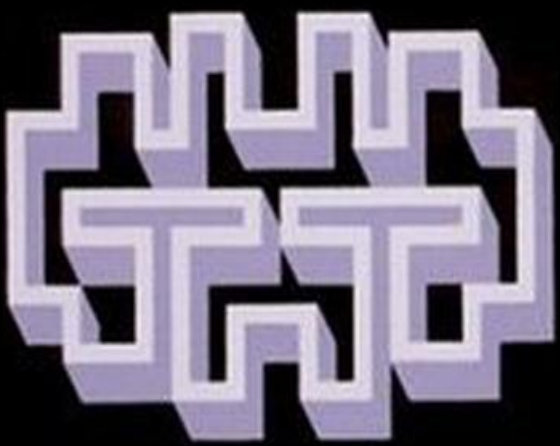
BRILL GESCHICHTE DES ANTIKEN JUDENTUMS UND DES URCHRISTENTUMS

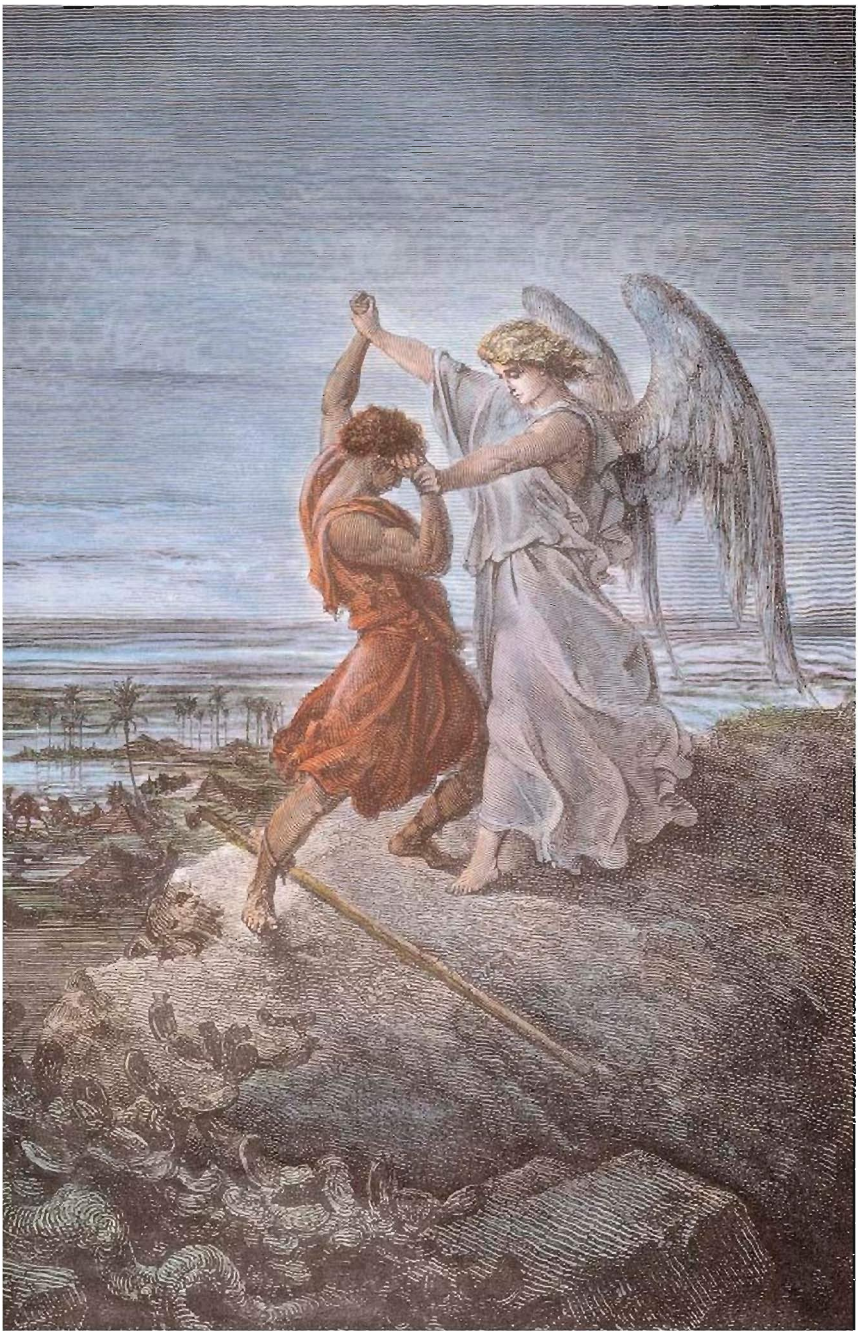
Wrestling with Angels

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANGELS AND HUMANS IN ANCIENT JEWISH LITERATURE AND THE NEW TESTAMENT



BY

KEVIN P. SULLIVAN



DORE: JACOB AND THE ANGEL, 19th C.
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WRESTLING WITH ANGELS

ARBEITEN ZUR GESCHICHTE DES ANTIKEN JUDENTUMS UND DES URCHRISTENTUMS

Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity

herausgegeben von

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WRESTLING WITH ANGELS

A Study of the Relationship between Angels and Humans in Ancient Jewish Literature and the New Testament

BY

KEVIN P. SULLIVAN

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To

Paul and Kathy Sullivan

and

In loving memory of

William (1920–2001) and
Mary (1923–1999) Kuzava

CONTENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations used in this monograph follow the *Society of Biblical Literature Handbook of Style: For Near Eastern, Biblical and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander, Society of Biblical Literature, 1997) 58–162 with the addition of:

Gen. Apoc. for the *Genesis Apocryphon* (= 1QapGen^{ar} = 1Q20)
HJPAJC for Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*
JA for *Joseph and Aseneth*
Mss. for manuscripts
SSS for the "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice" (4Q400–405, 11Q17).

Among the most frequently used abbreviations in this book are:

ABD	*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
DDD	K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. van der Horst, eds., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LXX	Septuagint
NT	New Testament
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OTP	J. Charlesworth ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*
RQ	*Revue de Qumran*
SBLSP	*Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: WRESTLING WITH ANGELS

1.1 *Introduction*

This monograph investigates the relationship between humans and angels as discussed in the literature of the late Second Temple and early Christian period (200 BCE–100 CE).

Angels are found in many books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, and a significant number of the extant extra-Biblical writings. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls served to remind modern scholars that many, if not all, Jewish groups had beliefs about angels. Angels, then, were a significant part of late Second Temple Jewish and early Christian cosmology. Yet the study of angel beliefs on the whole has not been a serious topic in earlier studies. Recently, scholars have begun to investigate this significant corpus of material on angels, primarily out of an interest in the impact of angel traditions on the development of Christology.

One aspect of the investigation that has received only modest attention thus far is the sometimes complex relationship between humans and angels. When they appear to humans, angels often take on the form of humans. Humans are sometimes characterized in angelic categories, and some humans are even said to transform into angels. Moreover, angels interact with humans in intimate ways, such as by coexisting in specific communities, appearing to partake of human hospitality, and also, in at least one line of tradition, having viable offspring with human women.

Because of this close and complex relationship, some scholars have suggested that ancient authors equated humans with angels. The examination undertaken in this study aims to determine whether and to what extent ancient authors made any such identification between humans and angels. As will be seen from the survey of scholarship below (1.3), the answer to this question is itself not only interesting and valuable but also has implications for understanding the emergence of Christology and early Jewish and Christian mysticism.

Ultimately, the preponderance of the evidence suggests no compelling reason to believe that writers from this period had any difficulty distinguishing between the two groups of beings.

1.2 *Methodology and Sources*

It is the aim of this study to examine all the relevant literary sources from the period of c. 200 BCE to c. 100 CE to determine what they reveal about the relationship between angels and humans. The sources to be assessed are, on the whole, texts where the words מלאך/αγγελος (Latin: *angelus*) appear. However, a number of terms may refer to the beings known as angels (e.g., spirits, stars, hosts, princes, powers, *et al.*). Since terms derive their meaning from use in context, the selection of evidence has been driven by usage. If it seems probable given the context of a passage that the evidence can provide information about the relationship between humans and angels, then it has been included.

Such an examination, however, is extensive in scope, since this evidence is found in a variety of genres and comes from a variety of social contexts. The primary sources are the writings from: the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, the Dead Sea Scrolls, rabbinic literature, the Targumim; Philo and Josephus, the New Testament, the early church fathers, and the so-called Pseudepigrapha. The use of each source is discussed as the material appears in the course of the examination. Two specific groups of sources deserve some comment from the outset, however. The evidence from the Targumim and the rabbis dates in large part well after the parameters of this study. Nevertheless, the traditions therein may date back to a much earlier period. Therefore, it is important at least to consider what this evidence may have to say about human-angel relationships. The Pseudepigrapha represents a different problem. Among the bodies of literature mentioned above, it is the least coherent as a corpus. In fact, the collections of the OT Pseudepigrapha by R. H. Charles and, more recently, J. Charlesworth have to some extent solidified their consideration as a corpus, but these writings represent a vast variety of genres, come from different social contexts, have different transmission histories, and date from quite a range of time periods. Therefore, careful attention will be paid to contextualizing these documents in particular before assessing the evidence they provide.

Given this range of provenance, the challenge is to assess this evidence impartially and present the picture that emerges as accurately as possible. The method employed here is to interpret each piece of evidence separately. Arguments for inclusion and dating are made as necessary. The impact of the genre of the literature in which the evidence is found is discussed. Inasmuch as it is possible to determine, the social context of the evidence is considered. Once the evidence is situated as much as possible in its context, it is assessed for what it can tell us about the relationship between humans and angels.

Before examining the evidence, however, there are three preliminary considerations. First, a discussion of the previous scholarship aims to set this study within the wider scope of scholarship. Second, a survey of the history and variety of the angel beliefs in this period situates the literary evidence to be investigated within its larger historical context. Third, the parts of the book are briefly outlined to orient the reader to the approach taken.

1.3 *Survey of Previous Scholarship*

The following section surveys previous scholarship in order to demonstrate (a) what scholars have said about the relationship between humans and angels, (b) where confusion has arisen, and (c) that there is a need for further research in this area.

(a) *Early Studies*

P. Schäfer's 1975 study *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen z. rabbin. Engelvorstellung* collected and examined 74 rabbinic texts that demonstrated a rivalry between humans and angels.[1] Although his study looked at evidence from the later rabbinic period, much of which is difficult to date, it is noteworthy for this discussion, since his book was among the first look systematically at any aspect of the relationship between humans and angels. Given the difficulty of dating the materials from which he draws evidence, Schäfer prudently chose a thematic arrangement (e.g., Israel, the high priest, Moses) for the text and his interpretation.[2] His overall

[1] P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menchen: Untersuchungen z. rabbin. Engelvorstellung* (New York: de Gruyter, 1975).

[2] P. Schäfer, *Rivalität*, pp. 75–218.

conclusion was that in the rabbinic material angels oppose humans because human nature is sinful and at odds with God's (and the angels') holiness.[3]

Schäfer briefly surveyed aspects of post-Exilic angel beliefs as a precursor to his analysis of the rabbinic material to show both continuity in and new aspects of angel beliefs in the rabbinic writings.[4] Little evidence from the post-Exilic period demonstrates any explicit rivalry between humans and angels.[5] It seems likely that the wide variety of angel beliefs in this period may have led to confusion over the place of humans in the celestial hierarchy, particularly when humans are transformed into angels. The seeds of the rivalry in the sinfulness of humans are certainly present in the Gen 6 material and its interpretations.

A. Segal's *Two Powers in Heaven* looked at the "two powers" heresy of rabbinic Judaism—that is, the belief that power in heaven was shared between God and another preeminent (but created) being.[6] Segal sees elements in early Christianity as representing one of the earliest forms of this "heresy." Within this framework, he argues that the early Christians identified some "human figures in heaven and angelic mediators" with Jesus.[7] Segal was not the first, and certainly not the last, scholar to consider the impact of angelology on the development of Christology.[8] So, certainly, the relationship between humans and angels creates an avenue for discussion in the person of Jesus. As will be seen in the comments below, study in this area burgeoned in the 1990s.

In a short but salient 1980 article J. Charlesworth collected seven texts that he saw as demonstrating the portrayal of righteous humans

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[3] P. Schäfer, *Rivalität*, p. 222.

[4] P. Schäfer, *Rivalität*, pp. 9–40. Although useful for his study and without parallel at the time, this survey is largely superseded by M. Mach's extensive analysis (see discussion of Mach below).

[5] A notable exception perhaps being the *Apoc. Ab.* 9–32.

[6] A. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977).

[7] A. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, p. 208.

[8] A comprehensive survey of the history of research in angel Christology can be found in C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997) 7–25; M. Werner (1941) was among the first scholars to make a strong case for angel Christology. He was rebuked harshly by W. Michaelis (1942), and the subject was not picked up for some time until J. Daniélou (1964) reopened the discussion. This survey of scholarship resumes in the 1980s, when angelology began to be studied more broadly, and not simply with regard to angel Christology.

as angels.[9] The texts he presented primarily came from works that found their way into the two-volume *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, which he was editing at the same time. He argues that this phenomenon of angelic portrayal and also angelic transformation of humans "is certainly a Jewish concept that antedates the second century CE and may predate the fall of Jerusalem in 70."[10] Yet the dating of a number of the texts that are included, such as 2 Enoch or the "History of the Rechabites," is very much debated. Although space did not permit Charlesworth to make solid, individual cases for the dating of a number of the texts, the contribution of his study was nevertheless significant. His article brought to scholarly attention the possibility that human portrayal in angelic categories and also human transformation into angels was potentially a first-century CE phenomenon. As will be seen in chapter 3 of this study, the figures often associated with such transformations were individuals who had lived a particularly righteous life and/or had a special relationship with God in their human existence (e.g., Adam or Jacob).

In his book, *The Open Heaven*, and in several subsequent articles, C. Rowland has discussed aspects of angelology.[11] In particular, Rowland has drawn attention to the role that imagery used to characterize angels has played in descriptions of the risen Christ. This has led him to advocate using the term "angelomorphic"[12] (based on the work of J. Daniélou) in discussions about the influence of angel traditions on Christology rather than "angelic" since, as Rowland states, "This kind of description [angelomorphic] in no way implies that Christ was identified entirely with that created order [the angels]."[13] The term "angelomorphic" has proven invaluable for making sense of complex Christological developments, which certainly seem to have appropriated angelological motifs. As will be seen below, however, the term has also been applied to discussions of humans more generally,

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[9] J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as an Angel" in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980) 135–151.

[10] J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous," p. 135.

[11] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982). Also see his articles, "The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature" *JSJ* 10 (1979) 137–154 and "A Man Clothed in Linen: Daniel 10:6ff. and Jewish Angelology" *JSNT* 24 (1985) 99–110.

[12] The depiction of particular beings in the form (μορφή) of angels.

[13] C. Rowland, "A Man Clothed in Linen," p. 100.

so that some scholars now speak of an "angelomorphic" humanity.[14] The merit of thinking in terms of angelomorphic humanity in the late Second Temple and early Christian period deeply informs the present study.

Around the same time as Rowland and Segal, J. Fossum was investigating traditions about the Angel of the Lord and the Name of God and their impact on Samaritan and Gnostic thought.[15] His study led him to conclude that

> the identification of the lieutenant of God as the Angel of the Lord made it possible for various groups to detect this figure in their respective heroes of the past—Adam, Enoch, Melchizedek, Jacob, Moses, Jesus or Simon Magus. Whether or not actual pre-existence was claimed for these men, a part of the tradition which identified the mediator with a human being seems to have been that the hero ascended to heaven and demonstrated his identity as God's plenipotentiary through heavenly enthronement.[16]

Thus, for Fossum the evidence allowed room for particular humans to be identified with the Angel of the Lord, but primarily this would take place only when the individual had ascended to heaven.

The topic of ascents to heaven in apocalyptic writings was taken up by M. Himmelfarb several years later.[17] In particular, her chapter on "Transformation and the Righteous Dead" focused on the ability of humans to interact with angels. She understands Jewish angelology as an attempt to bridge the gap between humans and God. She concludes, "Indeed it turns out that the boundaries between human beings and angels are not very clear."[18] She sees two main strands of tradition: one in which great heroes of the past represent how close humanity can come to the divine, and another in which ordinary

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[14] Angelomorphic Christology and angelomorphic humanity are separate phenomena, however. Thinking of the development of Christology (i.e., ways of thinking and talking about the risen Jesus) in angelic terms is not the same as saying there was a widespread belief about humans being understood as angels, as authors such as Fletcher-Louis and Gieschen have suggested—see section (d) below.

[15] J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985) and later his *Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christianity* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1995).

[16] J. Fossum, *The Name of God*, p. 333.

[17] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[18] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, p. 70.

humans who are righteous can take their place in the heavenly hierarchy after death. These traditions, then, focus on human relationships with angels in the heavens, usually after their mortal life has ended.

(b) *Michael Mach's Entwicklungsstadien*

M. Mach's *Entwicklungsstadien des judischen Engelglaubens in vorrabbinischer Zeit* is a comprehensive study tracing the development of angel beliefs through roughly the same period as the present project (c. 200 BCE–100 CE).[19] His book is wide in scope, attempting to trace the development of angel beliefs from the Biblical period through to the end of the Second Temple period. Limitations of space and focus on the development of ideas over time meant that he was not able to deal with some themes relating to his general topic in detail, but he has significant sections on human-angel communities.[20] He also, like Charlesworth, has a section on human transformation.[21]

Two of Mach's initial caveats merit reiteration here. First, Mach notes that Biblical "angelology" is a problematic term, since it suggests that there was a coherent set of angel beliefs for the entire Hebrew Bible.[22] Indeed, there is reason for caution in the use of this term, since it implies a systematic doctrine regarding angels. The evidence from this period suggests that there was a wide variety of beliefs. Nevertheless, at times it will be useful to talk of a specific author's or group's "angelology," but when speaking of this period as a whole, it is notably more prudent to speak of "angelologies." Second, Mach notes that previous studies of angels are oversimplified because they analyze only those passages containing the word "angel (מלאך)." The present study will largely (as Mach himself does despite

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[19] M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des judischen Engelglaubens in vorrabinischer Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).

[20] In his third chapter see especially pp. 159–163; 209–219; 241–255. His chapter 4, "Die Gefahren Der Gemeinschaft," is also relevant. In English, "The Danger of Communion" suggests the central theme is human-angel communities, but actually the discussion focuses more upon the ideological problems of the fusion of what Mach calls "Biblical Angelology" (ideas he discussed in chapter 1) and Graeco-Jewish Angelology (chapter 2).

[21] M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*, pp. 163–173.

[22] So also S. Olyan, who warns that, "The use of the common term 'angelology' by scholars is problematic. It implies a single, systematic doctrine of angels, something that may have existed for some specific groups (perhaps the Qumran sectarians), but certainly does not exist in rabbinic texts." S. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 1 n. 1.

his own warning) look at evidence where the term "angel" appears, but it will also consider evidence where divine beings appear to be interacting with humans even if various terms are employed.

Mach divides the material into four chapters that follow the stages of development. His first chapter looks at Biblical angelology. He sorts the many angel references in the Hebrew Bible according to function, discerning two main strands of tradition—the heavenly council motif and angels (מלאך) as "messengers"—that eventually fused in texts like the LXX of Job. "The Greco-Roman terminology for the New Angelology" is the subject of Mach's second chapter. He looks at issues involved in the translation of angel terms from the Hebrew Bible into the Septuagint. Interestingly for our study, Mach sees the use of ἄγγελος in the LXX as a blanket term for designating *heavenly* beings.

In his third and largest chapter Mach considers the development of angel beliefs in extra-Biblical writings, surveying the breadth of the traditions about angels. His sections on communion with angels (pp. 132–33, 209–19) are relevant to this study. In a somewhat broader sense than is taken in chapter 4 of this study, Mach discusses communion with angels in the forms of companions in heavenly ascent, interpreters/messengers, stars, *et al.* He attributes the growth of angelology in the late Second Temple period to the rise of apocalypticism. On the whole the present study agrees with this assertion. Mach also sees the fusion of Biblical angelology with Greek mythology in texts like *Joseph and Aseneth.*

In his final chapter Mach looks at what he calls "the dangers of human-angel communion" (*Die Gefahren Der Gemeinschaft*). On those occasions when angels might be expected but are absent (e.g., 2 Chr 36:15) or in particular when their role is downplayed, namely in the New Testament and the writings of Josephus, Mach suggests this absence represents a negative response to the otherwise burgeoning angel beliefs of the period. According to Mach, Josephus considers angel beliefs dangerous because of their intimate connection to the "political-ideological" problem of apocalypticism. That is, apocalyptic writings often had politically dangerous thoughts and ideas, such as the overturning of this-world powers, so that Josephus—and also the rabbis after him—downplayed both apocalyptic ideas as well as angel beliefs in their desire to cooperate with Roman rule.[23] Such a connec-

[23] M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien,* pp. 300–333.

tion between the burgeoning of angel beliefs and the political aspects of apocalyptic writings is not warranted by the evidence, however.

For Mach, the New Testament also reflects a deliberate and consistent downplaying of angel beliefs. This is due, however, to the theological and Christological problems that were created as Christ came to be understood as divine. While this may be perceptible as a trend in the development of angel beliefs over an extended period of time (with the benefit of hindsight), the 78 occurrences of the word ἄγγελος in the NT reflect a variety of beliefs. Since the documents of the NT come from a variety of communities and slightly different times, it may not be prudent to think of trends within what is now a corpus—the NT—as if it were a single body of literature in the past.[24]

Thus, Mach's work is very useful in that it has brought together and sought to understand the development of angel beliefs in the pre-rabbinic period. His study touched upon some of the same areas as the present investigation, such as the transformation of the righteous into angels and the communion of angels with humans. The relationship of humans and angels, however, still merits greater attention, especially in light of some recent conclusions made by those studying angelomorphic Christology.[25]

(c) *Other Important Studies on Angel Beliefs*

Two authors have looked closely at angel traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[26] C. Newsom published the first complete translation of the long-awaited *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4Q400–405) from Qumran in 1985.[27] The *Songs* contain a substantial amount of material on angels (including a wide range of terms for heavenly beings). Newsom's publication of the texts, along with some subsequent analysis in various articles, has helped to make this difficult material more accessible to scholars.[28] Also, her entry on "angels" in the Anchor Bible

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[24] For a similar critique of this point, see the review by L. Hurtado in *JTS* 45 (1994) 636.

[25] See section (d) below.

[26] More recently, M. Mach has written the entry for "Angels" in the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 24–27, which contains a helpful summary of the DSS evidence and some useful insights on the relationship of humans and angels in that literature.

[27] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Harvard Semitic Studies, 1985).

[28] C. Newsom and Y. Yadin, "The Masada Fragment of the Qumran Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice" *Israel Exploration Journal* 34 (1984) 77–88; C. Newsom,

Dictionary is an excellent starting point for any look at angels.[29] Even a cursory glance at this entry, however, will show that not much work has been done on the relationship between humans and angels.[30] M. Davidson's monograph, *Angels at Qumran*, compared angel traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls and 1 Enoch (chapters 1–36, 72–108).[31] Davidson's study filled a notable void by collecting and beginning to analyze the large body of angelic literature found in the writings from the Dead Sea Scrolls. His analysis, however, did not delve deeply into the relationship between humans and angels. Nevertheless, Davidson says that the authors of the Qumran sectarian writings and the material from 1 Enoch largely conceive of the realms of humans and of angels as two distinct realms. He admits that

> All writers presuppose a separation between the realms of angels and humans, a spatial dualism, but this gap, in various ways, is frequently bridged. Nevertheless, it appears that all our authors would hold to the view that the proper dwelling-place of angels is in heaven, even though many of the angels engage in various activities around the cosmos.[32]

So, in Davidson's analysis, the gap is bridged, but no identification is made between humans and angels.

Some other scholars have made important contributions to the general discussion of the nature of humans and angels. C. R. A. Morray-Jones has proposed that the attainment of angelic life may be seen as "transformational mysticism."[33] Though he focuses on the rabbinic and Hekhalot traditions, he also looks at the Jewish pseudepigraphic material. He has also seen this same phenomenon in Paul.[34]

M. Barker's *The Great Angel* considered the impact of an exalted angel tradition on the development of Christology.[35] In looking at

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"Merkabah Exegesis in the Qumran Sabbath Shirot" *JJS* 38 (1987) 11–30; C. Newsom, "He Has Established for Himself Priests" in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. L. Schiffman (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 101–120.

[29] C. Newsom, "Angels: OT" in *ABD* 1:248–253.

[30] See her subsection on "Relations between Angels and Humans" in *ABD* 1:250 for a brief discussion on Gen 6:1–4.

[31] M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1–36, 72–108 and the Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

[32] M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, p. 291.

[33] C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition" *JJS* 43 (1992) 1–31.

[34] C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1–12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostalate. Part 1: The Jewish Sources" *HTR* 86 (1993) 177–217; "Part 2: Paul's Heavenly Ascent and Its Significance," pp. 265–292.

[35] M. Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992).

the evidence of "the sons of God," she states, "All the texts in the Hebrew Bible distinguish clearly between the divine sons of Elohim/Elyon and those human beings who are called sons of Yahweh."[36] This observation is valuable, since "sons of God" is a term that sometimes refers to angels. Her distinction according to which form of the divine name is used may have an impact on our understanding of the term "sons of God" and its relation to humans and divine beings. Her assertion is borne out by the evidence, in that the term "sons of Elohim" does seem regularly to refer to angels.[37] It is less clear that the term "sons of Yahweh" is exclusive to humans, since the evidence is fairly limited.[38]

W. Horbury's recent book, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ*, contains an insightful section on the "Co-ordination of angelic and [human] messianic deliverers."[39] Horbury asks, "Could the angelic figures who were envisaged as heaven-sent deliverers have readily been associated with earthly leaders?"[40] To this he responds in the affirmative, though he notes that, "deliverers considered in contemporary discussion of divine agents are not always unambiguously angelic."[41]

(d) *Angelomorphic Christology*

In the 1990s several scholars refocused scholarly attention upon the identification of Jesus Christ with the form and/or function of an angel—that is, angelomorphic Christology. At the fore of this series of studies was L. Hurtado's *One God, One Lord*, which appeared in its first edition in 1988. His study sought to understand how nascent Christianity could incorporate Jewish monotheism *and* the worship of Christ. His analysis included a discussion of the relation of angelology to Christology.[42] Hurtado suggests that the early Christians believed in a bifurcation of the godhead: God and Christ. This bifurcation stems from the impact of Jewish "divine agency" traditions upon the early Christian conceptions of Christ's role. The distinctive

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[36] M. Barker, *The Great Angel*, p. 10.
[37] E.g., Gen 6:2; Deut 32:8 (LXX); Job 1:6, 38:7; Ps 29:1, 82:1, 6; Dan 3:25.
[38] See 1 Chr 28:6; Ps 2:7; Isa 9:6–7.
[39] W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* (London: SCM, 1998) 83–86.
[40] W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism*, p. 83.
[41] W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism*, p. 84.
[42] L. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998).

feature of the Christian "mutation" was that the risen Christ was *worshipped* unlike any other divine agent in the wider Jewish matrix. Hurtado's discussion of "divine agency" dealt with various aspects of angelology from the period, including a chapter on "Exalted Patriarchs as Divine Agents," which acted as a basis for further study by Gieschen, Fletcher-Louis, and this author.[43]

L. Hurtado's work elicited several responses,[44] the fullest of which was by L. Stuckenbruck, who looked specifically at the issue of angel veneration in the Book of Revelation and other related literature.[45] His monograph was largely a response to Hurtado's claims that veneration/worship was a decisive factor in Christianity's "mutation" away from Judaism. The worship of angels as discussed by both Hurtado and Stuckenbruck implies, at least, that there is a clear distinction between humans and angels; that is, if angels were in any way an object of worship by some, then they would not have been considered to be equivalent in nature to humans. What is unclear, however, is to what extent angel veneration was practiced. Yet in general angels' refusal of worship by humans seems to be motivated by a concern not for human-angel equality but instead for focusing reverence on God.

P. Carrell also investigated angel traditions in the Book of Revelation. His aim was to understand how and to what extent those traditions impacted the angelomorphic Christology therein.[46] His definition of the term "angels" is "heavenly beings, *distinct* from God and *from human beings*, who exist to serve God as messengers, as the heavenly congregation at worship, and as agents of the divine will fulfilling a variety of other functions."[47] Even though he employs a tight definition

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[43] L. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, pp. 51–70; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 153–161; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 145–164; chapter 3 below.

[44] P. Rainbow, "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology: A Review Article" *NovT* 33 (1991) 78–91; A. Chester, "Jewish Messianic Expectations, Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology" in *Paulus und das antike Judentums*, ed. M. Hengel and U. Heckel (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991) 17–89; P. Davis, "Divine Agents, Mediators, and New Testament Christology" *JTS* 45 (1994) 479–503.

[45] L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology. A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995).

[46] P. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and Christology in the Apocalypse of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). R. Gundry, "Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation" *SBLSP* (1994) 662–678, foresaw the need for a study such as Carrell's.

[47] P. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels*, p. 14; italics mine.

of "angel," he still includes a section on exalted humans in his "Angelomorphic Figures" chapter as a part of the "angelological context of the Apocalypse's Christology."[48] From the variety of evidence that he surveys regarding humans and angels, he concludes that, "We cannot be confident, however, that John [author of the Apocalypse, writing at the end of the first century CE] would have been familiar with the idea that a human could become an angel."[49]

D. Hannah examined traditions regarding the archangel Michael to see whether these inform the development of an angel Christology.[50] The prominence of the angel Michael in texts such as Daniel, the War Scroll, and the Book of Revelation lends support to the assertion that an identification of Jesus Christ with the angel Michael is highly plausible. Hannah's specific focus on Michael underscores the connection between Jewish angel traditions and early Christianity. In his book and in a later review of C. Gieschen, Hannah is cautious in his application of the terms "angel," "angelic," and "angelomorphic" with regard to Christology.[51] Of particular relevance is his note that "angelomorphic" should refer to visual portrayals of Christ in the form (based literally on μορφή) of an angel. The term "angelomorphic" in this study will refer to instances of human beings appearing in the form of angels. The visual component of angel portrayals will be discussed in chapter 2.

In a short article on patterns of mediation and their relation to Christology, P. Davis hinted at the direction scholars would next explore. He concludes:

> Other scholars have already noted a certain fluidity in the distinction between God and his chief agents in some texts. . . . By the same token, when that agent is a human being, there might be some fluidity in the distinction between the divine and the human in that particular case.[52]

Two subsequent studies on Christology explored this possibility of fluidity in the distinction between the human and divine.

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[48] P. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels,* pp. 77–90.

[49] P. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels,* p. 90.

[50] D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999). Hannah's work built upon the seminal study by W. Lueken, *Michael* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1898).

[51] D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ,* see esp. pp. 12–13; Review of C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997) in *JTS* 51 (2000) 230–236.

[52] P. Davis, "Divine Agents, Mediators, and New Testament Christology" *JTS* 45 (1994) 499.

C. Gieschen is perhaps the strongest advocate for angelomorphic Christology. Gieschen's work is a collection of the antecedents to and early evidence for angelomorphic Christology through the fourth century CE.[53] It is his aim to demonstrate that "angel traditions . . . had a significant impact on the early expression of Christology."[54] His survey of the antecedents included a section on "angelomorphic humans."[55] From his survey he concludes that "Many of these texts testify that humans can be, or become, angelomorphic while still alive on earth," adding, "human ontology is not a question that troubles the writers of this literature."[56] The claim that humans could be in some way identified as angels in their earthly lives pushed further the boundaries of scholars' understanding of the relationship between humans and angels.

C. Fletcher-Louis studied the Christology and soteriology of Luke-Acts in light of angelomorphic traditions.[57] Like Gieschen, Fletcher-Louis's background research included a significant section (the most thorough of the aforementioned studies) on angelomorphic humanity.[58] Fletcher-Louis concludes his survey of this evidence by saying he hopes to have demonstrated that "there was a well established and significant tradition, or even traditions, in which human identity was understood in angelic categories."[59] He goes on to say:

> We submit that an approach to the data . . . which does not impose a rigid dualism, but rather accepts the openness and fluidity of human, angelic and Divine categories, allows for simplicity of interpretation, and does most justice to the texts' own worldviews(s). Accordingly our label 'angelomorphic', has proved heuristically invaluable. (Though of course Jews themselves used many different terms equivalent to angelomorphic, such as holy ones, host, glorious ones, and were not afraid to recognise that an angelomorphic human could be regarded as equivalent to 'a god').[60]

This approach does create considerable confusion, however, and Fletcher-Louis has come under some criticism.[61] J. O'Neill has cri-

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[53] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*.
[54] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 6.
[55] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 152–183.
[56] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 183.
[57] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*.
[58] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, "Part II: Jewish Angelomorphic Traditions," pp. 109–215.
[59] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 211.
[60] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 211–212.
[61] Fletcher-Louis sometimes employs the term ἀγγελικὸς βίος (angelic life) to

tiqued Fletcher-Louis's conclusions because "these claims to ontological identity are simply misunderstandings of the Jewish evidence," adding, "there is a clear and consistently maintained difference in kind between God and angels and human beings."[62]

One example from among the texts to be studied will be useful for illustrating the question at hand. In Galatians 4:14 Paul writes, "and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus" (ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ ἐδέξασθέ με, ὡς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν). Most interpreters argue that Paul has some sort of comparison in mind—for instance, "you received me (as you) would receive a messenger/an angel of God, as you would receive Christ Jesus [himself]." In his highly regarded commentary on Galatians, however, H. Betz makes this interesting observation about the relationship between humans and angels in his gloss on 4:14, "To be sure, in antiquity there was not a great difference between the two, because one could never be sure whether one *was encountering a divine angel or a human messenger.*"[63] Betz's student M. Mitchell says concerning the same verse that "there is nothing in the passage to suggest that Paul likens himself to the supernatural envoys, angels."[64] These two juxtaposed opinions clearly demonstrate the considerable confusion that has arisen over the meaning of Paul's phrase, but also the relationship between humans and angels generally. Recently C. Gieschen has argued for a strong angel Christology underlying this phrase.[65] His exegesis, however, has been challenged by a number of scholars.[66] Thus, in current scholarship there seems to be considerable debate over the understanding of the relationship between humans and angels.

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describe his idea that individuals and communities are angelic in "this-life." The use of this terminology confuses the issue further, however, since the term comes from second century CE sources. The employment of it as a technical term implies that the idea was widespread in the literature from an earlier period, but this is not the case. *Luke-Acts*, pp. 184, 214–215.

[62] J. O'Neill, Review of C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts* in *JTS* 50 (1999) 225–230.

[63] H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979) 226; italics mine.

[64] M. Mitchell, "New Testament Envoys" *JBL* 111 (1992) 646 n. 17. Contra J. Fitzmyer, "But though the word ἄγγελος is found in the New Testament in the sense of a human messenger (Lk 7:24; 9:52; Jas 2:25), it is never used thus by Paul." "A Feature of Qumran Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor 11:10" *NTS* 4 (1957–58) 55.

[65] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 315–325.

[66] See two reviews: J. Davila, *JSJ* 30 (1999) 344–346, and D. Hannah, *JTS* 51 (2000) 230–236.

(e) *Summary*

What previous scholarship has said specifically about the relationship between humans and angels in the late Second Temple and early Christian period is relatively limited. Schäfer's study largely covered material after our period. The largest studies of the relevant literature pertaining to angels (e.g., Mach and Davidson) did not consider this topic as its own subject. Smaller studies, such as Charlesworth and Horbury, covered specific aspects of the relationship.

In particular, the question of the relationship of humans and angels arose in some of the studies researching angelomorphic Christology. Fletcher-Louis and Gieschen did more detailed work on the subject, but that work was done in the context of finding evidence for antecedents to angelomorphic Christology. The strong emphasis upon angelomorphic Christology in recent scholarship on angel beliefs represents something of a bias in scholarship. It suggests that angels can only be discussed valuably as they relate to the human Jesus but that angels are not themselves a valid subject, particularly in relation to humans generally.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between angels and humans as a phenomenon within the religious purview of late Second Temple Judaism, *of which nascent Christianity was one part*, and to answer J. O'Neill's assertion that there was "a clear and consistently maintained difference in kind between God and angels and human beings."[67] Looking at this phenomenon on its own, without the purpose of detecting its influence on later Christology, will allow for a more unbiased view that does not privilege the evidence regarding Jesus.

Next, a short discussion of the context of second Temple angel traditions is required in order to understand the antecedents and contemporaneous situation of the evidence upon which this study focuses.

1.4 *Historical Context*

Angels are found in texts from all periods of the Hebrew tradition from the pre-Exilic down to the Book of Daniel and beyond.[68]

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[67] J. O'Neill, *JTS* 50 (1999) 228.

[68] For some good general summaries and surveys of angel traditions, see P. Schäfer, *Rivalitat*, pp. 9–40; Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*; C. Newsom, "Angel: OT" in *ABD* 1:248–253; and J. Ashton, "Bridging Ambiguities" in *Studying John: Approaches to the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 71–89.

The Hebrew word for angel is מלאך.[69] At the most general level מלאך has the meaning of "messenger" or "envoy." The same meanings apply for the Greek ἄγγελος.[70] A more technical definition for "angel" is "a heavenly being that mediates between humans and the divine."[71] The term "angel" in the Hebrew and Greek had the flexibility to refer to either human or divine messengers.

In order to understand the angel beliefs of the late Second Temple period, it is important to be aware of the beliefs that preceded them, as well as those that were contemporary in the wider Graeco-Roman milieu.[72] The logical starting point, then, is angel beliefs from the Hebrew Bible. As Mach suggests, beliefs about angels from the Hebrew Bible can be grouped into two main categories: the divine council and the Angel of the Lord.

As in many ancient Near Eastern cultures, the Hebrew understanding of the heavenly world was of a royal court with Yahweh as king and various divine beings at his service (Ps 82; 1 Kg 22:19–22; Job 1–2; Dan 7).[73] Thus, early conceptions of the heavenly realm engaged anthropomorphic terms. It should come as no surprise, then, to see later angel beliefs demonstrating a similar understanding.

In a number of Hebrew Bible texts God's visible form to humans is described as the Angel of the Lord (מלאך יהוה).[74] Scholars have primarily considered the Angel of the Lord as a personification (hypostasis) of God.[75] The Angel of the Lord carries out particular tasks on earth: messenger (Gen 16, 22; Judg 6, 13), protector/warrior (Num 22; Ps 34), and even destroyer (Exod 4:24 [LXX]). That

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[69] For definitions of the term, see "מלאך" in *TDOT* 8:308–325; *BDB* 521–522.

[70] For definitions of the term, see "Ἄγγελος" in *TDNT* 1:74–87; W. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Writings* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1952) 7–8; Liddell-Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968) 7. The term is applied to some gods as messengers: Hermes (Homer, *Odyssey* 5:29; Plato, *Cratylus* 407e), Iris (Homer, *Illiad* 2:786, 3:121), and Nemesis (Plato, *Laws* 4:717d).

[71] For definitions of "angel" see: *ABD* 1:248–255; *DDD* 81–96; *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 24–27.

[72] For a survey of angel traditions in the Old Testament, see G. Heidt, *Angelology in the Old Testament* (Washington DC: Catholic University, 1949).

[73] E. Theodore Mullen, *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980).

[74] For references to the Angel of the Lord, see Gen 16, 22, 24; Exod 3:2; Num 20, 22; Judg 2, 5, 6, 13; Zech; *et al.*, as well as eleven references in the NT (Matt, Luke, and Acts).

[75] On the Angel of the Lord, see J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, pp. 192–238.

God's angel carries out tasks on earth that might regularly be performed by humans is interesting for our understanding of the relationship between humans and angels, since once again in this case early conceptualizations of angels, and in particular the Angel of the Lord, apparently had an anthropomorphic character.

An extension of the heavenly court concept noted above may have led to the individualization of one of the primary denizens of the judicial court setting: the accuser or "Satan." The Hebrew term "satan" literally means "adversary" or "accuser" in a legal context.[76] This figure appears first in the Book of Job in the heavenly court scenes of chapters 1–2; he appears in a similar scene in Zech 3.[77] Satan rarely appears in Jewish literature of the Second Temple period.[78] In the writings of the NT, Satan has developed into an evil being who stands diametrically opposed to God. The name Satan occurs some 39 times in the NT. Much has been written about the figure of Satan throughout history.[79] We will not be looking into demonology in our discussion; nevertheless, Satan does come to be understood as a tempter of humans on an individual basis and may even invade them (Luke 22:3, Mark 8:27–33).[80]

The prophets are relatively quiet on the subject of angels. Only the post-Exilic prophets Zechariah and Ezekiel have much to say about them. There are only two references from the pre-Exilic prophets: Hos 12:5–6 cf. Gen 32:22–30 and, less directly, the mention of the cherubim in Isa 6:1ff. The cherubim and seraphim are often classified as angels.[81] S. Olyan looked at angelic "brigade" des-

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[76] *BDB*, p. 1370.

[77] Satan also occurs once in 1 Chr 21:1.

[78] Other figures mentioned in this literature do seem to fit the same role: Mastema (Jubilees, Dead Sea Scrolls), Diablos (Life of Adam and Eve), Belial, etc.

[79] For a succinct survey, see C. Breytenbach and P. L. Day, "Satan" in *DDD* 1369–1380. Also see V. Hamilton, "Satan" in *ABD* 5:985–989. More thorough studies are undertaken by P. Day, *An Adversary in Heaven: Satan in the Hebrew Bible* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), and E. Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* (London: Penguin Books, 1997).

[80] The development of demonology seems to parallel that of angelology; i.e., there is a proliferation in the Second Temple period and beyond. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has opened up the study of demonology, which was largely centered on the New Testament. For a succinct review and look at the Dead Sea Scrolls' demonology, see P. Alexander, "Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls" in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after 50 Years*, ed. P. Flint and J. VanderKam (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999) 2:331–353.

[81] Cherubim are found in Gen 3:24; Exod 25, 26 (in descriptions of the Ark of the Covenant), 36, 37; Kgs and Chr (in descriptions of the art of the Temple);

ignations in detail in his monograph, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him.*[82] Humans do not appear to have a significant interaction with these groups of angels, save the cherubim with a fiery sword driving Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden in Gen 3:24 and Isaiah seeing the seraphim in his vision (Isa 6).

Over the late Second Temple period, there seems to have been increasing speculation about individual elite angels, called archangels. The first mention of named angels appears to be the Book of Daniel (Michael 10:13, 21 and 12:1; and Gabriel 8:16, 9:21).[83] The four main archangels are Michael,[84] Gabriel,[85] Raphael,[86] and Uriel,[87] although a number of others are named in various texts.[88] The term "archangel" (ἀρχάγγελος) itself does not appear in the LXX.[89] The writings now known as the Apocrypha provide us with two lengthy tales that involve some of these principal angels: Raphael appears in the Book of Tobit (3:17, 5:4, 7:8, 9:1 and 5, 11:2 and 7, 12:15) as a companion to Tobias; and Uriel in 4 Ezra (originally part of 2 Esdras) as an interpreter of visions. Both the creation of a hierarchy among the angels as well as the individualization of some angels seem to be anthropomorphisms that may have allowed for a more accessible nature for angels, which in turn may have provided the basis for a more dynamic relationship between humans and angels.

The authors of the LXX made interpretative decisions as they wrote their new text. Of particular interest to us is how the term מלאך is rendered in the LXX. In a large number of cases where מלאך appears, the LXX translates ἄγγελος. The cases that are most

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Ezek 10; *et al.* Seraphim are found in Isa 6:2, 6. As noted in *DDD* "Angel I" (pp. 83–84), these groups were never interpreted as "angels" in any ancient texts.

[82] S. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him.*

[83] According to the rabbis, the names of the angels came from the Babylonian Exile (*Gen R.* 18:1). On Michael and Gabriel in Daniel, see, "Michael and Gabriel: Angelological Problems in the Book of Daniel" in *The Scriptures and the Scrolls*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992) 114–124.

[84] See "Michael" in *DDD* 1065–1072; *ABD* 4:811. See also the aforementioned study by D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ.*

[85] See "Gabriel" in *DDD* 640–642; *ABD* 2:863.

[86] See "Raphael" in *DDD* 1299–1300; *ABD* 5:621.

[87] See "Uriel" in *DDD* 1670–1672; *ABD* 6:769.

[88] See G. Barton, "The Origin of the Names of Angels and Demons in the Extra-Canonical Apocalyptic Literature to 100 AD" *JBL* 31 (1912) 156–167, and Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962) 237–240.

[89] Yet Michael and Gabriel appear in the Book of Daniel, and an analogous figure appears in Josh 5:13–15.

illuminating for the present study are those when the LXX has taken some other term and translated it as ἄγγελος. The LXX of the Book of Job is a good example.[90] The Hebrew text of Job contains the term מלאך only at 33:23, but the LXX has 14 additional references to ἄγγελος, especially when describing the heavenly council in chapter 1.[91] This suggests that the author of the LXX of Job envisioned the court scenes in particular as being played out by heavenly actors. J. Gammie does not see any specific changes in the function of angels in the LXX of Job over against the functions of angels in the Hebrew Bible.[92] However, the fact that the term ἄγγελος is used so much more often than מלאך in the Hebrew suggests an increased interest or increased use of angel language to explain divine activity.

The term ἄγγελος is not exclusive to Biblical texts. Angels are also found in inscriptions around the Mediterranean region.[93] It does not appear that any of this material suggests a close relationship between humans and angels, however. Virtually all the invocations seem to be of deities referred to with the subtitle ἄγγελος or particular angels. These inscriptions may have functioned in a similar way to the ritual magic spells, such as protection or curses. The presence of inscriptions that use the term "angel" suggests that angel beliefs were quite widespread and may have spanned religious groups (Jewish, Christian, and pagan).

Magical texts (Greek, Hebrew, and Coptic) also make mention of angels.[94] Although much of this material is difficult to date (ranging anywhere from the first through the twelfth centuries CE), some of the angel beliefs demonstrated there may date back into our period.

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[90] M. Mach discusses it in a separate section, pp. 105–113; J. Gammie, "The Angelology and Demonology in the Septuagint of the Book of Job" *HUCA* 56 (1985) 1–19.

[91] 1:6, 14, 16, 17, 18, 2:1, 4:18, 5:1, 20:15, 36:14, 38:7, 40:11, 40:19, and 41:25.

[92] J. Gammie, "The Angelology," pp. 11–12.

[93] A brief survey of this material is considered in W. Carr, *Angels and Principalities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 40–42. A more thorough exposition of some of the material may be found in A. R. R. Sheppard, "Pagan Cults of Angels in Roman Asia Minor" *Talanta* 12–13 (1980–1981) 77–101, and S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 2:45–46, 106, and 136. See also section in L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology*, pp. 181–191.

[94] H. D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); M. Meyer and R. Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1994); R. Lesses, "Speaking with Angels: Jewish and Greco-Egyptian Revelatory Adjurations" *HTR* 89 (1996) 41–60; D. Aune, "The Apocalypse of John and Magic" *NTS* 33 (1987) 481–501. See also section in L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, pp. 192–200.

A survey of these texts shows that angels are often called upon by the spell-caster to provide a wide variety of services. In particular, spells were often cast for healing of particular ailments or protection from evil forces. There were also spells for sexual potency to increase attraction to the opposite sex. When angels are invoked, it is usually by name. In particular, the archangels Gabriel and Michael were popular, but Raphael and a wide variety of other theophoric names of angels appear.[95] It is not clear how widely these types of ritual texts would have been used. It does seem, however, that for those who used these spells, there was an inherent belief that angels had power to help them. Moreover, angels (and demons) were functional powers in their world. If nothing else, these texts suggest that speculation about angels continued well after our period of study in a variety of genres.

The widespread nature of angel beliefs in the literature suggests that a vast majority of Jewish groups in this period held some level of belief in angels and also that angels were part of the wider Graeco-Roman culture.[96] Nevertheless, one text from the extant literature of the period seems to suggest that a Jewish group denied the existence of angels, so we will analyze it here to determine whether it has broader implications for the present study. During Paul's speech before the Jerusalem council, Acts 23:8 says, "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge them all." D. Daube has argued that the import of this passage is the Sadducean denial of resurrection rather than the denial of the belief in angels.[97] Daube suggests that the issue is whether or not the Sadducees deny resurrection in the form of an angel or a spirit. For Daube the Sadducees deny "the span between death and

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[95] In the Testament of Solomon 22:20 (first-third centuries CE), we find the following reference to Jesus as an angel: "I [Solomon] said to him [Ephippas, a demon], 'By what angel are you thwarted?' He said, 'By the one who is going to be born of from a virgin and be crucified by the Jews.'"

[96] For some interesting parallels, see Acts 14:11–12, where the Lycaonians believe Paul and Barnabas to be Hermes and Zeus respectively. From classical literature we have a number of examples where the Greek gods, in the guise of humans, visited mortals: Apollodorus, *The Library* 2.4.8; Hesiod, *Shield of Heracles* 1–56; Homer, *Odyssey* 17.485; Iamblichus, *De mysteriis Aegyptus* 1.1 (Hermes is θεός ὁ τῶν λόγων); Plato, *Sophist* 216B; Silus Italicus 7.176; Ps-Sophocles (in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.14.111), 4–6; Ovid, *Metamorpheses* 8.611–724. See Geischen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 318.

[97] D. Daube. "On Acts 23: Sadducees and Angels" *JBL* 109 (1990) 493–497. Cf. C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 57–61.

resurrection, which, in widespread belief, a good person spends in the realm or mode of angel or spirit."[98] This line of argument is supported by the fact that Luke disparages the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection elsewhere (cf. Luke 20:27; Acts 4:1).

If Daube is correct, then there is no evidence the Sadducees denied the existence of angels. If Daube is incorrect, it still seems highly probable that since this reference in Acts is our only extant denial of the belief in the existence of angels by a Jewish group, it may actually act as the exception that proves the rule. That is, Luke may specifically mention it because it is *peculiar* that the Sadducees do not believe in angels. It is especially peculiar given the fact that angels figure prominently in the Pentateuch, which the Sadducees held as their scripture.[99]

There may have been other groups from whom there is no extant record who did not believe in angels, but this study will proceed with the assumption that the belief in angels was a widespread, if not ubiquitous, phenomenon for Jewish groups and that those beliefs were likely known and shared with the wider Graeco-Roman culture.

Lastly, a brief discussion of the approach taken toward the evidence is provided to orient the reader.

1.5 *Outline*

The evidence is examined in two parts: appearance and interaction. These two parts represent the main ways in which angels and humans have a relationship. They can physically appear like one another, and they can interact with one another in various ways.

The introduction to each of the two parts provides the larger context for the angel material to be discussed. Part one contains two chapters, the first of which examines the evidence in which angels appear in the form of human beings. The second examines the evidence in which human beings are characterized in angelic categories. The question of the relationship between angels and humans is addressed by considering the impact appearance has on identification. For instance, if an angel appears in the form of a human, does it mean there is any transformation of the angel?

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[98] D. Daube, "On Acts 23," p. 493.

[99] E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971, 638; Str-B. 2:767.

Part two consists of three chapters. In chapter 4 the evidence for the portrayal of humans and angels living together in communities is assessed. In chapter 5 texts that discuss angels eating with and sharing in human hospitality are considered. In chapter 6 the unique case of human-angel hybrid offspring stemming from the Gen 6:1–4 account is evaluated. The question of differentiation is considered in these instances in which there is close contact between humans and angels. For example, does a claim that angels are among those in a human community suggest there is an equation between angels and members of the community? Close and intimate contact may not mean that there is any identification between angels and humans.

The organization of this monograph is largely thematic; that is to say, material is grouped by themes such as "humans appearing as angels." Within each chapter the material is then divided into subsections, which on the whole discuss one text.

Each chapter will have a summary conclusion section. The final chapter brings those conclusions together, analyzes them, and states the implications of those conclusions for current scholarship.

The necessary groundwork has now been laid to proceed to the examination of the evidence for the relationship between humans and angels in the late Second Temple period.

PART ONE

APPEARANCE

PART ONE

APPEARANCE

Introduction

The first part of this study examines the relationship between humans and angels from the perspective of their physical form or appearance. "Appearance" in this study will be taken to mean "the outward form as perceived (whether correctly or not), especially visually."[1] Specifically, angels appearing in human form (i.e., anthropomorphic) are considered in chapter 2 and humans characterized as angels (i.e., angelomorphic) in chapter 3.

In attempting to understand the relationship between humans and angels, it is necessary to determine the criteria by which the two sets of beings might be identified or distinguished. As a starting point, we note that humans are flesh and blood, while divine beings, like angels, are incorporeal. It has already been noted that the terms מלאך and ἄγγελος have the semantic range to refer to both human and divine messengers. Terms derive their meaning from their context. Whether מלאך and ἄγγελος are meant to refer to human messengers or divine agents can only be determined by looking at their use in particular cases. Even with an awareness of context, however, S. Meier says, "the use of the term *mal'āk* to identify both human and supernatural messengers results in some passages where it is unclear which of the two is intended if no further details are provided." As examples he gives Judg 2:1–5; 5:23; Mal 3:1; Eccl 5:5.[2] C. Newsom notes similarly, "As terms denoting functions, both *aggelos* and *mal'āk* can refer equally to human or angelic beings. Consequently, there are passages in which it remains disputed whether the reference is to a heavenly being or a human one (see Judg 2:1; Mal 3:1)."[3] It is important to remember that, although some passages

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[1] The *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 59. "Appearance" will be used throughout rather than "form" since, as we will see, angels can appear in a variety of forms.

[2] S. Meier, "Angel: I" in *DDD*, p. 48.

[3] C. Newsom, "Angel: OT" in *ABD* 1:248–249. See also *JE* 2:957, "As a result

may present interpretative difficulties for modern readers, it is not correct to assume automatically that any such confusion existed for ancient authors and audiences. This study considers any passages where such ambiguity might exist to see (a) whether there is any lack of clarity and, if there is, (b) whether this means an identification of angels and humans is intended.

Another criterion some scholars have used in identifying the connection between humans and angels is instances where angels and humans seem to share physical form or appearance. A statement from C. Gieschen summarizes the confusion that can arise:

> Because angels often appear in the form of men, the distinction between what is anthropomorphic and what is angelomorphic is difficult to maintain. What one person may interpret as ananthropomorphism, another could see as a concrete description of an angelomorphic figure.[4]

Central to Gieschen's statement is the definition of "angelomorphic." He defines it as "an inclusive adjective which describes a phenomenon that has the variegated form and functions, even though the figure may not be explicitly identified as an angel."[5] C. Fletcher-Louis defines angelomorphic as "wherever there are signs that an individual or community possesses specifically angelic characteristics or status, though for whom identity cannot be reduced to that of an angel." He adds, "In this case we understand the word angel to be defined by the constellation of characteristics and motifs which commonly occur across a broad spread of Jewish texts from the second Temple and early rabbinic periods."[6] Among the characteristics of angelic identity that Fletcher-Louis outlines are: gigantism, iridescence, wearing of symbolic clothing, and participation in the angelic community and liturgy. These characteristics, he argues, can be applied to humans in some ancient texts, therefore allowing us to speak of an "angelomorphic humanity."[7]

These two definitions of "angelomorphic" are broadly inclusive: form, function, characteristics, and status. In some ways such broad

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of this diversity, there are some passages where it is uncertain whether a human or superhuman messenger is meant."

[4] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997) 28.

[5] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 27–28.

[6] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 14–15.

[7] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 211–225.

categorizations only cloud the discussion. D. Hannah is more exclusive in his use of the term "angelomorphic" with regard to Christology. He confines its use to instances where there are "visual portrayals of Christ in the form of an angel." He adds, "This, more precise use of the term than that found in many recent studies, confines the word to its literal meaning: Christ in the form (μορφή) of an angel."[8] His more exclusive use of the term "angelomorphic" is preferable, since it allows for a precise relation of the term to visual phenomena. The physical manifestation of an angel in human form (or conversely, a human described in angelic terms) does not necessarily imply any identification between the two. Thus, the use of the term "angelomorphic" with regard to humanity should be confined to the visual—that is, to describe the way in which some humans are portrayed visually. Using the term more broadly for all of humanity obfuscates the discussion of the relationship between humans and angels.

What is needed, then, for this study is to survey the variety of ways in which angels appear in the writings from this period so as to obtain an accurate idea of what characteristics might rightly be considered to be constitutive of "angelomorphic."

The evidence from the period for the appearance of angels fits into three categories:

(1) cases in which no physical description of the angel is given;
(2) cases in which angels appear in human form, or anthropomorphically. This category will be the focus of chapter 2; and
(3) angelophanies—cases in which the term for angel is present in the text.

First, the vast majority of instances where the terms מלאך/ἄγγελος in the evidence from this period seem to refer to the heavenly order of creatures omit any physical description (e.g., Gen 16; Judg 2:1–4; Luke 1; Acts 11:13; Gal 3:19; Rev 8–10, 14–16; *et al.*). It is difficult to glean much information from many of these instances because the context remains ambiguous as to whether the seer is aware that the angel is anything other than human.

It is uncertain how best to interpret this information. It could suggest that there was a widely understood or generally accepted idea

[8] D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 13.

of how angels looked, such that on most occasions no description would be necessary. On the other hand, it might suggest there was little interest in such matters, the interest instead being in the function of angels, whatever their appearance. This question will have to remain open, since the evidence simply does not provide any clues as to how to adjudicate.

We note here briefly that the second category into which the evidence of angel appearance can be organized is instances where angels appear in the form of human beings, and in a subset of those, angels are said to appear as youthful males. There are also cases where a being is referred to as a "man," but the context suggests that it may be an angel.

In the third classification for the appearance of angels there are specific (non-anthropomorphic) visual components associated with the manifestation of angels. The most common characteristics of this imagery are: (a) a luminous or fiery appearance and (b) an awesome/frightening appearance that often leads to falling to the ground (in fear and/or reverence).

(a) *Luminous/Fiery Appearance*

Angels sometimes are known to appear with brilliant light. The Angel of the Lord appears in the burning bush (Exod 3:2; cf. Acts 7:30). In Matt 28:3 the Angel of the Lord is said to have an appearance that "was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow." Also, in Acts 12:7, an Angel of the Lord appears, "and a light shone in the cell."

Angels are also sometimes described as stars (e.g., Job 38:7; Rev 1:20; *1 En.* 23; *1 En.* 104:2, 4, 6). The righteous are even said to be transformed into stars after their death in *2 Bar.* 51:3–13.

In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the "Prince of Light" is thought by most scholars to be equivalent to the angel Michael (and also Melchizedek), so this would indicate a relationship between an angel and light.

In Rev 10:1 the seer describes the angel in his vision: "Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire" (cf. Rev 19:17).

Interestingly in 2 Cor 11:14, Paul warns that "even Satan may appear as an angel of light". This suggests that Paul, much like many of his contemporaries, believed that otherworldly beings have the

ability to shape-shift (cf. Acts 14:12). Moreover, Satan can deceive people by taking on the form of an "angel of light." This suggests that perhaps one source for true revelation was expected to be a luminous messenger.

In the *Apocalyse of Zephaniah* 6:11–14 the angel Ermiel is described:

> Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel standing before me with his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory since his face is like that which is perfected in its glory. And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast. His feet were like bronze which is melted in a fire. And when I saw him, I rejoiced, for I thought that the Lord Almighty had come to visit me. I fell upon my face and worshipped him.

This is even seen in writings from the Nag Hammadi literature (Codex II, 4). The *Hypostasis of the Archons* 93:13–22 describes the angel Eleleth:

> Now as for that angel, I cannot speak of his power: his appearance is like fine gold and his raiment is like snow. No, truly, my mouth cannot bear to speak of his power and the appearance of his face. Eleleth, the great angel, spoke to me. "It is I," he said, "who am understanding. I am one of the four light-givers, who stand in the presence of the great invisible spirit."[9]

This brief survey of the evidence across a variety of texts (and in several texts to be considered below) indicates that brilliance and fiery appearance seem to be fairly common imagery associated with the manifestation of angels. However, D. Hannah, in a critique of Gieschen, warns against overemphasizing imagery:

> If a figure appears robed in light or with feet and legs aflame like molten bronze or with a face shining like the sun and/or lightning, then Gieschen, among others, automatically assumes we are dealing with an angel or angelomorphic being. The fact is that apocalypses describe heavenly beings, be they God, angels, exalted patriarchs, cherubim/seraphim, or whatever in broadly similar terms.[10]

Nevertheless, imagery is important. Nor are the apocalypses the only genre in which this type of imagery can be found. If certain imagery is regularly associated with angels, then it seems that we can say

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[9] Translation from R. Bullard and B. Layton, in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. J. Robinson (New York: Harper Collins, 1988) 161–170.

[10] D. Hannah, Review of C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, in *JTS* 51 (2000) 235.

that a being demonstrating such characteristics is "angelomorphic" without saying that the being is an angel. Taken from the reverse perspective, an angel may be "anthropomorphic" without being a human being. Given this more restricted use of the term "angelomorphic," however, it will rarely be applicable to human beings.

(b) *Fear and Falling to the Ground*

Another characteristic commonly associated with the manifestation of angels is fear and often falling to the ground on the part of the seer. Again, beginning with the Angel of the Lord, we see in Num 22:31, "Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed his head, and fell on his face." There is no physical description of the angel, but once Balaam is able to see the angel, he is reverent. In Matt 28:4–5 the Angel of the Lord opens the tomb of Jesus, and "for fear of him [the Angel of the Lord] the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified'"; also, Luke 1:11–12 has, "And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him" (cf. Luke 1:30).

1 Chr 21:20 records the appearance of an angel that causes fear, "Now Ornan was threshing wheat; he turned and saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid themselves."

Interestingly in Dan 8:16–17 the angel Gabriel is called a "man," yet his presence causes fear in Daniel, "And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, 'Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.' So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was frightened and fell upon my face."

In Acts 10:3–4 the angel who appears to the centurion, Cornelius, causes terror in the soldier:

> About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius." And he stared at him in terror, and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God."

All these examples suggest that a common reaction to the manifestation of an angel to a human is fear. This seems to imply that in at least the cases mentioned, there is likely no equation between the

two beings. The humans are fearful specifically because the angel is awesome in some respect.

Among the evidence of the manifestation of angels leading to the seer falling to the ground are some cases in which the reason for falling to the ground is intent to worship the being.[11] When Joshua is told the true identity of the being before him in Josh 5:13–15, he falls to the ground to worship (cf. Ezek 1:28; *1 En.* 14:14). In the *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:21 the prophet says, "And I fell on my face to worship him, and the angel who led me would not let me, but said to me, 'Worship neither throne, nor angel from the six heavens from where I was sent to lead you, before I tell you in the seventh heaven.'" Similarly, in Rev 19:10, "Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God'" (cf. Rev 22:8). Once again, the idea that humans would attempt to worship angels implies at least some inequality of status between them.

This characteristic of fear and falling to the ground is not limited to angelophanies, however. It seems to be an aspect of encountering divine being generally. So in Exod 3:6 at the burning bush Moses hides his face because he is afraid to look at God. Fear that human beings will die if they see God is a recurring theme (cf. Exod 20:19), and in two cases in Judg 6:23 and 13:22 (as well as Exod 3:2) the humans have actually seen the Angel of the Lord and fear death as if they have seen God.

So two characteristic elements often seem to be associated with the manifestation of an angel in the earthly realm. These cases suggest at least that the angels are appearing not in human form but in a more awesome form with bright light that causes the seer to fall to the ground in fear or worship. The evidence of this category suggests that, in at least these cases, there can be no identification between humans and angels. This is only a subset of the large body of evidence, however.

It is important, then, before beginning the analysis of texts to summarize and define fairly precisely what is meant by the term "angel" in this investigation. A general definition of an angel is "a heavenly/

[11] On the issue of angel veneration, see L. Struckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology. A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995) for a thorough survey, esp. pp. 81–85.

divine being that mediates between the earthly and heavenly realms." More specifically, though, an ANGEL is a being that:

(1) Has as a primary function the delivery of God's message/plan to human beings (and sometimes interpretation of that message).
(2) Typically resides in heaven but also travels to earth to perform various tasks.
(3) Is able to alter its form (e.g., can be anthropomorphic), especially when on earth.
(4) Is not bound by limitations of the earthly realm, such as the passage of time, death, hunger, sexual desire, etc.

To this more specific understanding, two more pieces of information may be added when an angel appears to human beings (an angelophany):

(1) The angel will often have a fiery/luminous appearance, and
(2) The angel will often cause fear/falling to the ground in the seer.

This definition of angel can be augmented or supported by the following definitions.

ANGELOMORPHIC—refers to the appearance of an angel. Something that is "angelomorphic" looks like an angel (as described above). This term, then, should be employed in parallel with the term "anthropomorphic." Just as God can be understood in "anthropomorphic" terms without being a human being, so too a human may be considered "angelomorphic" without being an angel.

GOD—the creator, resides in heaven, is transcendent, is unseen and unknowable (except through mediation) to those in the human realm. God is served by a myriad of heavenly/divine beings that also reside in heaven, but these beings are not equal to God.

HUMAN—the species *Homo sapiens*, created by God, bound by physical limitations, especially the passage of time, mortality, hunger, sexual desire, etc. They are unable to alter their physical form and unable to reach the heavenly realm of their own accord.

EARTHLY—things pertaining to the physical world of the senses, created by God.

HEAVENLY—things pertaining to the spiritual world (could also be referred to as otherworldly). It is the realm of God and the other heavenly/divine beings. Related to this definition is the term DIVINE, which often has the same meaning as HEAVENLY. A possible solu-

tion to some of the language problems scholars currently face might be limiting the use of the term "divine" to God, while using "heavenly" for the myriad of beings that reside in the heavens. Such a change, however, works very much against conventional uses, so for the purposes of this study, HEAVENLY and DIVINE will be used interchangeably.

CHAPTER TWO

"BLINDED BY THE LIGHT": ANGELS AS HUMAN BEINGS

In this chapter the texts in which angels appear in the form of human beings as well as apparently divine beings that are referred to as "men" are examined. In a number of texts, many from the Hebrew Bible, angels are described as appearing in the form of humans and are even indistinguishable from humans until their true nature is revealed. In some other texts, angels are described as young men. The evidence indicates that, even with such anthropomorphic descriptions of angels, they remained distinct from humans.

2.1 *The Book of Genesis*

In the late Second Temple period the Hebrew Scriptures existed side by side with translations of those same scriptures into Greek, the Septuagint (LXX), and perhaps also into Aramaic, the Targumim. Additionally, there were alternative versions of the Pentateuch, such as Jubilees, the Genesis Apocryphon, and the Samaritan Pentateuch circulating. The Hebrew Bible as it is now known comes to us primarily through the medieval Masoretes.[1] Thus it cannot be guaranteed that any particular passage has been accurately transmitted from Second Temple times through to the present, nor that it was treated as normative by all Jews at that time.

The safest path, then, is to consider what all versions that would have (or at least are likely to have) existed in the late Second Temple and early Christian period have to say about the selected passages.

(a) *Genesis 18–19*

In Gen 18:1–3 Abraham, who is resting in his tent from the midday heat, sees three men (שלשה אנשים). He hurries out to greet them and offer them hospitality in his tent:

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[1] But the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has provided us with some direct knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures in the Second Temple period (e.g., the Isaiah scroll).

> [1] And the Lord appeared to him [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. [2] He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men stood in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, [3] and said, "My lord, if I have found favour in your sight, do not pass by your servant."

The clause, "And the Lord appeared to him" acts as a sort of introduction, along with the setting material, "as he [Abraham] sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day" (v. 1). It is not entirely clear whether the Lord appears to Abraham separately from the three "men," but later we find that "two" men = angels go on to Sodom (Gen 19:1a, 5, 8, 12, 16), while Abraham debates with the Lord (Gen 18:22). This suggests that one of the three "men" is meant to be the Lord.[2]

The visitors tell Abraham that, although both he and his wife Sarah are extremely old, they will nevertheless have a child (v. 10). This pronouncement fulfills God's promise of progeny to Abraham (Gen 12:2; 17:2) and is apparently the reason for the visit to Abraham and Sarah, since once the news is delivered, the "men" set out from there accompanied by Abraham (v. 16). So the beings carry out an angelic function: delivery of a divine message. Then the Lord begins to tell Abraham about the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah (vv. 17–21). The "men" turn away from there and head to Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 22), leaving Abraham to plead with the Lord on behalf of any righteous in Sodom (vv. 22–33).

Chapter 19 begins by seemingly referring to the two men who had left the Lord and Abraham (18:22) as "two angels" (שני המאלכים). The two arrive in Sodom in the evening (v. 1). Lot greets the visitors with an entreaty to remain with him through the night. His words echo those of Abraham to his three visitors. The visitors agree to stay with Lot after first saying they would remain in the street (v. 2). Lot feeds the men (v. 3). Before the visitors are able to settle in for the night, however, the townsmen surround Lot's house, demanding the men be given to them. The visitors are once again referred to as angels in v. 15, when they warn Lot to leave the city with his family or be destroyed along with the city. Immediately

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[2] A. Johnson has noted that there is often an ambiguity between the singular and plural in the Hebrew Bible when referring to the Godhead. This ambiguity is seen particularly when the Angel of the Lord is mentioned (e.g., Judg 6 and 13) but also where angels are present, such as Gen 18 and 32. A. Johnson, *The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961).

after they are referred to as "angels" in v. 15, in v. 16 "the men" seize Lot and his family and ensure they leave the city before the destruction that comes in v. 24. No more is said about the "men."

Chapters 18 and 19 seem to be a continuous narrative. The two "men" who leave God and Abraham in 18:16 seem to be the same two beings described as "angels" in chapter 19. J. Van Seters has argued persuasively on the basis of linguistic analysis that the two chapters seem to make one narrative.[3] Even if the two traditions originated separately, they are preserved together from the earliest records, so it seems safe to consider them as a unified narrative.

To understand how Gen 18–19 as well as any other Hebrew Bible texts were being understood in the late Second Temple period, it is necessary to examine their interpretation in the various extant sources (LXX, Qumran, etc.) from that period. In this subsection, the various sources will be marked out with headings for clarity. The same method—examining all the extant late Second Temple interpretations of Biblical texts—will be employed throughout this monograph, even if the various sources are not marked out with headings.

(i) *The Septuagint*

The LXX maintains the same terms as the Hebrew in the Masoretic text. Gen 18:2 says there were "three men" (τρεῖς ἄνδρες), which is maintained throughout chapter 18. Chapter 19 says "the two angels" (οἱ δύο ἄγγελοι) arrived in Sodom. There are no significant variants. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine what the old Greek or Hebrew *Vorlage* said. The LXX, then, is most useful in telling us what at least one set of Jewish interpreters from the period were thinking about the being in this passage. Presumably the author(s) of the LXX would have seen Gen 18–19 much as it was told in the Hebrew tradition. Three visitors came to Abraham, two angels and the Lord, likely in human form. The angels went on to Sodom to see to the salvation of Lot and his family. Within the context of the narrative, the humans involved do not seem able to discern the true nature of the "men." At the same time, the "men" seem to be more than merely human beings: one, explicitly called the Lord, debates with Abraham about the fate of Sodom, while the other two, who are then called angels, see to the salvation of Lot and his family.

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[3] J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975) 214–216.

(ii) *The Dead Sea Scrolls*

None of the extant Biblical fragments of Genesis from the Dead Sea Scrolls contains chapters 18–19. However, in a small fragment known as "4QAges of Creation" (4Q180), which has been dated on paleographic grounds to the first century CE, fragments 2–4 include a statement that seems to refer to Gen 18.[4] Since the text is fragmentary, its genre cannot be determined with any confidence. It does seem, however, given the various allusions to Pentateuchal narratives, as if the fragment is one of a number of texts from among the finds at Qumran that represent a reworking or midrash of the Biblical texts. Interestingly, fragment 1 makes reference to Azazel and also to the "angels" to whom are born the giants (perhaps a reference to Gen 6 or *1 En.*).

The short reference in fragment 2 says, "[me]n from the oaks of Mamre angels [מלאכים] they [. . .]"[5] Though fragmentary, the statement seems to refer to Gen 18:1 and calls the visitors "angels." This is not a particularly surprising exegesis, since reading chapters 18 and 19 of Genesis as a continuous narrative leads to the same conclusion, but 4Q180 provides evidence that at least one interpreter was making the connection.

(iii) *The Book of Jubilees*

The Book of Jubilees (*Jub.*) largely tells its tale in the first person from the perspective of an angel of Presence, who in 1:27–28 is told by God to instruct Moses about the "creation until my sanctuary is built in their midst forever and ever." At 16:1 the Gen 18 narrative is recounted, "And on the new moon of the fourth month, we appeared to Abraham at the oak of Mamre and we talked with him and we also caused him to know that a son would be given to him by Sarah, his wife." The first-person plural "we" indicates that the speaker is identifying himself as one of the three who visited Abraham—either the Lord or his companion angels. Also at 18:7, the angels record that "we saved Lot because the Lord remembered Abraham and he brought him out from the midst of the overthrow."

Jub. is a retelling of the narrative of Genesis through Exod 12,

[4] See *HJPAJC* III.i:421–422 and 318–325.

[5] Original text by J. Allegro in *DJD V* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1968) pp. 77–79, pl. xxvii.

which is not unlike a number of texts found at Qumran, such as the Genesis Apocryphon. The presence of copies of *Jub.* at Qumran, as well as a reference to *Jub.* in the Damascus Document (CD 16:3–4), means it dates to no later than around 100 BCE. *Jub.* is presented as a revelation to Moses at Sinai by an "angel of the Presence." The angel often speaks in the first-person singular and first-person plural when associating himself with other angels. This is unique in the literature of the period.

It seems correct to infer here, then, that the author of *Jub.* has identified the angel of the Presence as also having appeared to Abraham long ago. *Jub.* represents another interpretation of the Genesis story in which an angel is the visitor to Abraham. The angels' primary function is to deliver the news of Sarah's pregnancy but also to save Lot. *Jub.*, then, represents a witness to the ongoing interpretation of Genesis in the earliest period. It focuses on angels and uses them as narrators in the tale of their visit to Abraham.

(iv) *Josephus*

Josephus' *Antiquities* (*Ant.*) presents Jewish history from the creation through his own day. In *Ant.* 1.196 Josephus says that Abraham "saw three angels [ἀγγέλους] and taking them to be strangers [καὶ νομίσας εἶναι ξένους], arose and saluted them." It is not entirely clear in Josephus whether Abraham knew the true nature of the three men, but he nevertheless treated them as he would any human guest to his home. We learn from Josephus that the angels (ἄγγελοι) who had visited Abraham, upon arrival in Sodom, were "young men of remarkably fair appearance [τοὺς νεανίσκους εὐπρεπείᾳ τῆς ὄψεως]" (200).

Josephus wrote in Rome in the latter half of the first century CE. His writings were intended for a Graeco-Roman audience. It makes sense that he might have adapted aspects of his writings to fit his cultural milieu. Josephus uses the term ἄγγελος to mean both human and divine messengers.[6] However, in some places where from the

[6] It seems clear that occurrences of ἄγγελος in the *B.J.* and *Vita* refer to human messengers. However, when we get to the *Ant.*, we see ἄγγελος being used in places where we would expect the term to mean divine being from the Hebrew Scripture. Two noticeable exceptions are 1:200 and 5:279 (Gen 19 and Judg 13), where the term νεανίαι/νεανίσκοι occurs. It is interesting to note that in the famous passage on the war (3:400), when Josephus recounts his proclamation to Vespasian that he would become Caesar, Josephus says that he came to Vespasian δ' ἄγγελος.

Biblical texts we might expect angels, Josephus chooses other terms, such as "young men," to convey his understanding of these divine beings to his audience.

(v) *Philo*

In *Abr.* 107 Philo says that Abraham's visitors in Gen 18 were "three travelers in the form of men, whose more divine nature was not apparent to him [Abraham]."[7] However, Philo makes clear that the visitors were indeed angels, saying they visited Abraham because they were certain of his virtue so that "angels received hospitality from men" (115).

Philo Judaeus was a Jew who lived in Alexandria, Egypt, and was a close contemporary of both Jesus and Paul (c. 30 BCE–c. 50 CE). Many of his writings aimed to show the similarities between Jewish beliefs and Greek philosophy. Philo often interpreted Biblical ideas allegorically. His angelology was also allegorized, mostly equating ἄγγελοι with (divine) λόγοι.[8] As divine "words" or "thoughts," they carried out specific tasks that God had willed but had no independent personality or existence of their own.

E. Goodenough concludes that Philo's angelology was one not of angels with specific names (e.g., Michael) and functions (e.g., protection of Israel), but instead

> his angels are only δυνάμεις of God, and not of a sort remotely to provoke or admit individual mythological elaboration. He could not possibly have made room for a literal Gabriel or Michael in his thinking, and allegorised away all resemblance of the Cherubim to that Palestinian tradition which seems to have been accepted and developed by the Pharisees.[9]

Similarly, H. A. Wolfson says that "On the whole, Philo considers the angels as merely a special kind of immanent powers in the world."[10] Philo, it seems, then, mainly allegorizes the appearance of

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[7] Similarly, Philo, *Abr.* 107, "for he [Abraham] in the middle of the day beholding as it were three men travelling (and he did not perceive that they were in reality of a more diving nature), ran up and entreated them with great perseverance not to pass by his tent."

[8] E.g., *Conf.* 27 "The divine and holy thoughts, who are often called angels" (ἱερῶν λόγων συνομοσάμενοί οὓς καλεῖν ἔθος ἀγγέλους).

[9] E. Goodenough, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1969) 79–80.

[10] H. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948) 372.

angels. Thus, it is interesting that in this case, where Josephus and the LXX have "angel," Philo calls the visitors "men," as in the Hebrew, but then makes clear that they were angels.

(vi) *The Targumim*

Targum Onqelos (*Tg. Onq.*) maintains the use of "men" in chapter 18 and two angels in chapter 19. Targum Neofiti (*Tg. Neo.*) specifically says that three angels appeared to Abraham (chapter 18), as does Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (*Tg. Ps.-J.*). Even more interestingly, in *Tg. Neo.* we are told that three angels are sent because each angel can only be sent to earth for one specific task. The three tasks assigned to these angels were: (1) announcing the birth of a child to Abraham and Sarah, (2) saving Lot and his family from destruction in Sodom, and (3) carrying out the destruction of Sodom. Also interesting is the fact that in *Tg. Ps.-J.* the two angels who were in Sodom, about whom we hear nothing further in the Hebrew Bible traditions, reappear in Gen 28 with Jacob's dream of the ladder.[11]

The Targumim are not easily dated. *Tg. Onq.* is likely the oldest, with a date for its final redaction around the beginning of the third century CE.[12] The final redaction of *Tg. Neo.* likely dates to the fourth century CE.[13] Suggested dates for *Tg. Ps.-J.* vary from the time of Ezra down to the Crusades; it probably came into its final form in the seventh or eighth century CE.[14] Texts with such late dates might reasonably be questioned as sources of late Second Temple angel belief. However, the discovery of Aramaic translations of Biblical texts at Qumran much like the Targumim suggests that this type of translation may date to an early period.[15] Moreover, by the first century CE, Aramaic had become the vernacular of the Jews in Palestine through to Babylon and beyond.[16] Thus, bearing in mind the difficulties

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[11] See C. Rowland, "John 1:51, Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition" *NTS* 30 (1984) 498–507, esp. p. 503.

[12] B. Grossfield, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, p. 32. P. Alexander dates the Babylonian redaction to the fourth-fifth century CE, "Targum, Targumim" in *ABD* 6:321.

[13] M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, p. 45. P. Alexander agrees (p. 323).

[14] M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, pp. 11–12. P. Alexander again concurs (p. 322). R. Hayward, "The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some Comments" *JJS* 40 (1989) 7–30, argues that the evidence for such a late date is not compelling and should be reassessed.

[15] Qumran targumim: fragments: 4QtgLev (4Q156), 4QtgJob (4Q157), and the more substantial 11QtgJob(11Q10). Also noteworthy is the Genesis Apocryphon (1Q20), which is an expansion/interpretation of Genesis in Aramaic.

[16] *M.* Meg 2:1 says concerning the recitation of the Scroll of Esther during the

with respect to dating, it is prudent to consider the evidence from the Targumim as perhaps containing traditions that go back to the late Second Temple period.

The evidence seems to suggest that near the first century CE, many interpreters understood the three "men" who appeared to Abraham as angels. That they appeared as humans does not seem to have meant they were in any way transformed; rather, they remained angels, taking on a human form to carry out their specific tasks.

(b) *Genesis 32*

In Gen 32:22–31(23–32) Jacob struggles with a "man" on the banks of the Jabbok ford.[17] The tale says:

> [22] The same night he [Jacob] arose and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. [23] He took them and he made them cross over the wadi, and they crossed with his belongings. [24] Jacob remained alone, and a man [איש] wrestled with him until the break of dawn. [25] And he realised that he could not prevail against him, and so he touched his hip joint and dislocated his hip (joint), while Jacob wrestled with him. [26] And he said, "Let me loose for the dawn is breaking." And he said. "I will not let you go unless you bless me." [27] And he said to him. "What is your name?" and he said "Jacob." [28] And he said, "No longer shall your name be called Jacob, but instead, Israel, since you strove with God [אלהים] and with men [אנשים] and you prevailed." [29] And Jacob requested, "Tell me, please, your name," and he said, "Why do you ask this, my name?" and he blessed him there. [30] And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel since, "I have seen God [אלהים] face to face and my life has been spared." [31] And the sun rose upon him as he crossed over Penu'el and he limped because of his hip.

The first two verses set the scene for the upcoming encounter with the mysterious adversary. Interestingly the larger Jacob narrative leads us to expect a confrontation between Jacob and his brother Esau. Jacob is fleeing from Esau, who is still angry with Jacob for tricking him out of his birthright (25:31) and especially for stealing his blessing (27:45). Jacob divides his people into two groups (32:7) and camps

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festival of Purim, "If he read it by heart, or if he read it in Aramaic or in any other language, he has not fulfilled his obligation." See also *m.* Yad. 4:5. Also, in the Talmud, *b.* Sabb 115a, there is a story that Gamliel I had a Targum of Job immured during a building project.

[17] The following translation is my own. It employs the verse numbers of English translations. The corresponding verses in the Hebrew (*BHS*) are one number higher.

for the evening (32:21). He has directly requested God's help against Esau (32:9–12). That same evening, Jacob makes his immediate family ford the river (v. 22–23), where he is then left alone (v. 24).[18]

An unknown adversary referred to only as a "man" (איש) then sets upon Jacob. Some commentators, led by Gunkel, have noted that this story may reflect a very ancient, folktale tradition of a river demon attempting to prevent crossing of the river due to its dangers.[19] Gunkel goes as far as to suggest that this story originally had little to do with Jacob.[20] This explanation of the origin of this tale is plausible, so it will not be debated here. It is sufficient to note that, if this explanation is correct, then the original form of the story already included a spiritual being as the opponent, not God.

Jacob and his adversary wrestle to a stalemate. The mysterious opponent then realizes that he will not prevail over Jacob (v. 25), so he uses either a special wrestling technique or, as von Rad has called it, "magical power" to dislocate Jacob's hip joint.[21] Even this is not successful in freeing him from Jacob's hold, so he implores Jacob to free him "because the dawn is breaking" (v. 26). Within the context of the story, no reason is given for the concern over the morning's arrival. However, this once again fits with Gunkel's suggestion that the story originally referred to a demon attack, since such a creature would only be able to function at night.[22]

Jacob, now obviously holding the upper hand, puts a condition on the release of his opponent: he requires a blessing. Jacob is clearly zealous to obtain a blessing (Gen. 27). Blessings are an important theme in Genesis; they come primarily from God (Gen 12, 39) and otherwise from venerable figures (e.g., the patriarchs upon their deathbeds, Gen 27, 48–49). With whom did Jacob suppose he was wrestling to make such a demand? It does not seem likely that he thought his opponent was Esau. This question must remain unanswered, but to some extent, given the context of blessings in Genesis,

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[18] There is some confusion as to whether Jacob did indeed cross the river himself, v. 22, but regardless, in v. 24 it is made clear that Jacob is alone when he is met.

[19] H. Gunkel, *The Folktale in the Old Testament*, trans. John W. Rogerson (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1987) 83–87.

[20] H. Gunkel, *Folktale*, p. 87.

[21] G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. J. Marks (London: SCM, 1961) 315.

[22] H. Gunkel, *Folktale*, p. 85. *Tg. Neo.* says that the morning is the time when the angels praise God, and Sariel, Jacob's opponent, is the leader of the angels. See also *Tg. Ps.-J.* and *Gen. Rab.* 78:1.

it seems that Jacob supposed his opponent to be someone of great power, who was able to give him an efficacious blessing, perhaps even God.

Jacob's adversary responds to this condition of a blessing by requesting Jacob's name (v. 27). This suggests that whoever we suppose the opponent to be, he did not know Jacob, although this would weigh against an understanding of the opponent as God and fit better with Gunkel's hypothesis of folktale origins. Jacob declares his name, then the opponent says, "No longer shall your name be called Jacob, but instead, Israel, since you strove[23] with God (אלהים) and with men (אנשים) and you prevailed" (v. 28).[24] Here we are given our main piece of evidence for identifying the Genesis adversary. Certainly, that Jacob strove with men harkens back first to his time in Rebecca's womb when he grabbed onto Esau's heel at their birth (25:26), and then also to Esau, Laban, and this manlike figure.

When v. 28 says that Jacob "strove with God," it is most likely referring to the present wrestling match, since nowhere else does Jacob have such an intimate, physical interaction with a divine being. Thus, the implication is that the Jabbok wrestling match is when Jacob "strove" with God and prevailed. That Jacob prevailed over his opponent is not explicitly stated, but it can be inferred from the fact that the condition of a blessing is met and Jacob is no longer detained. The victory comes at a price, however, since Jacob limps due to his injury. The injury is a palpable and striking consequence. Jacob is physically wounded after wrestling with a divine opponent. This is a very intimate relationship with the divine.

Jacob then responds by requesting his opponent's name. His request goes unfulfilled, with the adversary saying, "Why do you ask me this, my name [למה זה תשאל לשמי]?" A similar request is put to the Angel of the Lord in Judg 13:17; Manoah asks, "What is your name, so that when your words come true, we may honour you?" To which the Angel of the Lord responds (v. 18) in the exact same words as the Genesis opponent, "Why do you ask this, my name [למה זה תשאל לשמי]?" The Angel of the Lord then adds, "It [his name] is incomprehensible" (v. 18).

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[23] Note that the exact meaning of the term שרה is unknown. The common translation of "strive" is adopted for this discussion. See *BDB*, p. 975a.

[24] The name change occurs again in Gen 35:10 and is mentioned numerous times; see Gen 46:2; 2 Kgs 17:34; Ps 135:4; *et al.*

Once Jacob is blessed and his opponent leaves, he renames the place Peniel because he has "seen God face to face and survived." Seeing God is life-threatening in the Hebrew Bible (Gen 16:13; Exod 24:11, 33:20; Judg 6:22–23 cf. *Tripartite Tractate NHC I*, 64:28–65:1). In the Judg 13 story, the Angel of the Lord returns to Manoah and his wife. Manoah says to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen *God*" (13:22). This is a very important equation: Manoah and his wife saw the *Angel of the Lord* (v. 17, 21), but equally they have seen *God* (v. 22). Jacob seems to have accomplished something very rare indeed: he has seen God (cf. Ezek 1:26; John 1:18, 4:12). Jacob's proclamation, "I have seen God face to face, and my life was saved," is illuminated by the equation made in Judges. Jacob wrestled with God and saw him face to face, but again, a later interpreter could see the Angel of the Lord traditions that equate it with God and understand Jacob's opponent to be an Angel of the Lord.[25]

The prophet Hosea is aware of a similar tradition as the Genesis story in chapter 12:2–5 (3–6).[26] Hosea is the only pre-Exilic prophet to refer to an angel (מלאך).[27]

> [2] The Lord has an indictment against Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways, and requite him according to his deeds. [3] In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove [שרה] with God [אלהים]. [4] He strove with the angel [וישר אל־מלאך] and prevailed [ויכל], he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with him—[5] the Lord the God of hosts, the Lord is his name.

The close linguistic and narrative ties between Hos 12 and Gen 32 strongly suggest they are related. Only here and in Gen 32 does the verb שרה "strive" appear. Also, the verb יכל "prevail" appears in both texts. Furthermore, mention of Jacob's grabbing of Esau's heel, "striving" with God, and meeting with him at Bethel all firmly locate the origins of this pericope in the Jacob Cycle. Chapter 12 of Hosea has been the topic of much intertextual exegesis.[28] The importance

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[25] See *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Ps.-J.*

[26] Translation mine. As with Genesis, the verse numbers follow English translations; the corresponding verse numbers in Hebrew (*BHS*) are one number higher.

[27] But Isa 6:2–6 mentions the Seraphim, and Ezek 10 mentions the Cherubim.

[28] See especially L. Eslinger, "Hosea 12:5a and Genesis 32:29: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis" *JSOT* 18 (1980) 91–99; M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); M. Gertner, "The Masorah and the Levites: An Essay in the History of a Concept" *VT* 10 (1960) 241–272 with "Appendix: An Attempt at an Interpretation of Hosea 12," pp. 272–284.

of Hos 12:4 for this study lies in showing that from an early period a tradition existed in which Jacob's opponent was understood as an angel.

Many commentators believe that the word מלאך in v. 4 is a gloss.[29] Several reasons are generally put forward. The text itself still makes sense if one removes מלאך and inserts אל (as found in v. 1) or even perhaps אלהים (v. 3) as possible originals. Some ancient readers could certainly construe a verse that read "Jacob strove with God and he prevailed" as problematic. In light of the traditions extant in the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g., man, the Angel of the Lord, *et al.*), a change of אלהים to מלאך would not be difficult to imagine. A change to מלאך would eliminate any problematic readings that might arise if God were present in v. 4. Additional support for this suggestion is provided by the fact that Hosea nowhere else mentions מלאך and that the Genesis passage contains the word אלהים for "God," which elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible is understood as "gods" = angels or lesser divine beings.

None of these commentators seems to suggest, however, that the change to מלאך occurs for any reason other than to say that Jacob wrestled with a lesser, divine being. That is, none posits a switch to מלאך that had as its motivation the idea of מלאך as human "messenger."[30] Thus even if the "angel" mentioned in Hos 12 is a later gloss to the text, the redactor seems to have had in mind a divine but lesser being than God with whom Jacob wrestled and over whom Jacob was able to prevail. Moreover, the LXX, which reads ἄγγελος, supports מלאך.[31] That the LXX upholds מלאך suggests that if it was a gloss, then it happened fairly early in the tradition. H. Ginsberg has argued that a being known as "El-beth-el"—equivalent to an angel—was worshipped in a cult that evolved from the Penuel story.[32] If he is correct, this supports the idea that Jacob's opponent was understood as an angel (or at least divine being) from an early period.

At first glance, there seems no reason to suppose that Hosea, writ-

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[29] See especially H. Wolff, *Hosea,* trans. G. Stanstell (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974) 206–212 and F. Andersen and D. N. Freedman, *Hosea* (New York: Doubleday, 1980) 606–610.

[30] The common translation of מלאך; see *BDB* 521b.

[31] Note that there are no extant fragments of Hos 12 among the Dead Sea Scrolls, nor is it referred to specifically by Philo or Josephus.

[32] H. L. Ginsberg, "Hosea's Ephraim, More Fool Than Knave: An Interpretation of Hosea 12:1–14" *JBL* 80 (1961) 343–347.

ing in the pre-Exilic period, changed the Genesis tradition or knew of an alternate tradition that held Jacob's opponent was an angel. However, Hos 12, immediately after stating that Jacob wrestled with the angel/God and prevailed, says that Jacob wept in supplication (בכה). That Jacob wept is maintained nowhere else in the Jabbok traditions, so it certainly appears that Hosea either (a) knew of a tradition about Jacob that varies from the one recorded in Genesis or (b) altered the Genesis story. In either case, this lends credence to the possibility that מלאך was indeed original. Certainly, the Genesis passage was vague enough to allow room for interpretation, and it seems that regardless of when it occurred, the author/redactor of Hos 12 altered the Genesis tradition of Jacob wrestling with God to Jacob wrestling with an angel.

In *Ant.* book 1, Josephus deals directly with the Gen 32 story. His interpretation is quite illuminating in that he chooses a number of terms to describe Jacob's mysterious opponent. *Ant.* 1:331–334 states:

> [331] These preparations going smoothly through the entire day, at night he put his company in motion; when they crossed a ford called Jabacchos, Jacob being left behind, encountered a phantom [φαντάσματι]—the struggle had been begun by it—wrestled and overcame the phantom [φαντάσματος], [332] which now had the faculty of speech and spoke to him; It advised him that he should rejoice in his achievement and that it was no minor adversary whom he mastered, but a divine angel [θεῖον ἄγγελον] he had defeated, and that he should deem this a sign of great blessings to come and that his people would never be forsaken, nor that any mortal man would surpass him in strength. [333] He then called upon him to take the name of Israel, which according to the Hebrew tongue means "the opponent of an angel of God" [τὸν ἀντιστάτην ἀγγέλῳ θεοῦ]. This proclamation indeed he gave at the request of Jacob. For he, perceiving him to be an angel of God [ἄγγελον θεοῦ],[33] besought him to declare what destiny awaited him. The phantom [φάντασματα], having spoken, vanished; [334] and Jacob, delighted with this, named the place Phanuel, which means, "the face of God."[34]

Josephus's account of the Jabbok struggle follows roughly the same narrative sequence as the Genesis story, but there are some significant

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[33] Note Thackery translates this as "a messenger of God," which is appropriate in the context of the opponent delivering the news of Jacob's destiny, but "angel" carries with it the idea of "messenger" and also remains consistent with the previous uses of ἄγγελος.

[34] Greek text from Loeb editions Josephus, *Ant. I–IV*, trans. H. Thackeray (1961).

differences with respect to the opponent. Jacob sends his family across the Jabbok, is left alone, and wrestles with an unknown opponent. It is important to note the different terms employed by Josephus to name Jacob's opponent. Josephus is unique among extant sources in using "phantasm" to describe Jacob's adversary, selecting it on several occasions to denote heavenly beings.[35] Josephus may have chosen this term to maintain the mysterious nature of the adversary. That Josephus takes pains to say that this specter could then speak seems to suggest that, in his understanding of the tale, Jacob would not have immediately recognized his opponent's angelic (and thus messenger) status. Perhaps Josephus saw in this the mythical roots suggested by modern interpreters like Gunkel, for whom the original opponent was a river demon.[36] The opponent then tells Jacob that he has won a great victory and suggests the name change from Jacob to Israel (Josephus moves mention of Jacob's injury to the end of his retelling).[37] Jacob, recognizing his opponent's true nature, presses him for details of his own destiny (Josephus does not explicitly mention receipt of a blessing).[38] Finally, Jacob names the place Phanuel, the "face of God."[39]

However, in this same section, Josephus also calls Jacob's adversary a "heavenly angel" and an "angel of God," which seems to indicate that Josephus, like Hos 12, understood "man" to mean something other than a human or God. For Josephus, it seems that Jacob's opponent was an angel of God, a divine being, but not God himself. Josephus's explanation of the meaning of the name Israel supports this view, since he says that Israel means "the opponent of an

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[35] In *Ant.* 5.213, Josephus uses φάντασμα to describe the Angel of the Lord in Judg 6:11–24 and in 3.62 to characterize the Angel of the Lord in the burning bush. He uses the term mostly to refer to angels: *Ant.* 1.325, 331, 333 (Gen 32), 5.213, 277 (Judg 6 and 13), though also for "visions"; see also *B.J.* 3.353 and 5.381; *Ant.* 2.82 and 10.272 (Daniel's vision).

[36] H. Gunkel, *Folktale*, pp. 83–87.

[37] This seems a more logical place to mention the injury, since, as the Genesis account unfolds, the injury has nothing to do with Jacob's eventual yielding but relates to the aetiology in Gen 32:33 of the Jews' prohibition against eating the sinew of the hip.

[38] Josephus recounts that the angel tells Jacob "no mortal man will surpass him in strength." In this instance of the foretelling, Josephus seems to demonstrate dependence on the LXX version of the story, which says Jacob will be "μετὰ θεοῦ καὶ μετὰ ἀνθρώπων δυνατός" (v. 29).

[39] For a discussion of the significance of the name Phanuel, see G. Vermes, "The Archangel Sariel," in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Graeco-Roman Cults*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975) 3:159–166.

angel of God" rather than "one contending/striving with God." His interpolation clearly shows that the Genesis passage left open the identity of Jacob's opponent and that at least one first-century Jewish interpreter took this being to be an angel of God.

The text known as the Ladder of Jacob (*Lad. Jac.*) presents several problems to the exegete due to its transmission history.[40] *Lad. Jac.* survives only in the Slavonic version and contains many later corruptions, edits, and changes to the text. Nevertheless, it is interesting to consider some of the unique aspects of this text. Dates for *Lad. Jac.* have been suggested around the first century CE, but these are by no means certain.[41]

There are seven chapters in *Lad. Jac.* The first six appear to be Jewish, with the seventh seemingly a Christian expansion of the text.[42] The general sequence of events in *Lad. Jac.* follows that of Gen 28:10–22, but there are many expansions, etc. Upon each of twelve steps (a symbolic number) are said to be two faces. Much akin to the later Targumic and rabbinic material, *Lad. Jac.* says that at the top is an exceedingly awesome face. Above that face is God. *Lad. Jac.* 4:1–5 says:

> [1] And the angel [Sariel] said to me, "What is your name?" [2] And I said, "Jacob" [3] [He announced], "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but your name shall be similar to my name, Israel." [4] And when I was going from Phandana of Syria to meet Esau my brother, he came to me and blessed me and called me Israel. [5] And he would not tell me his name until I adjured him.

A few indicators in this short passage relate it to the Jabbok event, primarily the change of Jacob's name to Israel. The name Israel is said to be "like" that of his informant, Sariel.[43] Sariel is also named as the angel against whom Jacob wrestles in *Tg. Neo.* Jacob's new name is "like" that of one of the named archangels (1QM 9:14–15, *Grk 1 En.* 20). This seems to imply, at least, that Jacob's nature is to be changed to something more than simply human, since he has a name like that of an archangel. Further indicators are the specific mention of the blessing and that the name of Jacob's angelic visitor

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[40] Translation by H. Lunt, "The Ladder of Jacob" in *OTP* 2:408–409.

[41] H. Lunt, *Ladder*, in *OTP* 2:401–411.

[42] J. Charlesworth, "The Ladder of Jacob" in *ABD* (New York: Doubleday, 1991) 3:609.

[43] Note that the names are similar in that (a) they are both theophoric, and (b) שריאל and ישראל are transpositions of the same (unpointed) Hebrew consonants.

is not given until he is pressed (cf. Gen 32:29). An additional point of contact may be understood from the geographical reference, Phandana of Syria, which likely points toward the Jabbok event.[44]

From this short text, we can see yet another way in which the Jabbok tale was interpreted. Here, as in *Tg. Neo.*, Sariel comes to Jacob, changes his name, and blesses him. No struggle is explicitly mentioned, but certainly there is a visit from an angel. Jacob's new name, Israel, is said to be like that of the archangel, which suggests that from this point forward he has a special relationship with the divine via his new name. This is akin to what we have just seen above in Philo. Israel is a powerful name, which brings with it a change in nature.

There is one segment from a Graeco-Roman author on the Gen 32 passage. Demetrius's writings, though recorded in the fourth century CE writings of Eusebius, likely derive from the end of the third century BCE.[45] This fragment is contained in Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.21.1–19:[46]

> While he was on his way to Canaan, an angel of God [ἄγγελον τοῦ θεοῦ] wrestled [παλαῖσαι] with him and struck the broad part of Jacob's thigh; it became stiff and he limped on it. It is for this reason that the tendon in the thigh of animals is not eaten. And the angel [τὸν ἄγγελον] said to him that from then on he would no longer be called Jacob but Israel.

It seems that the tradition of Jacob wrestling an angel is quite ancient, so there is no reason to suppose Eusebius or an intermediate hand inserted it. Therefore, we have further evidence of Jacob's opponent being interpreted as an angel. It was maintained in the tradition by Eusebius as well.

Lastly, there is evidence from the Christian apologist Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 CE). In his "dialogue" with a Jewish interlocutor, Trypho, Justin discusses a number of passages from the Hebrew Scriptures in order to demonstrate to Trypho that Jesus was prophesied in those writings. The *Dialogue* was written around 135 CE, so it is on the margins of the time frame for this study, but Justin brings an

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[44] H. Lunt, in *OTP* 2:409 n. *4b*, says that Phandana of Syria represents Paddam-Aram, a key geographical reference from Gen 33:18 (as in *Apocalypse of Abraham* 2:3), which is also the same location mentioned in the Prayer of Joseph.

[45] C. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 1: *Historians* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983) 51–52.

[46] See C. Holladay, *Fragments*, p. 67.

interesting perspective to the question of Jesus's nature and these passages. He mentions the Gen 32 account on two occasions.[47] At 125.5, he writes:[48]

> The name Israel, then, means a man who overcomes power (δύναμις), for *Isra* is a "man who overcomes" and *El* is "power." That Christ would do this when He became man was thus foretold by the mystery of Jacob's wrestling with Him who appeared to him, in that He ministered to the will of the Father, nevertheless, He is God, because He is the first-born of all creatures. . . . By touching Jacob's thigh and making it numb, Christ showed that he, too, would grow numb [i.e., in physical and mental suffering], at His crucifixion. But his name from the beginning was Israel—a name which He conferred upon the blessed Jacob when he blessed him with his own name, proclaiming thereby that all who come to the Father through Him are part of blessed Israel.

At the beginning of the chapter Justin tells Trypho that he will discuss "the power (δύναμις) of the name Israel" (125:1). Justin states that "Israel" is the name given to the "first-born of all creatures" (cf. Philo, *Conf.* 146; Col 1:15)[49] and attributes the name to Christ. He links Jacob and Jesus by equating Jacob's numb thigh with Christ's suffering (numbness) at the Crucifixion.

Within the *Dialogue* Justin interprets a number of theophanies from the Hebrew Bible as proof that Jesus as the son of God existed before the incarnation.[50] Christ confers the name Israel, his own name, upon Jacob when he blesses him at the Jabbok. Justin uses this connection to show that Christ manifested himself in the ancient past and provided the means whereby Jews could also come to salvation, since they are actually members in "blessed Israel," which in its essence means partaking in Jesus through Jacob.

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[47] Justin also mentions Gen 32 in his next chapter, 126, but there he simply reiterates the Biblical story.

[48] Translation my own with special reference to Gieschen, p. 160; Greek text from Migne, *PG* vol. 6.

[49] See also *NHC* II:105, which says, "And a first-born called 'Israel,' i.e., 'the man who sees god (cf. Philo, PJ),' also having another name, 'Jesus the Christ,' who is like the Saviour." Translation from Hans-Gebhard Bethbe and Orval S. Wintermute in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. J. Robinson (San Francisco: Harper, 1978) 166.

[50] The burning bush (59:1), the visitors at Mamre (58:4–13), and the warrior that appeared to Joshus (62:5). See O. Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987).

Finally, in the *Dialogue with Trypho* 58:3 Justin says the following about Jesus:

> He is called God, and He is and shall be God. And when all had agreed on these grounds, I continued: "Moreover, I consider it necessary to repeat to you the words which narrate how He who is both Angel and God and Lord, and who appeared as a man to Abraham, and who wrestled in human form with Jacob, was seen by him when he fled from his brother Esau."

Justin describes Jesus as the one "who is both angel and God" and locates him in the ancient past in both the Genesis passages considered in this subsection: as a visitor to Abraham (Gen 18:1ff.) and the one who wrestled with Jacob (Gen 32:24–32).[51] So, for Justin, Jesus is a divine being, an angel and God, but who appeared as a man in the ancient past. Clearly, Justin would not intend any transformation of Jesus simply because he appeared as a man.

Thus, the tradition of Jacob wrestling with an unknown assailant at the Jabbok is attested in a number of sources. Gen 32 itself is an enigmatic tale that does not clearly define the opponent of Jacob, though by inference it seems that Jacob struggled with God. Subsequent interpreters, perhaps having difficulties with this idea, almost universally understand the "man" at the Jabbok ford to be an angel.

The author, or perhaps a later redactor of Hosea, likely began this trend of interpretation at a fairly early date, as early as Hosea itself in the pre-Exilic period. As we saw, Genesis itself contained the means by which an interpreter could see the "man" as an angel. Traditions about the name and the Angel of the Lord from the rest of the Hebrew canon only support this hypothesis.

This evidence all seems to suggest that it is legitimate to look at the Gen 32 passage, as interpreted in and around the first century CE, as a case of angelic-human interaction. If we assume this starting point, then we can further consider the relationship between angels and humans in the literature of the last centuries BCE and first CE. The Jabbok narrative seems to have been a case in which an angel, in the form or at least the appearance of man, wrestled with a human being. This is a very intimate contact with a divine

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[51] Also *Dial.* 59:1: "When I had spoken these words, I continued: 'Permit me, further, to show you from the book of Exodus how this same One, who is both Angel, and God, and Lord, and man, and who appeared in human form to Abraham and Isaac, appeared in a flame of fire from the bush, and conversed with Moses.' "

being. In fact, *Tg. Neo.* actually says that Jacob and the angel "embraced." What was the outcome of this struggle? Jacob's name was changed, he was blessed, and he was injured! Jacob's hip injury is maintained in almost all the traditions, primarily because it is the etiology of the prohibition of eating of the thigh. Still, the wound stands as a striking indicator of the kind of interaction that Jacob had with the divine. It was so real that he was injured and had a limp (though there is no suggestion that the wound was permanent, and the Midrash suggests that it was not).

It is easy to see why some later thought that Jacob, by virtue of being involved in such an incredible struggle, might have understood himself to be an angel (see 3.6 below). His name change and his intimate relationship with God or angels elevate him above other humans.

2.2 *The Book of Joshua*

Joshua encounters a "man" as he and the Israelites are encamped outside of Jericho.[52] Josh 5:13–15 states:

> [13] When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man [והנה־איש] stood before him with his drawn sword in his hand; and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" [14] And he said, "No; but as commander of the army of the Lord [שר־צבא־יהוה] I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and worshiped, and said to him, "What does my lord bid his servant?" [15] And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, "Put off your shoes from your feet; for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

The end of the story appears to be missing, since immediately following v. 15, in chapter 6, we have the account of the Israelites surrounding and capturing Jericho. Within the context of the story, Joshua does not appear to be able immediately to determine that the entity before him is anything other than a human being. He asks the "man" for which side he fights (v. 13). The "man" tells Joshua he is the commander of the army of the Lord (שר־צבא־יהוה).

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[52] P. Miller, *The Divine Warrior in Ancient Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 128–131. See also F. Abel, "L'apparition du chef de l'armée de Yahveh à Josué (Jos. V.13–15)" in *Miscellanea Biblica et Orientalia* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1951) 109–113; R. Nelson, *Joshua: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997) 80–83.

There are a few factors suggesting that the "man" in this scene might have been subsequently understood as an angel.

The LXX uses the term ἀρχιστράτηγος for the "commander of the army of the Lord." In the writings of the late Second Temple period and beyond, this term is often applied to the archangel Michael (*T. Ab.* 1:4ff.; *Jos. Asen.* 14:7; *2 En* 22:6 [J] and 33:10 [A]; *3 Bar.* 11:13:3; *Gk. Apoc. Ezra* 4:24 cf. Dan 8:11, 12:1 [Raphael in *Gk. Apoc. Ezra* 1:4]).[53] Michael is said to stand against "princes" of other nations in Dan 10:13, 20. He also has a military role in 1QM, Rev 12:7. There seems good reason to suppose, then, that by the time of the LXX this being could have been understood as an angel, which had at first appeared to Joshua in the form of a man.

The scene ends with Joshua being told he is on sacred ground (v. 15). This is reminiscent of Moses's theophany/angelophany[54] (Exod 3:5, cf. Acts 7:33), suggesting that Joshua is in the presence of a divine being, perhaps even the angel of the Lord (cf. Exod 23:21–22).[55]

Subsequent interpreters such as Philo and Josephus are silent, perhaps because of the incomplete nature of the narrative.[56] The Targum understands the "man" to be an angel (*T. Joshua* 5:13: "an angel sent from before the Lord").

The presence of the divine commander of the army of the Lord inaugurates the holy war that is to take place (Josh 6–24). That this "man" is a divine leader of God's armies seems straightforward. There does not seem to be any indication that the being is anything other than divine. There is evidence that the same title used for the being in the LXX was later understood to apply to angels, especially the archangel Michael. The most that might be said from this passage is that a divine being, the commander of the army of the Lord, could likely have been thought of as an angel (at least by the author of the LXX and subsequent interpreters [*Tg. Neb.*]) who appears as a man until he reveals his true identity to Joshua.

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[53] See W. Lueken, *Michael* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1898) 104, 157–166. It may well be the case that its use in the LXX of Joshua influenced its use in other late Second Temple writings.

[54] Exod 3:2 says that the Angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου; מלאך יהוה) appeared to Moses in the burning bush.

[55] Cf. 1 Chr 21:16 for the Angel of the Lord with a militaristic role.

[56] There is also no extant evidence from Qumran.

2.3 *The Book of Judges*

Three passages from Judges are of particular relevance. Each refers to the "Angel of the Lord." One passage that has caused some confusion for modern interpreters is Judg 2:1–2, which states:

> [1] Now the angel of the Lord [מלאך־יהוה; ἄγγελος κυρίου] went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land which I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you [2] and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my command. What is this you have done?"

Interpreters are undecided as to whether the "angel" here refers to a human or divine messenger.[57] The difficulty seems to stem from the fact that the Angel of the Lord proceeds from one point on earth to another. He does not simply appear, nor does he descend from heaven. The messenger performs his task of delivering the words of God (vv. 1b–3). Then Judg 2:4 says, "When the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept." A decisive factor might be v. 5, however, which states, "And they called the name of that place Bochim; and they sacrificed there to the Lord." Renaming, sacrificing, or consecrating a location after encountering a divine being is not uncommon in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Gen 28:22, 32:30; Judg 6:24, 13:23). Moreover, the Angel of the Lord is generally a messenger for God, and sometimes it is ambiguous whether the human recipient is speaking with the Angel of the Lord or God directly; for example, in Exod 3:2 the Angel of the Lord appears in the burning bush, but in the subsequent dialogue, it is clear Moses is speaking directly with the Lord.[58] This suggests that it makes most sense to take the Angel of the Lord in this case as a divine messenger. This being may have appeared in human form, but the story does not include any detail. We do not hear of this being again until Judg 6:11.

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[57] R. Boling, *Judges* (New York: Doubleday, 1975) 61, where Yahweh's envoy is an "angelic being"; C. Newsom, *ABD* 1:249 lists Judg 2:1 as an example of a passage where it "remains disputed whether the reference is to a heavenly being or a human one," as does S. A. Meier, *DDD*, p. 48.

[58] See S. Cook, "The Theophanies of Gideon and Manoah" *JTS* 28 (1927) 368–380; A. Johnson, *The One and the Many*; also J. Ashton, *Studying John* (Oxford: University Press, 1994) 71–89.

In Judg 6:11–24 the Angel of the Lord visits Gideon as the Israelites have been taken over by the Midianites. Judg 6:11 says, "Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites." Josephus, *Ant* 5.213 calls the visitor "a specter [φαντάσματος] in the form of a young man [νεανίσκου μορφῇ].[59] Gideon is told that he is to deliver his people out of their occupation (6:14); so again the primary purpose of the visitation seems to be the bearing of news. Gideon is uncertain that the person speaking to him is the Angel of the Lord, so he asks him to remain as he prepares a gift (v. 18). He returns with a meal that echoes the same level of hospitality that Abraham showed his visitors (Gen 18:1–8). The Angel of the Lord tells Gideon to put his food offering on a rock, which he does (v. 20). The angel touches the offering with his staff; the offering is consumed by fire, and at the same moment the angel vanishes (v. 21). Gideon then discerns that his visitor was indeed the Lord and fears that he will die, "Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face. But the Lord said to him, 'Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die'." Gideon, like Jacob in Gen 28 and 32, erects an altar at the site of his theophany.

In Judg 13:3–21, the Angel of the Lord appears to Manoah and his wife, announcing the birth of his son, Samson.[60] The angel first appears only to Manoah's wife. Judg 13:6 says, "Then the woman came and told her husband, 'A man of God came to me, and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; I did not ask him whence he was, and he did not tell me his name'."[61] The angel's appearance brings fear. When his wife tells him of the visit, Manoah entreats the Lord to have the "Man of God" visit again so that Manoah himself might learn what he is to do with his foretold son. The angel reappears, again only to Manoah's wife, but this time she runs to tell Manoah, who learns that what his wife has said is true. He then asks the angel to remain with him so that he might feed him. Once again, the issue of hospitality comes into play. The angel says, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food; but if you make ready a burnt offering, then offer it to the

[59] The Targum on Judges maintains the "Angel of the Lord" as the visitor.
[60] R. Boling, *Judges*, p. 219.
[61] Cf. 1 Kgs 17:18, where Elijah is called "man of God."

Lord" (v. 16a). We also learn that "Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the Lord" (v. 16b).

Josephus, in *Ant.* 5.277, says that the visitor was "a specter" (φάντασμα) that "appeared to her from God [one ms. reads "angel of God"] in the likeness of a comely and tall youth." After this opening verse, Josephus refers to the visitor as an "angel" (five times).[62] When Manoah's wife tells him of the angel, Josephus says that she extolled "the young man's comeliness and stature in such wise that he in his jealousy was driven by these praises to distraction and to conceive the suspicions that such passion arouses" (279).[63]

Thus, in the Book of Judges the Angel of the Lord appears on three occasions. The evidence of Judg 2 is somewhat ambiguous, in that the being is called the Angel of the Lord, but there is nothing else notable about the event. In chapters 6 and 13, the Angel of the Lord visits Gideon and Manoah respectively. The angel is not immediately recognized but is taken to be a human visitor and offered gifts and hospitality.[64] Once the Angel of the Lord's identity is known, however, the human seers fear for their lives, since they have seen the divine. It seems that the angels appeared as human beings. Josephus says that the visitor in each of these two cases was a specter that appeared as a young man.

2.4 *The Books of Zechariah and Ezekiel*

The Book of Zechariah, contrary to the majority of the prophetic writings, contains a number of references to angels. An angel who explains the visions of the prophet is often present (1:9, 14; 2:1–7; 4:1–5; 5:5–10; 6:4–5). In chapter 3 there is a court scene akin to Job 1–2. Joshua, the high priest, stands before the Angel of the Lord, Satan, and God. Of particular interest is the "man" in the visionary material of Zech 1:8–11 who seems to have angelic characteristics:

> [8] I saw in the night, and behold, a man [איש; ἀνὴρ] riding upon a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. [9] Then I said, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who talked with me said to me, "I

[62] On Josephus's use of φάντασμα see footnote 35 above.

[63] Perhaps this situation as described in Josephus is akin to Gen 6 and also 1 Cor 11:10.

[64] This aspect of human-angel interaction is discussed in chapter 5.

> will show you what they are." [10] So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "These are they whom the Lord has sent to patrol the earth." [11] And they answered the angel of the Lord [τῷ ἀγγέλῳ κυρίου; מלאך יהוה] who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth remains at rest."

This evidence comes in a vision. The being on the horse is called a man in v. 8 but seems to be called an Angel of the Lord in v. 11. There is no apparent indication, however, that simply because this being is referred to as a "man," he is anything other than an angel. Also in Zech 2:1 and 2:4, the vision of the "man" with a measuring rod in his hand may refer to an angel, although it is difficult to discern much from this evidence.

The visions of the prophet Ezekiel were very influential for rabbinic and mystical speculation as well as early Christianity.[65] Interestingly, there were prohibitions against the study of Ezek 1 (*m.* Hag 2:1) by the rabbis, and it was to be avoided as a scriptural reading (*m.* Meg 4:10). Ezek 1:26–27 says:

> [26] And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form. [27] And upward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire enclosed round about; and downward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him.

This figure may be God or may be another divine being. A man-like figure appears also in 8:2, "Then I beheld, and, lo, a form that had the appearance of a man; below what appeared to be his loins it was fire, and above his loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming bronze." This same being would also seem to be the referent of 40:3: "When he brought me there, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring reed in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway."[66] The identity of this figure is not certain. It probably refers to an angel in the sense that angels are divine beings but less than God. This being seems to have a specific, honored role, being

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[65] On this see C. Rowland, "The Influence of the First Chapter of Ezekiel on Jewish and Early Christian Literature" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1974).

[66] W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel I & II* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979–1983) 2:348.

enthroned in heaven. This manlike figure of Ezekiel, especially chapter 1, likely served as the basis for the "one like a son of man" seen in vision in Dan 7:13, which in turn likely influenced ideas in the Parables of Enoch, 4 Ezra, as well as the NT.[67]

The dazzling appearance of the manlike figure is certainly reminiscent of angelophanies. Other than this, nothing identifies this being with an angel in the context of Ezekiel. Even if we accept that the being is intended to be an angel, it seems unlikely that the manlike figure is intended to be human.

2.5 *The Book of Daniel*

In the Book of Daniel, the only book in the Hebrew Bible that speaks of the archangels Michael (10:13, 21; 12:1) and Gabriel (8:16; 9:21), several passages are relevant to the discussion of angels portrayed as humans.

The Book of Daniel can be easily divided into two parts: chapters 1–6, with fictional tales of Daniel's life in the court of Babylon, and chapters 7–12, with a series of visions by Daniel. The first part is told in the third person, while the visions are in the first person. Moreover, a very interesting feature of the book that is attested as early as the Qumran fragments is that chapters 2:4b–7:28 are in Aramaic, while the rest of the book is in Hebrew. The Hebrew sections are generally accepted to be later. The redaction of the text is dated fairly precisely to the time of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (167–163 BCE).[68]

Most of the relevant material comes from the visions, but one narrative from the first part is relevant. In the LXX of Daniel 3:92 (= Dan 3:25) King Nebuchadnezzar has cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into a fiery furnace for their refusal to worship a golden idol. After they are cast into the fire, the king's counselor looks in, saying, "But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like an angel of God" (καὶ ἡ ὅρασις τοῦ τετάρτου ὁμοίωμα ἀγγέλου

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[67] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven. A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982) 95; A. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977) 192.

[68] This date is widely accepted; see *HJPAJC* IIIi:247.

θεοῦ).[69] The Hebrew text has the counselor say the being is "like a son of God." This reading is also found in Theodotion. The same incident is recalled in the *Pr Azar* 1:26, but in this case the being is specifically called an angel: "But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace to be with Azariah and his companions, and drove the fiery flame out of the furnace."

In this incident an angel has apparently come to protect the three men. When the king's counselor looks in, he sees four "men." His physical manifestation as a man does not suggest, however, that he is a human being. Far from it; the expectation is that the three men would be consumed by the fire. Since they have not been consumed, the presence of the fourth man = angel seems the likely reason. Still, it is also possible that the three men may have been thought to have become angelic for a brief duration.

Within the visionary material there are several passages of interest. First, Dan 8:15 states, "When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man [כמראה־גבר; ὡς ὅρασις ἀνθρώπου (Th: ἀνδρός)]." At 9:21 there is a clear description of Gabriel (the archangel) as a man: "While I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel [ὁ ἀνήρ, גבריאל והאיש], whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice." The "first vision" refers back to Dan 8:15, where he is called "one having the appearance of a man." The name Gabriel is itself a play on words. The Hebrew גבר means "man."[70] Thus, Gabriel is "man of God."

The vision in Dan 10:5–6 may also refer to the "man" Gabriel:[71]

> [5] I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold of Uphaz. [6] His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the noise of a multitude.

This description seems to share the characteristic of luminous appearance (appearance like lightning, eyes like torches) with other angelo-

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[69] Theodotion reads καὶ ἡ ὅρασις τοῦ τετάρτου ομοία υἱῷ θεου. Here the Hebrew is "sons of god" (בר־אלהין), which is also rendered as angels in the LXX of Deut 32:8.

[70] *BDB*, pp. 149–150.

[71] Cf. Ezek 8:2, "Then I beheld, and, lo, a form that had the appearance of a man; below what appeared to be his loins it was fire, and above his loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming bronze."

phanies as discussed above. Interestingly, in 10:7 others who do not see the vision are still fearful and flee, common reactions to the manifestation of angel.[72] The image of the "man" clothed in linen will recur in other manifestations of angels. It is already seen in Lev 6:10; Ezek 9:2, 3, 11; 10:2, 6, 7; 44:17. This image of being "clothed in linen" occurs once more in Dan 12:6: "And I said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, 'How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?' "

C. Rowland has argued for the influence of Dan 10:6ff. on subsequent literature: *JA* 14, *Apoc. Abr.*, and Rev 1:13.[73] The influence of this passage on later writings suggests that it may have influenced Luke's ideas about angelic appearances. P. Carrell, unlike Rowland, sees Dan 10:5–6 as a development of the "angel" in Ezek 9:2, linking it by the phrase "clothed in linen." Yet Ezek 9:2 is not clearly an angel; Carrell infers this from the phrase "clothed in linen."

Two further passages also seem to refer to Gabriel. Dan 10:16 reads, "And behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, 'O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength'." Dan 10:18 has "Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me."

Gabriel appears in Daniel in the form of a human being. He carries out the role common to angels: delivery and interpretation of divine information to humans.

Michael's physical appearance, on the other hand, is not described. Michael is called the "prince" (שר) in 10:21, 12:1. In the LXX he is called an angel at 10:21; 12:1. In the Theodotion recension, however, in both cases he is referred to as "ὁ ἄρχων"[74] Michael's princely role seems to be as a defender of Israel against its opponents—human and presumably superhuman. He seems to be a counterpart to Gabriel (if Gabriel is the manlike figure of 10:18).

Lastly, it is important to consider the "one like a son of man" in Dan 7:13. The interpretation of this enigmatic phrase has caused an enormous amount of scholarly debate, particularly among NT scholars interested in its relevance for the use of the title "son of man" in

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[72] Cf. Acts 9:7 and 22:9.

[73] C. Rowland, "A Man Clothed in Linen Daniel 10:6ff. and Jewish Angelology" *JSNT* 24 (1985) 99–110.

[74] Unfortunately, no relevant sections of Daniel have survived in the Qumran material.

the NT.[75] There is no need to detail these arguments here. Instead we focus on the issue of the human-angel relationship. Dan 7:13 says:

> I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man [כבר אנש; ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου], and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

There are primarily two camps of interpretation. One sees the phrase as referring to an individual being, whether as an exalted human messiah or as an angelic figure (cf. 1 Enoch 46:3; Rev 1:13–14; 4 Ezra 13:2f.). The other reads the phrase in light of Dan 7:18 and 27 and sees it as a collective term for Israel.

The interpretation of a single individual dominated many centuries of interpretation. Only more recently has the collective interpretation been suggested and championed.[76] J. Collins concludes:

> In summary, the traditional interpretations of the "one like a human being" in the first millennium overwhelmingly favor the understanding of this figure as an individual, not as a collective symbol. The most usual identification was the messiah, but in the earliest adaptations of the vision (the Similitudes, 4 Ezra, the Gospels) the figure in question had a distinctly supernatural character.[77]

C. Rowland has made a strong case for seeing the "one like a son of man" as referring to a singular being. He writes, "If the Son of Man figure had merely been a symbol of the Saints of the Most High, we might have expected to find the same kind of identification between the Son of Man and the saints which we find in respect to the beasts and kings in v. 18, but this is lacking."[78] The son of man has also been identified as the high priest.[79]

Ultimately, there is good reason to suppose that the "one like a son of man" is intended to refer to an angel, even the angel Michael.[80]

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[75] D. Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) is an excellent, up-to-date survey of the entire issue. For a concise look at the evidence for the son of man as an angel, see A. Yarbro Collins, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish Christian Apocalypticism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996) 172–185.

[76] J. Collins, *Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 304–310, discusses the "one like a son of man" in Dan 7 in detail in an excursus.

[77] J. Collins, *Daniel*, p. 308.

[78] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 180. This is also the position of J. Collins, *Daniel*, pp. 308–310.

[79] See C. Fletcher-Louis, "The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Dan 7:13 as a Test Case" *SBLSP* (1997) 161–193.

[80] Cf. also *1 En.* 46:1, where the "the son of man" is said to have "a face like that of a human being, while his countenance was full of grace like that of one among the holy angels."

For the purposes of this investigation it is not worthwhile to penetrate much further, since (a) the referent remains debated, and (b) if it is accepted, it certainly seems to indicate that the manlike figure is something much more than human but appears only in human form.

The Book of Daniel reflects increased speculation about the role of angels in the world, and in particular the archangels Michael and Gabriel. The being that helps the three men in Dan 3 appears human but possesses superhuman power to save the men from the fire. Gabriel is described very much in anthropomorphic terms. He still carries out the function of an angel, however. Michael is called a "prince," but he seems to have superhuman status and may be equal to the "one like a son of man."

2.6 *The Book of Tobit*

The Book of Tobit appears in the LXX but not the Hebrew Bible and therefore is found today in the Apocrypha. It seems probable that Tobit was written in the third century BCE, so it is roughly contemporary with the Book of Daniel.[81] Some Aramaic fragments of Tobit are preserved at Qumran (4Q196–199, 4Q200 is in Hebrew), helping to verify its antiquity.[82] Tobit is something of an historical fiction with a didactic function. The story is set in the Assyrian capital, Nineveh, in the eighth century BCE. Tobias is sent out by his father, Tobit, who despite many good deeds has gone blind. Tobias is to journey to Media to collect money that Tobit is owed, which he will then use to live, since he can no longer earn a living due to his blindness.

In chapter 5 Tobias sends his son to find a travel companion for his journey to Media. Tobias meets with the angel Raphael, however, who appears as a man:

> [3] Then Tobit gave him the receipt, and said to him, "Find a man to go with you and I will pay him wages as long as I live; and go and get the money." [4] So he went to look for a man; and he found Raphael, who was an angel, [5] but Tobias did not know it. Tobias said to him, "Can you go with me to Rages in Media? Are you acquainted with that region?" [6] The angel replied, "I will go with you; I am familiar with the way, and I have stayed with our brother Gabael."

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[81] *HJPAJC* IIIi:224.

[82] These scrolls are very fragmentary, however, and do not provide any relevant evidence for the discussion of angels in this section.

The Sinaiticus version of Tobit 5:5 calls Raphael a "young man" (νεανίσκος). Tobias clearly does not discern Raphael's true identity, so within the narrative, we must assume he appears as a human being. Tobias brings Raphael to his father, who enquires of Raphael:

> [10] "My brother, to what tribe and family do you belong? Tell me." [11] But he answered, "Are you looking for a tribe and a family or for a man whom you will pay to go with your son?" And Tobit said to him, "I should like to know, my brother, your people and your name." [12] He replied, "I am Azarias the son of the great Ananias, one of your relatives."

Raphael continues to hide his real identity. Tobias would not be able to see him, but he does not reveal his identity until chapter 12. In Tob 12:15 the archangel proclaims, "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One." At this revelation, those seeing him are afraid (12:16), but Raphael calms them. Raphael then says he must ascend back to the heavens (12:20).

This is one of the most sustained and intriguing tales of an angel's activity on earth. Raphael keeps his identity secret until his task is complete. There is no indication that he is anything other than an angel the entire time. He is one of the seven archangels who are in God's presence. Although Raphael is anthropomorphic, he does not seem to undergo any permanent transformation of being but simply an alteration of his physical form, which allows him to carry out his function as travel companion and protector.

2.7 *The Gospels*

Angels appear to humans on three occasions in the Lukan infancy narrative: to Zechariah (1:11–24), to Mary (1:26–38), and to the shepherds (2:9–15, 21).[83] In the first occurrence an Angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου) appears to Zechariah to announce the birth of a son, John the Baptist, to his wife, Elizabeth. Zechariah at first is afraid (v. 12), but the angel tells him not to fear (v. 13). Zechariah

[83] In the Matthean infancy narrative the angel of the Lord is said to appear to Joseph (1:20; 2:13, 19) "in a dream" telling him God's plan in order to protect the life of Jesus.

is doubtful, since he and his wife are old (v. 18).[84] As a token of the truth of the statement, the angel identifies himself as none other than Gabriel (v. 19). Once this is revealed to Zechariah, he is made mute until the birth of his son (v. 20).[85]

The angel Gabriel is then sent to Mary (v. 26) to announce to her the miraculous birth of Jesus (vv. 31–33). Because she is unwed (v. 34), Mary is dubious, but the angel tells her that the holy spirit will enter her, and she will conceive. The angel then notes that Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, though of advanced age, was able to conceive, "For with God nothing will be impossible" (v. 37). In the third mention of angels in the Lukan infancy narrative, the Angel of the Lord appears to shepherds in the fields of the region (2:9). The shepherds are afraid at first, but the angel tells them not to fear, then announces the birth of Jesus (vv. 10–11). Once he does so, the heavens are filled with angels who sing praise (vv. 13–14).[86]

These three occurrences are ambiguous as to the outward appearance of the angel. The primary function of the angel is to deliver a message. We are not told in what physical form the angel appeared, although the reaction of fear by the seers suggests that the divine nature of the angel was apparent.

All four canonical gospels contain traditions about the empty tomb of Jesus. Each of these traditions mentions beings who are either explicitly called or seem to be angels. These beings announce perhaps the most important message of the NT, namely that Jesus has risen from the dead. All four accounts have women coming to the tomb to anoint Jesus. The four canonical gospels date from the period 70 to 110 CE.[87]

First, Mark 16:5 states, "And entering the tomb, they [the three women] saw a young man [νεανίσκον] sitting on the right side,

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[84] The announcement to Elizabeth is patterned on the announcement to Manoah and his wife in Judg 13.

[85] Interpreters have noted some strong similarities between the appearance of Gabriel to Zechariah and the appearance of Gabriel in Dan 9:20–21, such as its occurrence at a time of prayer, fear of the angel, and the muteness of the visionary after the vision. For a good summary of the secondary evidence, see R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (New York: Doubleday, 1993) 270–271.

[86] The angelic liturgy is a well-attested motif in Second Temple Judaism, e.g., *SSS; Jub.* 2, 6, 15, 30–31; *Apoc. Ab.* 17; *T. Levi* 3; *et al.*

[87] R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 163–164; 216–217; 273–274; and 373–376.

dressed in a white robe [στολὴν λευκήν]; and they were amazed." This young man tells them,

> [6] "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. [7] But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you."

On the surface there is little in this passage itself to suggest that Mark intended the being at the tomb to be an angel. Mark uses the term ἄγγελος six times (1:2, 13; 8:38; 12:25; 13:27; 13:32), so he could have employed it here but has chosen not to do so. The women's amazement, although perhaps associated with the presence of the youthful man, seems to be predicated on Jesus's absence. It is possible that the white robe is a signal of angelic status, since this is a characteristic of angelophanies (cf. Dan 10:5–6; Acts 1:10; Rev 1:14; 6:11); however, it is not clear that the women take any notice of the being's appearance, only of the absence of Jesus's body.

Still, the message delivered by the young man is an important one that seems to be unknown to any other human beings in Mark's narrative. Moreover, there is no other person within the narrative who would be this "young man," since in the only other occurrence of the term νεανίσκος, at 14:51–52, a young man who follows Jesus wearing only a linen cloth is seized but flees naked.

C. Fletcher-Louis suggests that "youthfulness was also assumed of angels, to the point that a reference to 'youth' could be considered a euphemism for an angel."[88] There is certainly significant diversity in the sources that demonstrate angels being portrayed as youthful men. Beyond the empty tomb narratives, we see it also in Josephus, Tobit, and the Shepherd of Hermas (see below). But, even if this term was a euphemism, it is not clear that a reference to a youthful human male that was intended to be understood as an angel would mean any identification between humans and angels.

It seems, however, that this figure in Mark is intended to be an angel. He carries out the primary function of an angel by delivering a divine message. He also has one aspect of the imagery associated with an angel. Why he is described as a νεανίσκος is not entirely clear. Perhaps by this period there was a growing tradition

[88] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 131 n. 135. Also M. Mach, *Entwicklungstadien*, p. 307 n. 81.

in which angels appeared as youthful males, or in the context of the narrative Mark thought that this would be a less alarming form for the messenger.

Matthew's version of the empty tomb narrative is significantly different from Mark's. Matt 28:2–7 states:

> [2] And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord [ἄγγελος κυρίου] descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. [3] His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. [4] And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. [5] But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. [6] He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. [7] Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. Lo, I have told you."

The Matthean version of the empty tomb story is quite dramatic. Again, women approach the tomb, but as they do, there is an earthquake, and the Angel of the Lord comes to move the stone that blocks the entrance to the tomb. The commands of the young man in Mark and of the Angel of the Lord in Matthew are strikingly similar. Assuming for the moment Markan priority, we can see how Matthew has redacted the Markan narrative.[89] The resemblance between the command to see the place where Jesus's body had lain and to go out and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen suggests a literary relationship between the two versions. If such a suggestion is justified, then Matthew has significantly changed the scene, making the messenger clearly an angel, with the imagery typically associated with an angelophany. This could mean that Matthew understood Mark's "youth" as an angel but saw it as insufficiently described and so bolstered its appearance to make its status obvious.

The Gospel of Luke 24:4–5 says, "While they [the women] were perplexed about this, behold, two men [ἄνδρες δύο] stood by them in dazzling apparel [ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ];[90] and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them,

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[89] R. Brown, *An Introduction*, p. 114, says that Markan priority is "the most common thesis employed to explain the relationship of Matt and Luke to Mark" by NT scholars. Still, it does not explain all the complexities of their relationship, nor is it the only thesis; e.g., the Greisbach hypothesis argues for the priority of Matthew, with Mark and Luke making changes and omissions to this source.

[90] Cf. the appearance of Jesus in the Transfiguration narratives in Mark 9:2–10, Matt 17:1–9, and Luke 9:28–36.

'Why do you seek the living among the dead?'" Here there are two beings at the tomb. They are referred to not as young men but simply as men. They do have dazzling clothing, and they announce to the women that Jesus is not in the tomb but has gone before his disciples to Galilee. Similarly in Acts 1:10–11, Luke narrates,

> [10] And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men [ἄνδρες δύο] stood by them in white robes [ἐν ἐσθήσεσι λευκαῖς], [11] and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Once again two men in striking apparel tell the disciples of God's plan. The implication seems to be that they are something more than human.

John 20:12 records that Mary Magdalene "saw two angels in white [δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς], sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet." These angels ask Mary "Why are you weeping?" She replies, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." The angels have no more part in the story, since Jesus then appears to Mary in v. 14.

The Gospel of Peter (*Gos. Pet.*) is known in a fragment discovered in 1886–1887 at Akhmîm. A reference from Eusebius, *HE* (6.12), tells us that "Serapion, bishop of Antioch [c. 190], found a church in Rhossus using an unorthodox book known as the Gospel of Peter." Also in 3.3.2 of the *HE*, Eusebius says, "the Gospel of Peter is named among the writings not handed down among the catholic scriptures." The Gospel of Peter, then, likely dates to sometime in the mid-late second century CE.[91] *Gos. Pet.* 35–37 also includes a narrative about the empty tomb:

> [35] Now in the night in which the Lord's day dawned, when the soldiers were keeping guard, two by two in each watch, there was a loud voice in heaven [36] and they saw the heavens open and two men [δύο ἄνδρας] come down from there in a great brightness and draw near the sepulchre. [37] That stone which had been laid against the entrance to the sepulchre started of itself to roll and move sideways, and the sepulchre was opened and both young men [οἱ νεανίσκοι] entered.[92]

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[91] J. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 150.

[92] Greek text from M. Mara, *Évangile de Pierre: introduction, text critique, traduction, commentaire et index* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1973) 56.

"Men" from heaven appearing with a great brightness seems to suggest that these beings are angels, but, as in other cases, these angels are referred to as "young men." It is very possible that the author of *Gos. Pet.* knew of and drew upon the (canonical) gospel traditions in creating this narrative.

It is important not to synthesize the individual gospel narratives into one coherent picture. A brief summary of the beings present at the empty tomb follows:

Mark: one young man (νεανίσκος) in a white robe (στολὴν λευκήν)
Matthew: an Angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου)
Luke: two men (ἄνδρες δύο) in dazzling apparel (ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ)
John: two angels in white (δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς)
Gos. Pet.: two men from heaven, called young men (νεανίσκοι)

Thus, the gospels present an interesting picture. It seems that the announcement to the women at the tomb was profound enough to have been given by divine messengers. The description of the being in each of the four gospels is different, however. Matthew is the most explicit, saying it is the Angel of the Lord who arrives with typical imagery of angels. John says there are two angels in white. The appearance of angels in white seems to have recurred more in the very late Second Temple period, stemming from the visions in Ezekiel and Daniel. Mark calls the being a "young man." Referring to angels as "young men" seems to have become commonplace by the late Second Temple period. Luke calls the beings two "men," but they also appear with "dazzling apparel," suggesting they are something special. The *Gos. Pet.* seems to have synthesized the canonical gospels, calling them "two men" from heaven, who are then revealed to be "angels." None of the texts offers any indication that these beings are not angels, whatever their appearance. They have specific knowledge of Jesus's whereabouts and sometimes appear with imagery commonly associated with angels, even if their physical form is that of human beings.

2.8 *The Acts of the Apostles*

One passage from the Book of Acts deserves attention in this chapter. The Acts of the Apostles is a history of the early Christian

church. It was likely written by the evangelist Luke and, if so, dates to around the end of the first century CE. Acts 12 records Peter's arrest by Herod and his subsequent escape with the help of an Angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου).[93] Once freed, Peter heads to where the others have gathered (Acts 12:12). When the house servant answers, she runs to tell the others that Peter has returned. They respond incredulously, "You are mad." But she insists that it is so. They say, "It is his angel [Ὁ ἄγγελός ἐστιν αὐτοῦ]!" But Peter continues knocking; and when they open, they see him and are amazed.[94] Amazement is a common reaction to miraculous phenomena (cf. Mar 5:42; Luk 8:56; 24:22; Acts 10:45). Peter has previously been helped by the Angel of the Lord in Acts 5:19.

The guardian angel motif has long been recognized to lie behind Acts 12:15.[95] There are numerous passages demonstrating the idea in Judaism. In Gen 48:16 Jacob says, as part of his blessing over Joseph, "the angel who has redeemed me from all evil." Ps 91:11 says, "He will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways." Also related are Exod 23:20–21, when the Angel of the Lord protects the Israelites during their desert wandering, and Deut 32:8 (LXX): "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of men, he fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God [ἀγγέλων θεοῦ]."[96] These passages certainly demonstrate that angels functioned as protectors in the Jewish literature prior to the NT period.

Other literature also evinces the guardian angel motif. Tob 5:21 states, "For a good angel will go with him; his journey will be successful, and he will come back safe and sound." In *T. Jac.* 1:10, "The angels would visit him and guard him and strengthen him in all things." Also in the *LAB* 59:4, "and because he has delivered me to his angels and to his guardians that they should guard me" (cf. 11:12; 15:5).

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[93] Note that the Greek here does not contain the article, but the LXX rendering of the Angel of the Lord in Gen 16, 22, 24; Exod 3; Judg 6; 2 Kgs 1, 19; Ps 34, 35; Isa 37 do not either. The Balaam story in Num 22, Judg 13, and Zech do employ the article. Thus it seems possible to render Acts 12:7 as "*the* Angel of the Lord."

[94] The D texts add "perhaps" (τυχόν).

[95] See J. Moulton, "It Is His Angel" *JTS* 3 (1902) 514–527; K. Lake and H. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 4: *English Translation and Commentary* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1933) 138–139; E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971) 385.

[96] The same idea is seen in Dan 10:13 (and 11:5) in the "princes" of the nations, as well as Michael as the "prince" of Israel.

Elsewhere in the NT, Matt 18:10, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven," is cited in support of this idea.[97] This text, though informative about the overall belief in angels as intercessors, is not of certain value for the interpretation of Acts 12:15.

Clement of Alexandria in his *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 10, 6–11, discusses Matt 18:10:

> They [the first-created] "always behold the face of the Father" and the face of the Father is the Son, through whom the Father is known. Yet that which sees and is seen cannot be formless or incorporeal. But they see not with an eye of sense, but with the eye of the mind, such as the Father provided. When, therefore, the Lord said, "Despise not one of these little ones. Truly, I say to you, their angels always behold the face of the Father," as is the pattern, so will be the elect, when they have received the perfect advance. But "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt 5:8). And how could their face be a shapeless being?

Clement seems to suggest that the elect will also find their place in heaven at the throne when they are taken up. This seems to demonstrate a close connection between the earthly elect and their heavenly counterparts and perhaps even a transformation from one into the other.

The widespread nature of this belief makes it very likely that Luke has picked up on the motif here in Acts 12. Certainly, that the angel comes and frees Peter from prison fits with the idea of a protector angel (Acts 12:7–9). What is a little less clear is why the other apostles, in hiding, might say that Peter's angel has come (Acts 12:15). L. Johnson notes that Jesus's post-resurrection appearance in Luke 24:37 is worthy of comparison here.[98] This passage says, "But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit (πνεῦμα)," perhaps suggesting that we are to suppose the other apostles thought Peter had been killed.[99] Still, the passage is peculiar in

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[97] C. Rowland, "Apocalyptic, the Poor, and the Gospel of Matthew" *JTS* 45 (1994) 511.

[98] L. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992) 213.

[99] J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967) 114, says this passage is "probably an instance of the not uncommon belief that the moment a man dies his guardian angel appears." He does not cite any instances of this phenomenon, however.

the sense that the apostles had expected an angel. They are told that Peter is at the door, and they dismiss the information, saying it is his angel.

So, traditionally Acts 12:15 is taken to represent the guardian angel motif, and this seems to lie behind the passage. It seems also, however, that for at least one author, Luke, the Angel-of-the-Lord traditions were still functional. Particularly striking are the parallels between Acts 12 and the Angel of the Lord in Exodus as protector, both in freeing the Israelites and Peter and in killing those who oppressed them, Pharaoh's son and Herod.

The meaning of "it is his angel" in Acts 12:15 is not entirely clear. Most commentators suggest that it refers to a guardian angel. It could perhaps also refer to some understanding (within the narrative) that Peter has returned to the other disciples in an afterlife existence as an angel (cf. Acts 23:8–9). The Greek (Ὁ ἄγγελός ἐστιν αὐτοῦ) here suggests, however, that there is a distinction between Peter and this angel; that is, it is his angel, not he is an angel.

2.9 *The Apocalypse of John*

There are 64 occurrences of the term ἄγγελος in the Apocalypse of John. The vast majority of these seem clearly to refer to heavenly beings who carry out God's plan (e.g., 5:2; 7:1–2, 8–10) or are part of the heavenly retinue (e.g., 5:11; 7:11; 8:2; 15:6).[100] Three passages are of particular interest with regard to the relationship between humans and angels: 1:20 (and also more loosely the eight references to the same "angels" of the individual churches that follow in chapters 2–3) and 19:10, which is paralleled in 22:9.

Rev 1:20 contains the enigmatic statement, "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches [οἱ ἑπτὰ ἀστέρες ἄγγελοι τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησιῶν εἰσιν] and the seven lampstands are the seven churches." This passage, perhaps better than any other, highlights the potential difficulty in understanding the relationship between humans and angels. Scholars debate what is meant

[100] It is also important to note that only nine of those (and eight refer to the angels of the churches, discussed below) appear in the visions of John (chapters 4–22).

by the "angels of the seven churches."[101] The "angels" can be understood as human (messengers) or divine beings. Different explanations have been offered to explain what is meant in either case. If human messengers are the referent, it would be understandable that John is told to write to the "messengers" of the churches, but the allegorical interpretation within the verse (i.e., the seven stars are angels and the seven lampstands are the seven churches) suggests that the angels are not simply human messengers. It is possible that some type of hybrid angel-human (perhaps some kind of acknowledged church leader) is intended, but again the issue of the allegorical interpretation arises. As for an angelic interpretation, it has been suggested that the angels are guardian angels or heavenly doubles. It is also possible that the term is only a literary device or literary fiction. Ultimately, the intended meaning of "angels of the seven churches" will likely remain ambiguous, but it is important to note it here since it is at least possible that the intent is some kind of angel-human being who can mediate for the seven churches in heaven. Moreover, this phrase highlights the potential difficulty that can arise in interpreting a passage in which the author may have been aware of and have played upon the range of meaning inherent in the term ἄγγελος.

The other two related passages of interest in studying the relationship between humans and angels in the Apocalypse are 19:10 and 22:8–9. In Rev 19:9 an angel commands John to write down the words he hears. In v. 10, John writes, "Then I fell down at his feet to worship him [the angel], but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.' For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Similarly, in 22:8–9, the author writes:

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[101] See discussions in: C. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1986) 32–34; L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology: A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995) 234–238; D. Aune, *Revelation*, 3 vols. (Dallas: Word Books, 1997–1998) 1:106–112; G. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999) 216–219; M. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000) 102–110. Due to the inherent ambiguity, most commentators list the options and avoid drawing any specific conclusions.

> [8] I John am he who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; [9] but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

These two accounts are quite similar. Interestingly, in both cases John falls at the feet of the angel; the angel tells him, "Do not do that," because he himself is simply "a fellow servant with you"; and the angel tells John to "Worship God." Only 19:10, however, says that John fell to worship (προσκυνέω).[102] At a general level, the prohibition seems to stand as a warning to Christians against angel worship and perhaps idolatry in any form.[103] Some have suggested that John may be confusing the being before him in 19:9 and 22:8–9 with the divine being he has seen in 1:13 and 10:11.[104]

Ultimately, the refusal of worship suggests that in the divine order humans and angels are on equal footing.[105] The implications of this are unclear. *Prime facie* it does not seem to suggest that the distinction between the two types of beings is necessarily blurred by this shared status; however, the angel does say that he is a "fellow servant," so perhaps, in the eschaton and new age that John sees in visions, angels and humans are not as distinct but instead are all equal followers of God (cf. *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 8–9).

2.10 *Joseph and Aseneth*

Joseph and Aseneth (JA), which belongs to the genre of Greek love stories, elaborates upon the narrative in Gen 41:37–45, 50–52, and 46:20, in which the patriarch Joseph marries the daughter of an Egyptian priest, Aseneth. It is likely to have been composed in Greek,

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[102] R. Bauckham has collected texts from the period that show the motif of the angelic denial of worship was extant. He sees the same motif in Tob 12:16–22, *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:11–15, *JA* 15:11–12, *Apoc. Paul*, *Apoc. Gosp. Matt* 3:3, *Lad. Jac.* 3:3–5, *3 En.* 16:1–5, *and Cairo Genizah Hekhalot* A/2 13–18. See R. Bauckham, "The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity" *NTS* 37 (1980–1981) 322–341, reprinted in R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 118–149.

[103] G. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, p. 946. D. Aune, *Revelation*, p. 1036. The question of whether or not there was a cult of angel worship in Judaism at this period is debated. A good review of scholarship on this appears in L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, pp. 111–119.

[104] G. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, pp. 946, 1128.

[105] L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, p. 252.

though it may derive from earlier oral traditions about Joseph. There are two main recensions: the longer and the shorter form.[106] Most scholars believe the longer form to be closer to the original, but this is debated. There remains a need for a critical edition of the text that includes all the major manuscripts.[107]

Scholars are divided on the date and provenance of *JA*. P. Battifol, one of the first scholars to translate the Greek text, suggested that it was a Christian text and should be dated quite late, between the fourth and sixth century CE.[108] This dating has been rejected by virtually all scholars, however, on the basis of the "Jewish" character of the text (e.g., its elaboration upon a Hebrew Bible story) and its Septuagintalisms. For some time there was a growing scholarly consensus that settled upon an Egyptian provenance and a late first-century BCE to a first-century CE date.[109]

Recently, G. Bohak has become more specific and located the author of *JA* in Egypt at the Onias Temple.[110] He sees the author as having a good knowledge of Greek, some familiarity with Egyptian (Heliopolitan) theology, and a deeply eschatological outlook. These factors suggest a date of 160–145 BCE to Bohak.

A dissenting voice comes from R. Kraemer, who makes a case for seeing "Aseneth" as no earlier than about the third century CE.[111] Her arguments for seeing the angelophany as adjuration magic akin to magical materials of the second and third centuries CE are interesting but not particularly persuasive as a basis for a late dating.

It seems probable that *JA* was written during or around the first century CE. Even if the actual date is somewhat later, it is still possible that the traditions therein may derive from an earlier period. The provenance is likely to be Egyptian. Its genre, the love story,

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[106] There are 16 Greek mss. and a number of versions in other languages; for a list see C. Burchard, *OTP* 2:178–179.

[107] *HJPAJC* IIIi:546–552.

[108] P. Battifol, *Le livre de la prière d'Aseneth* in Studia Patristica (Paris, 1889–1890).

[109] C. Burchard, *Untersuchungen zu Joseph und Aseneth: Überlieferung-Ortsbestimmung* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1965) and *OTP* 2:177–201; M. Philonenko, *Joseph et Aséneth: introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); R. Chesnutt, "Joseph and Aseneth" in *ABD* 3:969–971 and a good summary of the arguments in Chesnutt's recent work, *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 80–85.

[110] G. Bohak, *Joseph and Aseneth and the Jewish Temple in Heliopolis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996) 83–87.

[111] R. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 225–244.

is likely to contain themes of beauty and virtue and be of an epic character.

In chapters 14–17 of *JA* "a man from heaven" appears to Aseneth. The "man" is said to be very similar to Joseph in his garb, but his face and extremities are brilliant.

> [4] And a man came to her from heaven and stood by Aseneth's head. And he called her and said, "Aseneth, Aseneth." [5] And she said, "Who is it that calls me, because the door of my chamber is closed, and the tower is high, and how then did he come into my chamber?" [6] And the man called her a second time and said, "Aseneth, Aseneth." [7] And she said, "Behold, (here) I (am) Lord. Who are you, tell me?" [8] And the man said, "I am the chief of the house of the Lord and commander of the whole host of the Most High. Rise and stand on your feet and I will tell you what I have to say." [9] And Aseneth raised her head and saw, and behold, (there was) a man in every respect similar to Joseph, by the robe and the crown and the royal staff, except that his face was like lightning, and his eyes were like sunshine, and the hairs of his head like a flame of fire of a burning torch, and hands and feet like iron shining forth from a fire, and sparks shot forth from his hands and feet. [10] And Aseneth saw (it) and fell on her face at his feet on the ground (14:4–10).[112]

Most interpreters understand this being as an angel, even though the text does not contain the term ἄγγελος.[113] There are good reasons for this interpretation. The being comes originally as a "star" (14:1). Within the passage he is called "a man from heaven" (v. 4), who identifies himself as the "commander of the whole host of heaven" (v. 7). This title was seen in Josh 5.13–15 and later attributed to primary angels such as Michael. The imagery of his brilliant face and fiery hands and feet (v. 9) is common to angelophanies. Moreover, Aseneth responds by falling on the ground. This is undoubtedly a case in which an angel is referred to as a man. What is more interesting is that the angel appears in the form of a particular person, the patriarch Joseph. Additionally, when in chapter 16 the being reaches out his hand to Aseneth, she is afraid to take it because "sparks shot forth from his hand as from bubbling melted iron."

C. Fletcher-Louis has argued that Joseph in this scene and also Aseneth in chapter 18 are angelomorphic.[114] In the sense that certain imagery applied to each of them is often applied to angels, this

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[112] Translation C. Burchard, *OTP* 2:224–225.

[113] See especially G. Bohak, *Joseph and Aseneth*, pp. 2–3; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 165, *et al.*

[114] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 165–169.

seems correct. In the case of Aseneth, Fletcher-Louis sees the beauty ascribed to her in chapter 18 and her father's reaction of fear and falling to the ground (18:11) as signs of her angelic character, as well as her being able to partake of heavenly food (16:14).[115] These descriptions seem to show that the transformation Aseneth undergoes prepares her for marriage to her future husband, who has angelomorphic qualities. Ultimately, however, Aseneth is said to conceive and bear human children—Manasseh and Ephraim (21:9), which would seem to reinforce her human nature. The "parallelism" (Fletcher-Louis's term) between the portrayal of the angel in chapter 14 and Joseph generally is said to show Joseph's "angelic character."[116] The parallels include both the angel and Joseph coming from the East and being seen by Aseneth through her window. In 14:9, the angel is said to be "a man in every respect similar to Joseph." Fletcher-Louis sees the comment in 6:6 that Joseph has "a great light in him" as giving foundation for the parallel between him and the fiery creature of chapter 14, but this seems to press the evidence quite far. Ultimately, there may be a parallel between Joseph and his angelic counterpart. But are they the same being? It seems unlikely, given that the two are mentioned separately. Although there is no doubt that the depictions of both Joseph and Aseneth in *JA* are angelomorphic, it seems the two are human beings.

2.11 *The Shepherd of Hermas*

The Shepherd of Hermas was probably written in central Italy or Rome itself. Its dating is uncertain, but most scholars accept a date somewhere between the end of the first century CE and the first half of the second century.[117] This means it is likely to be roughly contemporary with both the gospels and Josephus. Hermas is split into three sections: *Visions, Mandates*, and *Similitudes*.

In the *Visions* an "ancient woman" is accompanied by "young men." It is later disclosed that these "young men" are actually "angels."[118] Originally, there are four young men, "So, when she had finished reading, and rose from the chair, there came four young

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[115] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 166–167.

[116] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 166.

[117] C. Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999) 18–20.

[118] Greek text from K. Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

men [νεανίαι], and took up the chair and went away toward the East" (*Vis.* 1.4.1), but in *Vis.* 3 there are six.

Vis. 3.1.6 says, "And she [the ancient lady] came with six young men [νεανίσκων], whom I [Hermas] had seen on the former occasion, and stood by me, and listened to me praying and confessing my sins to the Lord." These young men appear again in 3.1.7 and 8. In 3.1.8 they are told to "Go and build," which they do in 3.2.5:

> Now the tower was being built four-square by six young men [νεανίσκων] who had come with her; but tens of thousands of other men [ἀνδρῶν] were bringing stones, some from the deep sea, and some from the land, and were giving them to the six young men [νεανίσκοις], and these kept taking them and building.

Slightly later, Hermas enquires as to the identity of these main builders (*Vis.* 3.4.1):

> I answered and said to her: "Lady, great and wonderful is this thing. But, Lady, who are the six young men [νεανίσκοι] who are building?" "These are the holy angels of God [οἱ ἅγιοι ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ], who were first created, to whom the Lord delivered all his creation to make it increase, and to build it up, and to rule the whole creation."

The six young men are last mentioned in *Vis.* 3.10.1, when they come to carry away the ancient lady.

In her recent commentary, C. Osiek suggests that the six young men (= angels) may represent, along with the angel Michael (who appears in the *Sim.* 8.3.3 and 9.6.1), the seven primary archangels (cf. *1 En.* 90:21, *T. Levi* 8.1).[119] This is certainly possible, since the archangels are seen in groups of seven (Tob 12:15; *2 En.* 19:1), but also in groups of four, in the literature of the period.[120]

There is one other example of an angel being referred to as a "youth." In *Sim.* 6.1.5, Hermas is shown a vision of a shepherd:

> And after he spoke these things with me, he said to me: "Let us go into the country, and I will show you the shepherds of the sheep." "Let us go, sir," said I. And we came into a plain, and he showed me a young shepherd [ποιμένα νεανίσκον], clothed with a suit of garments of yellow color.

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[119] C. Osiek, *Shepherd*, p. 69.

[120] Groupings of four appear in *1QM* 9.14–16; *1 En.* 9:1, 40:9, 54:6, 71:8; *Apoc. Mos.* 40:2.

The identity of the shepherd is then revealed in 6.2.1:

> And he said to me: "Do you see this shepherd?" "Yes, sir," said I, "I see him." "This," said he, "is the angel of luxury and deceit [ἄγγελος τρυφῆς καὶ ἀπάτης]." He wears out the souls of the servants of God, and perverts them from the truth, deceiving them with evil desires in which they perish.

It seems that this shepherd is the antithesis of Hermas himself. Osiek calls the shepherd "a demonic figure."[121] It may be that some correspondence to the figure of Satan is intended. Whatever the case, this is another text that seems to refer to an angel appearing in a human form, in this case as a shepherd.

This interesting material shows that at least for the author of Hermas, angels could be anthropomorphic, and in particular, as we saw in Josephus and the Empty Tomb narratives, "young men" (νεανίσκοι).

All of the evidence for angels as youths seems to have a first- to early second-century CE provenance (Tobit, NT, Josephus, Hermas). There does not seem to be any particular connection between this concept of angels and the older traditions of angels being regarded as "men" from the Hebrew Bible.

2.12 *The Apocalypse of Abraham*

The Apocalypse of Abraham (*Apoc. Abr.*), extant only in Slavonic translation, can be divided into two main parts. The first, chapters 1–8, recounts Abraham's conversion from idolatry to monotheism. The remaining chapters (9–31) are an apocalypse based upon Gen 15. The apocalypse is not easily dated from internal evidence. There is an apparent reference to the destruction of the Temple in chapter 27. It seems to have been quoted in the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* I.32 (c. second century CE). Most scholars accept a date somewhere between the second half of the first century and the second century CE.[122]

The angel Iaoel (10:3), who helps Abraham, is described as anthropomorphic. *Apoc. Abr.* 10.4 states, "The angel he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and

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[121] C. Osiek, *Shepherd*, p. 188.

[122] R. Rubinkiewicz, "The Apocalypse of Abraham" in *OTP* 1:683; *HJPAJC* III.i:290.

stood me on my feet." He has the "likeness of a man" and is able to take the hand of Abraham. However, when Abraham looks upon his helper, he sees something different:

> [11:1] And I stood up and saw him who had taken my right hand and set me on my feet. [2] The appearance of his body was like sapphire, and the aspect of his face was like chrysolite, and the hair of his head like snow. [3] And a kidaris (was) on his head, its look like that of a rainbow, and the clothing of his garments (was) purple; and a golden staff was in his right hand.

The components of this angelophany are similar to those in the angelophanies considered above—in particular, his white hair and brilliant (jewel-like) body. One difference is that his garments are a royal purple rather than white.

As noted above, C. Rowland has argued on the basis of the strikingly similar imagery found in *JA*, *Apoc. Abr.*, and Rev that they reflect dependence on an interpretation of Dan 10:6 that was linked with Dan 7:13 as found in the LXX.[123] It seems likely that the images of the manlike figure in the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel were influential in subsequent visionary and apocalyptic literature.

The appearance of Iaoel as "in the likeness of a man" does not indicate any identification with human beings. Far from it; Iaoel is in the heavens and carries out the role of guide and interpreter often associated with angels.

Conclusions

In this chapter evidence for the portrayal of angels (and other divine beings) appearing as human beings has been investigated to determine whether it suggests any identification. Three points were noted at the outset. (1) The semantic range of the terms for angel can cover both human and divine messengers. Such a semantic range, however, does not necessarily imply any blurring of the distinction between the two types, since context dictates the meaning of the term. (2) The majority of texts that speak about angels do not include any physical description of them. (3) Some common characteristics

[123] C. Rowland, "A Man Clothed in Linen," pp. 99–110; see also *The Open Heaven*, p. 101.

of angelophanies (luminous appearance, fear in the seer) can be used to help identify what might be considered angelic.

Angels do sometimes appear in the form of humans (Gen 18–19, 32, Josh, Prophets Tob). In the context of the narrative they are often indistinguishable from human beings, at least until they reveal their true identity. Further, in the late Second Temple period, there seemed to be a development toward representing angels as youthful human males (the Gospels, *Herm.*).

The evidence indicates that, even when described anthropomorphically, angels remained distinct from humans. We therefore ask: What is the significance of the evidence where there are anthropomorphic descriptions of angels? The earliest evidence from the Hebrew Bible suggests that there may not have been any development in the concept of angels that made it problematic to refer to what from the context was clearly a divine being as a "man." As speculation about angels and the heavenly realm increased in the late Second Temple period, more of a distinction was made; older texts such as Genesis were reinterpreted and angels inserted where there may have been any ambiguity or where angels were the more logical choice of terms given the trends of that time.

In visionary literature it seems that divine beings and angels could continue to be referred to as men, but most often with a circumlocution such as "one like a son of man." This suggests a distinction was being maintained, even if the physical form of the being was humanlike. It is not difficult to see why a human form would be chosen for a divine being: the authors themselves were obviously human, and God created man in his own image (Gen 1:26).

It is interesting that angels came to be referred to as "youthful men." How this idea developed is not entirely clear, but by the first century CE, it seems to have been firmly in place, such that it might have even served as a euphemism for angels. Even in the cases where angels are called "young men," however, there does not seem to be any reason to suppose that this designation extends beyond their physical form to their essential nature.

Thus, the evidence analyzed in this chapter indicates that, although there is significant evidence for angels appearing in human form, a distinction was maintained between human and angels. The next step in this investigation is to look at cases in which human beings seem to take on the appearance of angels, which is the purpose of chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE

"YOU LOOK POSITIVELY ANGELIC": HUMAN BEINGS AS ANGELS

In the preceding chapter the evidence for angels appearing as human beings was examined. The evidence for human beings appearing as angels will be considered in this chapter. The evidence is mainly concentrated on specific individuals from the Hebrew Bible, who were known for their righteousness (e.g., Noah, Moses) or had an enigmatic background (e.g., Enoch, Melchizedek).[1] Some important individuals from early Christianity also may have attained such a status (e.g., Jesus, Stephen, and Paul). The evidence in this chapter is organized by considering the texts relating to each individual. The final subsection considers texts that speak about the possibility that humans who were righteous in their lifetime may receive an angelic life in heaven.

3.1 *Adam*

According to Genesis, Adam was the first human being created. Later speculation about his divine nature seems to stem from Gen 1:26–27, which states, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."[2] The creation story itself, along with the story in the Garden (Gen 2–3), indicates that there was a close relationship between the

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[1] As is seen in analyses by: J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels" in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980) 135–151; L. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998) 51–70; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 145–183; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997) 152–183.

[2] *Gen Rab* 8:3–6 discusses the first-person plural "we" in the creation statement and how God took counsel with the ministering angels in the creation (cf. also Gen 11:7). There is a good survey of the Jewish interpretations of Gen 1:26 in J. Jervell, *Imago Dei: Gen 1,26f. im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulischen Briefen* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1960) 15–51 and 71–121.

first humans and the divine. Interestingly, the cause of Adam's expulsion from the Garden is that he has "become like one of us, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:22a). Moreover, if Adam were to take from the Tree of Life, then he would "live forever" (Gen 3:22b). Thus, it seems that Adam had a kind of divine nature at the creation. No more distinction is made, other than that Adam is "like us."

1 Enoch (or Ethiopic Enoch) 69 comes from a section of 1 Enoch known as the Similitudes (or Parables) of Enoch (chaps. 37–71). 1 Enoch is a composite work made up of several sections: The Book of Watchers (chaps. 1–36); the Similitudes; the Astronomical Book (chaps. 83–90); the Book of Admonitions (chaps. 91–105); and the Birth Account of Noah (chaps. 106–107). The date of the Similitudes has been the subject of some debate, since it is also the section where the "son of man" saying is found (see above 2.5). Aramaic fragments from Qumran show that all sections of 1 Enoch were to be found there except the Similitudes.[3] This, along with the affinity of some Aramaic fragments of a Qumran Book of Giants to the Manichean Book of Giants, led the publisher of the Aramaic fragments, J. Milik, to suggest that the Similitudes did not exist in pre-Christian times but were in fact a late Christian addition to 1 Enoch (c. 270 CE).[4] The scholarly consensus today, however, largely rejects Milik's assertion and maintains a date in the first half of the first century CE.[5]

The Similitudes are focused upon events in the heavenly world. They culminate in the ascension of Enoch to heaven (chap. 71). *1 En.* 69 names the angels who sinned by disclosing secret knowledge to humans (v. 1). Verse 11 suggests that human beings originally shared a similar nature with angels:

> [11] For men were created exactly like angels, to the intent that they should continue pure and righteous, and death, which destroys everything, could not have taken hold of them, but through this their knowledge they are perishing, and through this power it is consuming me.[6]

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[3] J. Milik in collaboration with M. Black, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); G. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001).

[4] J. Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, pp. 89–96.

[5] See especially M. Knibb, "The Date of the Parables of Enoch" *NTS* 25 (1979) 358–359; C. Mearns, "Dating the Similitudes of Enoch" *NTS* 25 (1979) 369; *HJPAJC* IIIi:257–259.

[6] Translation R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913) 2:234.

Although Adam is not explicitly mentioned in this text, the context is of the creation of humankind, which must ultimately harken back to Adam in Genesis. According to the text, humans were created to be "like" angels. The simile comes in humans permanently "maintaining pure and righteous lives." This suggests that the original human state was to be pure and righteous (cf. Wis 2:23). Human beings seemingly fell from this state through the sin of Adam (Gen 2:17, 3:17f.; cf. Rom 5:12), suggestsing that Adam's prelapsarian state could be understood as angelic.[7]

Another text from the Enochic writings is more explicit about Adam's angelic status. 2 Enoch (Slavonic Enoch) expands upon the life of Enoch (Gen 5:21–32). Two recensions exist: the shorter [A] and the longer [J], which are dated differently. The manuscript evidence is quite late (fourteenth century), and dates have been offered from the first century CE through to the Middle Ages. F. Andersen, in his translation for the *OTP*, favors an early date for the shorter recension, while the longer is likely to come from a later date.[8] This evidence should be used with caution in discussing late Second Temple beliefs.[9]

It seems likely that 2 Enoch is dependent on Ethiopic Enoch. The genre is apocalyptic. Chapter 30 contains a detailed exposition of the creation narrative. Verse 11 [J] makes fairly explicit that Adam was created angelic:

> [11] And on the earth I assigned him to be a second angel, honored and great and glorious. And I assigned him to be a king, to reign [on] the earth, [and] to have my wisdom. And there was nothing comparable to him on the earth, even among my creatures that exist.

There is no clear referent for a "first" angel. Several texts have been offered in support of seeing Adam as the primary being of creation and even having an exalted status: Sir 49:16, Wis 10:1, and Philo, *Ques Gen* 2:56.[10] None of these supports an angelic reading, however.

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[7] This is clear in the rabbinic texts; see J. Jervell, *Imago Dei*, pp. 15–51. See also C. Rowland, "The Influence of the First Chapter of Ezekiel on Jewish and Early Christian Literature" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1974).

[8] F. Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch" in *OTP* 1:91–213; J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels," p. 137, simply assumes a first-century CE date.

[9] *HJPAJC* IIIii:748–749.

[10] J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1985) 273; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 142; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 154.

So the meaning of the title "second angel" is not self-evident. Adam's status on earth is clearly exalted above all the earthly beings. He is to be a king and to have wisdom (cf. 2 Sam 14:17). C. Gieschen suggests that the passage may be an interpretation of Ps 8, presumably verse 5, which states, "Yet thou hast made him a little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor." Thus, Gieschen sees the "second angel" as meaning one of God's principal angels.[11]

In chapter 31, Adam is placed in the Garden and allowed to look upon the angels in heaven, "And I [God] created for him [Adam] an open heaven, so that he might look upon the angels" (v. 2). That Adam can look upon angels in the open heaven suggests he has been given a superior-seer status. Since he has been called an "angel," his ability to see angels may be related to this status. In chapter 32:1–2, Adam transgresses and is expelled to the earth to live a mortal life.

The *Testament of Abraham* (*T. Abr.*) exists in two forms, the longer Recension A (Greek ms. supported by a Romanian version) and the shorter Recension B (Greek ms. supported by Slavonic and other versions).[12] Dates have been offered from as early as third century BCE to the third century CE. E. P. Sanders suggests a range for the dating between the first and second century CE, but the dating is not clear.[13]

In *T. Abr.* 11:4, the patriarch is taken into heaven after his death and sees a "man on a golden throne" who is described as "terrifying." When Abraham asks his angelic guide about the identity of this figure, he is told, "This is the first-formed Adam who is in such glory" (11:9). Again, in chapter 12, a "wondrous man" sits upon a throne. When Abraham asks the identity of the man, the angel tells him, "So you see, all-pious Abraham, the frightful man who is seated on the throne? This is the son of Adam, the first-formed, who is called Abel, whom Cain the wicked killed" (13:2).[14]

The Latin *Life of Adam and Eve* (*Vita*) expands upon the story of Adam and Eve after their expulsion from the Garden. It comes in

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[11] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 153; cf. J. Fossum, *The Name of God*, p. 273. Such an interpretation is not impossible in light of the description of Jacob as Israel and archangel in *Pr. Jos.* 7.

[12] E. P. Sanders, "Testament of Abraham" in *OTP* 1:871–902.

[13] E. P. Sanders, "Testament of Abraham" in *OTP* 1:874–875 and *HJPAJC* IIIii:764, both note the difficulty of dating the text but see a mid-second-century date as probable.

[14] On the Testament of Abraham, see P. Munoa, *Four Powers in Heaven: The Interpretation of Daniel 7 in the Testament of Abraham* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

Greek and Latin versions. M. Johnson suggests that the text derives from the period between 100 BCE and 200 CE, with the probability of a late first-century CE date.[15] In chapter 13, the devil explains why he and his companions were expelled from heaven.

> [1] The devil replied, "What are you telling me? It is because of you that I have been thrown out of there. [2] When you were created, I was cast out from the presence of God and was sent out from the fellowship of the angels. [3] When God blew into you the breath of life and your countenance and likeness were made in the image of God, Michael brought you and made (us) worship you in the sight of God, and the Lord God said, 'Behold Adam! I have made you in our image and likeness.' "

Fletcher-Louis and Gieschen have both strongly asserted that the veneration of Adam in this text demonstrates the veneration of an angelomorphic being.[16] It is not clear from the text, however, that Adam has an angelomorphic status. As Fletcher-Louis himself points out, "This is a most remarkable statement of the propriety of worshipping Adam as the image and visible likeness of God."[17] The issue, then, is Adam's *theo*morphic image.[18] Adam is to be worshipped because he is created in the image of God, not simply because he is angelic. It is significant that in 13:3 God says, "Behold, Adam! I have made you in our image and likeness." Presumably, the first-person plural refers to God and the angelic host. Nevertheless, the inclusive adjective may simply be maintaining the phraseology of Gen 1:26–27. Adam's countenance and likeness are in the image of God (13:3); moreover, the rationale for the call to worship is Adam's divine image. In 14:2, Michael calls out to the devil and his companions, "Worship the image of God, Yahweh." In 16:1 the devil and his lot are cast out from among the other angels for their refusal to worship Adam, but their refusal is not based on Adam's being created in the image of God but rather on his being created after them in the creation (14:3). The potential late date and lack of specific angel language in the *Vita* suggest caution in using it as evidence for Adam's angelic status.

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[15] M. Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve" in *OTP* 2:252.

[16] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 142; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 154.

[17] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 142.

[18] The Testament of Adam 3:2 and 4 (largely dismissed by Fletcher-Louis and Gieschen due to its late date (c. second to fifth century CE), says that Adam will have his wish fulfilled and be made a "god" after his death.

Overall, there is evidence for the angelic nature of Adam in literature from this period. Interestingly, however, J. Levison concluded his survey of several texts (Wis, Sir, Jub, Josephus, Philo, 4 Ezra, and 2 Bar.) on Adam in early Judaism by stating, "There is remarkably little speculation about the original nature of Adam in the authors of early Judaism which we examined."[19] This seems correct for the evidence that he examined, but other evidence, such as 1 Enoch, suggests that there was a line of interpretation that understood the first humans to have had an angelic nature, which was subsequently lost in the Fall. In 2 Enoch Adam is explicitly called "a second angel," even if this title is somewhat difficult to understand. It may identify Adam as a principal angel. It certainly locates him on earth with the power to look into the heavens and see the angels, but this status is subsequently lost. The evidence of the *Vita* hints at divine status for Adam that is not clearly defined, but the rationale for worship of Adam seems based on his being in the image of God, which does not necessarily relate to his having an angelomorphic nature.

3.2 *Seth(el)*

The fragmentary text named the *Apocalypse of Sethel* is preserved in the Cologne Mani Codex.[20] The manuscript appears to be from the fifth century CE, copied from a Syriac original.[21] Charlesworth dealt with this passage in his 1980 article, noting that "this particular apocalypse apparently predates Mani (215–275 CE) and in no way seems to reflect peculiar Manichean ideas; it seems very Jewish and contains no discernible Christian elements."[22] This assessment is by no means definitive, but it suggests there is good reason to believe that the ideas contained therein are roughly contemporary with those being examined in this study. Angels appear in a number of places throughout the codex.[23] Most of these occurrences mention angels

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[19] J. Levinson, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988) 152. See also J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, pp. 266–291.

[20] R. Cameron and A. Dewey, *The Cologne Mani Codex* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979) esp. 38–41.

[21] R. Cameron and A. Dewey, *The Cologne Mani Codex*, p. 2.

[22] J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels," p. 139.

[23] 2.10; 3.3; 12.12; 48:19; 49.4, 16; 50.4; 51:5–6; 52.4; 54.3; 56:12; 58.3, 22; 59.4; 60.10.

in a typical ministering role. In chapters 50 and 51, however, we find the interesting mention of the relationship between angels and humans regarding Seth(el), the son of Adam (cf. Gen 4:25).

The genre of the codex is apocalyptic, with various visionary material and transformations recounted.[24] Chapter 50.1 states, "And he became mightier than all the powers and the angels of creation." The referent, unfortunately, is not clear, but it seems to be Adam, who has been the subject of the preceding discussion. In 51.1 Sethel, the son of Adam, is said to have "become like one of the greatest angels" (ἐγενόμην ὡς εἷς τῶν μεγίστων ἀγγέλων). With this transformation comes a movement from a worldly existence to an otherworldly one: "When that angel placed his hand on my right hand, he wrenched me from the world from which I was born and carried me off to another place exceedingly great" (51.6–15). The fragmentary nature of the text precludes us from drawing any firm conclusions about it, but if the text itself—or at the minimum the traditions therein—dates to our period, then we have a piece of evidence regarding a human transformation into an angel alongside a transportation to a new world. This transformation might profitably be seen in a trajectory with Hebrew Bible traditions like the taking of Enoch or Elijah into heaven without an apparent physical death.

3.3 *Enoch*

In the Second Temple period, a significant amount of literature developed around the figure of Enoch, who is briefly mentioned in Genesis (5:18–24).[25] Much of the literature about Enoch stems from the enigmatic phrase, "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Gen 5:24; cf. Sir 44:16, 1Q20 Col. 2, vv. 20–21). This could have been interpreted as Enoch not having a physical death but being taken into heaven much like Elijah (2 Kgs 2:11).[26]

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[24] M. Himmelfarb, "Revelation and Rapture: The Transformation of the Visionary in the Ascent Apocalypses" in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquim,* ed. J. Collins and J. Charlesworth, JSPS 9 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 79–90.

[25] There are no extant fragments of Gen 5:24 from Qumran.

[26] Interestingly, however, *Gen. Rab.* 25.1, and the *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Neo.* on Gen 5:24 stress that Enoch died. This may be in reaction to those who sought to elevate the status of Enoch. *T. Ps.-J* says that Enoch was called Metatron (cf. *Jub.* 10:17; *1 En.* 12:3–5, *3 En.*). See C. Rowland, "Enoch" in *DDD,* pp. 576–581.

Josephus, *Ant.* 1.86 says that they did not record his death (cf. Philo, *Mut.* 34, *Abr.* 17, *Praem.* 16, *QG* 1:85–86).

There seems to be a line of tradition that understood Enoch as an angel or angelic being. The equation becomes more explicit in later documents. To begin with the clearest example, 3 Enoch—a Hekhalot text that dates to a much later period (fifth–sixth century CE)—Rabbi Ishmael, while journeying to the heavens, is told that the angel Metatron with whom he speaks is Enoch (4:3).[27] C. Fletcher-Louis lists a number of angelic qualities attributed to Enoch in 3 Enoch (e.g., gigantic size, brilliance, etc.) in an attempt to strengthen the connection.[28] Overall, this piece of evidence cannot add much to our understanding of late Second Temple human-angel relationships due to its late date. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to mention since it seems to show that the tradition of Enoch's transformation into an angel continued to develop from traditions that do derive from this period.

Enoch's transformation into an angel is also described in *2 En.* 22:6–10:

> [6b] The Lord said, "Let Enoch come up and stand in front of my face forever!" [7] And the glorious ones did obeisance and said, "Let him come up!" [8] The Lord said to Michael, "Take Enoch, and extract (him) from the earthly clothing. And anoint him with delightful oil, and put (him) into the clothes of glory." . . . [10] And I gazed at all of myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones, and there was no observable difference.[29]

The transformation undergone by Enoch is striking. In particular, his "earthly clothing" and being placed in "clothes of glory" suggest a permanent transformation.

Enoch's ascent to heaven is first mentioned in *1 En* 12:1–2:

> [1] Before these things (happened) Enoch was hidden, and no one of the children of the people knew by what he was hidden and where he was. [2] And his dwelling place as well as his activities were with the Watchers and holy ones; and (so were) his days.[30]

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[27] On the dating of *3 En.*, see P. Alexander, "The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch" *JJS* 28 (1977) 156–167.

[28] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 156.

[29] Translation F. Andersen, *OTP* 1:138–139.

[30] Translation E. Isaac, *OTP* 1:19.

This description of Enoch as living with the angels seems to have its basis in Gen 5:24. It makes clear that he dwells among divine beings. In *Jub.* 4:21–23, which may have used 1 Enoch, we read that after Enoch sired Methusaleh, "he was therefore with angels of God six jubilees of years" (294 years). Then he bore witness against the Watchers and was ultimately "taken from among the children of men."

In a separate section of *1 En.* 36–71 (the Similitudes), we read, "I [Enoch] fell on my face, my whole body mollified and my spirit transformed" (71:11). In the subsequent verses, Enoch is seemingly identified with the "one like a son of man" (71:14–17), who is a divine being. It is not explicitly clear that he is an angel, but such an identification can be justified.

Perhaps more than any other individual, there seems to have been an ongoing line of thought that identified Enoch with an angel. This identification becomes much more explicit in later texts; for instance, in 3 Enoch, Enoch is the angel Metatron, whereas in 1 Enoch the identification with an angel is more of a circumlocution: Enoch = "one like a son of man" = an angel, so Enoch = angel.

3.4 *Noah*

The patriarch Noah (Gen 5:29–9:28) was known for his righteousness and was said to have "walked with God" (Gen 6:9). Noah and his family were the only human beings to escape the destruction of the flood that was brought about by humankind's wickedness (Gen 6:5–8). The ending to 1 Enoch contains an interesting tradition concerning the birth of the patriarch, Noah. As mentioned above, all sections of 1 Enoch, save the Similitudes, are attested in fragmentary form in the Qumran Aramaic fragments; thus we can be confident in dating this material within the bounds of this study. *1 En.* 106:1–6 says of the newborn Noah:

> [1] And after some days my son, Methuselah, took a wife for his son Lamech, and she became pregnant by him and bore him a son. [2] And his body was white as snow and red as a rose; the hair of his head as white as wool and his demdema beautiful; and as for his eyes, when he opened them the whole house glowed like the sun—(rather) the whole house glowed even more exceedingly. [3] And when he arose from the hands of the midwife, he opened his mouth and spoke to the Lord with righteousness. [4] And his father, Lamech, was afraid of him and fled and went to Methuselah his father, [5] and said to

> him, "I have begotten a strange son: He is not like an (ordinary) human being, but he looks like the children of the angels of heaven to me; his form is different, and he is not like us. His eyes are like the rays of the sun, and his face glorious. [6] It does not seem to me that he is of me, but of angels; and I fear that a wondrous phenomenon may take place upon the earth in his days."[31]

Noah is twice described as having an appearance like an "angel" (vv. 5 and 6). A number of other factors suggest that he is superhuman. His eyes "glow like the sun," and his face is "glorious." Some scholars have been quick to dismiss this passage as providing no evidence for Noah's angelomorphic nature, since it only contains imagery and no clear indication that Noah was angelic.[32] Moreover, despite Noah's appearance, he is not the product of human-angel intercourse (v. 1).[33] However, it is significant that the imagery here is twice interpreted as being angelic in the text of the passage itself (vv. 5 and 6). Thus, it can be said that in this case, *at his birth* Noah was angel*omorphic* in that he appears as an angel. However, it is not clear to what extent this imagery is meant to be taken literally or to what extent Noah was angelomorphic throughout his entire life.

Interestingly, the tradition about Noah's wondrous nature at birth also seems to be reflected in the *Gen. Apoc.* (1Q20) col. 2 from Qumran, with a particular twist.

> [1] Behold, I thought then within my heart that conception was (due) to the Watchers [עירים] and the Holy Ones . . . and to the Giants [ולנפילם]
> [2] and my heart was troubled within me because of this child.
> [3] Then I, Lamech, approached Bathenosh [my] wife in haste and said to her,
> [4] [. . .] by the Most High, the Great Lord, the King of all the universe and Ruler of
> [5] [. . .]the Sons of Heaven [בני־שמים], until you tell me all things truthfully . . .
> [6] You will and without lies let me know whether this

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[31] Translation E. Issac, *OTP* 1:86. See also the fragment in J. Milik, *The Books of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 206–207.

[32] D. Hannah, Review of C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology* in *JTS* 51(2000) 235–236.

[33] G. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001) 543, writes, "For the characters in the story, Noah's appearance is prima facie evidence of supernatural conception. His father was apparently an angel, at a time when angels were fathering children from human mothers. But, as the reader knows from the beginning, and Lamech and Methusaleh will discover, the appearance is deceiving."

[7] by the King of the all the universe that you are speaking to me frankly and without lies
[8] Then Batenosh, my bride, spoke to me very harshly, she wept
[9] saying. "Oh my brother, O my Lord, remember my pleasure!
[10] [. . .] the time of love, the gasping of my breath in my breast. I [. . .] will tell you everything accurately
[11] [. . .] and then within me my heart was very upset
[12] When Batenosh, my wife, realized that my countenance had altered
[13] then she supressed her anger, speaking to me and saying to me, "O my lord
[14] my pleasure. I swear to you by the Holy Great One, the King of [the heavens] . . .
[15] that this seed is yours and that [this] conception is from you. This fruit was planted by you . . .
[16] and by no stranger or Watcher [עירים] or Son of Heaven [ולא מכל בנישמים] . . .
[17] [Why] is your countenance thus changed and dismayed, and why is your spirit thus distressed . . .
[18] I speak to you truthfully."

In this text, Lamech, the father of Noah, recognizes that something is different about his son. He is troubled because he believes that his wife has become impregnated by the Watchers.[34] Though Noah is not explicitly called an angel in this text, Lamech is concerned that he was sired by a Watcher or Son of Heaven.[35] This passage may lend some support to the belief that a tradition existed concerning Noah having an angelic nature at his birth. Citing not only 1QapGen and *1 En* 106, but also appealing to evidence from Pseudo-Eupolemus and relating it all to evidence from the *Gilgamesh* narrative, J. Reeves has asserted that "it is clear from several extrabiblical sources that there existed a tradition which alleged the Flood-hero was a 'Giant'."[36] R. Huggins has responded to Reeves.[37] Huggins concludes that the case for Noah's identification as an angel at birth has more to do with his special role in the Flood narrative and his righteousness than his being considered a giant. Thus, the *Gen. Apoc.*

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[34] Texts concerning the Watchers are examined in chapter 6.

[35] 4Q534 also makes reference to the Watchers, and it seems from some details of a physical description (e.g., red hair) that it may be the same type of discussion about Noah's bloodline as in the *Gen. Apoc.*, but the text is too fragmentary to draw any information.

[36] J. Reeves, "Utnapishtim in the Book of Giants?" *JBL* 112 (1993) 110.

[37] R. Huggins, "Critical Notes: Noah and the Giants: A Response to John C. Reeves" *JBL* 114 (1995) 103–110.

and 1 Enoch cannot be shown to demonstrate any belief in Noah's being of angelic origin. This conclusion goes against the exegesis of Fletcher-Louis, however.[38] By connecting Noah's angelomorphic/theomorphic characteristics with a priestly motif, Fletcher-Louis sees Noah as a strong example of an angelomorphic human.[39] Without such a connection, however, the evidence for Noah's status is more ambiguous. A tradition seems to have existed that Noah was notably different at birth. The imagery in the stories suggests that Noah's appearance was angelomorphic, but it is not clear how this carried through his life or whether it was simply meant to denote his being a particularly righteous human.

3.5 *Melchizedek*

Melchizedek, another enigmatic figure from the Hebrew Scriptures, appears in Gen 14:18 as a priest-king to whom Abraham pays homage and gives tithe. In Ps 110:4 his name occurs as the archetype for an eternal priesthood (לעולם על־דברתי מלכי־צדק). The Epistle to the Hebrews clearly shows interest in his (eternal) priestly nature via Ps 110:4 (Heb 5–7). So, again, we have an enigmatic individual from the Hebrew Bible about whose status it seems there was some speculation.

The main text that perhaps demonstrates Melchizedek's angelic nature comes from Qumran (11Q14).[40] The thirteen fragments date to around the first century BCE.[41] Melchizedek fills the role of the final judge akin to the court scene of Ps 82, which is quoted in 11Q14. The genre has been debated, but most scholars seem to think it is a type of pesher on Lev.[42] It states:

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[38] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002) 33–55.

[39] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, p. 53.

[40] See Y. Yadin, "A Note on Melchizedek and Qumran" *IEJ* 15 (1965) 152–154; J. Fitzmyer, "Further Light on Melchizedek from Qumran Cave 11" *JBL* 86 (1967) 25–41; M. Delcor, "Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews" *JSJ* 2 (1971) 115–135; M. De Jonge and A. S. Van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament" *NTS* 12 (1972) 301–326. F. L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); P. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1981); J. Davila, "Michael, Melchizedek, and Holy War" *SBLSP* (1998) 259–272. See also *DDD* 1047–1053.

[41] *HJPAJC* IIIi:449.

[42] *HJPAJC* IIIi:449; A. Aschim, "The Genre of 11QMelch" in *Qumran between the Old Testament and the New Testaments* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 17–31.

> [7] And the day of atonement is the end of the tenth jubilee [8] in which atonement will be made for all the sons of God and for the men of the lot of Melchizedek. And on the heights he will declare in their favor according to their lots; [9] for it is the time of the "year of grace" for Melchizedek, to exalt in the trial of the holy ones of God through the rule of judgment, as it is written [10] about him in the songs of David, who said, "Elohim will stand up in the assembly of God [אל], in the midst of the elohim he judges" [cf. Ps 82:1]. And about him he said: "Above it return [11] to the heights, God (el) will judge the peoples. . . . [13] And Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of God's [אל] judgments [on this day, and they shall be freed from the hands] of Belial and from the hands of all the sp[irits of his lot] [14] To his aid (shall come) all the gods of [justice]

Although this passage is often cited as demonstrating Melchizedek's angelic nature, the term for angel (מלאך) does not appear. Elohim (אלהים) is sometimes used for God (sg.) and other times for divine beings (pl.). Melchizedek seems to share the status of elohim. He acts both as judge and as executor of punishment (cf. *NHC* IX, 1).

An angelic identification for Melchizedek has also been suggested by the likelihood that within the Qumran literature, Melchizedek = the Prince of Lights (1QS 3:20; CD 5:18; 1QM 13:10) = the angel Michael (1QM 17:6–7) by virtue of their carrying out the same function.[43]

Neither of these points explicitly calls Melchizedek an angel, however. Nor, except by inference from the role of Melchizedek as eschatological judge, is he angelomorphic. He certainly, however, seems to have an exalted status.

On the strength of some imagery in *2 En.* 69–73, C. Gieschen notes that Melchizedek can be understood as angelomorphic.[44] Interestingly, in 2 Enoch Melchizedek's mother, Sopanim, is said to have conceived without having relations with her husband, Nir (71:2). His mother is extremely old and dies in childbirth, so Melchizedek delivers himself (71:17) as a developed child, aged three (71:18). As he is born, "the badge of priesthood was on his chest, and it was glorious in appearance" (71:19). This seems analogous to the newborn angelomorphic image of Noah (see above 3.4). No equation is made in 2 Enoch between his luminous appearance and an angelomorphic status.

Therefore, the weight of this evidence does not seem to suggest that Melchizedek was understood specifically as an angel. The author

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[43] *HJPAJC* IIIi:450; J. Davila, "Melchizedek, Michael, and War in Heaven" in *SBLSP* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996) 259–272.

[44] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 172–173.

of the Epistle to the Hebrews was certainly interested in his being part of an eternal order of priests (Ps 110). The Qumran fragments suggest an elevated status for him. He may be considered angelic if we equate the roles of Michael and Melchizedek, but this means synthesizing the Qumran evidence. The imagery from 2 Enoch suggests that there was wider speculation about the origins of Melchizedek. Again, this interest may stem from his being part of an eternal order of priests. Ultimately, the evidence about Melchizedek is unclear. It does not explicitly refer to him as an angel, but he does seem to enjoy a special status that suggests he might have been considered in some way angelic.

3.6 *Jacob/Israel*

Throughout the Genesis narrative, Jacob enjoys a special relationship with the heavenly world. God speaks to him directly throughout his life (especially in chaps. 28, 31, and 35). In Gen 28, Jacob has a dream vision of a place where heaven and earth meet and the means by which angels ascend to heaven and descend to earth. Jacob again sees angels in Gen 32:1–2. There is strong evidence that Jacob's opponent was widely understood as an angel (Gen 32) in the late Second Temple period.[45] What is examined here is the evidence that Jacob himself was considered an angel.

In his *Confusion of Tongues* 146, Philo writes:

> But if there be any as yet unworthy to be called a Son of God, let him press to take his place under God's First-born, his Word the eldest of the angels, an archangel. He possesses many names; for he is called, the Beginning, and the Name of God, and Logos, and the Man after his image, and "he that sees," that is Israel.

In this brief passage, Philo discusses the attributes of the divine Logos. The Logos is said to be God's word and the leader of the angels. A number of names are also given to the Logos: the Name (cf. Exodus 23:20f.), the Logos (cf. John 1:1f.), the "man" after his image (cf. Ezekiel 1:26), and importantly for our discussion, "he that sees" = "Israel." The exact meaning of the name Israel is uncertain, though "he that

[45] See section 2.1(b) above.

sees" seems to resolve the Hebrew into three parts, as איש ראה אל.[46] Philo says elsewhere that Israel means "he that sees (God)."[47]

In the larger context of a discussion regarding maturity and the significance of the number seventy in *Migration* 200–201, Philo makes a passing reference to Jacob and his name.[48] He says that Jacob is the name of one wrestling (παλαίοντος). The Greek word here is the same root as the LXX word for Jacob wrestling with the man in Gen 32:25 (παλαίω). Philo also mentions that Jacob's name refers to one "covered with dust" (κονιομένου).[49] A third understanding is of one "grabbing at the heel" (πτερνίζοντος).[50] These understandings of Jacob's name are deeply rooted in the Gen 32 struggle. Philo then says that when Jacob was "deemed capable of seeing God," his name was changed to Israel (Gen 32:29).[51] It is clear that for Philo, Jacob's name was changed because he was deemed capable of seeing God through his struggle at the Jabbok ford. The Logos possesses the name Israel, which Philo says means "he that sees." Admittedly the connection of these two passages is somewhat artificial, but if there is a connection via the name Israel, then Philo may have understood there to be an equation between the Logos, an archangel also named Israel, and the post-Peniel Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. If this is a correct reading, then we could understand Jacob's name change as a transformative event, which actually brought about an ontological change. However, Philo himself does not make this move, so it must remain at best speculation.

J. Z. Smith has noted that Philo and the *Prayer of Joseph* (*Pr. Jos.*)

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[46] From G. Vermes, "The Archangel Sariel" in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Graeco-Roman Cults*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975) 3:164–165 n. 25.

[47] J. Smith notes that Philo uses this phrase 49 times. See *OTP* 2:701 n. 20 for the list.

[48] Greek text taken from F. Colson, *Philo IV* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958); translation is mine.

[49] This suggests Philo may be aware that the Hebrew root for wrestle (אבק) is related to "dust"; *BDB*, 7b. Note that Colson translates κονιομένου as "preparing for the arena," which is correct but does not capture the nuance from the Hebrew.

[50] Colson translates this as "tripping up his adversary," which is also appropriate for Jacob as a trickster but may again miss a nuance of which Philo may have been well aware, i.e., Jacob's grabbing Esau's heel at their birth in Gen 25:26. For Philo's other applications of πτερνίζοντος to Jacob, see *Leg.* i.161, ii.89, iii.15, 93; *Sacrif.* 42.135; *Somn.* i.171; *Mutat.* 81; *Her.* 252.

[51] Jacob's name change is recorded a second time in Gen 35, but it is unlikely that Philo is referring to this passage, since no rationale for the change is provided there. Only in Gen 32 is it stated that Jacob "strove with God and prevailed."

are among the only ancient sources to refer to Israel as "one seeing God."[52] Smith has made a strong case for first- or second-century CE Jewish provenance of the document based on discussion of the titles attributed to Jacob. Certainly *Pr. Jos.* is not later than Origen's commentary c. 230 CE, in which it appears. If the dating is correct, this is perhaps one of the clearest pieces of evidence that a human had attained angelic status. The "prayer" states:

> [1] I, Jacob, who am speaking to you, am also Israel, an angel of God and a ruling spirit. [2] Abraham and Isaac were created before any work. [3] But, I, Jacob, who men call Jacob but whose name is Israel am he who God called Israel which means, a man seeing God, because I am the firstborn of every living thing to whom God gives life. [4] And when I was coming up from Syrian Mesopotamia, Uriel, the angel of God, came forth and said that "I [Jacob-Israel] had descended to earth and I had tabernacled among men and that I had been called by the name of Jacob." [5] He envied me and fought me and wrestled with me saying that his name and the name that is before every angel was to be above mine. [6] I told him his name and what rank he held among the sons of God. [7] "Are you not Uriel, eighth after me? and I, Israel, the archangel of the power of the Lord and the chief captain among the sons of God?" [8] Am I not Israel, the first minister before the face of God? [9] And I called upon my God by the inextinguishable Name.[53]

Jacob/Israel states that when he was coming up from Syrian-Mesopotamia, the angel Uriel met him.[54] Notably, the geographical reference seems to suggest the Jabbok event.[55] Uriel,[56] the speaker claims, envied Jacob and wrestled with him. Jacob sets the record straight and tells Uriel (an archangel) his rank in the celestial hierarchy: eighth after Jacob = Israel, himself an angel. The short "prayer" of Jacob makes grand claims. Not only is the speaker already the patriarch Jacob, but he is Israel, an angel of God (cf. Philo, *Conf.* 146). The speaker claims that his own forefathers, Abraham and Isaac, were created before all works but that he himself is the firstborn

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[52] J. Z. Smith, "The Prayer of Joseph" in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Randall Goodenough*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968) 253–294; reprint in J. Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 24–66; and *OTP* 2:699–714.

[53] Translation J. Z. Smith in *OTP* 2:713.

[54] Cf. *Tg. Neo.*, on Gen 32, where the opponent is the angel Sariel.

[55] Syrian Mesopotamia is the common LXX rendering of Paddan-Aram; J. Smith, *OTP* 2:713 n. *h*.

[56] Uriel, an archangel, appears in *Grk 1 En.* 20:2; *4 Ezra* 4:1, 10:28; *Bar.* 4:7, *et al.*

of all living things (Philo, *Conf.* 146; Col 1:15; Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 125.5; *Nag Hammadi Codex NHC* II, 105). Smith has exhaustively noted the numerous parallels between the titles of Jacob in *Pr. Jos.* and the characteristics of the Logos in Philo's *Conf.*[57]

One title in particular, "a man seeing God," is interesting, since it offers perhaps the clearest correspondence between Gen 32 and *Pr. Jos.* One result of the wrestling match in Gen 32 is the naming of the place where the event occurred. Jacob calls the place Peniel (פניאל literally "the face of God"), because "I [Jacob] have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved" (v. 30). There is danger involved in seeing God (e.g., Judg 6:22–23; 13:22). It is possible, as in Philo, that "the man seeing God" understanding of Israel is based on a particular reading of the Hebrew, but it is certainly much more plausible to see it as a development out of the Gen 32 story. Jacob, once he possesses the name Israel, appears to be understood as one who saw God. Within *Pr. Jos.*, however, Jacob/Israel clearly wrestles with Uriel, so it seems counterintuitive to suggest that this struggle was the origin of his name change to one having "seen God." In this case, Jacob/Israel is much greater than a human who wrestled with an angel and received a new name—he is an angel, who for a time was incarnate in the patriarch Jacob. As noted above, Jacob has a special relationship with God and angels (Gen 28, 32, 35).[58]

Jacob lastly claims to be "the first minister before the face of God." This is similar to what we find in *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Neo.*, where the angels are said to be "before the face of God." This once again suggests that Jacob/Israel has seen God, since he ministers before his countenance.

Pr. Jos. takes interpretation of the Jabbok event to another level. Not only is the opponent of Jacob a named angel, Uriel, but Jacob himself is an angel, Israel, who ranks above all other angels. In its understanding of Jacob's opponent as an angel, *Pr. Jos.* seems to accord with the trends that were circulating during the same period (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 1:331f.; *Lad. Jac.* 4:1–4; Targumim). In its explicit claims for Jacob's own angelic status, it stands as nearly unique among the extant evidence.

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[57] J. Smith, *Prayer*, pp. 260–272.

[58] The tradition of Jacob as the one seeing God is illuminated by considering the midrash on Genesis, which says that Jacob's face is engraved upon the throne of God (*Gen. Rab.* 68:12, 78:3, and 82:2). So, like Ezekiel, Jacob was/is present in the divine throne room—a special relationship with the Godhead.

Lastly, there is evidence to consider from *Joseph and Aseneth*.[59] *JA* 22:7–8 states:

> [7] And Aseneth saw him [Jacob] and was amazed at his beauty, because Jacob was exceedingly beautiful to look at, and his old age (was) like the youth of a handsome (young) man, and his head was all white as snow, and the hairs of his head were all exceedingly close and thick like (those) of an Ethiopian, and his beard (was) white reaching down to his breast, and his eyes (were) flashing and darting (flashes of) lightning, and his sinews and his shoulders and his arms were like (those) of an angel, and his thighs and his calves and his feet like (those) of a giant. And Jacob was like a man who had wrestled with God. [8] And Aseneth saw him and was amazed, and prostrated herself before him face down to the ground.[60]

Three features of this passage are particularly noteworthy with regard to angelic understandings. The first is the mention of Jacob's physical features: beauty (cf. *JA* 15:9), youth (Mark 16:5; *4 Ezra* 2:43f.; 2 Mac 3:26f.), white hair and flashing eyes (cf. Dan 10:6, Matt 28:3, Lk 9:29), angelic upper body, and gigantic lower body (cf. Gen 6). All of these features are elsewhere attributed to divine beings.[61] This suggests that Jacob possesses a superhuman nature akin to that of an angel.

The second feature is the mention that Jacob was "like a man who had wrestled with God." The origins of such a statement are Gen 32 and Hos 12, indicating that the author(s) of *JA* understood the Jabbok assailant to be God. The description of Jacob, "like a man who wrestled with God," follows directly after the mention of his numerous physical features. One can infer that perhaps such physical attributes are a consequence of Jacob's wrestling with God.

One additional note is the reaction of Aseneth upon seeing Jacob. She was amazed and fell to the ground before him. As noted above, amazement/fear and prostration are common reactions to angelic or divine visitations, reinforcing the idea of an angelic nature for Jacob in *JA*.

All of this evidence presents a coherent picture: Jacob, who wrestled with God, has a unique combination of human, superhuman,

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[59] There is good reason to date this text in the late Second Temple period, although there are scholars who see it as much later (e.g., Kraemer). See the fuller discussion above in 2.10.

[60] Translation C. Burchard, *OTP* 2:238.

[61] Cf. also Dan 7, Ezek 1.

and angelic features. When Aseneth saw him, she understood him to be some sort of divine being. In this case we have a text that interprets the Genesis event as Jacob wrestling with God; the outcome is a transmogrified Jacob who possesses human and angelic characteristics. This is not far from the type of interpretation we see in *Pr. Jos.*

3.7 *Moses*

Arguably the most important individual in the Hebrew Bible is Moses. From birth he is protected by God (Exod 1). He is chosen by God to lead the people of Israel out of bondage in Egypt (Exod 3). Throughout his life, Moses enjoys a close relationship with God, particularly at Sinai and the giving of the Law (Exod 18–20). There was a great deal of discussion about Moses as prophet and his close association with the Law in subsequent ancient literature. W. Meeks says, "Moses was the most important figure in all Hellenistic Jewish apologetic."[62]

Some ancient writings border on the divinization of Moses. Their interpretations generally derive from Exod 34:29–30, which says,

> [29] When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. [30] And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

Moses is actually transformed by seeing God. Because of the transformation the Israelites were afraid to be near him, so that Moses had to put a veil on his face to speak with them (34:33, 35). A brilliant appearance is one characteristic sometimes associated with an angel. The fear of the Israelites may also stem from the fear associated with seeing a divine being (e.g., Judg 6 and 13). It is not clear in the context that Moses is meant to be understood as an angel in any way.

In the Book of Sirach 44–45, there is a list of venerable figures from the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc.) who are praised. Sir 45:2 says God made Moses "equal in glory to the holy

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[62] W. Meeks, "The Divine Agent and His Counterfeit in Philo and the Fourth Gospel" in *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. E. Schüssler-Fiorenza (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976) 45, 43–67.

ones [ἁγίων], and made him great in the fears of his enemies." Some have noted that the term "holy ones" here can be taken to mean angels.[63] Moses clearly enjoys an exalted status, and this may be akin to that of the angels, but an identification is not explicitly made.

The text known as *Ezekiel the Exagogue* or *Ezekiel the Tragedian* recounts the story of the Exodus from Egypt in the form of a Greek drama. Given that it is cited in Alexander Polyhistor (first century CE), it likely dates from sometime in the second century BCE.[64] One section describes a vision of Moses enthroned in heaven. In verses 68–82, Moses says that he had a theophany and was then invited to sit upon the throne in heaven:

> [68] On Sinai's peak I saw what seemed a throne [69] so great in size it touched the clouds of heaven. [70] Upon it sat a man of noble mien, [71] becrowned, and with a scepter in one hand [72] while with the other he did beckon me. [73] I made approach and stood before the throne. [74] He handed o'er the scepter and he bade [75] me mount the throne, and gave to me the crown; [76] then he himself withdrew from off the throne. [77] I gazed upon the whole earth round about; [78] things under it, and high above the skies. [79] Then at my feet a multitude of stars fell down, and I their number reckoned up. [81] They passed by me like armed ranks of men. [82] Then I in terror wakened from the dream.[65]

Certainly, the enthronement of Moses is significant and speaks to his exalted status in this text. Once on the throne, he is passed by the stars (perhaps angels). Ultimately, the material is visionary, and Moses awakens.

Philo discusses Moses as having a divine nature on several occasions (*Sacrifices* 8–10; *Flight* 5; *Dreams* 1:142; *QE.* 2.29, 40; *Virtues* 72–79), as well as devoting an entire treatise to him (*Moses*).[66] Only the texts relevant to an identification of Moses with an angel are examined here.

In *QG* 4:8 Moses is actually referred to as "the chief prophet and chief messenger [ὁ ἀρχιπροφήτης καὶ ὁ ἀρχάγγελος], who desired to see the One." Given the parallelism with the chief prophet, it does

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[63] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 175, notes that the Geniza text contains אלהים, strengthening such a reading; see also C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 163; L. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998) 56–57.

[64] *OTP* 2:803–804; *HJPAJC* IIIi:563–566.

[65] Translation R. G. Robertson, *OTP* 2:803–804.

[66] Josephus is much more reserved in his descriptions of Moses. Perhaps the most "angelic" description would be calling Moses a θεῖον ἄνδρα in *Ant.* 3:180.

not seem that Philo intends to equate Moses with the archangels Michael and Raphael *et al.*, but such an identification cannot be entirely ruled out given Philo's proclivity to elevate the status of Moses.

In *Virtues* 72–79, Philo recounts that before his death Moses went to heaven to worship God, not unlike the angels. Philo says that Moses began a hymn (Deut 32:1–43) of final thanksgiving for his life. For that hymn, Moses gathered a divine assembly (συναγαγὼν ἄθροισμα θεῖον). The angels of the divine service (ἄγγελοι λειτουργιοί) watch over it (74). Moses is said to be among the ethereal choristers (αἰθέρα χορευταῖς) in 75. Once the song is complete (76), Moses is said to begin passing over from his mortal existence to immortality (ἐκ θνητῆς ζωῆς εἰς ἀθάνατον βίον). He is not called an angel specifically in this text, but he is certainly much like them in his participation in a liturgy over which angels preside. His transformation immediately afterward suggests that he was at the border between two forms of life during the song itself.

Lastly, in *Moses* 158 and *Sacrifices* 9, Philo calls Moses a god (θεός).[67] There is significant secondary literature on Philo's attitude toward the deifying of Moses.[68] The present investigation will not engage with these in any specific detail, since Philo often allegorizes angels as immanent powers. His discussion of Moses is more concrete, actually using the term θεός. Seemingly, if Philo understood Moses as a kind of angel, (a) he could have spoken of him as such explicitly, and (b) it would appear to undermine his more exalted status as one like a god, enjoying a special relationship with him.

The *Testament of Moses* (also called the *Assumption of Moses*) exists in a Latin manuscript but was likely originally written in Greek. Dates for the *Testament of Moses* vary greatly from the Maccabean period

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[67] Some have also noted that Philo's calling Moses one who "stands" by God indicates his angelic status (see especially *QE* 2:29, 40), since the posture of standing comes to be related to angels in rabbinic literature. On this see J. Fossum, *The Name of God*, pp. 56–58, 120–129; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 166–167; and C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 174–175. While intriguing, the arguments are not outlined here, since Philo makes no such equation, and, as the evidence suggests, did not make much of a case for the angelization of Moses but instead for his deification.

[68] For fuller treatments of Moses in Philo, see E. Goodenough, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1969) 199–234; W. Meeks, *The Prophet-King* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967) 100–130; and C. Holladay, *Theios Aner in Hellenistic Judaism* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977) 103–198; J. Fossum, *The Name of God*, pp. 112–143.

through to the first half of the second century CE.[69] At 11:17, there is a reference to Moses as a "great messenger":

> If the enemies have, up till now, but a single time, acted impiously against their Lord, there is (now) no advocate for them who will bear messages to the Lord on their behalf in the way that Moses was the great messenger [*magnus nuntius*].

Earlier in the work, Moses is called the "mediator of the covenant" (Latin: *arbiter*). Most interpreters equate this with the reference in 11:17 to a great messenger (Latin: *nuntius*).[70] Tromp argues that the term *nuntius* is a rendering of the Greek ἄγγελος.[71] While this may be true, it is interesting that the term *angelus* was not chosen rather than *nuntius*.[72] It seems clear that Moses is a mediator bringing the Law of God to humans. In that capacity he fulfills the role often associated with angels. It is not clear whether the intention is to equate him with angels, however.

Lastly, C. Fletcher-Louis has recently made a case for seeing 4Q374 in the light of angelomorphic traditions.[73] The important lines from frag. 2ii are 6–8, which state:

> [6] [And] he made him as god [לאלוהים] over the mighty ones [אדירים] and a cause of reeling to Pharaoh [. . .]
> [7] . . . they melted and their hearts trembled and their inward parts dissolved. He had compassion upon [. . .]
> [8] And when he caused his face to shine upon them for healing, they strengthened [their] hearts again, and knowledge [. . .][74]

This passage seems to recount the events at Sinai (Exod 34). The text is too fragmentary to be certain of the context. The term אלוהים in line six can be used to refer to angels. It seems that v. 6 refers to God making Moses like a god over the "mighty ones." In v. 8 the reference seems to be to the face of Moses after coming down

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[69] J. Priest, "The Testament of Moses" in *OTP* 1:919–934; *HJPAJC* IIIi:278–287.

[70] J. Tromp, *Assumption of Moses* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993) 230–231; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 181; L. Hurtado, *One God*, p. 57.

[71] J. Tromp, *Assumption of Moses*, p. 257.

[72] Yet the choice of *nuntius* is more comprehensible if it was translated by Christians.

[73] C. Fletcher-Louis, "4Q374: A Discourse on the Sinai Tradition: The Deification of Moses and Early Christology" *DSD* 3 (1996) 236–252. He reiterates many of the same points in C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 136–149. See also the preliminary publication by C. Newsom, "4Q374: A Discourse on the Exodus/Conquest Tradition" in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*, ed. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992) 40–52.

[74] Text from *DJD* XIX, p. 102.

from the mountain. It is possible that the referents in vv. 6 and 8 are not the same figure.

Fletcher-Louis says that, "the theophanic effect which Moses' deified identity has on his fellow Israelites . . . makes good sense in the context of known DSS traditions in which a human being experiences angelomorphic transformation (/deification)."[75] This may be possible, but it is not at all clear that Moses's status is angelomorphic, other than in his luminous appearance, which more than likely comes from Exodus and not necessarily any independent tradition about Moses's angelic nature.

In sum, two facts seem to hold with regard to Moses: Moses mediated between the people of Israel and God, and Moses had a special relationship with God by virtue of his role as mediator. Does his having these two characteristics mean that Moses was conceived of as an angel? The Second Temple evidence does not seem to bear out this identification. If anything, the evidence appears to stress Moses's theomorphic (divine) character after the events at Sinai. The question then becomes: Does the divinization of Moses in works such as Philo or his enthronement in *Ezek. Trag.* mean that Moses was understood as an angel? Only the *As. Moses* seems to be explicit in using the term *nuntius* for Moses, but even there *angelus* could have been used rather than *nuntius*. The problem in modern interpretation seems to be that either all types of heavenly beings are seen as angels or each type is considered separate. Thus, Moses goes to heaven, mediates between God and humans, and is therefore like an angel. Or, although Moses goes to heaven, he is not explicitly called an angel, nor does he seem to be an angel; if anything, he is above that status. This may be a problem of categorization.

3.8 *David*

David, a major figure in the Hebrew Scriptures, is a shepherd called to be a warrior and second king of Israel. Many of the Psalms are also attributed to him. In later Jewish and Christian literature, the restoration of a Davidic monarchy becomes part of messianic expectations.[76]

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[75] C. Fletcher-Louis, "4Q374," p. 252.

[76] It has also been suggested by some that Isa 9:6 (MT = 9:5 LXX), "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting

On three occasions in the Hebrew Bible, David is compared to an angel.[77] 1 Sam 29:9 states, "And Achish made answer to David, 'I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God (כמלאך אלהים); nevertheless the commanders of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.'" This passage seems only to be making a comparison, using the כ. David is like an angel in his blamelessness, but it is interesting that the LXX translates only "I know that you are good/blameless in my eyes (οἶδα ὅτι ἀγαθὸς σὺ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς μου)." In 2 Sam 14:17, it is said of David:

> [17] And your handmaid thought, "The word of my lord the king will set me at rest; for my lord the king is like the angel of God (כמלאך האלהים) to discern good and evil. The Lord your God be with you!"... [20] "In order to change the course of affairs your servant Joab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth."

Again in this case, a comparison is made. David is like an angel in that he has the capacity to discern good and evil. The LXX maintains this comparison: καθὼς ἄγγελος θεοῦ οὕτως ὁ κύριός μου ὁ βασιλεὺς. Thirdly, in 2 Sam 19:27, "He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God [המלך כמלאך האלהים]; do therefore what seems good to you." This comparison is similar to the previous in that David's likeness to an angel seems to lie in his ability to discern the right course of action. Once again the LXX has a literal translation: ὁ κύριός μου ὁ βασιλεὺς ὡς ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ. Each of these passages is a comparison, demonstrating that early in the tradition such comparisons were meaningful and could potentially open the door for later interpreters to see a more intimate connection between David and the divine realm.

The *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo (also referred to as the *L. A. B.* from its Latin title: *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*) gives an imaginative retelling of Biblical history from Genesis through to the time

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Father, Prince of Peace,'" where the LXX translates יועץ פלא as μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος, should be seen as an instance where a Davidic messiah is considered angelic. See, e.g., C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 176. It is not clear, however, that in the LXX version it is meant to imply anything more than "messenger." For a more detailed analysis of this passage relating to the concept of messiah, see W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1998) 89–92.

[77] With these three, cf. Add Esth 15:13–15, "'I saw you, my lord, like an angel of God, and my heart was shaken with fear at your glory. For you are wonderful, my lord, and your countenance is full of grace.' But as she was speaking, she fell fainting."

of David and Solomon. The Latin manuscripts seem to come from Greek translations of the original Hebrew,[78] likely from the first century CE.[79] It gives perhaps the clearest indication that David appears like an angel. After mortally wounding Goliath, David stands over him and tells him to look upon him (61:8–9):

> [8] And David said to him, "Before you die, open your eyes and see your slayer, the one that killed you." And the Philistine looked and saw an angel and said, "Not you alone have killed me, but also the one who is present with you, he whose appearance is not like the appearance of a man." [9] And then David cut off his head. Now the angel of the Lord had changed David's appearance, and no one recognised him. And Saul saw David and asked him who he was, and there was no one who recognised him.

In this text David's appearance is changed, so it is possible to speak of him as angelo*morphic*. It is unclear whether he has undergone any permanent change. The Angel of the Lord changed David's appearance and was present to help him in the defeat of Goliath, but it does not seem that David was an angel.

Thus, the evidence shows that David was compared to angels due to certain attributes (blamelessness, discernment). He appears in an angelomorphic form in the *L. A. B.* David was largely connected with the expectation for a messiah in later literature. His roles as king and military leader seem to be important, but it is not clear that we can speak of the office of king as one that was readily understood as angelomorphic.[80]

3.9 *The Prophets*

The primary function of angels when on earth is to act as messengers for God. The prophets can be understood to fulfill much the same function. *Prime facie*, then, it seems that the prophets might represent

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[78] D. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo" in *OTP* 2:298–299.

[79] D. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo" in *OTP* 2:299; F. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 6; *HJPAJC* IIIi:329.

[80] There may be some echo of this in Zech 12:7–9, "And the Lord will give victory to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over that of Judah. On that day the Lord will put a shield about the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord, at their head. And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

the human group most likely to appear similar in function to angels.[81] A passage in 2 Chr 36 is illustrative:

> [15] The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; [16] but they kept mocking the messengers of God [במלאכי האלהים], despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets [בנבאיו], till the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy.

This passage appears near the end of the Book of Chronicles. The chronicler often speaks of the prophets as going unheeded (2 Chr 12:5–8; 15:1–8; 19:1–3; 21:12–15, *et al.*). These verses explain why Judah fell to the Babylonians, seeming to set messengers (angels) of God and prophets in apposition. The LXX maintains the terms angels/messengers (τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ) and prophets (τοῖς προφήταις αὐτοῦ). There does not seem to be any indication that the prophets are understood as anything other than humans, although they function like angels in that they are messengers of God.[82]

An even more explicit connection with a particular prophet may be intended in Hag 1:12–13:

> [12] Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet [הנביא], as the Lord their God had sent him; and the people feared before the Lord. [13] Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord [מלאך יהוה], spoke to the people with the Lord's message,
> "I am with you," says the Lord.

In the person of Haggai, the offices of prophet and angel/messenger of God are united. Haggai clearly delivers a divine message. He is not said to appear in anything other than human form. He seems to be an effective prophet/messenger, but there is not much reason to suppose, apart from the use of the technical term for angel, that Haggai should be understood as anything other than a human prophet.

Perhaps the clearest expression of the idea that a prophet could act as God's messenger comes in Malachi. First, the name Malachi

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[81] This is the argument of J. Bühner, *Der Gesandte und sein Weg im 4 Evangelium* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1977) 341–373. For criticism of his approach, see C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts,* pp. 129–137.

[82] Cf. Isa 44:26 "who confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messengers [מלאכיו; ἀγγέλων]; who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited,' and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built, and I will raise up their ruins.' "

itself in Hebrew means "my messenger." Mal 1:1 states, "The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi." The LXX renders this as, λῆμμα λόγου κυρίου ἐπὶ τὸν Ισραηλ ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ θέσθε δὴ ἐπὶ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. The name Malachi is not rendered in Greek but is instead called ἀγγέλου αὐτου.

At least one interpreter discusses the apparent connection between Malachi and angelic nature because of his name (meaning angel), his appearance (beauty), and his behavior (delivering divine messages).[83] *The Lives of the Prophets* (c. first century CE) 16:1–3 says about Malachi:

> [1] This man was born in Sopha after the return, and while still a very young man he led a virtuous life. [2] And since the whole people honored him as holy and gentle, it called him Malachi, which means, "angel"; for he was indeed beautiful to behold. [3] Moreover, whatever he himself said in prophecy, on the same day an angel of God appeared and repeated (it).

However, the final sentence does suggest that there is good reason to suppose that Malachi was not considered in any way an angel. His name means angel, and he had a beautiful countenance—a trait sometimes associated with angels—but, according to this source, what Malachi said was then confirmed by an angel. The ambiguity in the "messenger" role of the prophet Malachi was taken up in the NT in the person of John the Baptist.

3.10 *John the Baptist*

Each of the synoptic gospels records a tradition of John the Baptist in which Jesus is said to quote the prophet Mal 3:1 with regard to John. Matthew and Luke likely took the tradition from Mark, but they expand upon it.[84] Matthew actually says that John is the prophet Elijah returned.

Mal 3:1 states, "Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts." Then Mal 4:5 states, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day

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[83] Cf. also 2 Esd 1:40, "and Malachi, who is called the messenger of the Lord" (qui et angelus Domini vocatus est).

[84] This study accepts with the majority of scholars Markan priority; see note 89 in section 2.7 above.

of the Lord comes." Gieschen has suggested that reading these two passages together with 4:5, which specifies Elijah as the messenger (מלאך; ἄγγελος) foretold in 3:1, allows us to understand that the early Christians and other interpreters would have understood Elijah's return to be angelomorphic.[85]

Interestingly, Mark connects Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3, attributing both to the prophet Isaiah in a pronouncement about the role of John the Baptist:

> [2a] As it is written [γέγραπται] in Isaiah the prophet [Ησαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ],
> [2b] "Behold, I send my messenger [τὸν ἄγγελόν μου] before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; [Mal 3:1]
> [3] the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight—" [Isa 40:3]
> [4] John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

In subsequent verses, we are told that John baptized all those who went out to him in the River Jordan (v. 5). A physical description of John is given (v. 6). He is clothed in camel's hair with a leather girdle, and he eats locusts and honey. John announces that he is unfit to stoop and untie the sandals of the one who is to come (v. 7). John then baptizes Jesus (v. 9). The heavens open, and a voice announces that Jesus is a "beloved son" who pleases the Father (v. 11). Jesus is then driven into the desert (v. 13), and John is arrested (v. 14). No more is made of John's role in Mark until chapter 6, when, after John is beheaded, some people think that Jesus is John the Baptist returned from the dead (6:14). These passages supply little evidence that John was in any way understood as an angel. In fact his physical description seems to go against any such identification, since there is nothing miraculous about his appearance and he eats human food. Matthew connects John the Baptist with Elijah via Mal 3:1, so it is important to consider this evidence.

Matt 11:7–14 expands the story regarding John the Baptist.[86]

> [7] As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed

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[85] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 167–168. See also C. Joynes, "The Return of Elijah: An Exploration of the Character and Context of the Relationship between Elijah, John the Baptist and Jesus in the Gospels" (Oxford: D.Phil. thesis, 1998).

[86] The parallel passage in Luke 7:24–35 is very similar to Matthew but does not equate John the Baptist with Elijah.

> shaken by the wind? [8] Why then did you go out? To see a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses. [9] Why then did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. [10] This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger (τὸν ἄγγελόν) before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.' [11] Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. [12] From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. [13] For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; [14] and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come."

Matthew seems to connect Mal 3:1 and Mal 4:5 in the person of John. Mal 4:5 states, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes." The prophet Elijah was taken up into heaven by a mystical chariot and did not die (2 Kgs 2:11). Malachi seems to reflect an expectation of his return. Matthew sees the fulfillment of this prophecy in the person of John, who is known as God's messenger (cf. Matt 17:10–13; Mark 6:14–16; cf. Sir 48:9–10). Here again there is no independent evidence that John was understood as an angel, unless we accept that there was some implicit understanding of the figure in Mal 3:1 or the returning Elijah as angelic. To the extent that Matthew identifies John with Elijah, we can perhaps understand John to be a messenger of God, but the stress on his being "born of a woman" (v. 11) and his subsequent death (14:10) seem to suggest his humanity.

One later interpreter does speak about John the Baptist as an angel, however. Origen in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* quotes from the so-called *Prayer of Joseph* (2.32) to show how John the Baptist may be thought of as an angel. He quotes Mark 1:2 (ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου) and then says of John the Baptist, "We call attention to him being one of the holy angels in service sent down as a forerunner of our saviour" (ἐφίσταμεν μήποτε εἷς τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων τυγχάνων ἐπὶ λειτουργίᾳ καταπέμπεται τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν πρόδρομος). This is a strong identification of John the Baptist as an angel—not only because he is called an angel but also because he is said to be in service (ἐπὶ λειτουργίᾳ), which may indicate one of the angels actually in the presence of God or participating in the heavenly liturgy.

It is certainly possible, given the ambiguity in the text of Mal 3:1, that some early Christians were thinking about John the Baptist as

an angel insomuch as he carried out a function commonly attributed to angels—that is, delivery of a divine message. Moreover, the term ἄγγελος is actually applied to him. At least one later interpreter understood John to be an angel. This represents a somewhat unique piece of evidence; it is uncertain, and arguably unlikely, whether such an understanding of John was widespread among early Christians.

3.11 *Jesus*

As noted in chapter 1, there has been a great deal of recent scholarship on Jesus and angelomorphic Christology. What is clear, however, from these studies is that nowhere in the NT is Jesus spoken of as an angel, though there are some passages that suggest this was an issue for early Christians (Col 2:18, Heb 1–2). J. Dunn summed up this point in 1980:

> So far as we can tell *then no NT writer thought of Christ as an angel*, whether as a pre-existent divine being who had appeared in Israel's history as the angel of the Lord, or as an angel or spirit become man or as a man who by exaltation after death had become an angel.[87]

Clearly, the recent spate of work on angelomorphic Christology suggests that not all scholars are convinced.[88] They have, however, had to look at antecedents, later identifications, and especially angelomorphic descriptions of Christ to develop their arguments. Because the present study focuses on the relationship between humans and angels, my aim here is quite modest relative to the vast literature on angel Christology. This section considers only evidence in which Jesus seems to be likened to an angel in his earthly (human) lifetime.

One case in which Jesus might be considered angelomorphic is in the Transfiguration narratives,[89] which are found in the synoptic gospels (Matt 17:1–9; Mark 9:2–10; Luke 9:28–36) but absent from the fourth gospel.[90] The Transfiguration has often been understood

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[87] J. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM, 1980) 158; italics are his.

[88] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 3, uses this quote as the starting point of his investigation.

[89] On the Transfiguration, see B. Chilton, "Transfiguration" in *ABD* 6:640–642; Str-B. 1:752–758. A useful and relatively up-to-date survey of scholarship on the Transfiguration can be found in A. D. A. Moses, *Matthew's Transfiguration Story and Jewish Christian Controversy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 20–49.

[90] There is a reference to the Transfiguration scene in 2 Pet 1:16–18. The ref-

to fit with the ascent of the Moses motif from Exod 24:16.[91] Additionally, it has been considered a misplaced resurrection account,[92] while others have related it to heavenly ascent and transformation motifs.[93] C. Rowland has suggested, "It would . . . be a mistake to exclude the possibility that we have in this story [the Transfiguration] a reflection of an experience when certain disciples, and particularly Peter, may have believed that they had seen Jesus in the form of an angelic envoy."[94]

There are indeed some aspects of the Transfiguration that support an angelomorphic interpretation. In Mark, Jesus is transfigured (μετεμορφώθη).[95] In Matthew Jesus is transfigured (μετεμορφώθη), and his face shines "like the sun." In Luke his face was "changed (ἕτερον)." This language is fairly explicit that Jesus has undergone a change. His physical appearance is altered, and either his face or his garments, or both, become brilliant. This is certainly an aspect of angelophanies.[96]

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erence seems to be used to legitimate the letter itself by claiming to be Peter, who was present during the event. It states, "For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,' we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain." There is also a version of the Transfiguration in the *Apocalypse of Peter* 15–17.

[91] On this see for, example, W. D. Davies and D. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–1997) 2:684–709; A. D. A. Moses, *Matthew's Transfiguration Story and Jewish Christian Controversy*, pp. 50–84. Interestingly, in Exodus 34:29–35 the result of Moses's seeing God is a glowing face that caused fear in those who saw him.

[92] On this position, held by scholars like J. Wellhausen and R. Bultmann, see R. Stein, "Is the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8) a Misplaced Resurrection Account?" *JBL* 95 (1976) 79–96.

[93] J. Fossum, "Ascensio, Metamorphosis: The 'Transfiguration' of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels" in *The Image of the Invisible God* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1995) 71–94. M. Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975) 237–244.

[94] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 368. Bracketed material my own for clarification. See also M. Sabbe, "La rédaction du récit de la transfiguration" in *La venue du Messie: Messianisme et eschatologie* (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962) 65–100; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 39–51. This is also the line of argument taken by P. Nogueira, "Heavenly Journey Elements in the Transfiguration Narrative: Apocalypticism and the Beginning of Christology," paper delivered to the Oxford Millenium Conference (April 2000).

[95] For a definition of the term, see J. Behm, "μεταμορφόω" in *TDNT* 4:755–759. The same verb μεταμορφόω appears on two occasions in Paul's letters (Rom 12:2, 2 Cor 3:18). In 2 Cor 3:18 (cf. also 1 Cor 15:51), Paul writes, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed [μεταμορφούμεθα] into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." This seems to suggest an ongoing change of the believer into some type of divine being.

[96] As noted in the introduction to part one above.

Two further points support a divine identification for Jesus. Moses and Ejijah appear to Jesus and talk with him. These two venerable figures of the past are known not to have died but to have been taken to heaven (Moses: Deut 34:5; Elijah: 2 Kgs 2:11). That Jesus is seen here with them suggests his exalted status. Lastly, a voice from the clouds proclaims that Jesus "is my Son, listen to him."[97]

It is not entirely clear that Jesus became an angel, since the term itself does not appear, nor is it clear that the transformation that he underwent was permanent. Nevertheless, the evidence here indicates that at least for the Transfiguration, Jesus was angelomorphic.

More interesting is the Gospel of Thomas, Logion 13. Greek fragments of Thomas were discovered more than a hundred years ago in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt.[98] In 1945 a complete Coptic manuscript of the gospel was discovered among the finds at Nag Hammadi.[99] Thomas's impact on NT studies has been among the most pronounced of all the Coptic writings uncovered there, since scholars immediately began to draw comparisons between it and the hypothetical sayings source named Q. More recent work has begun to look at Thomas as its own gospel, with a distinct community behind it just like the canonical gospels.[100] The date of Thomas has been debated; the suggestions range from sometime between the mid-first to mid-second century CE.[101] The range indicates that the ideas in Thomas are roughly contemporary with those of this study.

Logion 13 is reminiscent of the confession of Peter in the gospels.[102] Significantly, in the synoptics, this confession immediately precedes the Transfiguration account.[103] Jesus asks the disciples for opinions about his identity. In the Gospel of Thomas, it is Thomas whose answer is correct, however, not Peter's. Nevertheless, Peter's response is telling for our purposes:

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[97] This seems to create a link with Jesus's baptism (Mark 1:11, Matt 3:17, Luke 3:22). In particular Matthew's phrasing in 3:17 and 17:5 is identical.

[98] *P. Oxy.* 1:654, 655.

[99] *NHC* II, 2.

[100] See A. DeConick, *Seek to See Him* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997).

[101] R. Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 12–21.

[102] Cf. Matt 16:13–20, Mark 8:27–30, Luke 9:18–21, John 6:67–71.

[103] Thomas contains no Transfiguration account, but Fletcher-Louis (*Luke-Acts*, p. 47) suggests Thomas may have been aware of their relative location in the Synoptics.

> [Logion 13] Jesus said to his disciples: Make a comparison to me and tell me who I am like. Simon Peter said to him: You are like a righteous angel [δίκαιος ἄγγελος]. Matthew said to him: You are like a wise man of understanding, Thomas said to him: Master, my mouth will not at all be capable of saying whom you are like. Jesus said, "I am not your master, because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have measured out." And he took him, he withdrew, he spoke three words to him. When Thomas came back to his companions, they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?" Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the sayings that he spoke to me, you will pick up stones and throw them at me; a fire will come from the rocks and burn you up."

The context of the passage suggests that similes offered by Simon Peter and Matthew are meaningful and reverent but not altogether satisfactory. Thomas's response seems to elicit something of a rebuke tempered by a recognition of deeper understanding from Jesus, since he then takes Thomas aside and gives him three words that apparently permit more insight into Jesus's true identity. When Thomas returns to the other disciples, they ask him what Jesus has told him. Thomas says that if he were to tell them, they would want to stone him but that the stones would consume them.

A number of scholars have suggested that the three words are likely to have been אהיה אשר אהיה (Exod 3:14).[104] Thus, Jesus has compared himself with the divine. If Thomas were to share this information, speaking the ineffable name, the other disciples would be compelled to stone him.[105] R. Valantasis says that the comparisons of Jesus with an angel and with a philosopher "locate Jesus within the spectrum of understandings of divine figures as angelic or transcendently philosophical. These two understandings of Jesus operate within the spectrum of commonly understood religious figures."[106] Ultimately, the likening of Jesus to an angel in this logion is just that, a comparison. Jesus asks, "Make a comparison and tell me what I am like." There is no indication that any equation is being made. In fact, even if one were implied, the context suggests it would not be a satisfactory understanding. Therefore, it does not seem that here we can confidently speak of Jesus as an angel.

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[104] See A. DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, p. 113 n. 40; J. Fossum, *The Name of God*, p. 98 n. 59.

[105] Stoning was the punishment for blasphemy (Lev 24:16, John 10:30f., *m.* Sahn 7:4–5).

[106] R. Valantasis, *Gospel of Thomas*, p. 75.

Lastly, there is an interesting account of Jesus being literally clothed as Lithargoel in the apocryphal work *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles* 9 (second-third century CE):[107]

> He said to Peter, "Peter!" And Peter was frightened, for how did he know that his name was Peter? Peter responded to the Savior, "How do you know me, for you called my name?" Lithargoel answered, "I want to ask you who gave the name Peter to you?" He said to him, "It was Jesus Christ, the son of the living God. He gave this name to me." He answered and said, "It is I! Recognize me, Peter." He loosened the garment, which clothed him—the one into which he had changed himself because of us—revealing to us in truth that it was he. We prostrated ourselves on the ground and worshipped him. We comprised eleven disciples. He stretched forth his hand and caused us to stand. We spoke with him humbly. Our heads were bowed down in unworthiness as we said, "What you wish we will do. But give us power to do what you wish at all times."[108]

The reaction of Peter and the apostles to the revelation of Jesus is often associated with the epiphanies. Lithargoel is an enigmatic character who changes throughout the story but appears to be some sort of divine being, quite possibly angelic. It is difficult to know what to make of this tradition. It is somewhat late but suggests that, even if angel christologies were quickly discounted by the early church, they were not completely gone from consideration, especially perhaps in Gnostic circles. This source clearly would fit into an "angelomorphic" portrayal of Jesus in that he appears as an angel. That he is clothed as an angel and then removes that guise suggests not a permanent but a temporary change of physical appearance.

3.12 *Stephen*

Acts 6 records that Stephen, chosen to be one of the seven ministers to the community in Jerusalem, performed great signs (Acts 6:8). Some in the community became jealous of him and began to conspire against him (Acts 6:11). He is seized and brought before the

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[107] A. Molinari, *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve: Allegory, Ascent, and Ministry in the Wake of the Decian Persecution* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 2000) 201–204, suggests that the final redaction of the text dates to the Decian persecution (249–251 CE) and that the genre is largely allegorical, with a mix of realism and surrealism (pp. 53–92).

[108] Translation from J. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (New York: Harper Collins, 1988) 292–293.

council (6:12–13). Just prior to Stephen's defense speech (Acts 7) comes the somewhat enigmatic statement, "And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel [ὡσεὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου]" (Acts 6:15).[109] It seems probable that Luke does not simply mean a human "messenger" for ἄγγελος in this instance, since the term would then convey no special significance. Nevertheless, he uses the qualifier (ὡσεί) in speaking about the appearance of Stephen's face; that is, his face was *like* an angel's face.

To understand what such a statement meant to Luke and his audience, it is necessary to consider what antecedents and sources Luke may have been calling upon in this reference. Munck suggests, "In the midst of all these falsehoods, Stephen's face shone like an angel."[110] This is not particularly helpful for understanding what Luke might have meant by this comment.

In the Hebrew Bible, Moses has an epiphany, and his countenance is altered (Exod 34:29–35). This scene may also have informed Luke's writing:

> [29] When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. [30] And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. [31] But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. [32] And afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. [33] And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; [34] but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, [35] the people of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone; and Moses would put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

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[109] The D text adds "standing in their midst (ἑστῶτος ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν)." This suggests that an angel was present with Stephen at that moment or that Stephen himself was transformed into an angel, since this phrase locates the angelomorphic being in the onlookers' physical space rather than simply leaving it as an appearance or apparition.

[110] J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967) 59. Similarly, E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971) 272, says, "This transfiguration signifies for Luke that Stephen is filled with the Holy Spirit, and thereby enabled to make the speech which now follows."

The idea of Moses's face being changed at Sinai seems to have influenced Luke's image of Stephen in some way. O. Glombitza has suggested that the giving of the Law by angels in Acts 7:53 (cf. Deut 33:2, Gal 3:19, Acts 7:38, Heb 2:2) is parallel to the teaching (giving of the law) by the angel-like Stephen in 6:15.[111] Related to this passage is an interesting parallel from Qumran, 4Q374.[112] This fragment seems to talk about Moses at Sinai, saying that he [Moses] was made "as God [לאלוהים]" and that God "caused his face to shine."[113]

Some scholars have suggested that Stephen's angelic appearance is connected with his subsequent martyrdom.[114] In the early Christian *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, we do find the belief that the martyrs are transformed into angelomorphic beings immediately prior to their death. The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 2:3 states, "but it [the reward of righteousness] was shown by the Lord to them who were no longer men, but already angels" (cf. *Hermas Vis* 2:2:7 and *Sim* 9:25:2).

After completing his defense speech in Acts 7:55, Stephen is filled with the holy spirit and has a vision: "[He] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.'" So too, in the *Martyrdom* 12:1, Polycarp is "filled with courage and joy, and his countenance with grace [τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτου/ χάριτος ἐπληροῦτο] so that it not only did not fall with trouble at the things said to him, but that the Pro-Consul was astounded." The change in Stephen's countenance seems to be echoed in Polycarp.

C. Fletcher-Louis has noted some of the difficulties with the martyrdom interpretation.[115] He rightly points out that this type of interpretation has been used to downplay the significance of the passage. Besides the fact that between Stephen's change in countenance and his martyrdom are some 53 intervening verses, Fletcher-Louis also notes that there are no Jewish, pre-Christian examples of righteous martyrs becoming angelic before their death.

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[111] O. Glombitza, "Zur Charakterisierung des Stephanus in Act 6 und 7" *ZNW* 53 (1962) 238–244.

[112] C. Newsom, "4Q374: A Discourse on the Exodus/Conquest Tradition." Also in *DJD* XIX; C. Fletcher-Louis, "4Q374: A Discourse on the Sinai Tradition," pp. 236–252.

[113] Cf. also Dan 12:3 and Rev 1:16.

[114] See H. Conzlemann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) 48; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 96–98.

[115] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 97.

Ultimately, Acts 6:15 seems to build upon a relatively widespread Jewish (and early Christian) understanding of the physical appearance of angels. That Stephen had "a face like an angel" suggests that his countenance was in some way illuminated and temporarily transformed. This may be related to the idea in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* that martyrs received angelic status just prior to their death; however, Stephen's angelic status may also have been linked to the giving of Torah/revelation. There does not seem to be any strong indication that he underwent any kind of transformation into an angel.

3.13 *Paul*

Paul uses the term ἄγγελος ten times in his epistles.[116] In Gal 4, he makes an interesting reference to angels. In the larger context of the discussion Paul is stating his understanding of the purpose of the Law (chapter 3) and exhorting the Galatians as heirs to the promise to Abraham to follow Christ (4:1–11). At verse 12, he switches to remind the Galatians of their treatment of him during his visit to them. In Gal 4:14, Paul says, "and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but [ἀλλα] received me as an angel of God [ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ], as Christ Jesus."[117] While the meaning of 4:14 is unclear, the translation is not often disputed. The ἀλλα seems to have a strong adversative affect. The Galatians did not reject Paul but instead received him as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. The ὡς clauses seem to stand in apposition, so angel of God and Christ Jesus are both the comparative ways in which Paul was received.

Many commentators see the reference to "angel" here as meaning "messenger/envoy" in the sense of commissioning.[118] The parallel

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[116] Taking with the majority of scholars seven letters to be authentically Pauline (Rom, 1 and 2 Cor, Gal, Phil. 1 Thess and Phmn). On this see R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 406, 585–589. The ten occurrences of the term ἄγγελος are: Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 4:9, 6:3, 11:10, 13:1; 2 Cor 11:14, 12:7; Gal 1:8, 3:19, 4:14 and also in 1 Thess 4:16 ἀρχαγγέλου.

[117] A noteworthy parallel from a fourth-century CE text is *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 3, "At times he [Paul] looked like a man [ἄνθρωπος], and at times he had the face of an angel [ἀγγέλου πρόσωπον εἶχεν]." This is likely based on Acts 6:15 and may be more loosely based on Gal 4:14, since the Acts themselves use 2 Cor 12:3 as a starting point. On the appearance of Paul, see A. Malherbe, "A Physical Description of Paul" *HTR* 79 (1986) 170–175.

[118] E.g. J. Dunn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 235.

clause "as Christ Jesus" is then understood as one of commissioning—that is, the messenger can act with the authority of the one who sent him. In some sense Paul's statement parallels the words of Jesus in Matt 10:40, "He who receives [δεχόμενος] you receives [δεχόμενος] me, and he who receives [δεχόμενος] me receives [δεχόμενος] him who sent me" (cf. John 13:20; Mark 9:37; negative construction Luke 10:16). The Galatians received Paul and, in so doing, received Christ and Paul's gospel message (and implicitly God). This would then reflect Paul's own belief that he was sent/commissioned by the risen Jesus himself (Gal 1:12).[119] Certainly, some aspect of this idea of commissioning is meant by Paul's use of ἄγγελος here, since the term itself conveys this idea.[120] However, Paul often uses the term "apostle" to mean "messenger" (e.g., Phil 2:25), so we may be right in thinking that, when he uses "angel," he may mean something more.

A. Goddard and S. Cummins offer an intriguing insight. They briefly survey some literature suggesting that in Jewish writings of the time, there was an "interplay between afflicted saints and their angelic counterparts."[121] Moreover, they note that in the early Christian literature martyrs are sometimes identified with angels at the moment of their death (Acts 6:15, *Mart. Pol.* 2:3). This reading, which they admit can only be tentatively placed along a trajectory of disparate evidence, fits well enough with their interpretation; but it would be difficult to substantiate any significant connection between Gal 4:14 and the literature they cite, since Paul does not seem to suggest (even in the context of suffering) that he is near to his own death (martyrdom)—at least in Galatians.[122] Nevertheless, the intriguing aspect of their suggestion may be that, if Paul preached a Christ-patterned

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[119] Paul may be hinting at this idea also in Gal 1:16 when he says that he has Christ "in him [ἐν ἐμοὶ]." He might be suggesting that he has some sort of divine being/power within him (cf. Gal 2:20).

[120] A. Goddard and S. Cummins, "Ill or Ill-treated? Conflict and Persecution as the Context of Paul's Original Ministry in Galatia (Galatians 4:12–20)" *JSNT* 52 (1993) 93–136. They note that the LXX use of ἄγγελον θεοῦ is relevant here, such that the Galatians "gladly recognized Paul's divine commission and authority" (p. 108).

[121] A. Goddard and S. Cummins, "Ill or Ill-treated?" p. 108.

[122] A number of recent works have argued that suffering was an integral part of Paul's mission. See S. Hafemann, "The Role of Suffering in the Mission of Paul" *in The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles,* ed. Jostein Ådna and Hans Kvalbein (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2000); T. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); E. Baasland, "Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians" *ST* 38 (1984) 135–150.

gospel (i.e., one of self-giving), which he embodied in weakness through persecution (4:14 and especially 2 Cor 11:23–33), then we can perhaps see Paul's teaching as the nascent seed of the ideal of martyrdom as the ultimate self-giving in a Christlike pattern.[123]

Recently, C. Gieschen has strongly asserted that Paul is presenting an angelomorphic self-understanding.[124] Gieschen begins his analysis by noting that most modern interpreters take the phrase "as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus" to be hypothetical; that is to say, the Galatians received Paul as if he were an angel or even Jesus Christ. Gieschen breaks down his exegesis by asking two fundamental questions: (1) what does Paul mean by the phrase ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ, and (2) what is meant by the parallel ὡς clauses? To the first, Gieschen argues that Paul meant "angel" in the technical sense, "as a spirit who mediates between the heavenly and the earthly realms." Regarding the ὡς clauses, Gieschen draws on examples from Paul (1 Cor 3:1 and 2 Cor 2:17) as well as from Phm 17 and Didache 11:3–4 to demonstrate that the clauses stand in apposition to each other: God's angel is Christ Jesus. Gieschen thus concludes that Paul in some sense means that he is an angelic being because he has been united through his apocalypse with a specific angel of God, namely Jesus Christ.

One may want to question Gieschen's assertion that Paul's revelation (apocalypse) of the risen Christ meant that he had in some way become angelomorphic. The common interpretation of Paul's account of a mystical ascent in 2 Cor 12:2–5 is that Paul is not very affirming of its value.[125] Nevertheless, some of the strongest support for this comes from Paul himself. In the same pericope, 2 Cor 12:1–10, after the mention of the man who fourteen years earlier had a mystical ascent, Paul says, "On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, *except of my weaknesses* [ταῖς ἀσθενείαις]." He then discusses the "thorn in the flesh [σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί]," the "angel of Satan" who kept him from being too elated—presumably in his revelation. In verse 9 he repeats, "I will all the

[123] Paul may have thought of himself as actually embodying Christ. On this see C. Joynes, *The Return of Elijah*, pp. 202–216.

[124] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 315–325. M. Barker also says that Paul equated Jesus with an angel, citing Gal 4:14; *The Great Angel* (London: SPCK, 1992) 223.

[125] R. Price, "Punished in Paradise" *JSNT* 7 (1980) 33–40, suggests that Paul's thorn in the flesh is an angel of Satan who has come with him from his mystical ascent to keep him from being too prideful. See also P. Gooder, "Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 and Heavenly Ascent" (Oxford: D.Phil. thesis, 1998).

more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

In support of this view, Gieschen notes the work of C. Morray-Jones, who has traced the idea that the mystic is actually transformed during his vision.[126] He also cites *2 En* 22:8, in which Enoch ascends to heaven and is said to be changed to the form of the glorious ones of heaven. If indeed Paul identified with this tradition, then his statement makes a great deal more sense. The Galatians received him as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus, because Paul himself, via his personal apocalypse of the risen Jesus, had been transformed.

Gieschen has been challenged on this exegesis, and it does perhaps press the evidence too far.[127] Therefore, an alternative understanding of Paul's meaning is required. Many interpreters believe that Paul is using hyperbole to make his point about the Galatians' original reception of him and his message; however, if seen in light of traditions such as Gen 18, Paul's meaning may be susceptible of a better interpretation.

It is relatively certain that Paul has in mind the Abraham cycle (Gen 16–21) in his arguments concerning those who are heirs to the promise, since Abraham appears by name seven times in Gal 3. However, the idea that Paul might have had in mind the Gen 18 visitation of angels (and God) to Abraham has not been explored. If Paul did have such ideas in the back of his mind, it might mean that he intends to compliment the Galatians on having received him in a way befitting the reception of a divine guest. This is more than purely a metaphor, since Paul would have in mind the possibility that divine beings really do visit human beings.

It is important to recall that Gen 18 is the occasion when God and the angels brought the news that Sarah was to bear Abraham a true heir (unlike Ishmael in Gen 17, born of the slave Hagar). Abraham received his guests with proper hospitality. It was then revealed to him that he would finally have the son promised him. The promise was continuing life through his progeny. In Rom 4:17, Paul notes that this promise gave life from death. Paul hints at this very same understanding in Gal 4:29 when he says, "But as at that

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[126] C. Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition" *JJS* 43 (1992) 1–31.

[127] For some strong reactions to his exegesis of this passage, see reviews by D. Hannah, *JTS* 51 (2000) and J. Davila, *JSJ* 30 (1999) 345–346.

time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now." The one born κατὰ πνεῦμα is Isaac, since he was born to parents who were beyond the age when they could normally produce children.

This argument is strengthened by the fact that Abraham appears again just after our passage in the allegory of Sarah and Hagar (Gal 4:21–31).[128] Paul employs this allegory to show how those who are heirs of the promise of life to Abraham via Sarah are, like Isaac, children of promise. Paul's language of slavery is continued also, in that Hagar is a slave and her offspring represent those who are in the world and enslaved to the elemental powers.

Whether the Galatians would have been able to hear this allusion to Gen 18 and Abraham's reception of the angels depends on how one understands that community's makeup. Nevertheless, it seems likely that Paul would have had this passage in mind as he wrote Galatians and constructed his argument of the Galatians (Gentiles) as heirs to the promise given to Abraham, a promise that was ultimately fulfilled in the narrative of Gen 18.

Paul may be drawing upon a number of Hebrew Bible traditions in which humans played host to angels when he says that the Galatians received him correctly—that is, showed him hospitality as if he were an angel or even Jesus himself. Not only, then, did they receive Paul correctly in that way, but Paul also mentions that despite his infirmity (4:14) they did not turn him away. The infirmity creates a situation whereby the Galatians might have rejected Paul without necessarily breaching hospitality; instead they received him graciously.

3.14 *Taxo*

Like other writings in the genre, the Testament of Moses purports to be the final words of Moses to his successor Joshua.[129] In the Testament of Moses 10:2 we read, "Then will be filled the hands of the messenger (Latin: *nuntius*), who is in the highest place appointed. Yea, he will at once avenge them of their enemies." The identity of this messenger has been debated by scholars. Through a comparison of the role played by each, this *nuntius* was first identified as the

[128] L. Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 431.
[129] For arguments on dating see section 3.7 above.

archangel Michael.[130] T. Manson pointed out that *nuntius*, when used in the Vulgate, refers to human messengers, which offered Elijah (citing the role of Elijah in Mal 3:1f. and Sir 48:10) as a possible candidate for the *nuntius*.[131] His suggestion has not been taken up by others, however. D. Carlson explored the relationship between Taxo in chapter 9 and the *nuntius* in chapter 10 from the perspective of vengeance in apocalyptic literature.[132] The strength of his analysis was to see the close connection between the suffering of Taxo and his sons in chapter 9 and the subsequent call for vengeance in 10:2. His analysis led him to see the messenger in 10:2 as a "priestly" heavenly figure.[133]

Recently, J. Tromp has argued that the *nuntius* should be equated with Taxo from chapter 9.[134] Tromp stresses that the *nuntius* is a human being, Taxo. He states that when we see Taxo as the figure in 10:2, "the disturbing appearance of a superfluous angel is discarded."[135]

This situation is a good example of the ambiguity that seems to exist in the definition of "angels" in this period. That scholars can see either-or suggests that perhaps the best way to interpret the text is to leave open the possibility that the author intended some ambiguity. The difficulties that arise in trying to decide between human or angelic messenger are alleviated when we recognize the possibility of a fluid understanding of the relationship between humans and angels.

If this is the case, then in the Testament of Moses this *nuntius* appears to be a figure who will avenge the suffering of Taxo and his sons. Such a scenario would be in keeping with the evidence

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[130] This language is reminiscent of the role of Melchizedek in 11Q13. Some have argued for the equation of Michael and Melchizedek in the writings from the Dead Sea, e.g., F. Garcia Martinez, "The Eschatological Figure of 4Q246" in *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992) 162–179; J. Davila, "Michael, Melchizedek, and Holy War," pp. 259–272; *HJPAJC* IIIi:450.

[131] T. Manson, "Miscellanea Apocalyptica" *JTS* 46 (1945) 41–45.

[132] D. Carlson, "Vengeance and Angelic Mediation in Testament of Moses 9 and 10" *JBL* 101 (1982) 85–95. He sees the theme of vengeance playing out in other apocalypses such as *1 En.* 9–10, 47, 91–104, Rev 8:3–5 and also in Tob 12:12–15.

[133] His insight may be given added support by J. Tromp, who notes (p. 209 n. 29) that in Hecataeus (in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, XL, 3, 5), the Jews, "call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts as a messenger (ἄγγελόν) to them in God's commandments" (see 3.15).

[134] J. Tromp, "Taxo, The Messenger of the Lord" *JSJ* 21 (1990) 200–209. See also J. Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses: A Critical Edition with Commentary* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993) 228–231.

[135] J. Tromp, "Taxo," p. 209.

from this section that righteous individuals seemed to have a particular access to the angelic. There is not a strong case here for seeing Taxo as either angelomorphic or as an angel.

3.15 *The High Priest in Hecateus of Abdera*

Hecateus of Abdera, a non-Jew writing in the fourth century BCE, is recorded by Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* XL, 3, 5 (first century BCE). Diodorus is recorded in Photius (ninth century CE), so it is difficult to know for certain how much the text has been changed over time and to what audience it had originally (and later) been directed. Verses 5–6 says of the high priest:

> [5] These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Jews never have a king, and the authority over the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. They call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts [γίνεσθαι] as a messenger [ἄγγελον] to them of God's commandments. [6] It is he, we are told, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightaway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them.[136]

Falling to the ground is often part of an angelophany, but it is almost exclusively the case that this occurs once the identity of the angel has been revealed to the seer. There is some hint in the Hebrew Bible that the priestly role is one of mediation that may be considered something like an angel. Mal 2:7 says, "For the lips of a priest [כהן] should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger [מלאך] of the Lord of hosts." Fletcher-Louis stresses the worship of the high priest as representative of an exalted nature and the donning of the priestly garb as integral to that role.[137] He writes, "Falling to the ground in rever-

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[136] M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974–1984) 1:26–35.

[137] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 120–129. He develops more fully the idea of the importance of the high priest's garbs as transformative to an angelic status in C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 222–251. The exegesis is pertinent to the Qumran group but is not as relevant to a discussion of the high priest more generally, so it is simply noted here.

ence/worship is obviously a posture typical of theophanies and angelophanies, and this action demands an ontological rather than a purely functional sense to the priest's identity as ἄγγελος."[138] Fletcher-Louis has also seen the high priest in the interpretation of Dan 7:13.[139] However, L. Stuckenbruck, in his study on angel veneration in this period, concludes that "reactions to the presence of an angel or human superior [are] frequently not deemed an act which runs at all counter to the worship of one God."[140] This suggests that due reverence could be given to the high priest without demanding an ontological understanding of his identity as messenger (ἄγγελος), since he need not be understood as divine in order to be treated reverentially.

The problem in understanding the passage from Hecateus lies in knowing in what sense the term ἄγγελος is used. Is it simply meant to refer to the high priest as human messenger of divine will or something more? Reverence for the high priest suggests that it might be something more, but it is not clear that Hecateus has particularly reliable information regarding the practice in the Jerusalem cult. F. Watson noticed this passage some time ago.[141] Interestingly, he concluded,

> But while words cannot, certainly, be pressed as evidence of Jewish attitudes or practices of the late fourth century B.C., it is at least interesting and perhaps significant that he [Hecateus] gives no hint of a doctrine of angels [as present at the giving of the law], and knows of no intermediary between God and the Jewish nation other than the man to whom has fallen the sacred office of High Priest.[142]

Thus, it is difficult to come to any firm conclusions regarding this passage, considering our current uncertainties about its date and context. The non-Jewish author Hecataeus may have used the term ἄγγελος to relate the idea of the high priest's role as intermediary and interpreter of divine ordinance. That the Jews are said to fall to the ground and worship the high priest may represent something of a misunderstanding of the high priest's role. The use of the term

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[138] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 121.

[139] C. Fletcher-Louis, "The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Dan 7:13 as a Test Case" *SBLSP* (1997) 161–193.

[140] L. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology: A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995) 83.

[141] F. Watson, "The Messenger of God in Hecataeus of Abdera" *HTR* 48 (1955) 255–257.

[142] F. Watson, "The Messenger," p. 257; words in brackets are mine.

ἄγγελος probably did not conjure any ideas of the human high priest as a divine being on earth, but it cannot be certain that it did not for some hearers.

Lastly, before moving on it is necessary to discuss briefly the suggestion by Fletcher-Louis of the priesthood (in general) being understood as angelomorphic.[143] To make his case, he suggests that the prophetic role, with its more suggestive status between God and humanity, was absorbed into the priesthood. Then, with the Temple as focus for Jewish worship and a place where the earthly and heavenly coalesce, the priesthood can be seen as a group that enjoyed an "angelomorphic" (quasi-divine) status. Ultimately, even though it is plausible that the priesthood could have been conceived of in such a way, we do not see much, if any, evidence that the priesthood actually was so conceived. On this point, I remain unconvinced, though Fletcher-Louis is continuing work in this vein.

3.16 *The Daughters of Job*

In the Testament of Job the daughters of Job are described as undergoing a transformation. Like other writings in the testament genre, the work purports to record the words of Job near the end of his life. The dating of the work is not certain, but most suggest a date around the turn of the era.[144] The daughters of Job receive garments from their father that seem to bring about a transformation with an angelomorphic character:

> [48:1] Thus, when the one called Hermera arose, she wrapped around her own string just as her father had said. [2] And she took on another heart—no longer minded toward earthly things—but she spoke ecstatically in the angelic dialect [τῇ ἀγγελικῇ διαλέκτῳ], sending up a hymn to God in accord with the hymnic style of the angels [τὴν τῶν ἀγγέλων ὑμνολογίαν]. And as she spoke ecstatically, she allowed, "The Spirit" [τό πνεῦμα] to be inscribed on her garment.
>
> [49:1] The Kasia bound hers on and had her heart changed so that she no longer regarded worldly things. [2] And her mouth took on the dialect of the archons [τῶν ἀρχῶν] and she praised God for the creation of the heights. [3] So, if anyone wishes to know "The Creation of the Heavens," he will be able to find it in "The Hymns of Kasia."

[143] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 56–87 and 222–251; *Luke-Acts*, pp. 118–129.
[144] R. Spittler, "Testament of Job" in *OTP* 1:833–834.

> [50:1] Then the other one also, named Amaltheia's Horn, bound on her cord. And her mouth spoke ecstatically in the dialect of those on high, [2] since her heart also was changed, keeping aloof from worldly things. For she spoke in the dialect of the cherubim, glorifying the Master of virtues by exhibiting their splendor. [3] And finally whoever wishes to grasp a trace of "The Paternal Splendor" will find it written down in "The Prayers of Amaltheia's Horn."[145]

This text certainly seems to indicate that the daughters of Job were transformed. One of the important transformations was their internal "change of heart." They no longer were concerned with things of this life but focused more on the worship of God. Their worship took the form of speaking (ecstatically) in the melodic form of the angels (cf. Luke 2:13–14; 1 Cor 13:1).[146] Van der Horst says, however, that he sees the women as undergoing "a radical and lasting change; in fact they become virtually heavenly beings."[147] It is not clear that their change was permanent or whether it was related to their putting on of garments.

What is particularly fascinating about this passage is that it is the *daughters* of Job who become angelomorphic. In no other extant text are women said to become like angels. Moreover, as seen in chapter 2, angels were often represented as young men. Like all the texts in this period, the dominant culture, whether it was Jewish or Graeco-Roman, was patriarchal. This certainly would flavor any portrayals. That many angelic beings in the Hebrew Bible were first referred to as "men" was also likely a contributing factor in such a bias. Nevertheless, it is not entirely clear why such a gender bias should necessarily exist in the discussion of angels. It likely stems from a belief that women were ritually impure (Lev 12:1–8 and 15:25–30, cf. also *m.* Kelim 1:8) and thus excluded from holy places such as the inner parts of the Jerusalem temple; such a belief may have been extended by analogy to the heavens. However, the issue of gender is not completely outside the discussion relating to angels.[148]

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[145] Translation from *OTP* 1:865–866. Greek text taken from S. Brock, *Testamentum Iobi* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967) 56–57.

[146] On glossolalia see W. Mills, ed., *Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research on Glossolalia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986).

[147] P. W. van der Horst, "Images of Women in the Testament of Job" in *Studies on the Testament of Job*, ed. M. Knibb and P. W. van der Horst (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 104.

[148] In 4.6 the issue of the veiling of the Corinthian women is considered, and in chapter 6 the issue of human women mating with angels is examined. There remains much work to be done, however, on issues of gender in relation to angel beliefs, especially, angels' common portrayal as young men and the idea of angelic celibacy.

3.17 *On Being like Angels in Heaven*

Lastly, there is evidence that some groups believed humans would be transformed into angels in the afterlife.

Some afterlife traditions are present in the Hebrew Bible. Most references are to a shadowy existence in Sheol (Ps 6:6, 88:4–6, 115:17; Eccl 9:4–10; Isa 38:18–19). There is no reference to this existence being angelic. The clearest reference to an afterlife in the Hebrew Scriptures is Dan 12:2–3,[149] which states,

> [2] And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [3] And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

The passage seems to speak of a resurrection in which the dead will be judged. Those found wise will shine in the heavens, and those who turn people to righteousness will be like stars. As already noted, light is sometimes a characteristic of angelic appearance. More importantly, angels are sometimes equated with stars in ancient Jewish texts (Job 38:7 [LXX]; *1 En.* 104:2–6).[150] This equation is made explicit in the later work *2 Bar.* (early second century CE), where the seer asks, "In what shape will the living live in your day?" (49:2).[151] In response, he is told, "For they will live in the heights of that world and they will be like the angels and be equal to the stars. And they will be changed into any shape which they wished, from beauty to loveliness, and from light to the splendour of glory" (51:10). This passage seems to be the clearest indication that the afterlife for humans comes in the form of angels, which are equal to stars. It seems one possible strand of afterlife traditions foresaw humans transforming into heavenly luminaries or stars. This connection is at best indirect and is not seen in the evidence. That human afterlife was thought to be specifically angelic is clearer in some other evidence.

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[149] Other allusions are found in Ezek 37; Hos 6:2; and Isa 24–27; cf. 2 Macc 7:14 and 4Q521 fragment 2. See the comprehensive coverage of this topic in G. W. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972). For a useful summary of the evidence, see J. J. Collins, *Daniel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) 394–398.

[150] See especially M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*, pp. 170–173. F. Lelli, "Stars" in *DDD*, pp. 1530–1540.

[151] A. F. J. Klijn, "2 Baruch" in *OTP* 1:615–652.

Philo's *Sacr.* 5 describes the postmortem existence of Abraham as angelic:

> For also, when Abraham left mortal life, "he was added to the people of God" [Gen 25:8], having gained immortality [ἀφθαρσίαν] and having become equal to the angels [ἴσος ἀγγέλους γεγονώς], for angels are the host of God, incorporeal [ἀσώματοι] and blessed souls.

The larger context for this passage is a discussion of the virtue of Abel over Cain. Philo says, "the addition of one thing is a taking away of some other" (*Sacr.* 1). The addition of Abel meant the taking away of Cain, so when the virtuous Abraham died, he was "gathered/added to his people" (LXX Gen 25:8: προσετέθη πρὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ). In vv. 5–6 Philo says that both Jacob and Isaac also left their corporeal bodies to attain a new state (cf. 4 Macc 7:19, 16:25). All three, as righteous men focused upon God, attained a higher nature, "imperishable and perfect" (ἄφθαρτον καὶ τελεώτατον, *Sacr.* 7).

Philo describes a transformation from a corporeal to an incorporeal state. The incorporeal state is equal to that of angels, which are akin to the thoughts (λόγοι, *Conf.* 27) of God. This transformation comes at the end of Abraham's mortal existence and does not appear to have been in any way part of his earthly existence. Here, as in the transformations considered previously, the person(s) transformed into the angelic state were humans of special character in their earthly life. Also, Philo makes no other mention of humans being transformed into angels. It seems here, then, that Philo intends to show that Abraham as a righteous man took his rightful place among the proper divine thoughts of God in the afterlife. Thus in Philo's interpretation, Abraham (and presumably Isaac and Jacob) were transformed into angels in the afterlife.

1 En. 39, part of the Similitudes of Enoch, describes a vision by Enoch in which he sees the heavens. In chapter 38 the fate of sinners is foretold—they will be destroyed. In 39:4–5 Enoch sees "the dwelling places of the holy ones and their resting places too. So, there my eyes saw their dwelling places with the holy angels and their resting places with the holy ones." It seems clear that, for the author of the Similitudes, the righteous will be in heaven and share in a life like the angels. However, the dating of this text is an issue.[152]

[152] Most scholars accept a date sometime in the first century CE. See the discussion above in section 3.1.

If the text dates to sometime around the first century CE, as many scholars suppose, then the idea of righteous humans becoming angels in heaven seems to be evinced in at least one text.

The Synoptic Gospels contain a tradition wherein the Sadducees challenge Jesus on the nature of the afterlife (Mark 12:18–27, Matt 22:23–33, and Luke 20:27–40). The Markan and Lukan versions are of particular interest.[153] The general setting has the Sadduccees pose a hypothetical question regarding marriage in the afterlife. Their line of questioning is meant to expose the absurdity of belief in resurrection itself, since the Sadducees themselves do not believe in resurrection (Matt 22:23, Mark 12:18, Luke 20:27, Acts 4:1–2; 23:8–9, Josephus *BJ* 2.165, *Ant* 18:16). They ask whose wife a woman would be in the resurrection if, in keeping with Torah, a series of seven brothers had all wed the same woman but died without male issue (vv. 19–23).[154] Jesus's twofold response to their question exposes both the Sadducean misunderstanding of the nature of resurrection life (v. 25) and also their inability to see proof of the resurrection in Scripture (vv. 26–27). Jesus says that in the resurrection no one will marry, but all will be "like angels in heaven" (εἰσὶν ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς).

This pericope is found between other passages focused on correct interpretation: the question on paying taxes to Caesar (12:13–17) and the question of the scribes as to which commandment is the greatest (12:28–34). These pericopes seem grouped together in order to demonstrate the superiority of Jesus's scriptural interpretation to that of all other Jewish groups.

The thrust of Jesus's pronouncement seems to point to the Sadducean failure to understand that human institutions, such as marriage, will not exist in the afterlife; therefore their question is moot. Humans will be like angels (ὡς ἄγγελοι) in that they will have no need of the institution of marriage. This does not necessarily suggest an equation of humans with angels but instead a similarity, in that neither has any need of marriage. The interpretation is open for debate, however. Luke seems to have seen the ambiguity of the Markan form and made some significant alterations.

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[153] The Matthean version does not vary from the Markan in any ways significant to the discussion of angelic afterlife.

[154] The Sadducean argument is based on the marriage prescription of Deut 25:5–10 (cf. also Gen 38:8, Ruth 4:1–10). The question of marital relations upon the death of one brother is also seen in *m.* Yebam. 3:9.

In 20:35 the Lukan Jesus states, "But those who were accounted worthy to attain that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die any more, for they are equal to the angels [the *hapax legomenon*, ἰσάγγελοι] and are sons of God [υἱοί εἰσιν θεου], being sons of the resurrection [τῆς ἀναστάσεως υιοὶ ὄντες]."

Luke's term ἰσάγγελοι is quite similar to Philo's ἴσος ἀγγέλους γεγονώς and may reflect the same kind of idea of equality with angels, rather than mere similarity to angels as in Mark and Matt. This term seems to make a stronger statement for the equality of angels with humans. Still, the question may be raised as to whether this is equality of nature or merely of status. Again, it is not entirely clear. Luke also says that "they cannot die" (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀποθανεῖν), just as Philo says that angels are immortal (ἀφθαρσία).

The context, then, seems to indicate that Jesus speaks of the afterlife as angelic. A few scholars have seen in the Lukan form of this pericope the precursor for later generations of Christians renouncing marriage as a means to a this-life angelic nature, an Ἀγγελικὸς Βίος.[155] T. Karlsen-Seim argues that there are good reasons to see the Lukan version as changing the Markan original to support the current community's rejection of marriage as a means to an angelic existence.[156] Even if we accept that Luke intends for his audience to understand the teaching of Jesus as an outline for living the resurrection life, it still represents human action mimicking the life of angels. It does not mean that humans were transformed into angels in their earthly lives.

Luke records another tradition regarding angels and the afterlife in Acts 23:6–8.[157] Paul has been arrested in Jerusalem for causing uprisings (22:22). He is brought before a council of the Jews (23:1). As Paul offers his defense, he moves the discussion to the topic of res-

[155] See S. Frank, ΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΣ ΒΙΟΣ. *Begriffanalytische und Begriffgeschichteliche Untersuchung zum 'engelgleichen leben' in frühen Mönchtum* (Munster, 1964); R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Penguin, 1986) 336–374, esp. p. 363.

[156] T. Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994). See also C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts,* pp. 86–88, and D. Aune, "Luke 20:34–36A Gnosticized Logion of Jesus?" in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1996) 187–202, who sees the Jesus teaching passage as being (1) stripped from its original narrative, (2) reformulated in an encratite baptismal context, and (3) inserted into the Gospel of Luke.

[157] Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts,* p. 59, notes that τινες τῶν γραμματέων is the same in Luke 20:39 and Acts 23:9, loosely linking these passages.

urrection in order to divert attention from himself and cause factional debate, since the Pharisees and Sadducees are split on the issue:

> [6] But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead I am on trial." [7] And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. [8] For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection [ἀνάστασιν], nor angel [ἄγγελον], nor spirit [πνεῦμα]; but the Pharisees acknowledge them all [τὰ ἀμφότερα].

The interpretation of verse 8 hinges upon the understanding of the term τὰ ἀμφότερα. Its usual meaning is "both," though some have taken it to mean "all." It could mean the Sadducees denied "both" the resurrection and the existence of angels. Recently, D. Daube has asserted that the passage is better understood as the Sadducees' denial of resurrection and of "the span between death and resurrection, which, in widespread belief, a good person spends in the realm or mode of angel or spirit."[158] It is not clear whether this was part of "widespread" belief, but the evidence in this subsection indicates that it was in the minds of some Jews in the late Second Temple period. As G. Nickelsburg concludes, "The evidence indicates that in the intertestamental period there was no single Jewish orthodoxy on the time, mode, and place of resurrection, immortality, and eternal life."[159] B. Viviano has taken the discussion a step further, arguing that the passage is best understood as discussing the denial of the resurrection.[160] The τὰ ἀμφότερα refers to "both" angel and spirit as modes of resurrection. Thus, the nouns ἄγγελος and πνεῦμα stand in apposition to ἀνάστασις, such that Sadducees deny the resurrection in "the form of an angel" or in the "form of a spirit." Viviano's interpretation seems to present the most likely reading of the passage. There is some corroborating evidence for the claim that the Sadducees denied the resurrection. There is no evidence whatsoever that any Jewish group—and in particular one that likely took the Pentateuch, which contains traditions about angels, as sacred—denied the existence of angels. The fluidity in afterlife beliefs seen in the evidence

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[158] David Daube, "On Acts 23: Sadducees and Angels" *JBL* 109 (1990) 493–497.
[159] G. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, p. 180.
[160] B. Viviano, "Sadducees, Angels, and Resurrection (Acts 23:8–9)" *JBL* 111 (1992) 496–498.

from the period shows there was room for debate over the mode of afterlife existence. It seems plausible that τὰ ἀμφότερα refers to the terms "angel" and "spirit," in which case Acts 23 serves as another piece of evidence that some Jews believed the afterlife mode of existence was angelic.

In Rev 6:9–11, John sees a vision of the souls (ψυχή) who have died under an altar. The souls are each given a white robe (cf. *Mart. Asc. Isa.* 9:24–26) and told to rest a while longer until the number of their brothers is fulfilled. It is not clear that the vision is of angels, but D. Aune says, "It is theologically significant that here the dead are in some way present in heaven," since, as he adds, "from the perspective of the OT it is not possible for mortals to go to heaven after their death."[161] The facts that the beings are under the altar in heaven and also are given white robes both seem to point toward a special status, which may perhaps be understood as angelic.

In the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* the prophet Isaiah has a visionary ascent through the seven heavens.[162] During his ascent Isaiah is said to be transformed into an angel. As it now exists in Ethiopic mss., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* consists of two main parts: the story of Isaiah's martyrdom (chapters 1–5) and a vision/ascent (chapters 6–11). The *Ascension* circulated on its own and is extant in Latin and Slavonic copies.[163] This supports the common understanding that the two parts of *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* seem to have been originally separate writings.[164]

There is a growing scholarly consensus that *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* in its complete form dates to the early second century CE.[165] Justin Martyr

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[161] D. Aune, *Revelation*, 3 vols. (Dallas: Word Books, 1997–1998) 1:403.

[162] Cf. the vision to Isa 6:1–13. On the seven heavens, see A. Yarbro Collins, "The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses" in *Death, Ecstasy and Other-Worldly Journeys*, ed. J. Collins and M. Fishbane (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995) 59–93.

[163] M. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah" in *OTP* 2:145–146.

[164] *HJPAJC* IIIi:337; M. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah" in *OTP* 2:147–150; R. Hall, "Isaiah's Ascent to See the Beloved: An Ancient Jewish Source for the *Ascension of Isaiah*" *JBL* 113 (1994) 463–484; J. Knight, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 28–32; and J. Knight, *Disciples of the Beloved One: The Christology, Social Setting and Theological Context of the Ascension of Isaiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 33–39. V. Burch, "The Literary Unity of the Ascensio Isaiae" *JTS* 20 (1919) 17–23, asserts its unity and Christian composition, but this fails to acknowledge the Jewish character of the story of Isaiah's martyrdom.

[165] *HJPAJC* IIIi:337–338; M. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah" in *OTP* 2:149–150; R. Hall, "The *Ascension of Isaiah*: Community Situation, Date, and Place in Early Christianity" *JBL* 109 (1990) 300–306; J. Knight, *The Ascension of Isaiah*, pp. 21–23. On the basis of the ms. evidence alone R. H. Charles suggested a date in the third to second century CE or even earlier; *The Ascension of Isaiah* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1900) xlv.

and Tertullian both make reference to Isaiah's martyrdom, specifically his being sawed in half (*Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 5:11).[166] There are also indications that 3:13–4:22 may refer to the emperor Nero (d. 68 CE). These points aside, it is not entirely clear when the *Ascension* itself was composed. Affinities of the *Ascension* with works like the *Acts of Peter* (c. 150–220 CE) and the *Protoevangelium of James* (c. 150 CE) suggest that it was composed in the early second century CE.[167] It is important to be aware that an early second-century date, though widely accepted, is not certain.

The account of Isaiah's martyrdom seems to be a Jewish work and is only loosely connected to the ascent material. The *Ascension* is a Christian work that culminates in Isaiah seeing Christ descend to earth (disguised as an angel) and once again ascend to heaven.[168] In chapters 6–11, we learn the content of the vision Isaiah had when he was prophesying before King Hezekiah. As Isaiah ascends, he is transformed into an angel. In the third heaven he states, "for the glory of my face was being transformed as I went up from heaven to heaven" (7:25). More explicitly in 8:15 Isaiah is told by his angelic guide that, when he dies and ascends and puts on his heavenly robe, then he "will be equal to the angels who (are) in the seventh heaven." Moreover, Isaiah is able to praise God alongside the angels, "And (strength) was given to me, and I also sang praises with them, and that angel also, and our praise was like theirs" (8:16–17).

In 11:35, we are told that Isaiah returns to normal after his vision until he dies, when he returns to heaven and takes on an angelic form. It seems that Isaiah, when he dies, will be able to become one of the denizens of the seventh heaven (8:15, 9:39) and worship God as one of the righteous dead (e.g., Abel and Enoch).[169]

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[166] *Dial. Trypho* 120:5; *De Patientia* 14 respectively.

[167] M. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah" in *OTP* 2:149–150.

[168] M. Himmelfarb says, "One might argue that Christ's disguise is the opposite side of Isaiah's transformation: while a human being needs to become more like the dwellers in the highest heavens to ascend, Christ needs to become more like the dwellers in the lower heavens to descend." *Ascent to Heaven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 57–58.

[169] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, pp. 56–57, argues that the righteous dead actually enjoy a higher status than the angels in the seventh heaven, but this is not entirely clear. She bases this on the fact that the righteous worship before the angels (9:33–34), and the righteous are said to "gaze intently upon the Glory" of God, unlike the angels who can only look upon the glory (9:37–38). There is some difference in the status, but how much higher the righteous dead are exalted is nominal since both groups are in the seventh heaven worshipping God. Cf. J. Bühner, *Der Gesandte*, pp. 355–356.

Thus, in heaven Isaiah is accommodated by being transformed into an angel.[170] This transformation is not permanent, however. Instead, it is a preview of what will befall him, as one of Israel's righteous, who can take up his robe, be transformed, and take his place in the seventh heaven. It does not seem to be a privilege that all will enjoy, however.

Two passages from the Hermetic Literature (c. 100–150 CE) may also evince the idea of an angelic afterlife. *Vis.* 2:2:7 states that those "who work righteousness must remain steadfast and be not double-minded," so that their "passing may be with the Holy Angels" (ἡ πάραδος μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων). Similarly, Herm. *Sim.* 9:25:2 says of "apostles and teachers," "The passing of such is with the angels" (ἡ πάραδος μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐστίν). C. Osiek notes that although these passages are often compared with *1 En.* 104:4; *2 Bar.* 51:5; and *Mart. Pol.* 2:3, the sense is more akin to Matt 22:30.[171] In both cases, the opportunity to be like angels in the afterlife seems restricted to a specific group, those who are virtuous in life. It does not seem available to everyone.

Lastly, the *Mart. Pol.* (c. 175 CE) 2:3 states of the Christians as they were martyred, "but it ['good things which are preserved for those who endure'] was shown by the Lord to them [the martyrs] who were no longer men, but already angels" (οἵπερ μηκέτι ἄνθρωποι ἀλλ' ἤδη ἄγγελοι ἦσαν). This passage seems to indicate that the transformation to an angelic nature already begins on earth for the martyr.[172]

Thus, no specific traditions of humans transforming into angels in the afterlife seem to be evident prior to the first century CE. Early traditions about the afterlife may have understood human passing as leading to a communion with the divine as stars (= angels) in the heavens. In the case of Philo, Abraham seems to have undergone an afterlife transformation into an angel, but for Philo, angels were akin to divine thoughts, and it was in the sense of Abraham as a righteous and virtuous man that he was added to the divine. In the gospels, the tradition seems to have meant that humans became like

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[170] In some visionary writings, the seer is accommodated in heaven by becoming an angel (*Apoc. Zeph.*, *2 En.* 22, *3 En.*), but in some cases, no such transformation occurs (Rev, *Apoc. Paul*). On this see M. Himmelfarb, "The Experience of the Visionary and Genre in the Ascension of Isaiah 6–11 and the Apocalypse of Paul" *Semeia* 36 (1986) 97–111.

[171] C. Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999) 55 n. 12.

[172] See the discussion on Stephen above (3:12), and cf. 4 Macc. 16:25.

or equal to angels in heaven and therefore had no need of the human institution of marriage (and copulation). The gospel tradition was apparently expanded in the burgeoning Christian tradition (martyrs, encratites), which seemed to indicate the possibility of mimicking the angelic mode of existence on earth.

Conclusions

This chapter examined the evidence for angels appearing as human beings. Eight renowned individuals from the Hebrew Bible, four from the NT, as well as others, were considered. The evidence for Adam, the primordial man, was interesting but not conclusive. There may have been strands of tradition that thought of Adam and Eve as having had an angelic status before the Fall. The evidence pertaining to Sethel was from only one text but did seem to suggest that he was understood to have become like an angel in the afterlife. The Enochic literature apparently became more explicit over time about Enoch's angelic transformation and even equation with a named angel, Metatron (in *3 En.*)—seemingly an extrapolation upon the Gen 5:24 saying that Enoch was taken to heaven but did not die. In two texts, Noah was described as having angelomorphic features at his birth, but it was not clear that he was ever considered an angel. There was evidence that Melchizedek was an important figure in speculations about the heavens in Second Temple writings. He was certainly thought of as a divine figure (אלהים) and may have been thought of as an angel.

In the case of Jacob, some interpretations understood his name change to Israel as denoting a change in his nature to an angel. It is made explicit that he is thought of as an angel in *Pr. Jos.* This equation is significant, but it cannot be pressed too far either. The evidence for Moses was somewhat difficult to assess. Certainly, authors like Philo deified Moses, even calling him θεός, but there is little extant evidence that he was thought to be an angel. A few texts compared David to an angel, yet only Pseudo-Philo gave any hint that David might have been thought of as angelic; even there the evidence suggested that his appearance was changed but not his nature.

Some evidence from the prophets seemed ambiguous. Certainly, the role of the prophet as a mouthpiece for God suggests that their function and the function of angels could be understood at some

level as similar.[173] Perhaps the most ambiguous evidence was that from Malachi. That the term "angel" may have been taken to mean both human and divine messenger can be seen in its use related to John the Baptist in the NT. Clearly, Origen demonstrates that one author thought of John the Baptist as an angel.

There was very little evidence for Jesus actually being referred to as an angel. The Transfiguration talked about Jesus in angelomorphic terms, however. The Gospel of Thomas showed that Jesus could be compared to an angel but that such a comparison was Christologically insufficient. The evidence for the other NT figures, Stephen and Paul, did not demonstrate they were considered angels.

T. Moses contained a text that some have thought might have meant the figure Taxo was considered an angel, but this identification was unlikely. The interesting case of the daughters of Job in *T. Job* saw them undergoing an angelomorphic change (speaking like angels) when donning girdles from their father. It was not clear the change was permanent, however. This text was unique in that women, rather than men, were angelomorphic.

The fragment from Hecateus concerning the angelic nature of the high priest was interesting, but the context is not clear. Since it came to us through various authors, there is no way to be certain that the original author was at all clear about the realities relating to the high priest.

Lastly, the evidence relating to what happens to humans in heaven was considered. It was not clear that there was any late Second Temple tradition that understood humans as becoming angels in heaven.

J. Charlesworth identified the motif of some righteous individuals being portrayed as angels.[174] His insight seems correct—namely, that the motif is mainly, if not exclusively, applied to righteous humans; moreover it is applied to specific individuals and not larger bodies of righteous, at least not in the late Second Temple and early Christian period. Others, however, have seen the idea extending beyond select individuals to corporate humanity.[175] Fletcher-Louis has argued—against M. Mach's (and others') assertion that representations of humans taking on angelic existences in this life relate to an interest in escha-

[173] But Isa 6:1–13 seems to show a strong distinction between the seraphim (= angels ?) and the prophet as a "man of unclean lips."

[174] J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as an Angel," pp. 135–151.

[175] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 109–215, and C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 152–186.

tological postmortem existence—saying, "It is just as likely that the eschatological, post-mortem angelic life of the righteous is an extension of a belief in, or sublimated hope for, a this-life angelomorphic identity."[176] It may be just as likely, but it is not clear any evidence from the Second Temple period truly supports such an assertion.

The evidence analyzed in this chapter indicates that, although there are texts in which human beings are described in angelomorphic terms, a distinction appears to be maintained between humans and angels. The next step in this investigation is to look at cases in which close interaction between humans and angels might suggest some transformation. This is the goal of part two of this investigation.

[176] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 213.

PART TWO

INTERACTION

PART TWO

INTERACTION

Introduction

The second part of this investigation examines the relationship between humans and angels by looking at portrayals of close or intimate interaction between the two groups of beings on earth. Specifically, the evidence of human-angel communities (chapter 4), the possibility of humans providing hospitality and eating with angels (chapter 5), and hybrid offspring from human-angel relations (chapter 6) are considered. For the following discussion "Interaction" will be taken to mean "reciprocal action or influence."[1] The particular nuance of this choice of term is that the activity can potentially have a mutual aspect; it is not simply angels affecting humans.

As was the case with the appearance of angels in part one, it is helpful before proceeding to survey broadly the variety of ways in which angels interact with humans in the writings from this period to provide the context for the material to be examined in part two. This survey is not intended to be an exhaustive list of angel functions but instead to situate this particular evidence among the variety of angel functions evinced in the literature from this period.[2]

Angels, as they are most commonly understood, are denizens of the heavens.[3] By definition, then, their interaction with human beings is limited. They are members of the heavenly court worshipping God

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[1] The *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 709.

[2] M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens in vorrabinischer Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992) 60–63, provides an exhaustive list of the functions of angels in the Hebrew Bible. In chapter 3, he delineates the additional functions of angels in the extra-Biblical literature, pp. 114–278.

[3] Davidson, Maxwell J., *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1–36, 72–108 and the Sectarian Writings from Qumran*, JSPS 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) p. 291; M. Mach, "Angels" in *The Encyclopaedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence Schiffman and James VanderKam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 1:24; D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*, WUNT 2:109 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 17; P. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and Christology in the Apocalypse of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 14.

and carrying out the divine liturgy (1QSb 4:24–26; 4Q405 frag. 20; Luke 2:13–14; Heb 1:6; Rev 4:8; *Jub.* 30:18, 31:14; *T. Levi* 3:8; *1 En.* 61:10–12).[4] The idea that angels "stand" before God is well attested in Jewish literature from the period and afterwards.[5] Texts such as the *SSS* and NT passages like 1 Cor 11:10 and Col 2:18 suggest that communities sought to be part of the ongoing heavenly liturgy of angels.

In heavenly ascent literature, angels often act as guides for humans who have come into the heavens (Dan 7–12; *1 En.* 17–36; *Ap. Abr.* 10–18; *4 Ezra* 3–14). Interestingly, humans on such ascents sometimes participate in the angelic liturgy (*3 En.* 1:12; *Apoc. Ab.* 17, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:37; 9:31).

Among the other roles angels take on are: guardians and helpers (Gen 24:7, 48:16; Exod 14:19, 23:20–23, *et al.*; Ps 34:7; Isa 63:9; Dan 3:28, 6:22; Tob 5:21; Acts 5:19, 12:7–11; 2 Macc 11:6; *T. Jac.* 1:10; *L.A.B.* 59:4; Herm. *Mand.* 6.2.2), and carrying out God's vengeance (Num 22; 2 Sam 24:16–17; 1 Chr 21:12–30; 1QS 4:12; Acts 12:23; Rev 16; Sir 48:21; 1 Macc 7:41; Sus 1:55, 59).

As functionaries of God, angels are sometimes sent to carry out specific tasks on earth. It is mainly in this capacity that they interact with humans. As their name implies, their primary task was to act as *messengers* (e.g., Gen 16:7f., 22:11, 15; Judg 6 and 13; Zech 1:9f.; Matt 1–2; Luke 1–2; Acts 8:26; *4 Ezra* 4–5; *et al.*). Chapter 4 examines what is perhaps the closest contact between angels and humans, namely, the presence of angels in specific human communities.

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[4] Angels are actually called priests (כוהן) in the *SSS*. For a fuller discussion of angels as priests, see M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) esp. 29–46.

[5] See Isa 6:3; Matt 18:10; Luke 1:19, 2:15; *1 Clem.* 34:5. J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985) 55, 120–124, 139–141. Cf. Philo, *Sacrifices* 8–9.

CHAPTER FOUR

"ANGELS IN OUR MIDST": HUMAN-ANGEL COMMUNITIES

In this chapter, texts describing angels and humans living together in communities are examined. The majority of this evidence comes from the literature discovered at Qumran, but two other texts that may evince angel-human communities—Paul's epistles to the Corinthians and the so-called History of the Rechabites—are also examined. A number of scholars have already noted that the literature from Qumran seems to present a picture of a community that understood itself as having angels present, with the most recent contribution coming from Fletcher-Louis.[6]

In his book, *All the Glory of Adam*, Fletcher-Louis seeks to foreground the phenomenon of human-angel interaction by demonstrating two "interlocking" theses:

> (1) the theology of ancient Judaism took for granted the belief that in its original, true, redeemed state humanity is divine (and/or angelic), and that (2) this belief was conceptually and experientially inextricable from temple worship in which ordinary space and time, and therefore human ontology, are transcended because the true temple is a model of the universe which offers its entrants a transfer from earth to heaven, from humanity to divinity and from mortality to immortality.[7]

These theses will be dealt with as specific discussion arises and also in the conclusion section. At the outset, it is appropriate to offer a general critique of them. Regarding his first thesis, it is perhaps more accurate to say simply that humankind in its true form was "theomorphic" since Adam was made in the image of God. This would obviate some of the confusion in the secondary literature regarding "angelic" and "divine." Regarding the second thesis, the Holy of Holies in the Temple and perhaps the liturgical space of the Qumran group

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[6] H. Kuhn, *Enderwartung und gegenwärtiges Heil* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1966) 66–72; C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982) 113–120; M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*, pp. 159–161; 209–218; 241–254. C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002).

[7] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, p. xii.

may indeed have been places where some Jews believed that the earthly and heavenly spheres could have contact, creating a synergy. However, such contact did not imply any permanent transformation of participants. That is to say, participants (either the high priest or the Qumran sectarians) may have experienced something transcendent in such a locus without undergoing a permanent transformation.

The pertinent question for this study is to what extent living in a specific community meant identifying with the angels that were believed to be present. In other words, were these communities envisioning their members as being transformed into part of the angelic community? Or did they simply believe that through a heightened state of purity they, as humans, were creating a space where angels could dwell on earth? The evidence points to the latter.

Since much of the evidence in this chapter comes from the Dead Sea Scrolls, a preliminary issue must be addressed. The scrolls are often associated with the Essenes, a Jewish sectarian group known primarily through the writings of Josephus and Philo. The many parallels between the literature recovered from the caves near the Dead Sea and the accounts of the Essenes in classical reports have been well documented.[8] Also, Josephus (*B.J.* 2.142) says that the Essene group was "to preserve the books of the sect and the names of the angels." Many scholars proceed by outlining their definitions of "sectarian" and "nonsectarian" texts, then speaking about "sectarian" beliefs. This strategy often leads to using one text to interpret another, even though the connection between such texts is not entirely clear, which can ultimately lead to a synthesized and artificial picture of "sectarian" beliefs. Sectarian provenance of these writings does not change what information can be gleaned from them about angel beliefs. Nor is it correct to assume, even if all the texts are "sectarian," that all members held the same beliefs at the same time. Examining texts individually as evidence for what at least one Jewish author (and likely audience) from this period was thinking about angels is a more secure foundation for interpretation. For the following analysis, the question of sectarian or nonsectarian has been put aside, and each piece of evidence is considered individually.[9]

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[8] See, in particular, T. Beale, *Josephus' Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), and M. Goodman and G. Vermes, *The Essenes According to Classical Sources* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989).

[9] This is the same methodology employed by M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1–36, 72–108 and the Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994) 138–141.

4.1 *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400–407, 11Q17, Mas1k)*

The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (*SSS*), also sometimes referred to as "The Angelic Liturgy," exists in eight manuscripts discovered at Qumran in cave 4 (4Q400–407),[10] one from cave 11 (11Q17), and one from Masada (Mas1k).[11] These fragments seem to represent a liturgical cycle on a 364–day calendar that covers thirteen sabbaths—the first quarter of the year during which holocaust sacrifices are offered (Num 28:9–10, Ezek 46:4–5). C. Newsom produced the first critical edition of all the relevant fragments in 1985.[12] Recently, the *SSS* have been covered in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* and the *Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Series*.[13]

There is no internal evidence that can be used to date the *SSS*, nor is the relation of the *SSS* to other sectarian literature a firm criterion. The *SSS* are dated paleographically between 100 BCE and 68 CE, and scholars widely agree upon this dating.[14] Even if earlier or later dates were to be established, the *SSS* are still an important text in the overall discussion of late Second Temple angel beliefs.

Of all the texts from the Dead Sea, no other work seems to be as focused upon the inner working of the heavenly sanctuary and the beings therein as the *SSS*. J. Strugnell believed that the *SSS* were "no angelic liturgy, no visionary work where a sect hears the praise of the angels, but a *Maskil*'s composition for an earthly liturgy in which the presence of the angels is in a sense invoked."[15] Still, the

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[10] First critical edition of 4Q403 and 4Q405 by J. Strugnell, "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran—4Q *Serek Shirot Olat Hashshabbat*" in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Congress Volume*, ed. G. Andersen *et al.* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960) 318–345.

[11] Preliminary edition by C. Newsom and Y. Yadin, "The Masada Fragment of the Qumran Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice" *IEJ* 34 (1984) 77–88; see also, Y. Yadin, "The Excavations at Masada" *IEJ* 15 (1965) 105–108, and E. Puech, "Notes sur les manuscrits des Cantiques du Sacrifice du Sabbat trouvé à Masada" *RQ* 12/48 (1987) 575–583.

[12] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Harvard Semitic Studies, 1985).

[13] C. Newsom, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert XI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); J. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations: Vol. 4B Angelic Liturgy: Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1999).

[14] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 1, notes that "the hand of the oldest manuscript, 4Q400, may be dated to ca. 75–50 BCE." See also, J. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, p. 4; Stegemann, *The Library at Qumran*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998) 99.

[15] J. Strugnell, "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran," p. 320.

similarities between the *SSS* and later ascent or mystical literature as evinced in later Merkavah and Hekhalot sources has been regularly noted, and their importance for understanding the development of those forms of mysticism is still being explored.[16] Newsom suggests that the *SSS* are a "quasi-mystical liturgy designed to evoke a sense of being present in the heavenly Temple."[17] What is widely accepted is that the *SSS* represent some kind of liturgical document. What is less clear is how that document would have been used. Newsom believes that each song began with למשכיל ("to/for the Instructor")[18]—a term that appears in other finds from among the Dead Sea Scrolls and seems to refer to a human leader of the sect.[19] This term may represent some type of dedication "to the Instructor" (sometimes suggested to be the Teacher of Righteousness), or it may represent a notation that this is "for the Instructor."

The *SSS* are often frustratingly incomplete, full of suggestive terminology whose meaning is often difficult, if not impossible, to discern. Few passages are of decisive interpretative value. J. Davila says, "the overall genre of the work remains elusive, but it does share a number of features with apocalypses containing otherworldly journeys. . . . Even the very basic problem of whether these songs are prose or poetry does not have a clear answer."[20] Moreover, regarding the angelology of the *SSS*, Newsom states, "Because the cycle of the Sabbath *Shirot* is a liturgical document and not a treatise on angelology, not all the questions one would like to raise can be answered."[21] Although they are often referred to as the "angelic liturgy," the *SSS* do not actually mention any of the words of those

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[16] J. Baumgarten, "The Qumran Sabbath Shirot and Rabbinic Merkabah Traditions" *RQ* 13 (1988) 199–213; C. Newsom, "Merkabah Exegesis in the Qumran Sabbath Shirot" *JJS* 38 (1987) 11–30; L. Schiffman, "Merkavah Speculation at Qumran: The 4Q Serekh Shirot Olat ha-Shabbat," in *Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians*, ed. J. Reinharz and D. Swetschinski (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982) 15–47; C. Rowland, "The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature" *JSJ* 10 (1979) 137–154; C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 387, 392–393.

[17] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 59.

[18] C. Newsom, "He Has Established for Himself Priests" in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. L. Schiffman (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 102. The term is found or can be confidently restored in 4Q401 frag. 1; 4Q403 frag. 1 2:18; 4Q405 frag. 20 2:6; 11Q17 frag. 16–18, line 9.

[19] Seen elsewhere in 1QS 3:13, 9:12; 1QSb 1:1, 3:22, 5:20; CD 12:21, 13:22; 4Q510 4, 4Q511 2 i 1, 8:4; 1QH 20:11.

[20] J. Davila, *Liturgical Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000) 87–88.

[21] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 23.

in worship.[22] Thus, it seems safest to concede that the genre of the *SSS* is uncertain. Examination of particular passages is the best way to glean information.

In her critical edition, Newsom provides a thorough discussion of the various terms that may refer to angels in her section on angelology[23] and also in her concordance,[24] so there is no need to repeat such lists in detail here.[25] However, it is important to note that Newsom's paradigm for understanding the *SSS* has recently been criticized by Fletcher-Louis.[26] He believes that in her initial study of the *SSS* Newsom propounded a dualistic interpretative paradigm that has prevented a correct understanding of the *Songs*. Rather than seeing a dualism of earthly worship reflecting the heavenly cult (as Newsom does), Fletcher-Louis believes that the songs represent a crossing of the boundary between the two realms, such that by participating in the songs, the sectarians were transformed into divine beings who participated in the actual heavenly cult. He observes that "in general we have been able to distinguish these heavenly humans from angels and spiritual beings who are particularly associated with the physical features of the cultic structures."[27] However, he then adds, "A confident claim to know just how much 'divine' language is given to the human worshippers is not possible."[28] Fletcher-Louis suggests that this way of envisioning the liturgy gave the sectarians an alternative to the Jerusalem cult to which they, now living in the desert of Qumran, no longer had access. Suffice it to state at this point that the overall aim of this study is to clarify our terminology and to make a case for separation between the heavenly and the earthly, so that my findings largely go against those of Fletcher-Louis. However, before saying more, we need to return to our examination of the texts.

In order to understand the relationship between humans and angels in the *SSS*, it is necessary to attempt to clarify the meaning of the various terms found therein.

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[22] D. Allison, "The Silence of Angels: Reflections on the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice" *RQ* 13 (1988) 189–197.

[23] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, pp. 23–28.

[24] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, pp. 389–466.

[25] See also M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, pp. 248–253.

[26] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 252–394.

[27] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 392.

[28] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 392.

First, the term מלאך itself is rare in the *SSS*, and there are no named archangels.[29] Perhaps the most common term in the *SSS* that may refer to angels is אלים. The term אלים is rare in the Hebrew Bible (Pss 29:1, 89:7; Dan 11:36) but is more common in the literature found at the Dead Sea (especially 1QM and 1QH).

Another common term is אלוהים. In the Hebrew Bible, this term is often used for the Hebrew God (e.g., Gen 1–3); however, it is plural in form, so it can be understood to refer to multiple "gods" of other nations (e.g., Exod 12:12, 18:11, 20:3; 1 Kgs 14:9) or perhaps even to angels (e.g., Ps 82:1, 6; 138:1).[30] As Newsom notes, "many occurrences of אלוהים in the *Shirot* are ambiguous and might refer either to God or to the angels."[31] Some cases such as כול אלוהים most likely refer to some kind of divine beings, not to God. It seems that here in the *SSS*, the אלוהים are meant to stand for some type of divine beings subordinate to God. It is unclear whether אלים and אלוהים are meant to be the same or qualitatively different beings. Certainly, the terms are cognate, with אלים being the plural of אל (God) and אלוהים (pl. in form: God or gods). That the two terms are sometimes used in the same section implies some type of distinction between them, but equally they might be used interchangeably for the same being.

Other terms, such as "holy ones" (קדושים) and "spirits" (רוחות), may also refer to angels/divine beings. One of the more uncommon characteristics of the *SSS* angelology is the discussion of angels as priests (כוהן), though this is not an idea exclusive to the *SSS* (cf. *T. Levi* 3:4f.). The wide array of terms that may refer to angelic beings makes any investigation into the relationship between humans and angels quite difficult, since the more terms that are believed to refer to "angels," the more complex the discussion becomes. It seems best, then, to look for any evidence that humans and any apparently divine beings are discussed in the same unit.

There are very few passages in which humans and angels are discussed together. The first six lines of 4Q400 fragment 2 offer one such instance:

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[29] C. Newsom suggests that Melchizedek may be named in the 4Q401, 11, 3 (See *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 37) and perhaps in 4Q401 22, 3. The reconstructions are by no means certain but are plausible.

[30] *BDB*, pp. 43–44.

[31] C. Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 24.

> [1] to praise your glory wondrously with אלי of knowledge and the praises of your kingship among the [Most]ho[ly ones].
> [2] They are honoured in all the camps of the אלוהים and revered by the assembly of humans [ואנשים], wondrously . . .
> [3] than אלוהים or humans [ואנסים] they declare the majesty of his kingship according to their knowledge and they exalt [. . .]
> [4] the heavens of his realm. And in all the highest heights wondrous psalms according to all [. . .]
> [5] glory of the king of אלוהים they declare in the dwellings their station . . .
> [6] How shall we be accounted [among] them? And how shall our priesthood (be accounted) in their dwellings?

The passage is representative of the interpretative difficulties faced in trying to understand the relationship of humans and angels in the *SSS*. At least two words (אלים and אלוהים) seem to refer to divine beings. The humans mentioned seem to constitute a separate group. Line 6 suggests, however, that perhaps the human community seeks to become part of the heavenly worshipping community.

This is echoed in 4Q401 fragment 14, column 1, line 8, "They are honored among all the camps of the אלוהים and r[evered by the asse]mbly of humans [אנשים]." These passages do not seem to preclude the possibility that the two realms, human and angelic, can be one and the same insomuch as they exist contemporaneously and participate in the same activity, but the humans do not necessarily become angels.

Given the lack of specific evidence within the *SSS*, discussion of the relationship between angels and humans in the *SSS* has instead focused on understanding the overall function of the text. Thus, that it is "a quasi-mystical" liturgical text might suggest some sort of communal experience of the divine liturgy. The *SSS* seem unique among the extant literature, to the extent that this cannot be ruled out. This type of approach to the texts has led C. Fletcher-Louis recently to suggest a "new paradigm" for reading the *SSS*. Rather than understand all the various terminology as "angels," he suggests that the *SSS* becomes much more understandable if one applies many of these references to the human community, who "now have a heavenly, angelic and divine identity.[32] He calls upon his own recent work and

[32] C. Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent or Incarnational Presence? A Revisionist Reading of *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*" in *SBL 1998 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998) 2:367–399; quote p. 369.

that of C. Morray-Jones, which argued that in the late Second Temple period righteous individuals were widely believed to become angelomorphic beings.[33] This study challenges whether such a belief was actually held. Moreover, there are basic issues of the applicability of topoi from the "Qumran Literature" as a corpus to the *SSS*—namely, that the connection between the *SSS* and, for example, 1QH is not clear unless one assumes they are both works from the same community. As interesting as his suggestion is, it would represent the only evidence for a sustained reference to humans as essentially "gods" (אלוהים and אלים). That the *SSS* would be unique among the evidence does not preclude its possibility, but it does seem to make it less likely. Ultimately, such a paradigm cannot be proved and cannot even really be sustained without connecting the *SSS* to other works from the Dead Sea Scrolls.[34]

In summary, there seems little doubt that the *SSS* are liturgical in some sense. One of their primary concerns is worship in the heavenly temple, the hierarchy and structure, and so on. Clearly, the *SSS* share an affinity with both contemporaneous apocalyptic (visionary) works and also with later mystical writings. What is much less clear is the genre of the *SSS* and its function in its community. The main hint that it was meant in some form to be read and used by a community is the opening of each song, "to the maskîl" (למשכיל). Beyond that indicator, things become much less clear. It is certainly possible that the intent of reading such a document was to give the community the sense that they were partaking in the heavenly liturgy, and if so some sort of transformation might have been implied. It is at least conceivable that the *SSS* were indeed meant to provoke a sense of communion with angels. It may be that they were not intended for regular liturgical use but instead for use at a specific time, namely the eschaton. It cannot be substantiated that the community itself is the referent of terms like אלים and אלוהים as "angelomorphic" beings. There is no clear indication from the text itself that angels live among

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[33] C. Fletcher-Louis, "Heavenly Ascent," esp. pp. 369–382. See also, J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels" in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms*, ed. J. Collins and J. Charlesworth (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980) 135–151.

[34] Additionally, Newsom (*The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, p. 23) says that the term אלים is used frequently within the Qumran corpus to refer to angels. If the *SSS* is a sectarian document as Fletcher-Louis supposes, then this goes against his paradigm as well.

the community. It is more likely that, if the *SSS* are meant as a means by which the community could partake in the heavenly liturgy, then they would in some sense ascend to the heavens to do so, but there is no indication that, if they did, they underwent any kind of permanent transformation by doing so. The evidence from the *SSS* is ambiguous. The text does not clearly distinguish between humans and angels but suggests a unique circumstance in which human and divine liturgy is in some sense combined or shared. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the *SSS*.

4.2 *The War Scroll (1QM and 4Q491–496)*

Among the seven large manuscripts discovered in cave 1 was a document that contained nineteen Hebrew columns of what first came to be known from Y. Yadin's seminal work as the Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness but is now more commonly known as the War Scroll (1QM).[35] In cave 4 fragments of another six copies of this work were later discovered (4Q491–496).[36]

At first glance, the War Scroll seems to be unified in content and theme, which suggests that it could come from a single author. However, closer examination reveals repetitions (e.g., 12:8–16 and 19:1–8) and other discrepancies in details such as timing and implements of war, with the result that today it is widely accepted that the War Scroll is a composite text with various levels of redaction. J. Van der Ploeg first suggested that columns 1 and 15–19 constituted the earliest form of the text.[37] Davies has identified three levels of redaction (2–9, 10–12, and 15–19, with 1 and 13–14 as summary additions).[38] In most recent attempts to reconstruct the literary history of the War Scroll, certain sections have been regularly recognized as literary units: columns 2–9, 10–12 (or 14), and 15–19. Nonetheless, the order in which these were produced or how and

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[35] Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

[36] J. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994). H. Stegeman, *The Library of Qumran: The Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998) 102, finds 10 mss. of the War Scroll.

[37] J. van der Ploeg, "La composition litteraire de la Règle de la Guerre de Qumran" in *Sacra Pagina II*, ed. J. Coppens, A. Descamps, and E. Massaux (Gembloux: Duculot) 13–19.

[38] P. Davies, *1QM: The War Scroll from Qumran* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1977).

why they were fitted together in their present form, as well as the relation of column 1 to the others, remain matters of debate. The complexity of the issues involved has caused some to continue to assume unity when performing exegesis.[39] There does not seem to be any specific set of angel beliefs related to any one level of redactional activity, so for the purpose of the following discussion, the War Scroll will be considered from the perspective of the final redactor, who brought the text into its present form.

The literary dependence of the War Scroll upon the Book of Daniel (e.g., 1QM 1 and Dan 11:40–12:3) gives us a *terminus a quo* of approximately 160 BCE.[40] Paleographic evidence dates 1QM to the second half of the first century BCE, thus a likely *terminus ad quem*.[41] However, given that the scroll was discovered among the finds at the Dead Sea, Yadin posits that the latest date for the copying of the War Scroll extant to us is 70 CE.[42] More precise dates have been suggested for the text on the basis of comparisons to contemporary military manuals, but those discussions need not concern us here. The War Scroll is firmly within the chronological bounds of our study.

Due to its eschatological components, the War Scroll appears often in discussions of apocalyptic literature from the Second Temple period.[43] However, it is generally accepted as a rule book, and in the secondary literature it is sometimes even referred to as the War Rule. These "rules" were apparently a map of the correct conditions needed to create a human-angel army to fight the eschatological battle.[44]

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[39] E.g., M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 213.

[40] G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 4th ed. (New York: Penguin, 1995) 124.

[41] F. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 3rd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1995) 138.

[42] See also, D. Dimant, "Qumran Sectarian Literature" in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, ed. Michael Stone (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) x; H. Stegeman, *The Library at Qumran*, pp. 102–104.

[43] The rubric "apocalyptic" should not be overemphasized with regard to the War Scroll, however, since the War Scroll lacks the definitive mark of an apocalypse, i.e., a revelation. C. Rowland states of the evidence regarding the War Scroll, "All this seems to indicate that we are dealing with a text which is related to the apocalypses, but one which hardly justifies the label 'apocalyptic'." *The Open Heaven*, p. 42. His point is echoed by J. Collins, who, more recently, says the War Scroll is "perhaps the most 'apocalyptic' book in the corpus, although its literary form is that of a rule book and not of a revelation." *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997) 10. See also, R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 212ff.

[44] In some sense, the term "utopian" might be appropriate to this situation, insomuch as the War Scroll seems to describe a synergy between humans and angels as the "Sons of Light."

The important question is: How does such a set of rules function? In column 1 we are told that the document is "For the M[aster, The Rule of] War on the unleashing of the attack of the sons of light against the sons of darkness, the army of Belial: against the troop of Edom, Moab, the sons of Ammon." Contained within the subsequent columns are specific directions on the assignment of troops (col. 2), the rule for the trumpets (cols. 2–3), rules for the standards (cols. 3–4), inscriptions, prayers, and so on. The detail is extraordinary. This specificity would seem to have a definite purpose. The number, and perhaps even compulsive nature, of the rules seems to imply a necessary state or condition must be obtained and maintained for the eschatological war to take place and for the Sons of Light to be successful. Column 16 reiterates that "They shall act according to this entire rule."

The War Scroll utilizes a theme already present in the Hebrew Bible: holy war the idea that armed confrontation ordained by God against those who stand ideologically opposed to the chosen people of God is an essential component in the reordering of history. That angels are an essential component of holy warfare is well attested (Joshua 5:13–15, 1 Chr 21:16, 2 Kgs 19:35, 1 Macc 7:41 and 2 Macc 15:22f., Num 22:22, 3 Macc 6:18, 4 Macc 4:10 Sirach 48:21). As Bauckham suggests, "holy war" traditions can be divided into two types: (1) those in which God (alone or with his heavenly forces) is victorious (e.g., Exod 14:13–14; 2 Kgs 19:32–35; *et al.*) and (2) those in which humans assist in the warfare.[45] He notes that "the one work—not preserved by Christians—which does give us detailed evidence of ideas about an eschatological holy war in which Israelite armies will fight is the War Scroll from Qumran (1QM)."[46] Bauckham highlights the uniqueness of the War Scroll's human participation in the holy war to demonstrate certain similarities between 1QM and the Book of Revelation.

In addition to the theme of holy war in the Hebrew Bible, there is also a tradition of God as warrior. Exod 15:3 states, "The Lord is a *man of war*;[47] the Lord is his name" (יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה שמו). The LXX was not as comfortable with calling the Lord a "man of war" and instead has "the Lord is crushing wars; the Lord is his

[45] R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 210ff.
[46] R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, p. 212.
[47] See also Isa 42:13; Hos 12:6, and cf. Josh 5:13.

name" (κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους κύριος ὄνομα αὐτῷ). A. Segal has shown that in the rabbinic traditions, this passage became one of a number of sources that led to the "two powers" controversy, since the manifestation of the Lord as a human warrior could have been understood as an entity separate from the Lord, especially in light of passages like Dan 7:13.[48] For the present discussion, the passage is relevant insomuch as a divine being is described as a "man." However, this theophany does not tell us much about angels and humans. Still, the Lord-as-warrior motif likely influenced portrayals of the angel Michael in 1QM and Revelation, for example.

The War Scroll, then, seems to allow believers to participate in the restoration of God's order in history, first through preparation in the rules, then actually fighting side-by-side with angels in the final battle.[49]

Column 1 states that in the final struggle between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness "the congregation of divine beings [אלים] and the assembly of men [אנשים], the Sons of Light, and the lot of darkness shall fight each other" (vv. 10–11). Furthermore, in that battle there will be war cries (v. 11) from both the אלים and the ואנשים (v. 11). However we understand אלים, it is clear that they are something qualitatively different from ואנשים. The "congregation of divine beings" (עדת אלים) and the "assembly of men וקהלת אנשים do battle against a single force, the lot of darkness (ונורל הושך). This lot, called the Army of Belial in v. 13, also seems to have angels (מלאכים) among its forces (v. 15). So a distinction is made between the two groups of beings involved, but they seem to constitute one fighting force.

Column 7:4–6 contains ordinances for purity specifically because the angels are to be with the host. It states:

> [4] . . . Neither lame, nor blind, nor crippled, nor a man in whose flesh there is a permanent blemish, nor a man stricken by some uncleanliness [5] in the flesh, none of them shall go to battle with them. They shall all be freely enlisted for war, perfect in spirit and in body and prepared for the Day of Vengeance. And
> [6] no man shall go down with them on the day of battle who is impure because of his "fount," for the holy angels [מלאכי קודש] shall be with their hosts [עם צבאותם].

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[48] A. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977) 33–57.

[49] My conclusions regarding the nature of the War Scroll are very much like those of C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 395–475.

There seem to be two explanations for such rules. First, there may have been members of the group who fit these criteria: blind, deaf, infirm, and so on; thus the concern was to exclude such members at key moments to ensure the possibility of angelic presence. Second, there were not necessarily such members, but their heightened sense of purity was related to preparing for a holy war, since these proscriptions are very much like those outlined in Deut 23:9–14 for those encamped against their enemies. It is not possible to know which of these is the case, or whether it is some of both.

Also, the angels are simply said to be "with" (עם) the host. This does not necessarily imply any transformation of either party but simply a joining of forces.

Again in 12:8, the angels are said to be among the men, "For the Lord is holy, and the glorious king (is) with us, together with the holy ones [קדושים] [. . .] the host of angels [צבא מלאכים] is among our numbered men [בפקודינו]." The angels are with the men, but there is no clear sense that the men are transformed, only that they have likely achieved a necessary level of purity to allow the angels to be present.

The community does seem to have a special connection with the angels. Column 10:9–11 states:

> [9] Who is like your people Israel which you have chosen for yourself from all the peoples of the lands,
> [10] the people of the saints of the Covenant, instructed in the laws and learned in wisdom, taught in discern[ment . . .]hearers of the glorious voice, and seers of
> [11] holy angels [מלאכי קודש], open of ear, and hearers of profound things . . .

The reference to "hearers of the glorious voice" may mean no more than understanding Torah, but when combined with the reference to seeing angels, it suggests a more intimate connection with the heavenly realm.[50] None of this implies transformation, however. That the members may be able to see angels is not extraordinary in the context of the War Scroll itself, since numerous passages speak of angels being present.

Lastly, some other passages also seem to indicate that angels are believed to be present during the final battle. The archangels' names (Sariel, Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael) are invoked on shields of the

[50] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 116.

towers (9:14–16). Also, Michael will be definitive in the victory of the Sons of Light (17:6):

> He has sent an everlasting help to the lot whom he has redeemed through the might of the majestic angel. (He will set) the authority of Michael in everlasting light. He will cause the covenant of Israel to shine in joy. Peace and blessing to the lot of God. He will exalt over all the divine beings the authority of Michael and the dominion of Israel over all the flesh.

The Prince of Lights may be the same being as Michael and is also said to be entrusted with the rescue of the "Sons of Light" (13:10).

The War Scroll shows us one Jewish group's ideas about the eschatological war that would reorder history. The rules therein provide the community with guidelines for the eschatological battle that is to take place between themselves and the forces of darkness. That angels are meant to be an important part of this battle cannot be doubted. The relationship of the human believers to the angels is not entirely clear, however. The passages considered above represent a very small percentage of the entire document, which is largely concerned with the actions necessary for the human community. There is an apparent concern to maintain a heightened sense of purity to allow the angels to be among men. The combined human-angelic fighting force—the Sons of Light—will carry out God's plan of destruction for the Sons of Darkness. There does not seem to be any reason to suppose that any transformation of the human warriors is intended, at least before and during the final battle.

A Related Fragment: 4Q491

One other fragment, attributed to the War Scroll family of texts, is relevant to the discussion of the relationship between humans and angels: 4Q491 fragment 11, col. 1 was originally deemed "The Song of Michael and the Just" by M. Baillet.[51] Other recensions of what is now believed to be the same text (or at least a very similar text) are: 4Q471[b]; 4Q427 fragment 7, and perhaps 1QH[a] col. 26.[52]

Baillet was likely led to the conclusion that the speaker was the angel Michael because the speaker in the text makes some bold claims:

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[51] M. Baillet, *DJD* VII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) 45–49.

[52] E. Schuller, "A Hymn from a Cave Four *Hodayaot* Manuscript: 4Q427 7 i + ii" *JBL* 112 (1993) 605–628.

> [12] . . . a powerful throne in the congregation of divine beings [אלים], on which all the kings of the East cannot sit, and their nobles [. . .] stand still
> [13][. . .] my glory. None is exalted besides me, and none comes to me, for I have sat on [. . .] in the heavens. There is no
> [14][. . .] *ybwm* I reckon myself among the divine beings [אלהים], and my place (is) in the holy congregation.

Verse 18 adds, "For I am recko[ned] among the divine beings [אלים], [and] my glory is with the king's sons."

The attribution of these words to the angel Michael has been challenged by M. Smith, who thinks that Michael would not compare himself to such "small fry" as earthly kings (Antiochus Epiphanes).[53] Smith sees this as a claim made by the Master, perhaps the Teacher of Righteousness, to a heavenly seat. J. Collins notes that Smith's position needs some qualification. Smith is correct that the being is not an angel, but he is incorrect to say that this text represents an ascent. Collins suggests that it is closer to texts that discuss the deification (enthronement) of Moses than mystical ascent texts.[54] Collins's qualifications seem to make more sense of the text as it currently stands.

However this passage is understood, it seems clear enough that the individual speaking sees himself to have been exalted and is now among the group called the אלים (line 14) and that this group could be understood as a class or type of angels.[55]

4.3 *The Hodayot (1QH)*

The *Hodayot*, or Thanksgiving Scroll, was discovered in cave 1, surviving in two originally separate manuscripts as well as some sixty-five fragments. There are eighteen columns with approximately thirty hymns extant. The hymns likely date to the first century BCE.[56] A

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[53] M. Smith, "Two Ascended to Heaven: Jesus and the Author of 4Q491" in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. J. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 290–301.

[54] J. Collins, "A Throne in the Heavens: Apotheosis in pre-Christian Judaism" in *Death, Ecstasy and Other Worldly Journeys*, ed. J. Collins and M. Fishbane (New York: SUNY, 1995) 43–58.

[55] The terms אלהים and אלים do appear elsewhere in the 4Q material: 4QM1 frag. 1–3, v. 3; frag. 5–6 v. 1; frag. 13 v. 1; 4QM5 frag. 2 v. 4; 4QM6 frag. 2 v. 2; 3 v. 5, but they add comparatively little to our overall understanding due to their limited context.

[56] D. Dimant, "Qumran Sectarian Literature," p. 107.

few scholars have even asserted that some hymns in the first person may have been written by the Teacher of Righteousness.[57] Nevertheless, their authorship remains uncertain.

H. Kuhn's work was among the first to suggest the angel-community idea for this text.[58] Others have noted the importance of this work in understanding angel-human communities as well.[59]

The hymns make known the full potential of the believers. Column 11:20–22 says:

> [20] And I know there is hope
> [21] for someone you fashioned out of clay to be an everlasting community. The corrupt spirit you have purified from the great sin so that he can take his place
> [22] with the host of the holy ones, and can enter in communion with the congregation of the sons of heaven [בני שמים].

Here the term "angel" does not appear explicitly, but the situation seems relatively clear. Those "fashioned out of clay," human beings (Gen 2:7) with a "corrupt spirit" (humans in a fallen state), have a chance to take their place with the "holy ones," entering into communion with the "sons of heaven."[60] This seems to suggest a return to a purer, perhaps pre-Fall state (cf. Adam in 3.1 above). In this case, humans begin as something distinct—that is, "those fashioned out of clay" with a "corrupt spirit." The righteous are purified and enter into communion with the angels.

Men and angels are mentioned in 1QH column 14:12–13:

> [12] . . . For you have brought [your truth and your] glory
> [13] to all the men of your council [אנשי עצתכה] and in the lot, together with the angels of the face [מלאכי פנים], without there being an interpreter [מליץ] between y[our holy ones . . .]

The term מלאך appears in this passage and seems juxtaposed with the "men" of the council. The end of line 13 is suggestive. It says "without there being a מליץ between."[61] The text breaks off after

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[57] J. Hyatt, "The View of the Man in the Qumran 'Hodayot'," *NTS* 2 (1955–1956) 276–284; H. Stegemann, *Library*, p. 107.

[58] H. Kuhn, *Enderwartung*, pp. 66–72.

[59] See, C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 116–118; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 185–188 and *All the Glory*, pp. 104–112; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 174.

[60] H. Kuhn, *Enderwartung*, pp. 91–92, argues that the "holy ones" should be understood as angels, and this seems correct.

[61] Interestingly, in Job 33:23 the term מליץ is used in connection with מלאך, and the two terms may even stand in apposition.

this point. That men may be together with "angels of the face" is significant. It may reflect a union with the angels that needs no mediation. The somewhat fragmentary nature of the text is frustrating, since a clear connection between the two groups cannot be made.

In 1QH 19:10–14 there seems to be a concern for purity so that members can attain an elevated status:

> [10] For your glory, you have purified man from sin,
> [11] so that he can make himself holy for you from every impure abomination and blameworthy iniquity, to become united with the sons of your truth and the lot of your holy ones,
> [12] to raise the worms of the dead from the dust, to an [everlasting] community and from a depraved spirit, to your knowledge,
> [13] so that he can take his place in your presence with the perpetual host and the [everlasting] spirits, to renew him with everything that will exist,
> [14] and with those who know in a community of jubilation.

Angels are not explicitly mentioned, but the perpetual host suggests the angels who constantly worship God in the heavenly temple. This passage is not unlike column 11 above in that it apparently speaks of a restoration to a sinless state. Such a purified state seems to allow the members to become part of the angelic host. It is not clear whether this would happen in their mortal lives or after, but it is at least plausible that the intention is for a this-life elevated state.[62]

The Thanksgiving Hymns are suggestive. Some passages give thanks for a purified state in which it seems humans could be in communion with the heavenly host. There is a clear sense that humans begin as flesh and blood (formed out of clay) and are sinful (and in need of purification). Once transformed from the human condition, they apparently believed in the possibility of being identified with angels in heaven.

4.4 *The Rule of the Community (1QS, 1QSa, and 1QSb)*[63]

The Rule of the Community was also discovered in cave 1. Contained on the same scroll are three works that are not continuous: (1) the Rule of the Community (1QS), (2) the Rule of the Congregation (1QSa), and (3) the Rule of the Blessings (1QSb). All three works

[62] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 117–118.

[63] Additionally, there are fragments from cave 4 (4Q255–264) and perhaps cave 5 (5Q11) that are part of S.

are in the same hand. It is believed to have been composed sometime around 150–100 BCE.[64] The *Serekh* contains guidelines for communal living. That there are three works written on the same scroll suggests that there may be some relation among them, but this should not be automatically assumed.

1QS 11:7–8 suggests a fusing of the earthly community with the heavenly:

> [7] . . . To those whom God has selected he has given them an everlasting possession; until they inherit them in the lot of
> [8] the holy ones [קדשים]. He joins their assembly to the sons of heaven [בני שמים] in order for the counsel of the Community and a foundation of the building of holiness to be an eternal plantation throughout
> [9] all future ages . . .

There is no explicit mention of angels in the passage itself, but if the "holy ones" are understood as referring to the human community and the "sons of heaven" to heavenly beings, then we could perhaps infer a combining of the two groups. At the same time, the passage suggests that the two groups are distinct and will only be joined together at a specific point in time. Their joining together does have a permanent effect (lines 8–9). C. Rowland suggests here that the community could be understood as "an extension of the heavenly world," adding, "God has, as it were, extended the boundaries of heaven to include this haven of holiness."[65]

1QSa sets out regulations for the congregation (men, women, and children). There are only two extant columns, beginning, "Now this is the Rule for the entire congregation of Israel, during the end time." The Rule of the Congregation 2:5–9 explicitly mentions angels. The concern here is for the purity of the members, because the angels are said to be "among the congregation."

> [5] . . . And everyone who is defiled in his flesh, defiled in his feet or
> [6] in the hands, lame or blind, deaf or dumb or defiled in his flesh with a blemish
> [7] visible to the eyes, or an old man who cannot maintain himself in the congregation;
> [8] these shall not enter to take their place among the congregation of the men of name, for angels
> [8] of holiness are among their congre[gation] . . .

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[64] D. Dimant, "Qumran," pp. 497–498; H. Stegemann, *Library*, p. 107.
[65] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 118.

This text quite clearly states that angels are in the midst of the community (cf. 1QM 7:6, 12:8 above). First, it seems there may well have been members of the group who fit these criteria: blind, deaf, infirm, etc. If this were true, then certainly not all members would be able to participate in any ceremony that might involve the presence of angels. Secondly, that the angels are said to be present does not mean members are in any way transformed by their presence. There is perhaps the possibility that the pure members of the community are meant to be in some way transformed through their experience, but this is by no means necessary.

1QSb, The Rule of the Blessings, column 4 reads:

> [24] . . . and you
> [25] like an angel of the face [כמלאך פנים] in the holy residence for the glory of the God of Hosts [. . .] [. . .] you be around, serving in the temple of
> [26] the kingdom, casting lot with the angels of the face [מלאכי פנים] and the Council of the Community . . .

This passage is even more suggestive of the possible angelic status of the believers. In line 24 only the word ואתה is extant, but many translators suggest readings like "may you be like" or "you shall be like" an angel of the face. These are possible readings, but they suggest a particular meaning.[66] It is important to note the כ prefix to מלאך. It makes a comparison (like or as), not an equation (cf. Gal 4:14). In line 26, the angels of the face are again mentioned, and the same form ואתה recurs near the end of line 25. In line 26 we also get the verb ומפיל. It is not entirely clear what this phrase means (cf. Ps 22:19).[67]

4.5 *Songs of the Sage (4Q511 Fragment 35)*

The Songs of the Sage are a number of fragments that seem to be hymns against demons and evil spirits. They are written in a Herodian

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[66] E.g., J. Charlesworth and L. Stuckenbruck, *The Rule of the Community and Related Documents* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994) 127–128; F. Garcia-Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994) 433.

[67] C. Fletcher-Louis (*All the Glory*, pp. 150–161) discusses this text in light of "priestly" anthropomorphism. While his exegesis is interesting, his synthetic approach of tying the priesthood to this text is not one that is accepted here.

script and date to around the turn of the era.[68] On fragment 35 nine lines are extant, though only seven can be reconstructed with confidence. The first five lines are of the most interest. Line 4 in particular could be seen as equating priests, the righteous people, God's army (or host), his servants, and the angels that are able to see the כבוד. A fairly literal translation of the first five lines is offered:

> [1] God against all flesh, and a judgment of vengeance to destroy wickedness, and through the raging
> [2] anger of God. Some of those who are refined seven times and the holy ones [ובקדושים]
> [3] God [אלוהים] makes holy for himself like an everlasting sanctuary, and purity among those purified. And they
> [4] shall be priests [כוהנים], his righteous people [עם צדקו], his host [צבאו] and his servants [ומשרתים], the angels of his glory [מלאכי כבודו]
> [5] and they shall praise him [יהללוהו]

The "holy ones" of line 2 are usually understood to be the human community.[69] Assuming this is the case, then the referent of the various titles of line 4 could be understood as the human "holy ones," in which case "angels of his glory" could be one of those titles. M. Baillet believed that the "holy ones" would become "servants" of the angels. The final *mem* of ומשרתים indicates otherwise, since a construct form would be expected.

M. Davidson sees a break at "his servants" and begins a new sentence with "the angels of his glory will praise him."[70] This is a plausible translation, in which case there would be no equation between humans and angels. As Davidson himself says, "Nowhere else in the corpus [of Qumran literature] is there found an expectation that the sectaries will live in heaven, let alone become angels."[71]

C. Gieschen simply notes line 4 as an example of an equation being made between priests and angels.[72] C. Fletcher-Louis goes much further, refuting translations that would negate equality between angels and humans here.[73] He supports this position by connecting

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[68] M. Baillet, *DJD* VII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) 215, 219. Hebrew text taken from pp. 237–238, pl. LXII.

[69] M. Baillet, *DJD* VII, pp. 237–238; M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, pp. 282–285; C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 190.

[70] M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, p. 284.

[71] M. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, p. 284.

[72] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 174.

[73] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 189–193. See also C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, pp. 293–296.

the Qumran evidence with the Essenes and suggesting that within the sect were some who remained celibate because they deemed themselves to be living in a "state of Temple purity," which they understood as equivalent to an "angelic existence."[74] Josephus (*B.J.* 2:119–121, 160–161) does record that there were two types of Essenes, ones that led a celibate life and others that married. The problem in connecting the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls as a corpus with what Josephus says about the Essenes is that the link between the scrolls and the Essenes is not certain. It may well be warranted, but any conclusions based on such a connection must remain tentative.

This fragment in and of itself does not provide much information about the relationship between humans and angels. A number of translations are possible, some of which would mean that no equation is intended between the human "holy ones" and the "angels of glory."

Lastly, there are two other pieces of evidence beyond the Dead Sea Scrolls that need to be considered for possible communities that envisioned themselves as living together with angels.

4.6 *The Corinthian Community*

Paul seems to have had a special relationship with the community in Corinth, writing and visiting them often. As noted, the term ἄγγελος appears only ten times in the seven letters considered to be authentically Pauline (see 3.13). Four of those ten occur in 1 Cor, another two in 2 Cor. The most suggestive passage in terms of human-angel interaction is 1 Cor 11. Paul's discussion concerns proper worship (11:2). In 11:3 he says, "the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God" (11:3). In 11:10 Paul makes the enigmatic statement, "That is why a woman ought to have [ἐξουσίαν (lit. "authority," though most translate as "veil" as a symbol of authority)] on her head, because of the angels [διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους]."[75] Two issues are involved and are integrally linked for understanding the passage: the meaning of the ἐξουσία upon the woman's head and the meaning of the phrase διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους.

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[74] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 192–195.

[75] The word κάλυμμα "veil" appears in several mss. and Patristic sources (Irenaeus, Jerome). It appears to be a gloss meant to explain the difficult term ἐξουσίαν. See also Tertullian, *Virg. Vel.* 7:2.

Many interpreters suggest that the "authority" on her head is a mark of subordination in keeping with Paul's statement in 11:3. Others have suggested that it is simply a veil that is meant to maintain the correct social mores in keeping with 11:5: that is, a woman's bare head is like a shorn head—it is not socially acceptable. This does not explain why Paul then includes the phrase διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους, however.

It has been suggested that the sense may be that without some sort of covering for their heads as a prophylactic, the women of the Corinthian congregation were vulnerable to evil angels such as the "sons of God" who lusted after women (Gen 6:2).[76] This interpretation has on the whole been disregarded, since it does not make sense in the context of Paul's discussion. Paul has not said anything to suggest these angels are present or would represent any problem.[77] Other interpreters have suggested that the angelic presence may be "good" angels interested in the maintenance of the order of creation and proper worship.[78] In such a case, the women must be veiled because they will lead the angels to sin.[79]

J. Fitzmyer has observed that Paul's statement reflects an idea seen in some of the texts from the Dead Sea community considered above—namely, that angels seem to dwell among the actual human members of the congregation at specific times.[80] In this case the concern of Paul and the Corinthians is something akin to what is seen in the War Scroll (cf. Deut 32), where purity is an issue in order for angels to be present. The women need to have their "veils" because their uncovered heads represent the equivalent of a "bodily defect." Fitzmyer summarizes his insights from the Qumran evidence: "We are invited by the evidence from Qumran to understand that the unveiled head of a woman is like a bodily defect which should be excluded from the assembly, 'because holy angels are present in

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[76] B. Reicke, *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1946).

[77] M. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of I Cor XI.10" *NTS* 10 (1964) 412; G. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987) 521.

[78] Foerster, *TDNT* 2:573f.; M. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head," pp. 412–413.

[79] Cf. *T. Reu.* 5.

[80] J. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor 11:10" in *Paul and Qumran*, ed. J. Murphy-O'Connor (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968) 187–204. See also H. Cadbury, "A Qumran Parallel to Paul" *Harvard Theological Review* 51 (1958) 1–2.

the congregation.'"[81] The evidence from Qumran demonstrates a concern equally for infirm and impure men as it is does for women.

M. Hooker has offered a slightly different exegesis.[82] She suggests that ἐξουσία be taken to mean "authority" in the sense that the women in the Corinthian community can pray and prophesy side-by-side with men in the Corinthian community. There is no way to be certain of Paul's meaning here, but it is necessary to have an idea of the range of interpretations since these are integrally related to how one interprets διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους.

Fitzmyer's and Hooker's interpretations are not mutually exclusive, however.[83] Both suggest that the angels are present in the community due to a concern for proper worship. Perhaps, rather than seeing the unveiled head as a "bodily defect" that requires a veil, it is more natural to take ἐξουσία as "authority," as Hooker suggests. The "authority" is a sign that in this new community women are empowered to pray and prophesy as men. The ἐξουσία is a sign to the angels that this is correct and part of the natural order that Paul outlined in 11:3. As was the case with much of the material from Qumran and as will be the case in the text below (4.7), the concern for purity in order that angels can dwell with humans seems to be important, but the ἐξουσία may also be a sign that through baptism into the community angels could dwell with women as well as men.

1 Cor 11:10 is not the only passage that suggests those in the Corinthian community believed in the presence of angels. In 1 Cor 4:9 Paul says, "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles [ἀποστόλους] as last of all, like men sentenced to death [ἐπιθανατίους]; because we have become a spectacle [θέατρον] to the world [τῷ κόσμῳ], to angels and to men [καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις]." In this section, Paul is defending his apostleship. He warns the Corinthians against judging any person, particularly "servants" such as himself or Apollos, who have come to him to spread the gospel. It is not entirely clear why Paul brings angels into this discussion. It may simply be a way of talking about the entire cosmos.[84] However, their inclusion suggests

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[81] J. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran Angelology," p. 200.

[82] M. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head," pp. 411–416.

[83] In discussion at the Graduate NT Seminar (Oxford, UK on 31 January 2002), Prof. Hooker said she did not see a great difference between hers and J. Fitzmyer's interpretation of the passage.

[84] G. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987) 521.

that Paul and perhaps his audience believed that angels took an interest in the affairs of humans, particularly those carrying out God's work.[85]

In 1 Cor 6:3 Paul asks, "Do you not know that we will judge [κρινοῦμεν][86] angels [ἀγγέλους]? How much more [μήτιγε], matters pertaining to this life!" The context is Paul's discussion regarding members of the Corinthian church who are bringing one another before secular authorities to solve disputes. In 6:2 Paul asks, "Do you not know that the saints [οἱ ἅγιοι] will judge [κρινοῦσιν] the world [τὸν κόσμον]?" Most interpreters take this verse to refer to the Corinthians. Thus, Paul seems to be saying that members of the communities have been given a special power/obligation to make judgments now about angels. This would imply a superiority of humans over angels (cf. Heb 2:5), which in turn would certainly suggest a strong distinction between humans and angels.

Lastly, Paul may hint at an angelic attribute for himself in 1 Cor 13:1 when he says that he can "speak in the tongues of angels and men" (Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων).[87] It seems natural from the context to take this to refer to the ecstatic power of speaking in tongues (spiritual gifts [πνευματικῶν]), but perhaps it means something more in the sense of actually speaking the language of the angels. Paul does not say that he does, only "if he were to" speak as an angel. This would be parallel to Paul's use of the hyperbole in Gal 1:8, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed." Still, in light of the fact that Paul uses the term on three other occasions in 1 Cor, it is at least conceivable that he uses this analogy because it is functional for the Corinthians.

Thus, the only passage that seems explicitly to refer to the presence of angels is 1 Cor 11:10: "because of the angels." The cumulative effect of the four Corinthian passages might suggest more than a passing interest in the presence of angels in the community, but there is no way to be certain. In 1 Cor 4:9 Paul seems to say that angels as well as men observe human affairs. 1 Cor 11:10 indicates

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[85] M. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head," p. 413.

[86] That the verb is future indicative suggests that perhaps Paul is referring to an eschatological setting for this judgment scene.

[87] Speaking in the angelic dialect was an aspect at least one other text considered above—in the transformation undergone by the daughters of Job in *T. Job* 48 when they donned special clothing. In that case both their hearts and mouths were transformed, which is not unlike Paul's overall message in 1 Cor 13.

some specific concern about angels' presence at liturgy. The enigmatic statement in 1 Cor 6:3 places humans in judgment of angels, and lastly in 1 Cor 13:1 Paul hints at the possibility of speaking in an angelic dialect, but this may simply be some kind of analogy.

The Corinthian community may not have been the only early Christian community to have had such beliefs. Col 2:18 says, "Let no one disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels [θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων], taking his stand on visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind." Rowland argues persuasively for taking τῶν ἀγγέλων as a subjective genitive.[88] This means that it is not the community worshipping angels, but instead the community is concerned for the worship of the angels in heaven. Two recent studies show that scholarship is moving in this direction.[89]

The evidence here does not seem to suggest any identification between humans and angels. On the contrary, it seems to maintain the distinction. In 1 Cor 11:10 the ἐξουσία is needed διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. Human females need some type of distinguishing mark because of the angels. Paul says he could speak in the tongue of men *or* angels (13:1). Angels *and* men (not necessarily together) observe the apostles, who have become a spectacle, and humans judge angels (4:9). Even in 6:3, where Paul suggests that humans may judge the angels, thereby giving humans a superior position, there is still a distinction between the classes of beings. Nevertheless, the evidence does suggest that Paul and the Corinthian community saw the liturgical space as one where humans and angels could and did interact. But at the same time the necessary separation/distinction between humans and angels is maintained.

4.7 *The Community of the Rechabites (Hist. Rech.)*

The text known as The History of the Rechabites (also sometimes called the Apocalypse of Zosimus) is difficult to date. The first translator of the text suggested that the *Hist. Rech.* came from a fifth-century

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[88] C. Rowland, "Apocalyptic Visions and the Exaltation of Christ in the Letter to the Colossians" *JSNT* 19 (1983) 73–83. See also F. Francis, "Humility and Angelic Veneration in Col 2:18" in *Conflict at Colossae*, rev. ed., ed. F. Francis and W. Meeks (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975) 163–195.

[89] J. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996) 177–185, and C. Marvin Pate, "The Agony of the Ecstasy" in *Communities of the Last Days: The Dead Sea Scrolls, the New Testament, and the Story of Israel* (Leicester: Apollos, 2000) 179–195 and 271–275.

CE Christian monastic setting.[90] More recently, both B. McNeil and J. Charlesworth have seen in it a more ancient Jewish stratum and have argued for its first-century CE provenance.[91] The problems of dating are insoluble. Since it is possible that there is a line of tradition in this text dating back to the period of this study, the text is examined.

The Rechabites appear in Jer 35:2, 3, 5, 18. In Jeremiah this religious group is said to abstain from wine; they do not farm or make permanent homes, living in tents.[92]

The *Hist. Rech.* recounts the visit of a holy man named Zosimus to the island of the people known as "the Blessed Ones." Zosimus abstains from bread and wine and does not see other humans for forty years. An angel appears to him and tells him that he will be given his wish to see the people known as "the Blessed Ones."

After a long journey, Zosimus arrives on the island, where he meets a naked man. He asks the man why he is naked, to which the man replies that it is Zosimus who is actually naked and tells him that, if he wishes to see him, he should look to the heavens. As Zosimus does so, he sees, "his face (to be) like the face of an angel" (cf. Stephen, Acts 6:15). Zosimus's "eyes were dimmed from fear" and he falls to the ground (5:4)—common reactions to angelophanies. The "man" discloses that he is one of the "Blessed Ones" (6:1). Zosimus is told about the place and the "Blessed Ones." The island is like the Garden of Eden, and the Blessed Ones are like Adam and Eve before they sinned (7:2–3).

When many of the community hear that Zosimus has come to them, they wish to cast him out,

> [10] And many noble elders and spiritual youths, who were like angels from heaven, assembled, formed an assembly, and said to me, "O man of sin, go, exit from among us. We do not know how you prepared yourself so that you were able to come among us; [10a] perhaps you

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[90] M. R. James, "On the Story of Zosimus" in *Apocrypha Anecdota*, Texts and Studies 2:3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893) 86–108.

[91] B. McNeil, "The Narration of Zosimus" *JSJ* 9 (1978) 68–82, and J. Charlesworth, *OTP* 2:443–461; J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels" in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. J. Collins and G. Nickelsburg (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980).

[92] That the Essenes or Qumran community might be the descendants of the Biblical Rechabites has been suggested by some scholars, among them M. Black. This has on the whole been rejected. See C. H. Knights, "The Rechabites of Jeremiah 35: Forerunners of the Essenes?" *JSP* 10 (1992) 81–87.

> wish to deceive us as the Evil One deceived our father Adam." [11] However, I, miserable, Zosimus, fell upon my face before them, and with mournful tears entreated them earnestly and said, "Have mercy upon me, O Blessed Ones; And forgive me my offense, earthly angels." (*Hist. Rech.* 7:10–11)

The Blessed Ones are concerned for the purity of their community. In this case the impurity is sin, but the sinful body is like a corrupted garment (5:3).

What is meant by "earthly angels" is not entirely clear; it suggests some type of liminal existence. However, the community is explicit that they are mortals (11:2a). The "angels of God" are said to come among the community continuously (12:6).

J. Charlesworth says that the Blessed Ones "are in a post-earthly but pre-resurrection form; they are in a place waiting to be taken to heaven by the angels who visit them,"[93] while Fletcher-Louis concludes that, "in this text we have another example of an angelomorphic humanity . . . a community whose total lifestyle reflects their transformation."[94] In some sense calling the Blessed Ones "angelomorphic" is appropriate, since the vision that Zosimus has of the first man he encounters uses the imagery of angelophanies. Nevertheless, the Blessed Ones are mortal (11:2a) and are clearly different from the heavenly angels who visit them regularly (12:6).

B. McNeil has argued that the *Hist. Rech.* is a writing of the Jewish ascetic group known as the Theraputae.[95] The Theraputae are known to us only from Philo, who discusses them in his treatise, "On the Contemplative Life" (2–3, 10–40, 64–90).[96] The Theraputae share a number of characteristics with the Essenes, who, if they are taken to be the same group as those who composed the Dead Sea Scrolls, would share a communal lifestyle, etc.[97] Philo says they exemplify a community focused on contemplation and mystical vision of the divine:

> [11] The Theraputae, a people always taught from the first to use their sight, should desire the vision of the Existent and soar above the sun and our senses and never leave their place in this company which carries them on to perfect happiness . . . [12] but carried away by a heaven-sent passion of love, remain rapt and possessed like bacchanals

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[93] J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as Angels," p. 143.
[94] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 203.
[95] B. McNeil, "The Narration of Zosimus," pp. 68–82.
[96] F. Colson, *Philo IX* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941).
[97] *HJPAJC* II:592–597.

> or corybants until they see the object of their yearning. [13] Then such is their longing for the deathless and blessed life that thinking their mortal life already ended they abandon their property to their sons and daughters or to other kinsfolk, thus voluntarily advancing the time of their inheritance. (11–13)

Philo ends his discussion by calling the Theraputae those who have "lived in the soul alone, citizens of Heaven and the world." (90). There is no explicit mention of angels in *Contempl. Life.* McNeil himself notes at the beginning of his argument, "Also significant is the lack of a single mention of angels—we are not even told that the Theraputae believe in angels—whereas the Rechabites are 'brethren of angels'."[98]

McNeil concludes, "But if it be accepted that that Narration is a statement of the ideals of a Jewish community, then the group whose ideals it fits with minimum of difficulty is the Theraputae."[99] To be more precise, what McNeil should say is that it best fits with the Jewish evidence from among those groups about whom modern scholars have some knowledge. It is equally possible that the *Hist. Rech.* represents the ideas of a group about which we have no other information or perhaps a much later community.

C. Fletcher-Louis includes the Theraputae in his discussion of "Angelomorphic communities within Israel."[100] Nothing explicit in Philo's account suggests that the community, or anyone looking at them, thought they were living an angelic or transformed life. Philo does say that the Theraputae sought to have visions of the divine. He also says that they "have lived in the soul alone, citizens of Heaven and the world." Their ascetic practices could have been connected to some belief in angels living among them, as we see in *Hist. Rech.* or perhaps in some of the Qumran evidence, but there is no way to be certain of this.

That there were a number of communities that were concerned for purity and lived disciplined, ascetic lifestyles cannot be doubted, based on the Qumran evidence, Philo's description of the Theraputae, and the picture seen in the *Hist. Rech.*, as well as perhaps the community behind the Gospel of Thomas.[101] Nevertheless, there is no

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[98] B. McNeil, "The Narration of Zosimus," p. 77.
[99] B. McNeil, "The Narration of Zosimus," p. 81.
[100] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 198–199.
[101] See A. DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of*

reason to suppose that all the communities were one and the same, nor that any of them specifically believed that by their actions they were becoming angels.

Therefore, the *Hist. Rech.* must be used with some caution in any discussion of late Second Temple angel beliefs, since its date and provenance are by no means certain. An identification with the Theraputae may be correct, but it is also possible that this group is the best fit from among the groups about which we have information. Further, even if this identification were correct, it adds little to our understanding of the Rechabite communion with angels. The *Hist. Rech.* suggests there was a Jewish community that believed it was descended from the Rechabites of Jer 35 and that had angels living among them. This idea of earthly communion with angels is not unlike what was seen in some evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls. This group seems to have maintained a pure state so that heavenly angels could be present. The term "earthly angels" suggests the liminal or transformed state of the community. Ultimately, this material remains ambiguous.

Conclusions

Seven units of evidence were examined in this chapter. The analysis aimed to determine whether angels dwelling among a human community signified or implied any transformation of the human community members into an angelic status. Some of the Qumran material clearly showed a belief that angels were to live among the community members, but often purity laws were laid out that seemed to be a necessary prerequisite for angelic presence. 1QH did suggest that humans, though originally distinct from angels, might become part of the congregation of heaven as angels.

Regarding the evidence from Qumran generally, Fletcher-Louis concludes, "this discussion of Qumran material, in conjunction with what else is known of the Essenes [from Josephus], has demonstrated the importance for the community of an identity transformed from that of normal mortality to the angelic life."[102] The evidence on the

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Thomas (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996) 86–93, who makes a strong case for seeing the *Gos. Thom.* as a mystical—rather than Gnostic—text wherein the community sought communion with the divine through an ascetic lifestyle.

[102] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 198; bracketed material is my own.

whole does not support such an assertion. Much of the evidence is ambiguous, and if the Qumran material is not first synthesized and then material from Josephus (about the Essenes) added to the discussion, such an assertion seems even less tenable.

Fletcher-Louis has recently articulated this position more fully.[103] He sees the locus of human to angel (divine) transformation as the Temple, or in the case of Qumran, the communal liturgical space. There are two methodological problems with this idea.[104] One is seeing the material from Qumran as a corpus; the other is seeing the documents as representing the ideas of the community at any given time. These two issues detract from the impact of any exegesis that would derive a coherent set of beliefs for the community. Still, these critiques aside, Fletcher-Louis has provided scholars with some useful insights. The Temple or liturgical space of the community may be understood as qualitatively different from normal space.[105] It is certainly possible that this specific locus was a place where at least some Jews (and in this case, the Qumran community) understood that the earthly and heavenly spheres could have contact and some form of transcendence could occur. This seems to be the type of understanding many Jews would have held for the high priest entering the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. Whether it extended beyond this locus for most Jews is unclear. Even if it did, however, the effect seems to have been transient.

Insomuch as any "mystical" experience can be understood as transformative, it seems this one would have been as well; however, the preponderance of the evidence seems to indicate that such transformations were only glimpses—perhaps at most accumulating steps in the right direction—that would not have caused participants to see one another as angels but instead as righteous humans ultimately seeking to commune with (and perhaps transform into) angels in the afterlife. In so doing, they would thus fulfill the ultimate goal of the mystic: to reside with God in the throne room. This, I suggest, was not simply an eschatological idea/hope. The belief in the possibility of transformation on the model of righteous individuals of the past was a focus of the mystic in this life. One could not simply believe, "I will transform into an angel when I die, and thus I will one day

[103] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*.
[104] See my review of *All the Glory* in *CBQ* 65 (2003) 256–258.
[105] This seems to be similar to what Paul is suggesting in 1 Cor. See 4.6 above.

be with God." One had to prepare oneself in this life and begin a process that would (and could) only be fully realized in the afterlife. Seen in this light, Fletcher-Louis's assertions are valuable.

The first part of Fletcher-Louis's thesis from *All the Glory* is that "in its original, true and redeemed state humanity is divine (and/or angelic)." Adam is said to be made in the image of God and thus humanity is as well. This means that Adam and humans are theomorphic (or perhaps "divine"), but to call them "angelomorphic" seems to add unnecessary confusion to the discussion, so I suggest stressing the "theomorphic" character of humanity in its original state. The thesis may or may not be correct, but it is not necessary as long as transformation *could* occur in the afterlife.[106]

The second, interlocking component of Fletcher-Louis's thesis states that:

> The attainment now, for the redeemed, of this true humanity was conceptually and experientially grounded in their 'temple' worship in which ordinary space and time, and therefore human ontology, are transcended. They take for granted a cultic mythology which means that those who enter the worship of the community experience a transfer from earth to heaven, from humanity to divinity and from mortality to immortality.[107]

This seems possible for a very specific set of loci (i.e., the Temple or the liturgical space at Qumran), but ultimately it is unclear that the evidence from the scrolls supports such a claim, especially on a corporate level. As seen in chapter 3, "human ontology" was transcended only for specific, righteous individuals. Humans and angels remained separate, although it does seem that some of the Qumran texts (as well as perhaps some early Christian texts), saw the liturgical space as a place where the earthly and heavenly spheres could have contact and humans and angels could interact. This is different from saying that the sectarians transformed into "divine humanity."

Angels mediate between God and humans (i.e., they are able to cross the boundary between the heavenly and the earthly) and stand before God in the throne room. Some humans (especially "mystics") sought to experience God. So it seems logical that these humans would aspire to angelic status in order to become closer to God. The examples from their past of humans who had actually gone to

[106] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, p. 476.
[107] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, p. 476.

heaven and attained an angelic status meant that they believed the *potential* existed for access to God. The early Jewish and Christian mystics likely built upon this belief, and eventually the early Christians developed it into the idea of the ἀγγελικὸς βίος.[108]

In the case of the Corinthian community, it was not entirely clear what beliefs they held concerning angels, but 1 Cor 11:10 certainly seemed to suggest there was some belief in the presence of angels during the liturgy. The meaning of ἐξουσίαν was unclear also, but it seems likely, especially in light of evidence from Qumran, that whatever Paul means by the term, it stems from a concern for maintaining purity so that angels can be present. On the whole, only 11:10 seemed to suggest angelic presence in the community.

The *Hist. Rech.* presented insights into what one author/community envisioned as the progress of the ascetic community of Jer 35. The difficulties involved in dating the text make any conclusions tentative, but even there the Blessed Ones are mortals. Even in this case purity issues are involved in maintaining a state in which divine angels could be present. The status of the "earthly angels" of the community was somewhat ambiguous.

It is fascinating to consider that there is evidence that angels are believed to be present among various communities. Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that even in cases where angels and humans live in communities together, a distinction is maintained between the two classes of beings. The distinction between the two is cast into high relief by the fact that there often seem to be serious purity concerns involved when angels are meant to be present; humans must maintain a heightened state of purity in order for the possibility of angelic presence even to occur.

[108] One step along this path might be seen in a passage like 2 Cor 3:18.

CHAPTER FIVE

"GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER": HOSPITALITY AND EATING WITH ANGELS

This chapter will consider human-angel interaction by examining portrayals of humans offering hospitality to angels on earth and angels appearing to consume human food. The evidence indicates that when humans offer angels hospitality, the angels have almost always appeared in human form and the one visited is not aware of the angel's true nature. In some instances angels appear to eat human food, but late Second Temple interpretations of these traditions deny that the angel ate.

For the purposes of the discussion in this chapter, hospitality is understood as "the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests or strangers."[1] In the ancient world the two main components of this would likely have been food and shelter.

Examples of the practice of hospitality are found in Graeco-Roman, Jewish, and early Christian writings from the period.[2] There is no one Hebrew term that directly translates as "hospitality." In Greek the term is φιλοξενία.

In the Jewish tradition Abraham seems to stand as the paradigm of the virtue of hospitality, based upon Gen 18.[3] Most of the traditions discussed in this chapter are based on Abraham's encounter with divine guests (e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 43:7). Even Lot's hospitality is likely modeled on Abraham's.[4] Hospitality is also listed among the virtues of Job (Job 31:32).

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[1] The *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 656. See also J. Koenig, "Hospitality" in *ABD* 3:299–301.

[2] For examples in Graeco-Roman writings, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 628–632, where Zeus and Hermes are guests of the old couple Baucis and Philemon (cf. Acts 14:11–12, Homer, *Od.* 17:485–487) and the discussion in L. Martin, "Gods or Ambassadors of God? Barnabas and Paul in Lystra" *NTS* 41 (1995) 152–156. See also G. Stählin, "ξενος" in *TDNT* 5:1–36, esp. 17–25; Philo, *Mos.* 1:58.

[3] See *JE* 8:1030–1033 for a summary of the Jewish evidence regarding hospitality. Cf. *T. Zeb.* 6:4.

[4] T. Desmond Alexander, "Lot's Hospitality: A Clue to His Righteousness" *JBL* 104 (1985) 289–291.

Hospitality seems to have been an important virtue in the earliest Christian churches. The NT contains a number of other passages that state the importance of hospitality generally.[5] In particular, Jesus's pronouncements about the kingdom in the gospels, the Gospel of Luke itself, and the writings of Paul seem to evince a concern for this virtue.[6] These writings seem to have a practical or humanitarian basis rather than overtly suggesting that the guest so welcomed may be an angel. Hebrews 13:2 does seem to suggest that the virtue of hospitality is important because the host may unknowingly be entertaining angels, as some figures from the Hebrew Bible had done.[7] The early church fathers continued to stress the importance of hospitality, and it has been suggested that Christian hospitality facilitated the spread of the gospel.[8] The virtue of hospitality was important across cultures throughout the Mediterranean around the turn of the era.

An important component of hospitality is food. The question of whether or not angels require any sustenance has been considered by D. Goodman.[9] His article surveyed the Jewish material on the topic from the Hebrew Bible through the rabbinic literature, asking three questions: (1) How are angels sustained? (2) Is there any eating or drinking in heaven? And (3) do angels behave as men when they descend to earth?[10] The last of his questions is most relevant to the present discussion, but it is also useful to consider his conclusions about the first two questions to give context to the third.

With regard to angelic sustenance (1), Goodman begins his analysis with Ps 78:23–25, which states, "Yet he commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of heaven; and he rained down upon them manna to eat, and gave them the grain of heaven. Man ate of the bread of the mighty [לחם אבירים] or as the LXX reads, 'bread of the angels' [ἄρτον ἀγγέλων]."[11] Goodman notes that a certain

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[5] Rom 12:13; 1 Tim 3:2, 5:10; Tit 1:8; 1 Pet 4:9; Heb 13:2 and cf. Acts 28:7. For more on this idea see C. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), and A. Malherbe, "Hospitality and Inhospitality in the Church" in *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983) 92–112.

[6] J. Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

[7] Heb 13:2 is discussed in more detail below in section 5.7.

[8] D. Riddle, "Early Christian Hospitality: A Factor in the Gospel Transmission" *JBL* 57 (1938) 141–154. *Did.* 11–13 suggests that such hospitality could be abused, however.

[9] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" *JJS* 37 (1986) 160–175.

[10] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" p. 160.

[11] See also D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" p. 161 n. 5.

ambivalence toward the manna is already evinced in the Hebrew Bible. Exod 16:15 states, "When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, 'It is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.'" Little else is said in the Hebrew Bible regarding angelic food. Goodman cites *b. Yoma* 75b, in which R. Aqiba says the ministering angels eat the heavenly bread, but R. Ishmael rejects R. Aqiba on the basis of Deut 9:18, where Moses on Sinai states, "I neither ate bread nor drank water."

As for eating and drinking in heaven (2), Goodman shows that much of the evidence focuses upon how Moses was sustained during his forty days on Sinai (Deut 9:9, 18; Exod 24:9–11).[12] To Goodman, the evidence suggests that the ancient authors believed there was no food in heaven. However, humans in mystical ascent can survive by nourishment from the divine (Exod 34:28–9, *Apoc. Abr.* 13). Surveying the rabbinic writings, Goodman finds little discussion of how the angels themselves were sustained, since due to their incorporeality they apparently did not require sustenance. By the third century CE a tradition seems to have developed that the angels were sustained by contact with the Shekinah.

As for how angels behave on earth (3), Goodman surveyed the related literature: Judg 6 and 13, in which food is offered to the Angel of the Lord, who refuses, but the food is nevertheless consumed by fire; Tob 12, where the angel Raphael announces that he only appeared to eat and drink; and Luke 24, where the resurrected Jesus eats fish in front of the disciples as proof he is not an apparition. The majority of Goodman's analysis is focused upon Abraham and his heavenly visitors (Gen 18–19 and related traditions). It is with these same passages and one other that this chapter is concerned.[13]

Goodman sums up his conclusions regarding angelic sustenance by relating them to the conclusions of P. Schäfer on the negative reports about angels in much of the rabbinic literature:[14]

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[12] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" pp. 162–163; There is also a late tradition that Moses partook of the food of the angels while on Sinai (based on Exod 34:28) in the Samaritan *M. Marq.* 4.6 (cf. also Philo, *Moses* 2.69; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.99). See W. Meeks, "Moses as God and King" in *Religions in Antiquity*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968) 370 n. 5.

[13] To the discussion of angelic sustenance it is illuminating to add the honeycomb in *JA*, which will be considered below (5.4).

[14] P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen* (New York: de Gruyter, 1975).

> The earliest stage in the beliefs concerning angelic sustenance seems to be that angels do not eat the same food as men but nevertheless partake of some form of nourishment. Subsequent to the mid-second century CE, when negative reports are found about the angels, particularly in the dealings with man, interest in the angelic appetite evolves more from a concern for the welfare of man when he is in heaven, either during a mystical ascent or at the eschatological time, than from an interest in the angels themselves.[15]

Thus it seems that in the late Second Temple period, angels were believed to have some form of sustenance, but it was not the same as that meant for humans (cf. *L.A.E.* 4:2). Instead, angels in heaven were sustained by being present to God. They had no need of sustenance in the same way as humans. Goodman says the traditions based on Gen 18–19 suggest "possibly an *equality of status* between angels and men."[16] This equality, however, seemingly comes in how one receives a visitor, but it does not extend to the realm of identity. Given the influence of the Gen 18–19 story on subsequent traditions about hospitality to angels, it is appropriate to begin the examination of evidence there.

5.1 *The Book of Genesis 18–19*

Section 2.1 above lays out the evidence for the "men" of Gen 18–19 being interpreted as angels in the late Second Temple period. From that evidence, it seemed probable that most interpreters in that period understood these "men" to be angels. This being the case, what will be considered in this section is the interesting notion that Abraham and Lot offered hospitality (food, shelter, rest, etc.) to their angelic guests.

In Gen 18:2 Abraham sees the three "men" approach his tent; he hurries out to greet them and offer them hospitality. Abraham begs the visitors—though he addresses the "Lord" in the singular, who is said to appear to him (v. 1)—to remain with him (v. 3). First, Abraham orders water to be brought so they can wash their feet and sees that they rest themselves under the tree (v. 4). He then asks whether they will remain for some bread to refresh themselves (v. 5). Once they agree, Abraham tells Sarah to prepare three cakes

[15] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" p. 174.
[16] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" pp. 174–175; italics are mine.

of bread (v. 6). He next selects a tender calf and gives it to his servant to prepare (v. 7). The entire meal, which includes curds and milk, is placed before the travelers. Then Abraham stands by them under the tree "and they ate" (ויאכלו; καὶ ἐφάγοσαν) (v. 8). Abraham's hospitality is quite generous. From the narrative, Abraham does not seem to know the visitors or their divine nature. He requests that they remain, rest themselves, and eat. The meal he prepares is more than the simple bread he has originally offered them. The text explicitly states that the visitors ate what was prepared for them.

In chapter 19, Lot greets the visitors, now referred to as angels (19:1, 15; they are called "men" again in 19:16), with an entreaty to remain with him through the night. His words echo those of Abraham to his three visitors. The visitors agree to stay with Lot after first saying they would remain in the street (v. 2). Lot feeds them (v. 3). Before the visitors are able to settle in for the night, the townsmen surround Lot's house, demanding the men be given to them. The visitors are once again referred to as angels in v. 15, when the angels warn Lot to leave the city with his family or be destroyed along with the city. What is pertinent for the present discussion is to consider what subsequent interpreters did with the tradition of angels eating; that is, did they maintain, change, or eliminate it?

In *Abr.* Philo makes some interesting comments on Abraham's visitors.[17] Philo says explicitly that "angels received hospitality [ξενίων] from men" (115 cf. 167). In some sense, Philo interprets Abraham's very hospitality as the reward (ἀθλόν) for his virtue but adds that Abraham's hospitality was only a "by-product of his greater virtue . . . piety [ἀρετή]" (114).[18]

Philo is clear that the guests did not partake of the food offered to them, saying that they feasted "not so much on that prepared for them as on the good will of their host" (110). More explicitly, Philo says of Abraham's visitors, "It is a marvel indeed that though they neither ate nor drank, they gave the appearance of both eating and drinking" (118). So for Philo, the angels received Abraham's hospitality and responded by appearing to eat the food prepared for them without actually eating it.

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[17] Unfortunately, Philo's *QG* end immediately before where the events of Gen 18–19 would likely have been discussed.

[18] This same idea is evident in *1 Clem.* 10:7: "Because of his faith [πίστιν] and hospitality [φιλοξενίαν] a son was given him in his old age." Lot is saved for his "hospitality [φιλοξενίαν] and piety [εὐσέβειαν]" (11:1). (Cf. also *1 Clem.* 12:1; *Did.* 12).

Josephus in the *Ant.* 1.196–197 presents a similar analysis of the situation. The three men are angels (ἄγγελοι) that Abraham takes to be strangers (ξένοι), whom he asks to partake of his hospitality (ξενία). Abraham has cakes made and kills a calf. The angels, however, only "gave to him the appearance of having consumed" (οἱ δὲ δόξαν αὐτῷ παρέσχον ἐσθιόντων). Josephus also stresses that Lot extended hospitality to the angels, a lesson learned from living with Abraham (*Ant.* 1.200). Like Philo, Josephus is clear that the beings were angels who only gave the appearance of eating.

The only other relevant evidence regarding the reception of this passage comes from the Targumim. *Tg. Onq.* is quite similar to the Genesis narrative as we have it in the Masoretic tradition and the LXX. According to 18:8, the angels did apparently eat what Abraham placed before them, and again in 19:3 the two angels who visited Lot appear to have eaten the meal put before them. *Tg. Neo.* says that the angels only "gave the appearance of eating and drinking." *Tg. Ps-J.* also maintains that the angels only appeared to partake of the food placed before them, adding that the hosts did this "according to the manner (and) custom of human beings."[19] This seems to hint at both the custom of hospitality practiced among human beings as well as the simple fact that they were given food that humans need but angels do not.

Overall, the tradition is clear that Abraham warmly offered hospitality to his (angelic) visitors. In the Hebrew narrative it appears at least that the visitors ate what was placed before them. By the late Second Temple period and beyond, interpreters were apparently making clear that the angels did not eat but would give the appearance of doing so in order to conceal their identity or accept their hosts' hospitality.

5.2 *The Book of Judges 6 and 13*

Twice in the Book of Judges, the Angel of the Lord appears to humans. In each of these accounts the one visited offers hospitality including food to the angel, but in neither case does it appear the food is eaten; instead it is accepted as a type of sacrificial offering.

[19] This reading is seen in the fragmentary Targumim (P and V), which say, "And they appeared as though they were eating and as though they were drinking."

Judg 6:11–24 records the visit of the Angel of the Lord to Gideon at the time when the Israelites have been taken over by the Midianites. Judg 6:11 says, "Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites." Gideon is told that he is to deliver his people out of their occupation (6:14); thus the primary purpose of the visitation seems to be the revelation of God's plan for Gideon. Gideon seems unaware that the person speaking to him is the Angel of the Lord and asks the person to remain as he prepares a gift (v. 18). Gideon returns with a substantial meal of a prepared kid, broth, and unleavened cakes. The Angel of the Lord tells Gideon to put his food offering on a rock, which he does (v. 20). The angel touches the offering with his staff; the offering is consumed by fire, and at the same moment the angel vanishes (v. 21). Gideon then discerns that his visitor was indeed the Lord and fears that he will die, "Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face. But the Lord said to him, 'Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die.'" Gideon, like Jacob in Gen 28 and 32, then erects an altar at the site of his epiphany.

Josephus discusses the angelophany (*Ant.* 5.213–214) but is silent on whether or not Gideon made any offer of food. Philo does not mention either angelophany from Judges.[20] The Targum on Judg 6 likewise records that the angel did not eat but that the food prepared for him was consumed by fire as he disappeared. In Ps.-Philo the consumption of the food and water occurs in response to a request for a sign by Gideon. Moreover, only water is poured over a rock. As it is poured out, it disappears as half blood and half fire (*L.A.B.* 35:6).

In Judg 13:3–21, the Angel of the Lord appears to Manoah and his wife, announcing the birth of their son, Samson. Manoah asks the angel to remain with him so that he might feed him. Once again, the issue of hospitality comes into play. The angel says, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food; but if you make ready a burnt offering, then offer it to the Lord" (v. 16a). We also learn that "Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the Lord" (v. 16b).

[20] Additionally, 1Q6 fragment 1 contains part of Judg 6:20–22, only retaining one readable letter, מ, where מלאך is expected from the Masoretic text (*DJD* I:62).

Josephus, *Ant.* 5.282–284, records:

> [282] . . . and though Manoah invited him [the angel] to stay and partake of hospitality [ξενίων], he did not give his consent. However, he was persuaded at his earnest entreaty to remain while some token of hospitality [ξενίων] might be brought to him. [283] So, he killed a kid and bid his wife to cook it. When all was ready, the angel [ἄγγελος] ordered them to set out the loaves and the meat upon the rock, without the vessels. [284] That done, he touched the meat with the rod which he held and a fire blazing out, it was consumed along with the bread, while the angel [ἄγγελος], borne on the smoke as on a chariot, was plainly seen by them ascending to heaven.

Josephus very much stresses the hospitality of Manoah. Since the original tale has the angel refusing, Josephus says that it was through Manoah's persuasion that the angel did accept a token of his hospitality, consuming it with fire.

In his retelling of Judg 14, Ps.-Philo says that Manoah and his wife are able to offer both bread and gifts to the angel, who says, "I will not enter your house with you, nor eat your bread, nor take your gifts" (*L.A.B.* 42:8). After offering various sacrifices on his newly made altar, Manoah puts out the meat he has cut. The angel "reached out and touched them with the tip of his staff," and fire comes from the rock and consumes it. At the end of the chapter we learn that the angel has a name, Fadahel.

The Targum on Judg 13 has little expansion but makes no significant changes with regard to the angel not consuming the food.

While the offer of hospitality seems to be the correct course of action in both of these cases in Judges, in neither case did the one visited apparently know that the guest was the Angel of the Lord. The offer of food is accepted, but the food is not eaten and is instead consumed by fire as if a type of sacrificial offering.

5.3 *The Book of Tobit 5–12*

In the Book of Tobit, the archangel Raphael acts as travel companion to Tobias in chapters 5–12.[21] Raphael appears as a man, and no one seems to discern any difference until, just before his departure, the angel proclaims, "'I am Raphael, one of the seven

[21] For a discussion of the issues regarding the dating and genre of Tobit, see section 2.6 above.

holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One.' They were both alarmed; and they fell upon their faces, for they were afraid" (12:15–16).

Interestingly, in Tob 6:5, when Raphael and Tobias are encamped on the banks of the Tigris, Raphael tells Tobias to catch a large fish, saving the guts for a healing remedy. Once he has done this, they "roasted and ate [ἔφαγον] the fish."[22] This curious passage suggests that perhaps Raphael did indeed eat with his human companion. However, after the revelation of his true identity in 12:15–16, Raphael then proclaims, "All these days I merely appeared to you and did not eat or drink, but you were seeing a vision" (12:19). This is an early attestation of the idea that angels do not consume human food.

The parallels of an angel—here an archangel—coming to a human and not being recognized, giving an important revelation, appearing to eat, then departing are all important evidence of the motif in the literature prior to the first century CE.

Hospitality does not figure into this case specifically.[23] There is definitely an angel, the archangel Raphael, whose true nature is not known until the end of the tale. In the context of the story, he appears to eat, but it is revealed later that he did not.

5.4 *Joseph and Aseneth 15–16*

In section 2.10 above we considered the evidence for the visitor to Aseneth in chapters 14–17 of *JA* being understood as an angel. In this subsection the evidence that the angel accepts Aseneth's hospitality and also requests a specific food (a honeycomb) is analyzed. Part of the dialogue between Aseneth and the angel is as follows:

> [15:14] And the man said to her, "Speak (up)." And Aseneth stretched out her right hand and put it on his knees and said to him, "I beg you, Lord, sit down a little on this bed, because this bed is pure and undefiled, and a man or a woman never sat on it. And I will set a table before you, and bring you bread and you will eat, and bring

[22] Similarly, the (S) version of Tobit reads ἔφαγεν; and 4Q197 (Aramaic copy of Tobit) reads ואכל. The fact that both of these are singular in form suggests that only Tobit ate.

[23] But in 4:16 Tobit tells his son before his journey to "Give of your bread to the hungry, and of your clothing to the naked. Give all your surplus to charity, and do not let your eye begrudge the gift when you made it."

> you from my storeroom old and good wine, the exhalation of which will go up till heaven, and you will drink from it. [15] And after this you will go out (on) your way." And the man said to her, "Hurry and bring (it) quickly."
> [16:1] And Aseneth hurried and set a new table before him and went to provide bread for him. And the man said to her, "Bring me also a honeycomb." [2] And Aseneth stood still and was distressed, because she did not have a honeycomb in her storeroom.

Her hospitality includes rest, good food, and wine, followed by a departure after having been refreshed. The visitor agrees. He then requests a honeycomb. Aseneth is distressed because she does not have one in her stores, but she tells him that she will send a boy to fetch one. The angel assures her that there will be one in her stores when she checks, and indeed this is the case (v. 8). The honeycomb is not a typical one. It is said to give honey that is "like dew from heaven and its exhalation like breath of life" (v. 9). Further, the angel says that it is "full of the spirit of life. And the bees of paradise of delight have made this from the dew of the roses of life that are in the paradise of God" (v. 14). The angel then eats some of the honeycomb:

> [16:15] And the man stretched out his right hand and broke a small portion of the comb, and he himself ate and what was left he put with his hand into Aseneth's mouth, and said to her, "Eat." And she ate. [16] And the man said to Aseneth, "Behold, you have eaten bread of life, and drunk a cup of immortality, and been anointed with ointment of incorruptibility."

It is clear that the honeycomb is divine. The angel is said to eat it. No mention is made of his eating (or not eating) the food that Aseneth prepared, but presumably with the emphasis on the honeycomb, the other food is ignored. Most interesting is the fact that Aseneth is allowed to partake of the honeycomb. By doing so, she has "eaten bread of life, and drunk a cup of immortality, and been anointed with ointment of incorruptibility." It is unique among the passages considered in this chapter that the human benefits by eating angelic food after offering hospitality and human food to her guest.

Lastly, it is interesting to note that Aseneth indicates to her guest that the bed upon which she has asked him to recline is "pure and undefiled," with neither a man nor woman having sat upon it. This seems to reflect the same type of purity concerns seen in much of the evidence analyzed in chapter 4.

5.5 *The Testament of Abraham*

The *Testament of Abraham* (*T. Abr.*) likely dates to the first-second century CE. The text exists today in two main forms: the longer, Recension A (Greek ms., supported by a Romanian version), which is likely closer to its original form; and the shorter, Recension B (Greek ms., supported by a Slavonic and other versions); however, the precise relation of the two versions is not clear.[24] It is instructive to look at the evidence from both recensions.

Like other writings in the testament genre, *T. Abr.* tells of the time near the patriarch's death. However, Abraham refuses to accept that the time of his death has come. This text is unusual in the testament genre in that it does not contain a testament or much ethical teaching from Abraham.

God first sends the angel Michael (ἀρχιστράτηγος) to Abraham. Michael's arrival echoes the visitation of the angels in Gen 18–19, and within the story it is subsequently revealed that Michael was indeed one of the three visitors to him in the past at the oak of Mamre. The *T. Abr.* seems to expand on the idea of Abraham's hospitality by using Gen 18 as a model for how Abraham greets any guests.

In Recension A, Abraham is said to be a righteous man who was very hospitable (1:1). Abraham is in his fields with other workers when the angel Michael is said to appear to him as an "honored soldier, bright as the sun and most handsome, more than all the sons of men" (2:4); Michael's brilliant appearance seems to signal his angelic nature. Abraham greets Michael and asks him to travel with him across his fields (2:7). They arrive at Abraham's tent. When Isaac sees the face of the angel, he says to Sarah, "My lady mother, behold: the man who is sitting with my father Abraham is no son of the race which dwells upon the earth" (3:5). Isaac then worships Michael (v. 6). The preparations for their guest are extensive, including beautifying the guest room with purple cloth and silk (4:2). Michael then makes a discreet exit and ascends to heaven. There he says to God that he cannot announce to Abraham his death because "I have not seen upon the earth a man like him—merciful,

[24] E. P. Sanders, "The Testament of Abraham" in *OTP* 1:871; *HJPAJC* III.ii: 761–766.

hospitable, righteous, God-fearing, refraining from every evil deed" (4:6). Michael is commanded by the Lord, "Go down to my friend, Abraham, and whatever he should say to you, this do, and whatever he should eat you also eat with him" (4:7). Michael clearly finds this command problematic, saying in 4:9:

> Lord, all the heavenly spirits are incorporeal, and they neither eat nor drink. Now he has set before me a table with an abundance of all the good things which are earthly and perishable. And now, Lord, what shall I do? How shall I escape his notice while I am sitting at one table with him?

The Lord then says (4:10):

> Go down to him, and do not be concerned about this. For when you are seated with him I shall send upon you an all-devouring spirit, and, from your hands and through your mouth, it will consume everything which is on the table. Make merry with him in everything.

With this command, Michael returns to Abraham. The text does not say that Michael ate but picks up the story "after the supper was finished" (5:2), so presumably he gave the appearance of eating.

Sarah later recognizes the angel as one of the "three heavenly men who stayed as guests in our tent beside the oak of Mamre," a clear reference to Gen 18 (6:4).

It is clear in this recension of the story that Michael did not eat any food prepared for him, but instead he gives the appearance of eating, while the food is consumed by a spirit. Michael does accept Abraham's hospitality.

There are some significant differences between recensions A and B. In chapter 2 of Recension B, when Abraham sees a stranger—who is actually the angel Michael, though Abraham does not know this—he arises and first wishes him well on his journey. When the angel replies with kind words, Abraham then offers him hospitality (rest and food). Michael asks Abraham his name. When he learns that he is Abram, renamed Abraham by the Lord, Michael says, "Bear with me, my father, man who has been taken thought of by God, because I am a stranger, and I heard about you when you went apart forty stadia and took a calf and slaughtered it, entertaining angels as guests in your house, so that they might rest" (v. 10).

Michael returns to heaven to pray. He tells God that he cannot deliver the message of Abraham's death to him, saying Abraham is "a righteous man, who welcomes strangers" (4:10). Michael is ordered

to return to Abraham, where he is to "stay with him as a guest. And whatever you see (him) eating, you also eat." Thus, Michael is to accept gracefully Abraham's hospitality and at least give the appearance of eating. Chapter 5 says that upon Michael's return, "they ate, drank, and made merry" (v. 1). It is not clear whether Michael ate. Since he is commanded by God to eat what he sees Abraham eat, the implication is at least that eating is not a normal activity for him, but the text is not as explicit as Recension A in saying that a spirit consumed the food for him.

Interestingly, at 6:10 Sarah says, "I declare and say that this is one of the three men who stayed as our guests at the oak of Mamre," a clear reference to Gen 18, which is then quoted (v. 11). Abraham discloses that he also knows the identity of their visitor (vv. 12–13).

Michael does not bring Abraham to heaven, so Death is sent to him. Even though Abraham fears the sight of Death (13:4), he offers him hospitality (13:6).

Clearly, Abraham's hospitality lies at the heart of the narrative in this recension. Michael is told to eat and seems to do so in 5:1. It is not clear, however, since God has given him leave to eat, whether this is a case of an angel actually eating or simply appearing to eat.

The Gen 18–19 narrative clearly influenced the portrayal of Abraham in the *T. Abr.* The angel Michael, who comes to Abraham, is revealed as one of the angels to have visited him at Mamre (A-6:4; B-6:10). Abraham is the model of a hospitable host (A-1:1; B-4:11). The angel Michael is struck by Abraham's virtue to the extent that he cannot carry out his duty (A-4:6; B-4:12). After consulting God, Michael gives the appearance of eating so as not to offend Abraham's hospitality, but the food is consumed by a spirit, not Michael (A-4:7, 10; B-4:15).

5.6 *The Gospel of Luke*

There are some similarities between the angelic visitation in Gen 18–19 and the resurrection appearance of Jesus on the Emmaus road in Luke 24.[25] In both cases, divine beings appear as strangers to

[25] The idea of a divine being or angel as travel companion is seen in Tob 5–12. On this see M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*, pp. 144–148. See also C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, pp. 62–63.

humans. The humans are unaware of the true nature of the stranger and ask him to accept their hospitality. The two break bread with Jesus (24:30) and immediately realize who he is. At that moment Jesus disappears (cf. Judg 6:21 and 13:20). The two disciples who first see Jesus on the road return to Jerusalem and the other disciples (24:33). Once there, they tell the others what has happened to them (24:34–35). Then:

> [36] As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them. [37] But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. [πνεῦμα, D reads φάντασμα] [38] And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? [39] See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit [πνεῦμα] has not flesh [σάρκα] and bones [ὀστέα] as you see that I have." [41] And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" [42] They gave him a piece of broiled fish, [43] and he took it and ate [ἔφαγεν] before them.[26]

Luke (or the author of this resurrection account) probably drew on the traditions mentioned, so Jesus would take on characteristics associated with the divine visitors.[27] However, the text does read πνεῦμα, not ἄγγελος, though it is granted that "spirit" is a term sometimes meant to refer to any incorporeal or divine supernatural (cf. Luke 4:33, 9:39, 13:11). Is Jesus meant to be an angel? Jesus offers two proofs of his identity. One is the eating of the fish—he is flesh and blood—and the other is the fulfillment of words he spoke while alive (vv. 44–48); it is really the same Jesus. The use of eating as a proof of his humanness implies that eating is generally a human activity, not one in which incorporeal beings partake.[28] The point is that Jesus is not an angel or spirit but is meant to be flesh and blood.

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[26] There is an interesting variant at 24:42: καὶ ἀπὸ μελισσίου κηρίου ("and from a honeycomb"). B. Metzger says this is an "obvious interpolation," inserted as a justification for honey being used in celebration of the Eucharist and in the baptismal liturgy; *A Textual Commentary on the New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994) 161. However, it is interesting that in *JA* 16 the angel requests a honeycomb from Aseneth, and it turns out to be divine food.

[27] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 63, says that Jesus's appearance has the "clear contours of an angelophany" but notes that Luke may see this as a weak Christology.

[28] D. Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?" p. 168.

5.7 *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Hospitality*

One of the clearest allusions to Gen 18–19 in the NT comes in Heb 13:2: "Do not neglect to show hospitality [φιλοξενίας] to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels [ἀγγέλους] unawares." This reminder occurs at the end of the epistle in a section of exhortative statements. H. Attridge notes that the "some" (τινες) in this verse may refer to a number of persons from Hebrew Bible stories: Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18:2–15); Lot (Gen 19: 1–14), Gideon (Judg 6:11–18), Manoah (Judg 13:2–22), or Tobit (Tob 12:1–20).[29] All of the passages are possible referents, since the issue of hospitality is involved, but the aspect of giving hospitality unawares seems to point toward Genesis or Tobit. Whichever text or texts it is, the command of the author of Hebrews seems clear: you (first-century audience) should (in your present context) not neglect hospitality, because some (in our history) have entertained angels (in their own time). It is an exhortative statement in the present, justifying why Christians should always show hospitality to strangers. How seriously one is to take such a command is not clear. It might be an exaggeration meant to stress a particular point. However, in light of the passages considered above, the author may take seriously the possibility of angelic visitation to humans (e.g. Gal 4:14).

Tertullian, writing in the second century CE, says in chapter 26 of *De Oratione*, "You will not dismiss a brother who has entered your house without prayer.—'Have you seen,' says Scripture, 'a brother? you have seen your Lord';—especially 'a stranger,' lest perhaps he be 'an angel' [*angelus*]."[30] His comment is based on Heb 13:2, but his exhortation is targeted toward his present community and could reflect a continuing belief in angels visiting human beings.

The congenial reception of strangers embodies the ideal that Jesus sets out in Matt 25:35–36, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." These words of the Matthean Jesus idealize the virtue of hospitality. In giving

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[29] H. Attridge, *Hebrews: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989) 386.

[30] Translation from the *ANF* 3:690.

food and drink to the lowly, the righteous are actually giving it to the Son of Man himself. In Matt 10:40, Jesus declares, "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me" (cf. Matt 18:10).[31] As noted above, it is clear that hospitality continues in the early church and may even have been a factor in the spread of the gospel. The possibility exists that a least a partial factor in the push for strong hospitality was the belief that divine beings, angels, or even Jesus might visit the community.

Conclusions

The examination of evidence in this chapter showed that the motif of angels visiting humans on earth and being offered hospitality was present in the literature of the late Second Temple period. Much of it seems to be based on the Gen 18 narrative about Abraham being hospitable to his three guests at the oak of Mamre. This story clearly influenced the portrayal of Abraham in the *T. Abr.*

In all the cases, hospitality was offered to the angels while the host was unaware of the angel's divine nature. No explicit reasons were given—simply an underlying understanding that angels did not eat human food. In the case of *JA*, the food of the angel is a special honeycomb. Regardless of whether they actually ate or only appeared to eat, there is no indication that hosts should do anything other than offer the best (human) hospitality to their guests (angelic or otherwise), particularly since they could not always be certain of their guests' true nature.

The evidence from the NT showed that Gen 18–19 and other Hebrew Bible passages informed the exhortation in Heb 13:2 but also the idea of Christian hospitality as a whole; angels could visit, so one needed to be ready to offer them the proper welcome at any time.

Echoing the conclusions of D. Goodman, C. Fletcher-Louis says that literal readings of texts such as Gen 18 were denied from early on, thus confirming "that it was a standard assumption that angels did not eat."[32] This seems to be the case for the Second Temple

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[31] The idea of hospitality may also lie behind the commandment to "Love your neighbor as yourself" in Matt 5:43, 19:19, 22:39; Mark 12:31, 33; Luke 10:27; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8; cf. Rom 13:8, 10. See C. Rowland, "Apocalyptic, the Poor, and the Gospel of Matthew" *JTS* 45 (1994) 504–518.

[32] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, p. 69.

evidence. Angels did not eat human food, presumably because eating is a human activity that is unnecessary for them. In Luke 24, Jesus actually goes about proving his corporeal nature by eating. It seems, then, that one factor in distinguishing humans from angels is whether they need to eat. Angels, even when on earth, have no need to eat, while humans do. But angels, when offered food, aimed not to offend their hosts so gave the appearance of eating.

CHAPTER SIX

"THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS": HUMAN-ANGEL HYBRID OFFSPRING

This chapter investigates the relationship between humans and angels by considering the portrayals (deriving from Gen 6:1–4) of angels having sexual relations with human women. In a number of texts these relations resulted in viable offspring: angel-human hybrids that came to be known as the Nephilim, Giborim, or giants.

The "taking of wives" in the Gen 6 narrative and subsequent interpretations was understood as a euphemism for sexual relations that led to hybrid offspring. The term "hybrid" will be understood to mean, "the offspring of two animals [or beings] of different species or varieties."[1] This term regularly has the connotation that the two entities involved are incongruous—that is, do not regularly or naturally join.

The evidence in this chapter indicates that a union between angels and humans was not considered natural. They were distinct beings (or species) from the creation onward. The angels' descent to earth was a transgression of the natural order that represented a significant problem. It was even considered by some interpreters to be the source of evil in the world.

6.1 *Genesis 6:1–4 in the Hebrew Bible*

Prior to the short story of the "sons of God" in Gen 6:1–4 are the creation (chaps. 1–2), the story of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the garden of Eden (chaps. 3–4), and then a list of the generations after Adam up to the mention of Noah and his three sons (chap. 5). With seemingly no connection to the preceding material, chapter 6 abruptly interjects this short tale of the "sons of God" and the daughters of men:

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[1] The *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 665. The words in brackets are mine.

> [1] When men [האדם] began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them,
> [2] the sons of God [בני־האלהים] saw that the daughters of men [בנות האדם] were fair; and they took to wife [ויקחו להם נשים] such of them as they chose.
> [3] Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."
> [4] The Nephilim [הנפלים] were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God [בני האלהים] came in to the daughters of men [בנות האדם], and they bore children to them, these [המה] (were) the mighty men [הגברים] that were of old, the men of renown.

Immediately after this short account, it is said that the Lord looks upon the earth, sees that humans are wicked, and repents of his creation (6:5). This connection with the evil of the age and the flood is central in later interpretations. The flood narratives follow, when God purifies the earth of the first, wicked humans. Only those of Noah's family survive (chaps. 6–9). So, already in the Hebrew Bible tradition, the descent to earth and taking of wives by divine beings seems to have precipitated a judgment upon the earth.

A brief outline of the Gen 6:1–4 narrative will be helpful, since (a) the passage itself is rather brief and not logically well structured, and (b) subsequent traditions pick up on particular parts of the passage:

1. Humans are said to increase in number upon the earth (6:1a).
2. Daughters are born to the humans (6:1b). The "sons of God" then see that the daughters are pleasing to the eye (6:2a), and they "take wives" from among the human females (6:2b).
3. Then the Lord says that his spirit (רוח) will not remain in humans for longer than 120 years (6:3).[2] No apparent rationale is given for the sudden limitation, especially since it is already clear that humans are mortal (Gen 3:19), nor for the specific maximum duration of life (120 years). This verse interrupts the story, and it is sometimes omitted in subsequent interpretations.

[2] The significance of the term "spirit" here is not entirely clear. It seems to represent the life force (breath) that God gave to humans. However, "spirit" is a term sometimes used to refer to angels, especially in some of the Dead Sea Scrolls. On this see A. Sekki, *The Meaning of Ruah at Qumran* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989) 145–171. If the "sons of God" were to be understood as humans, then this might suggest that God's spirit does not remain in them because of their action. However, virtually all subsequent interpretations seem to suggest that these beings are angels.

4. The Nephilim are said to exist from this point in history onward (6:4a).[3] It is implied, but not explicit, that these Nephilim are the offspring of the "sons of God" and the daughters of humans (6:4b). The Nephilim are also called "the mighty men of old" (הגברים)[4] who are "men of renown" (אנשי השם) (6:4c).

At first glance, Gen 6:1–4 seems to present two distinct aetiologies: mortality (i.e., a finite life span for humans) and the Nephilim; however, no connection between these two aetiologies is readily apparent. C. Westermann argues that verses 1–2 and 4 make up the original passage, while v. 3 is a later, interpretive gloss that disrupts the flow of the original narrative.[5] This would mean that the thrust of the original narrative was the origin of the Nephilim, who were the offspring of the "sons of God" and human women. This explanation seems plausible, but the originality of v. 3 does not necessarily have any impact on the interpretation of this passage with regard to the angel-human relationship. In v. 4 the Nephilim are said to be then upon the face of the earth, after the sons of God had offspring via human women, implying that the Nephilim are the same as the "mighty men of old, the men of renown."

As noted, this short narrative is often taken by modern interpreters to be separate from the larger narrative scheme of Genesis. R. Hendel, however, has offered an interpretation of this passage that seeks to unite 6:1–4 with the Flood narrative that follows it.[6] He says, "the story of the mingling of gods and mortals and the procreation of the demigods was originally connected to the flood narrative and functioned as its motivation."[7] Demonstrating parallels in other ancient cultures, Hendel suggests that, "The Primeval Cycle is characterised by a series of mythological transgressions of boundaries that result in a range of divine responses which slowly build up the present order of the cosmos." The taking of human wives by the "sons of God" was one such transgression. Noting the work of M. Douglas,

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[3] Other occurrences of the Nephilim are at Num 13:33 (cf. Deut 2:10–11); Jos 8:25; Judg 20:46; 2 Ki 25:11; Ps 145:14; Jer 39:9; Jer 52:15; Ezek 32:22, 24. See *DDD*, pp. 1163–1168.

[4] The term הגברים appears 20 times in the Hebrew Bible. The beings in Gen 6:1–4 seem to be different from David's fighters in 2 Sam 23:8–39 = 1 Chr 11:10–47.

[5] C. Westermann, *Genesis* (London: SPCK 1985) 363–383.

[6] R. Hendel, "Of Demigods and the Deluge: Toward an Interpretation of 6:1–4" *JBL* 106 (1987) 13–26.

[7] R. Hendel, "Of Demigods," p. 16.

he suggests that such a union went against the "categories of creation."[8] These categories were meant to be distinct from each other: human and divine. The fusion of the two created an "imbalance and a confusion in the cosmic order," which had to be redressed. R. Hendel sees the Flood as "the natural conclusion of Gen 6:1–4 . . . the destruction of humanity and the concomitant annihilation of the disorder."[9] Even if one does not accept his entire exegesis, Hendel's assertion that categories of purity and creation order are disrupted by the actions of the "sons of God" is illuminating, since it connects the story with its immediate context rather than seeing it as a disjointed segment. It also shows that the mixing of divine and human could have been understood as problematic from the earliest period. It apparently continued to be a problem for some, such as the authors of *Jub.* and *T. Naph.*

Thus, this short narrative in the Hebrew Bible tells of the intermingling of human (daughters of men) and divine (sons of God) blood, which seems to have led to unusual offspring. It appears to be somewhat unconnected to the surrounding passages, but as Hendel suggests, already in this narrative, the sin of boundary transgression could be understood as leading to the Flood. Virtually all subsequent interpretations of this passage will understand the "sons of God" as angels. The earliest of these seems to have been the Book of Watchers.

6.2 *1 Enoch 6–11: The Book of Watchers*

Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, dates for 1 Enoch had been posited as early as the first century BCE to as late as the third century CE. Discovery of Aramaic fragments of all the major sections of 1 Enoch—except the Similitudes (chapters 37–71)—has led most scholars to believe that 1 Enoch 1–36 and 72–108 are at least first century BCE in origin and probably as old as the third century BCE.[10]

A few scholars have suggested that 1 Enoch may even be old enough to have influenced the Book of Genesis itself, but this idea has not

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[8] M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) esp. 53–54; R. Hendel, "Of Demigods," p. 23.

[9] R. Hendel, "Of Demigods," p. 23.

[10] G. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11" *JBL* 96 (1977) 389–391. G. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001) 14–15.

won much scholarly support.[11] The narrative in 1 Enoch is much more expansive than in Genesis and clarifies some ambiguities. Therefore, the priority of the Genesis narrative will be assumed. It will be seen that the traditions in 1 Enoch, however, did influence many, if not all, subsequent interpretations of the fallen angel narrative.

The term "Watchers" (עיר) came to be applied to the divine beings (angels) who left their place in heaven.[12] In the Hebrew Bible the term only appears in the Book of Daniel as referring to heavenly beings (4:13, 17, 23); it appears in *Jub.* 3:15, 5:1, CD 2:18, the *Gen. Apoc.*, and several other late Second Temple writings. The term is not exclusive to the fallen angels, since *1 En.* 20:1 applies it to the four archangels. J. Collins notes that the function of the Watchers overlaps that of the angels but that the Watchers were likely conceived of as a distinct class of angelic beings.[13]

The most relevant section of the Book of Watchers is chapters 6–15, where the narrative of Gen 6 is discussed and expanded upon. There seem to be two strands of tradition within the passage: the Shemaziah and the Azazel.[14] Chapter 6 says:

> [1] In those days, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. [2] And the angels, the children of heaven, saw them and desired them; and they said to one another, "Come, let us choose wives for ourselves from among the daughters of man and beget us children." [3] And Semyaz, being their leader, said unto them, "I fear that perhaps you will not consent that this deed should be done, and I alone will become (responsible) for this great sin." [4] But they all responded to him, "Let us swear an oath and bind everyone among us by a curse not to abandon this suggestion but to do the deed." Then they all swore together and bound one another by (the curse).[15]

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[11] J. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976) 31, 124–5. M. Barker, *The Last Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence of Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), but see M. Barker, *The Older Testament* (London: SPCK, 1987) 12–16.

[12] J. Collins, "Watchers" in *DDD*, pp. 1681–1685. See also J. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I: A Commentary*, 2nd ed., Biblica et Orientalia 18a (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971) 80–81.

[13] J. Collins, "Watchers" p. 1684.

[14] D. Dimant, "I Enoch 6–11: A Methodological Perspective" *SBLSP* (1978) 323–339; G. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11," pp. 383–405; *HJPAJC* IIIi:255.

[15] Then the names of these angels are given: "And they were altogether two hundred; and they descended into Ardos, which is the summit of Hermon. And they called the mount Armon, for they swore and bound one another by a curse.

1 En. 6 appears to expand upon the core narrative from Gen 6. (1) Humans multiply on the earth (Gen 6:1). (2) Divine beings see the beauty of the daughters of the humans and descend to the earth (Gen 6:2a). At this point the narrative is expanded to include a long discussion between Semyaz and his coconspirators. As the leader, Semyaz does not trust that his companions will follow through on their plan to go to the human women, because it is a great sin, so they all swear an oath. We are told the number of angels, two hundred, and we are also told fifteen names of various leaders among the angels. Once bound by an oath, they descend and take wives (Gen 6:2b).

It is interesting to note in passing that 1 Enoch does not seem to make reference to Gen 6:3, where God limits the life span of humans. As was noted, Westermann suggested that this verse may not be original. That 1 Enoch does not reflect Gen 6:3 does not prove or even suggest that the verse was not already present, since it possible that the author of 1 Enoch had particular motivations for omitting reference to the verse.

After the names of the leading angels are given (vv. 7–8), chapter 7 continues:

> [1] And they took wives unto themselves, and everyone (respectively) chose one woman for himself, and they began to go unto them. And they taught them magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and taught them (about) plants. [2] And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants whose heights were three hundred cubits. [3] These (giants) consumed the produce of all the people until the people detested feeding them. [4] So the giants turned against (the people) in order to eat them. [5] And they began to sin against birds, wild beasts, reptiles, and fish. [6] And their flesh was devoured the one by the other, and they drank blood. And then the earth brought an accusation against the oppressors.[16]

The angels then teach human beings about medicine, herbalism, and magic. The women become pregnant and have offspring. 1 Enoch is explicit that these offspring were giants who were 300 cubits high (cf. Gen 6:4). These hybrid creatures bring sin into the world, especially cannibalism, and the earth is said to accuse them.

And their names are as follows: Semyaz, the leader of Arakeb, Ramael, Tamel, Ramel, Danel, Baraqyal, Asel, Baratel, Ananel, Sasomaspweel, Kestarel, Turel, Yamayol, and Arazyal. These are their chiefs of tens and others with them" (*1 En.* 6:6–8).

[16] Translation of all *1 En.* passages taken from E. Isaac, *OTP* 1:15–16.

At the beginning of chapter 8, Azazel[17] is said to teach humans

> [1] (the art of) making swords and knives, and shields, and breastplates; and he showed to their chosen ones bracelets, decorations (shadowing of the eye) with antimony, ornamentation, the beautifying of the eyelids, all kinds of precious stones, and all coloring tinctures and alchemy.

The list continues, with others teaching incantations and astrology, until the people cried and their voice reached heaven (v. 4). Angels teaching humans many skills, most of which lead only to destruction (weapons, armor) or dangerous arts (seduction, astrology), is an elaboration upon the Genesis narrative. It may be an extension of the idea in Gen 6:5, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Rowland points out the irony of the angelic revelation appearing in an apocalyptic text: "One can only assume that the major difference between Enoch and the angels is the fact that man receives the heavenly mysteries by means of revelation, whereas angels are guilty of exposing the heavenly mysteries to man without God's permission."[18] So, even in the case of the angels revealing knowledge, it seems that divine parameters were transgressed.

In chapter 9 the archangels (Michael, Surafel, and Gabriel) are observing the earth. They beseech God to do something about the evil that is upon the earth, saying:

> [6] You see what Azazel has done; how he has taught all (forms of) oppression upon the earth. And they revealed eternal secrets which are performed in heaven (and which) man learned. [7] (Moreover) Semyaz, to whom you have given power to rule over his companions, co-operating, they went in unto the daughters of the people of the earth; [8] and they lay together with them—with those women—and defiled themselves, and revealed to them every (kind of) sin. [9] As for the women, they gave birth to giants to the degree that the whole earth was filled with blood.

God decides that a deluge will be sent to purify the world, and Noah is warned (10:1–3). God then sends Raphael to bind Azazel and cast him into darkness (10:5). Raphael is said to make a hole in the desert that was in Dudael and cast him there. This is interesting in light of Lev 16, in which the goat that is offered for Azazel is sent out

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[17] For other texts re: Azazel see: Lev 16:8, 10, 26; *1 En.* 8:1, 9:6, 10:4–8, 13:1, 54:5–6, 55:4, 69:2; *Apoc. Abr.* 13:6–14, 14:4–6, 20:6–7.

[18] C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (New York: Crossroads, 1982) 93–94.

into the desert on the Day of Atonement. Gabriel is sent "to proceed against the bastards and reprobates and against the children of adultery . . . and expel the children of the Watchers from among the people" (10:9). Lastly, Michael is sent to "Make known to Semyaza and the others who are with him, who fornicated with the women, that they will die together with them in their defilement" (10:11).

Interestingly, in *1 En.* 12–13, Enoch is called upon by the Watchers to intercede on their behalf. This ironic twist has a human in heaven pleading on behalf of angels who are on the earth. The angels have transgressed the boundaries and left their natural position, while Enoch has been chosen by God and brought up into their abode.

A number of interpretations have been offered for the present state of the text. Both G. Nickelsburg and P. Hanson have attempted to link the development of the tradition of the fallen Watchers with Graeco-Roman myths.[19] In particular, Hesiod's *Theogony* 185 and Homer's *Odyssey* 7.59 both mention that blood from heaven mingled with the earth to create giants. These parallels are interesting, but the interpretation of this narrative has been pushed further by M. Barker and especially D. Suter.[20] D. Suter locates in 1 Enoch a concern for purity in the priestly bloodline, which has been translated into a myth about angels who procreate with women and mix blood. This interpretation is particularly illuminating for the present discussion. It is also in keeping with Hendel's interpretation of Gen 6:1–4, in which the mixing of the two types of beings was already a fundamental problem and cause of the destruction in the Flood. Here the understanding that the sin of the angels is to go to earth and copulate with human women is more explicit. An additional sin is to teach humans various types of hidden knowledge.

Thus, the Book of Watchers is an early tradition, but it does still seem to depend upon the core narrative in Gen 6. Virtually all subsequent interpreters of the Watchers narrative likely had some aware-

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[19] G. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11," pp. 383–405; P. Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhermeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11" *JBL* 96 (1977) 195–233. See also J. Collins, "Methodological Issues in the Study of I Enoch: Reflections on the Articles of P. Hanson and G. Nickelsburg" *SBLSP* (1978) 315–322, with responses in the same volume by Hanson (pp. 307–309) and Nickelsburg (pp. 311–314).

[20] M. Barker, *The Older Testament* (London: SPCK, 1987) 8–80; D. Suter, "Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in 1 Enoch 6–16" *HUCA* 50 (1979) 115–135.

ness of the kinds of ideas that developed in 1 Enoch. In particular, it is made explicit that the divine beings who came to earth were angels, even named angels. One of their transgressions was to have relations with human women and spawn giant hybrid offspring, but another was to teach humans many secrets. As J. Klawans points out, "The watchers engage in sexually defiling behavior which leads to their permanent degradation and their exile from Heaven."[21]

6.3 *The Septuagint*

It is important to see how the key Hebrew terms (בני־האלהים; הנפלים; and הגברים) of Gen 6:1–4 were translated in the LXX to gain insight into those interpreters' ideas about angels in the Second Temple period. "Sons of God" (בני־האלהים) is a rare term in the Hebrew Scriptures; besides its two occurrences in Gen 6, it appears only in Job 1:6, 2:1, and 38:7 (all three are בני אלהים); Ps 29:1 (בני אלים), 82:6 ("gods, and sons of the Most High" (ובני עליון אלהים)); and Dan 3:25 (לבר אלהין). The three cases in Job and one in Daniel are rendered with ἄγγελος, while the others are rendered literally. In each case, the "sons of God" seems to refer to divine beings.[22]

Interestingly, in the two occurrences in Gen 6:2 and 4 the text seems to have maintained this term, using οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ to translate it directly.[23] One version (Codex A) has οἱ ἄγγελοὶ τοῦ θεου at v. 2, but, as P. Alexander points out, this is not likely to have been the original reading.[24] The implications of this are not entirely clear. It could mean that the translators were not aware of the line of tradition, such as in 1 Enoch, that was interpreting the "sons of God" as angels. Conversely, it may represent a reaction against such an interpretation. Thirdly, it may represent some ambivalence toward the question,

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[21] J. Klawans, *Sin and Impurity in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 57.

[22] B. Byrne, *"Sons of God"—"Seed of Abraham": A Study of the Idea of Sonship of God of All Christians in Paul against the Jewish Background* (Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1979) 10–23, provides a good survey of the range of meaning for "son of God" as angelic beings. See also "Son of God" in *ABD* 6:129, and S. Parker, "Sons of (the) God(s)" in *DDD*, pp. 1499–1510.

[23] Symmachus translates "sons of the powerful ones [δύναστευοντων]"; Theodotion "sons of God"; and Aquila "sons of gods [θεῶν]."

[24] P. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis of 'Sons of God' in Genesis 6" *JJS* 23 (1972) 60–71.

so that a literal translation was adopted. The question is likely not answerable, but at least one variant of the LXX does demonstrate the reading ἄγγελος, so such a reading was at least possible.

The LXX translates both the term הנפלים and הגברים as γίγαντες,[25] demonstrating two interpretive moves. First, the Nephilim and the Giborim are equated. Although this is the likely interpretation, it is not explicit in the Hebrew. Second, these beings were understood as "giants." Num 13:32–33 echoes the same idea regarding the Nephilim, again translating their names as "giants" and stating that they are humans of enormous stature:

> [32] So they brought to the people of Israel an evil report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone, to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. [33] And there we saw the Nephilim [γίγαντας] (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim); and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

Another text hints that gigantic features belong to angel-human hybrids. *JA* 22:7–8 states of (the heavenly) Jacob:

> [7] And Aseneth saw him and was amazed at his beauty, because Jacob was exceedingly beautiful to look at, and his old age (was) like the youth of a handsome (young) man, and his head was all white as snow, and the hairs of his head were all exceedingly close and thick like those of an Ethiopian, and his beard (was) white reaching down to his breast, and his eyes (were) flashing and darting (flashes of) lightning, and his sinews and his shoulders and his arms were like those of an angel, and his thighs and calves and his feet like (those) of a giant. [8] And Jacob was like a man who had wrestled with God.[26]

The parallels here are intriguing. Both the beings in Gen 6:1–4 and Jacob in this text are hybrids, being both human and divine (in *JA* explicitly said to be "angelic," and in the LXX version of Gen 6 this is at least a possible reading). In both cases, gigantism is part of their hybrid nature.[27]

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[25] On the Greek background to this term, see *DDD*, pp. 649–653.

[26] C. Burchard, *OTP* 2:238.

[27] In the *Book of Elchasai* as recorded in fragments in Hippolytus, *Ref.* 9.13.2–3 (third century CE), an angel is said to have gigantic features: "It had been communicated by an angel, whose height was 24 *schoinoi*, which is 96 miles, his breath four schoinoi, and from shoulder to shoulder six *schoinoi*, and the tracks of his feet in length 3.5 schoinoi, which is 14 miles, and in breadth 1.5 schoinoi, and in height half a *schoinos* (translation: J. Irmscher in E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha* [London: Lutterworth Press, 1965] 747–748).

Thus, the evidence from the LXX is unclear as to whether the "sons of God" are understood specifically as angels in the earliest versions. The LXX authors opted for a literal translation of the term. The LXX's choice to maintain sons of God (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεου) is interpretatively ambiguous, but at least one variant does show οἱ ἄγγελοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ. The Nephilim and Giborim are equated by their common rendering as "giants" (γίγαντες). This seems to suggest an ongoing interpretation of the offspring as giants (*1 En.* and LXX) in the early part of the Second Temple period.

6.4 *The Dead Sea Scrolls*

Although there are no fragments of Gen 6:1–4 among the extant Dead Sea Scrolls, a number of texts take their inspiration from the Gen 6 narrative: the Genesis Apocryphon (*Gen. Apoc*), the Book of Giants, and some fragments.[28]

Most scholars date the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen^{ar} = 1Q20) to the end of the first century BCE or early first century CE.[29] The genre of the Genesis Apocryphon is still a matter of scholarly debate.[30] It seems to be a rewritten version of Gen 5–15. That the text seems to know Gen 6 and especially 1 Enoch is clear. The first extant column, column 2, contains a discussion between Lamech and his wife Batenosh (cf. *Jub.* 4:28). The first 18 lines state:

> [1] Behold, I thought then within my heart that conception was (due) to the Watchers [עירים] and the Holy Ones . . . and to the Giants [ולנפיל]
> [2] and my heart was troubled within me because of this child.
> [3] Then I, Lamech, approached Bathenosh [my] wife in haste and said to her,
> [4] [. . .] by the Most High, the Great Lord, the King of all the universe and Ruler of
> [5] [. . .]the Sons of Heaven [בנישמים], until you tell me all things truthfully . . .
> [6] You will and without lies let me know whether this

[28] 4Q252 col. 1:2–3, however, reflects Gen 6:3 closely, stating, "And God said: 'My spirit will not reside in man for ever. Their days shall be fixed at one hundred and twenty years until the end of the waters of the flood.'" The complete form of this text may well have included the whole of the Gen 6:1–4 narrative, though it cannot be known for certain.

[29] N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon* (Jerusalem: Magnus Press, 1956) 38.

[30] See *HJPAJC* IIIi:318–25.

[7] by the King of the all the universe that you are speaking to me frankly and without lies
[8] Then Batenosh, my bride, spoke to me very harshly, she wept
[9] saying. "Oh my brother, O my Lord, remember my pleasure!
[10] [. . .] the time of love, the gasping of my breath in my breast. I [. . .] will tell you everything accurately
[11] [. . .] and then within me my heart was very upset
[12] When Batenosh, my wife, realized that my countenance had altered
[13] then she suppressed her anger, speaking to me and saying to me, "O my lord
[14] my pleasure. I swear to you by the Holy Great One, the King of [the heavens] . . .
[15] that this seed is yours and that [this] conception is from you. This fruit was planted by you . . .
[16] and by no stranger or Watcher [עירים] or Son of Heaven [ולא מכל בנישמים] . . .
[17] [Why] is your countenance thus changed and dismayed, and why is your spirit thus distressed . . .
[18] I speak to you truthfully."

Lamech is concerned that his child (Noah) may be the offspring of the Watchers (עיר). Interestingly, they are juxtaposed with "Holy Ones" in each occurrence just as in the Book of Daniel (4:10, 14, 20). Two other titles used in the fragment are noteworthy. "Sons of Heaven" is another that seems to refer to the same beings as Watchers and Holy Ones, and connects the beings more closely with the divine than the human. The Nephilim are also mentioned (v. 1), and there may be some indication that they are equivalent to the Watchers (Holy Ones), but this is not certain due to the fragmentary nature of the text.

The most intriguing aspect of *Gen. Apoc.* is that Bathenosh must convince her husband, Lamech, that she is pregnant through him and not any superhuman being. The implication of the story is that something about Noah's appearance at birth has led Lamech to believe he is abnormal, perhaps superhuman, and to ask whether the child is his own. This expansion is very much like that seen in *1 En.* 106.[31] Bathenosh's protests are explicit, reminding Lamech of her pleasure in their sexual union. She denies that anyone but him has fathered their son, saying it was by no "stranger, or Watcher or son of Heaven."

[31] For the discussion of *1 En.* 106 on Noah as angelic, see 3.4 above.

Gen. Apoc. indicates that, for at least one author, a birth that had been conceived by the mixing of human and divine stock was possible. If *Gen. Apoc.* picks up on traditions in 1 Enoch, then we can see the tradition recorded in more than one text. The author did not choose to use the term for angel (מלאך), as in LXX (A) and 1 Enoch; however, there is certainly mention of beings who are from heaven (of divine origin), who seem to be distinct from human beings but who are still able to act both in the heavens and on earth. This may only reflect the author's ideas about events in the antediluvian past, but it gives us a glimpse into how the author might have perceived the actions of heavenly beings in his own time.

A Book of Giants that circulated among the Manicheans (Mani, third century CE) has been known to scholars for some time.[32] More recently, a Book of Giants from Qumran has been identified (1Q23–24, 4Q530–531, and 6Q8, and possibly others).[33] Dates for the Qumran Book of Giants vary but likely lie somewhere between the late third and middle second century BCE, so it is an important source for this period.[34] The relation of the Qumran Book of Giants to the Manichean one is unclear, especially because of the fragmentary nature of most of the Qumran evidence. The Manichean text may depend on the Qumran text in some way, but there is no way to be certain. The Qumran evidence is thus taken on its own and is not supplemented by the Manichean texts.[35]

The Qumran fragments represent an interpretation of Gen 6:1–4 similar to 1 Enoch. The mere fact that an entire book was dedicated to speculation about the giants indicates the impact the Gen 6 passage had on at least one author and community.

The fragmentary nature of the extant Qumran evidence makes any assessment of the purpose or genre of the Book of Giants at

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[32] For the Manichean text, see W. Henning, "The Book of Giants" *BSOAS* 11 (1943–1946) 52–74.

[33] J. Milik, *The Book of Enoch,* pp. 298–339, first identified 13 fragments as belonging to a Qumran Book of Giants. L. Stuckenbruck has put out a critical edition of all the fragments of the Book of Giants from among the Dead Sea Scrolls: *The Book of Giants from Qumran* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997). I have based my translations on the text given in the latter.

[34] L. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants,* p. 31.

[35] J. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichean Cosmogony: Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992) 207–209, suggests that Jewish traditions did exert a determinative force on Mani's cosmology. Reeves includes in "Jewish influence" Gen 6, *1 En.*, and other works. He does not necessarily see any direct influence (contra J. Milik, *Enoch,* pp. 298–339).

Qumran difficult, if not impossible. Taken together, the fragments show an interest in the giants, naming them (two have Babylonian names), and in Enoch as an interpreter of dreams, suggesting a story similar to 1 Enoch but one that elaborates upon the offspring giants. What purpose such a text would have served remains uncertain.

Three fragments are of particular interest because various key words (e.g., Nephilim, etc.) appear in the text: 4Q203 fragments 7 and 8, and 4Q531 fragment 5.

4Q203 fragment 7 is short but refers to Azazel, Giborim, and probably the Watchers (which is restored from an initial ע and a final א seemingly with space for (יר׳).[36]

> [5] Th[en] Ohyah [said] to Hahya[h, . . .]
> [6] us [but . . .]*h* Aza[z]el and made h[im . . .]
> [7] the giants [גבריא] and the Wa[tchers]. All [their] co[mpanions] will rise up [against . . .]

This fragment is too short to be certain of its larger context, but the mention of Azazel, the Giborim, and the Watchers seems to situate it within the scope of Gen 6, 1 Enoch and their interpretations. This makes sense given that the larger context of the Book of Giants is the hybrid offspring, giants.

The next fragment (4Q203 fragment 8) is more substantial, but its evidence is still partial. It states:

> [1] The boo[k . . .]
> [2] *vacat*
> [3] A copy of the s[eco]nd tablet of the l[etter . . .]
> [4] in a writing by the hand of Enoch, the scribe of righteousness [. . .]
> [5] and the Holy One to Shemihazah and to all (his) c[ompanions . . .]
> [6] "Let it be known to you th[at . . .]*l*[. . .]
> [7] your deeds and those of (your) wives [. . .]
> [8] [. . .] those [. . .] son[s and] the wives of [. . .]
> [9] through your fornication on the earth, for it has [. . .]
> [10] accusing you regarding the deeds of your sons [. . .]
> [11] the corruption which you have committed on it [. . .]
> [12] until the coming of Raphael. Behold destru[ction . . .]
> [13] those who are in the deserts and those who are in the seas. And the interpretation of [. . .]
> [14] evil upon you. So, now, set loose what you hold *mh*[. . .]
> [15] and pray. [. . .]

[36] L. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants*, p. 78.

It is interesting that this passage mentions Enoch as a scribe of righteousness, since in *1 En.* 12:4, Enoch is called upon by the Watchers to intercede on their behalf. This may suggest a similar context for this fragment. Two angels are named explicitly in this text, Shemihazah (*1 En.*) and Raphael (Tobit, 1QM, *1 En., Apoc. Mos.*). This very much echoes *1 En.* 9–11, where the archangels intercede on behalf of humans and are given tasks by God. The implication of "fornication on the earth" and "corruption" seems to indicate that this is the case.

One other fragment (4Q531 fragment 5) mentions the giants:

[1] [. . .] they defiled themselves [. . .]
[2] [. . .] Giants [גברין] and Nephilim [ונפלין] [. . .]
[3] [. . .] they begat. Behold *k*[. . .].
[4] [. . .] in its blood, and by means of *mh*[. . .]
[5] [. . .] because it was not enough for them and for [. . .]
[6] [. . .] and they demanded much to eat *ml*[. . .]
[7] *vacat*
[. . .] [. . .] the Nephilim [ונפלין] destroyed it [. . .]

Here the Nephilim are mentioned along with the Giborim. They seem to be linked with defilement and the corruption of the earth, if we assume a context similar to that of 1 Enoch and the texts already discussed.

Overall, the evidence from the Book of Giants is quite limited, but it does show that at least one community was greatly expanding upon the traditions of Gen 6 and 1 Enoch. There the term "angel (מלאך)" does not explicitly occur, but some named angels are mentioned. Certainly, the idea of divine beings and humans copulating was picked up and expanded.

The Damascus Document (CD) was first known to scholars from the manuscripts found in the Cairo Genizah at the end of the nineteenth century. Many fragments of CD were present at Qumran. 4Q267 fragment 2 and 4Q270 fragment 1 discuss the Watchers who fell from heaven.[37] They are listed in a section that discusses sinners and righteous figures from the Hebrew Bible. The Watchers begin a list of figures from the Hebrew Bible who suffered specifically because they did not keep the precepts of God. CD says of the Watchers:

[37] Both fragments are largely reconstructed from the Genizah manuscripts. Cf. *DJD* XVIII.

> [16] . . . For many
> [17] have failed due to them; mighty warriors [וגבורי ציל] have stumbled due to them, from the earliest times and until today, walking in the stubbornness
> [18] of their hearts, the Watchers [עידי] of the heavens fell; on account of it they were caught, for they did not follow the precepts of God.
> [19] And their sons, whose height was like that of cedars and whose bodies were like mountains when they fell. (*4Q267 frag. 2*)

Notably, here the Watchers fall because they fail to follow the precepts of God, presumably to maintain their correct place in the cosmos. Also, the offspring of the Watchers are said to be of enormous stature, tall as cedars and with bodies like mountains. Further, the Watchers are sinful in their actions against God.

Lastly, fragments 4Q180 and 4Q181, also known as "The Ages of Creation," date to the first century CE.[38] They do not provide much additional information but seem to make reference to the 1 Enoch tradition. 4Q180 says:

> [7] [And] the interpretation concerning Azazel [עזזאל] and the angels [והמלאכים] who
> [8] they bore to them giants [גברים]. And concerning Azazel [עזזאל] . . .
> [9] and iniquity, and to cause them to inherit wickedness . . .
> [10] judgments and judgment of the congregation . . .

Although the text is fragmentary, it adds to our overall collection of extant texts that speculate about the events described in Gen 6:1–4. It also mentions Azazel (discussed above) and seems to indicate that angels and humans had viable offspring. Similar to line 8 of 4Q180, 4Q181 fragment 2 line 2 says, ". . . man and bore to them giants [גבורים]."

To sum up, the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls is quite varied. *Gen. Apoc.* is a reworking of Genesis. Its unique interpretation has Lamech concerned that his son, Noah, is not his own but the son of the heavenly Watchers due to his fantastic appearance at his birth. Fragments from what has been identified as a Qumran Book of Giants show that the hybrid offspring was a subject worthy of its own text. The Damascus Document and other fragments show that the interpretation of Gen 6 and 1 Enoch was already quite pervasive in the literature from Qumran. All of this suggests that 1 Enoch

[38] J. Allegro, *DJD* V (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) 77–79.

was very influential at Qumran, and it adds to the picture of how widespread the discussion of the Genesis narrative on the fallen Watchers had become by the late Second Temple period.

6.5 *The Book of Jubilees*

The Book of Jubilees (*Jub.*) is a type of Biblical midrash on the Book of Genesis.[39] It dates to the second century BCE and was found among the works at Qumran, so it seems likely that the author of Jubilees would have known traditions seen in 1 Enoch. Three passages are of interest. First, *Jub.* 4:15 says:

> [15] And in the second week of the tenth jubilee, Mahalalel took for himself a wife, Dinah, the daughter of Barakiel, the daughter of his father's brother, as a wife. And she bore a son for him in the third week of the sixth year. And he called him Jared because in his days the angels of the Lord, who were called Watchers, came down upon the earth in order to teach the sons of man, and perform judgment and uprightness upon the earth.[40]

This passage says that Watchers are "angels of the Lord." The Watchers are said to have come to the earth to teach men and to execute judgment. The teaching aspect of their visit to earth parallels part of the tradition in *1 En.* 7–8 that is not in the Genesis passage. Moreover, as in *1 En.* 20, the archangels can apparently also be referred to as Watchers, since they also "perform judgment and uprightness upon the earth." In 4:16 the birth of Enoch is recounted. *Jub.* 4:22 say that Enoch

> [22] . . . wrote everything, and bore witness to the Watchers, the ones who sinned with the daughters of men because they began to mingle themselves with the daughters of men so they might be polluted. And Enoch bore witness against them.

This makes clear that the intermingling of the heavenly Watchers with humankind is a transgression (= sin) that leads to pollution. In this passage, it is not explicit that this mingling need even produce offspring, but that their union did indeed prove viable is made clear

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[39] For a discussion of the date and genre of Jubilees see 2.1a above; see also *HJPAJC* 3i:309.

[40] Translations by O. Wintermute, *OTP* 2:62 and 64.

in chapter 5. Jubilees seems to be aware of *1 En.* 12–16, in which Enoch, who is in the heavens, actually intercedes on behalf of the fallen ones (*1 En.* 12–13) but says that he "bore witness against them."

Jub. 5:1–2 is the point at which Gen 6:1–4 is recounted.[41] The passage says:

> [1] And when the children of men began to multiply on the surface of the earth and daughters were born to them, the angels of the Lord saw in a certain year of that jubilee that they were good to look at. And they took wives for themselves from all those whom they chose. And they bore children for them; and they were the giants. [2] And injustice increased upon the earth, and all flesh corrupted its way; man and cattle and beasts and birds and everything which walks on the earth. And they all corrupted their way and their ordinances, and they began to eat one another. And injustice grew upon the earth and every imagination of the thoughts of all mankind was thus continually evil.

Jub. 5:1–2 contains three of the four main components of Gen 6:1–4, lacking only the mention of the limitation of the human life span. Each of the other aspects—human proliferation, angelic lust, and ultimately corruption -is present. Jubilees does not appear to expand upon the tradition, but it is explicit that angels looked upon the human females and took them as wives. Moreover, it makes clear that the offspring of the union between the divine beings and human females were giants. A clear connection is also made between the arrival of the giants on the earth and the beginning of injustice in the world. In v. 4 God says, "I will wipe out man and all flesh which I have created from upon the surface of the earth." Noah is spared (v. 5). Verse 6 says of God, "And against his angels whom he had sent to the earth he was very angry." The angel then says, "And he told us to bind them in the depths of the earth," and they are bound (vv. 6, 10). The offspring, never referred to as giants, are said to kill one another because God sends out his sword among them (vv. 7, 9). God then speaks out against humanity, saying (cf. Gen 6:3) that "My spirit will not abide in man forever; for they are flesh, and their days will be one hundred twenty years" (v. 9).

J. van Ruiten has examined the interpretation of Gen 6:1–12 in *Jub.* 5:1–19 in detail.[42] He sees Jubilees as both utilizing Gen 6:1–4

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[41] *Jub.* 5:1–2 is also evinced in a small fragment from Qumran (11Q12 fragment 5). The text itself is fragmentary and adds little to the discussion of angels, so it has not been given separate consideration.

[42] J. van Ruiten, "The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1–12 in Jubilees 5:1–19" in

and also adapting it as necessary. These adaptations, he says, seem "not to be caused by exegetical problems, but by current interpretations of the text."[43] He is quite correct. In particular, Jubilees seems to be well aware of the story from the Book of Watchers (*1 En.*) and uses this material freely as well as being based in the Genesis narrative, especially regarding the idea of the angels being sent by God to the world to teach man but turning away from God.

Jubilees is therefore interesting for a number of reasons. First, it was present at Qumran and is roughly contemporary with both 1 Enoch and the LXX. Jubilees demonstrates dependence on both Gen 6 and 1 Enoch, while making its own interpretations and adaptations. The beings who come to earth are angels of God, called Watchers. They actually seem to have originally been sent by God, but subsequently, because they copulated with human females, turned away from God and polluted themselves. The offspring of the angels and humans are referred to as giants. Their pollution leads to their being bound and cast away to await final judgment. The giants are compelled by God to destroy one another, while humanity, except for Noah, is destroyed by the Flood.

6.6 *Josephus and Philo*

In book 1 of the *Antiquities*, Josephus expounds the Genesis story. Leading up to discussion of Noah and the Flood, Josephus describes how the seven generations after Seth slowly turned away from God. Ultimately, there is a mingling with angels:

> [73] For many angels of God [ἄγγελοι θεοῦ] consorted with women and sired sons who were licentious [ὑβριστὰς] and disdainful of every virtue, such confidence had they in their strength; in fact the deeds that tradition ascribes to them resemble the audacious exploits told by the Greeks [Ἑλλήνων] of the giants [γίγαντων].

Josephus says that the beings who consorted with women were angels of God. He seems to reflect a tradition in keeping with the type of interpretation in 1 Enoch and some of the Dead Sea Scroll evidence, where the hybrid offspring of angels and humans were violent and

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Studies in the Book of Jubilees, ed. M. Albani, J. Frey, and A. Longe (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 59–75.

[43] J. van Ruiten, "The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1–12 in Jubilees 5:1–19," p. 74.

ignorant of virtue. Moreover, Josephus notes that according to tradition the actions of these angels resemble those of the giants in Greek legend. He makes this interpretative move in order to make the story more accessible to his Graeco-Roman audience, who were likely to be aware of the myths regarding the giants.[44] Josephus then juxtaposes Noah with the (unrighteous) hybrid sons. Noah tries to get them to change their ways, but, realizing he will be unsuccessful, he takes his family and leaves the area (74). Noah and his family are spared from the Flood, while the hybrid sons and all of wicked humanity are wiped out (76).

Philo has much more to say regarding Gen 6. He devotes an entire treatise to the giants (*Gig.*), while also dealing with the passage in *Questions and Solutions on Genesis* (*QG I*). The treatise "On the Giants" is an extended discussion of Gen 6:1–4. However, the title is somewhat misrepresentative of its content. The treatise is divided by modern scholars into 61 chapters. Of these, the vast majority (chapters 19–57) are devoted to an interpretation of God's nature and the unworthiness of flesh. His long allegory is a digression from anything really related to the giants. In the other material—1–18 and 58–61—there are two passages relevant to the present discussion. As seen in his other writings, Philo uses allegory to interpret angels. In chapter 6 he says that what Moses (Torah) calls angels, the philosophers (Greeks) call demons.

> [6] "And when the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, they took to themselves wives from all, those whom they chose" (Gen 6:2). It is Moses' custom to give the name angels to those whom other philosophers call demons [δαίμονας], souls that is, which fly and hover in the air.

The discussion goes on to explain that such creatures are not myth (9–11). Ultimately, Philo explains that souls (ψυχαί), demons (δαίμονες), and angels (ἄγγελοι) are different names for the same underlying phenomenon, saying, "So if you realize that souls and demons and angels are but different names for the same one underlying object,

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[44] The relationship with the giants of Greek mythology seems to be reflected in *Sib. Or.* 2:227–232, which says: "Then Uriel, the great angel, will break the gigantic bolts, of unyielding and unbreakable steel, of the gates of Hades, not forged of metal; he will throw them wide open and will lead the mournful forms to judgement, especially those of ancient phantoms, *Titans and the Giants and such as the Flood destroyed*" (translation by J. J. Collins, in *OTP* 1:350–51). Also, one Greek ms. of *1 En.* 9:9 reads τιτᾶνας where most read γίγαντας.

you will cast from you that most grievous burden, the fear of demons or superstition" (16). Moreover, Philo says that:

> [16] The common usage of men is to give the name of demon to bad and good demons alike, and the name of soul to good and bad souls. And so, too, you also will not go wrong if you reckon as angels, not only those who are worthy of the name, who are as ambassadors backward and forwards between man and God and are rendered sacred and inviolate by reason of glorious and blameless ministry, but also those who are unholy and unworthy of the title.

The terms "angels," "demons," and "spirits" refer to the same beings for Philo. The term "angels" can apply to both good and evil angels. This interpretative move may well stem from the reading ἄγγελος in his source text. The normal lot of angels is to be pure, worshipping God.

After his long exposition on God's spirit, Philo emphasizes that the mention of giants in the Torah (by Moses) is not myth but can be explained as an allegory of the origins of various types of men.

> [58] "Now the giants were on the earth in those days." Some may think that the Lawgiver is alluding to the myths of the poets about the giants, but indeed myth-making is a thing most alien to him, and his mind is set on following in the steps of truth and nothing but truth. . . . So, then, it is no myth at all of giants that he sets before us; rather he wishes to show you that some men are earth-born, some heaven-born, and some God-born . . .

First, Philo denies that the story is myth akin to the Greek writers about the giants. His exegesis of Gen 6:4 is an allegory explaining that there are three types of men: earthly, heavenly, and Godly. The giants are considered earthly lustful and hedonistic. The exemplar of these is Nimrod (Gen 10:8), whose name is said to mean "deserter." Abram, turned Abraham, is said to be the paradigm of the heavenly man who cultivates the mind and is totally focused on God. This interpretation, although an allegory, seems to hark back to 1 Enoch, in which the angels are punished for their violence and indiscretion.

In the *QG* I:92 Philo discusses Gen 6:4 in detail:

> Why were the giants born from angels and women? The poets relate that the giants were earth-born, children of the earth. But he (Moses) uses this name improperly [καταχρηστιῆς] and frequently when he wishes to indicate excessive size of the body, after the likeness of Haik. And he relates that their creation was a mixture of two things, of angels and of mortal women. But the substance [οὐσία] of angels is

> spiritual [πνευματική]; however, it often happens that they imitate the forms of men and for immediate purposes, as in respect of knowing women for the sake of begetting giants. But if children become zealous emulators of maternal depravity, they will draw away from paternal virtue and depart from it through contempt and arrogance toward the better they are condemned as guilty of wilful wrongdoing. But sometimes he calls the angels "sons of God" because they are made incorporeal through no mortal man but are spirits without body. But rather does that exhorter, Moses give to good and excellent men the name "sons of God," while wicked and evil men, he calls "bodies."[45]

Philo is explicit that the giants are the offspring of humans and angels.[46] Here he says that the nature (οὐσία) of angels is spiritual (πνευματική), distinct from earthly, which is in keeping with his usual interpretation of angels as spiritual beings and even heavenly λόγοι. Philo says that Genesis describes the giants as the offspring of human females and angels, though angels are able to take on various forms as necessary (χρεία). He equates depravity with the feminine and virtue with the masculine. He does not explicitly mention the giants as depraved, but it seems logical to infer that Philo is saying the giants, whose only human component was female, fell into depravity because they inclined toward the feminine.[47] What is clear is that the giants were the offspring of humans (earthly) and angels (spiritual) and that they were a source of corruption in the world. Philo also notes that Moses (the Torah) sometimes uses the term "sons of God" to refer to angels. Thus, Philo seems to be aware of both "sons of God" and "angels" as terms for the beings who came down to earth to take human wives.

The evidence of Josephus and Philo tells us a number of things. First-century Hellenized Jews were dealing with the Gen 6 passage. In their context, it seems that some connection was made between the giants of Genesis and giants in Greek myths. They both understood the "sons of God" as angels. That angels copulated with women does not seem to have presented any problem. Where there is more

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[45] English translation from F. Colson, *Philo Supplement I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1958) 60–61.

[46] Philo also says that the beings were angels in *Deus* 1:1, "'And after this,' says Moses, 'when angels of God [οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ] went in unto the daughters of men [ἀνθρώπων] and they bore children to them.'"

[47] On the issue of how Philo sees the female gender, see D. Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990) 91–110.

discussion is over the nature of the offspring. The giants are understood for various reasons as depraved and corrupt. This type of interpretation does not come from Genesis but appears to derive from texts like 1 Enoch.

6.7 *Other Second Temple Interpretations*

Three other texts that likely date to or near the late Second Temple period are worthy of discussion: The testaments of Reuben and Naphtali, and 2 Baruch.[48] The Testament of Reuben likely dates from some time in the second century BCE.[49] The testaments purport to be speeches by each of the twelve sons of Jacob just before their death. Reuben is the eldest son (Gen 35:23). His speech largely warns against the vices of the flesh, but in particular Reuben warns of the dangers of women, based upon his own failing with Bilhah (Gen 35:22). Reuben warns his kin, "Do not devote your attention to a woman's looks, nor live with a woman who is already married, nor become involved in the affairs with women." In chapter 5 Reuben says, "Order your wives and your daughters not to adorn their heads and their appearances so as to deceive men's sound minds." He then says in v. 6:

> [6] For it was thus that they [women] charmed the Watchers, who were there before the Flood. As they continued looking at the women, they were filled with desire for them and perpetrated the act in their minds. They were transformed into human males, and while the women were cohabiting with their husbands they appeared to them. Since the women's minds were filled with lust for these apparitions, they gave birth to giants. For the Watchers were disclosed to them as being as high as the heavens.

This line of tradition is unique in suggesting there was no intercourse between the angels and humans. Blame for the fall of the angels is placed squarely on the women who charmed the Watchers.[50] The

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[48] Pseudo-Philo, *L.A.B.* 3:1–3 also discusses Gen 6:1–4, though there is very little variation from the Genesis narrative.

[49] H. Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" in *OTP* 1:777. Although there may be some Christian interpolations, it seems that the main body of the text dates from the second century BCE.

[50] Some later interpreters share the idea that the women are culpable: Justin Martyr (see below) and *Pirqe R. El.* 22:15.

angels lusted after the women and so changed their form into human males. The women, upon seeing them, lusted after them and thus gave birth to the giants.

A short note in *T. Naph.* 3:5 also mentions the Watchers, saying, "Likewise the Watchers departed from nature's order; the Lord pronounced a curse on them at the Flood. On their account he ordered that the earth be without dweller or produce."[51] This interesting passage reinforces the idea that the fall of the angels was a transgression of the natural order.

Lastly, 2 Baruch, which exists today in a Syriac copy but has likely come from a Greek original,[52] is widely accepted, based on internal evidence (32:2–4, where two destructions of the Temple are mentioned), to be post-70 CE. The work seems to share a close relationship with 4 Ezra and also the *L.A.B.* of Pseudo-Philo. 2 Baruch may possibly be cited in *Ep. Barn.* 61:7. Thus, most scholars accept a date around 100 CE for this apocalypse.[53]

The work presents itself as a writing by Baruch of his revelations dealing with the destruction of the First Jerusalem Temple (c. 587 BCE), but, as noted, the author is probably in fact coming to grips with the destruction of the Second Temple. Chapter 56 is part of the interpretation of a vision of dark clouds and waters that Baruch has received in chapter 53. Humans are fallen and are a danger not only to themselves. but to the angels. Verses 10–15 state:

> [10] For he who was a danger to himself [humankind] was also a danger to the angels. [11] For they possessed a freedom in that time in which they were created. [12] And some of them came down and mingled themselves with women. [13] At that time they who acted like this were tormented in chains. [14] But the rest of the multitude of angels, who have no number, restrained themselves. [15] And those living on earth perished together through the waters of the flood.

This interpretation is like that of the Testament of Reuben in that humans are culpable for the angelic sin. It is also like 1 Enoch and other traditions that record that the angels who did sin were punished for their transgression. The implication is that any offspring were destroyed in the Flood.

By the late Second Temple period, the myth about the sons of

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[51] H. Kee, *OTP* 1:812.
[52] A. Klijn, *OTP* 1:615–616.
[53] *HJPAJC* IIIii:752–753; *OTP* 1:616–617.

God and the giants maintained in Gen 6:1–4 had been elaborated upon considerably. The identity of the "sons of God" as angels seems to have been widely recognized. That these angels did wrong by transgressing divine boundaries and copulating with women is also widely accepted, as evinced in these texts.

6.8 *Early Christian Writings*

In the New Testament, interpretations of the Gen 6 narrative connect the angels' sin (their transgression of the boundaries between human and divine) with evil in the world. One recent article has posited a connection between the portrayal of the disciples in the Gospel of Mark and the traditions relating to the Watchers.[54] R. Strelan suggests that "By depicting the disciples in a guise reminiscent of the legendary fallen Watchers, Mark urges watchfulness and holiness in Christian discipleship."[55] His assertion does seem to press the interpretation of some terms in Mark, such as the call to watchfulness in Mark 13:37, but his intriguing suggestion shows that the influence of the Watchers narrative could have been quite pervasive in the thinking of ancient authors.

The influence of the Watchers narrative is more explicit in the Epistle of Jude. In Jude 5–10, a number of evildoers from the Hebrew Bible are listed. First among them, the angels (ἀγγέλους) "that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day" (v. 6). The angels are followed in this list by the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, "which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust [τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον τούτοις ἐκπορνεύσασαι καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἑτέρας]." The link between the two (angels and inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah) is that they have been sexually improper (= pollution). It seems highly probable, especially given the reference to Enoch as a source in v. 15, that Jude 6 is dependent on 1 Enoch as its source for the tradition of the angels who left their place and were then bound until a final judgment.[56]

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[54] R. Strelan, "The Fallen Watchers and the Disciples in Mark" *JSP* 20 (1999) 73–92.

[55] R. Strelan, "The Fallen Watchers," p. 92.

[56] R. Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude* (Waco, TX: Word, 1983) 43–55.

2 Peter 2:4 also mentions the same tradition. It seems to depend at least partially on Jude.[57] 2 Pet 2:4 (cf. 1 Pet 3:19–20) states, "God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgment." This reflects the tradition seen in both 1 Enoch and in Jubilees about the punishment of the fallen Watchers.

Lastly, one of the early apologists discusses this tradition. Justin Martyr (second century CE) discusses Gen 6 on two occasions.[58] Justin appears to maintain the type of angel tradition we saw in 1 Enoch, especially in his reference to the angels bringing hidden knowledge to humanity. In his second Apology he writes:

> [5] But the angels transgressed this appointment, and were captivated by love of women, and bore children who are those that are called demons [δαίμονας]; and besides, they afterwards subdued the human race to themselves, partly by magical writings, and partly by fears and the punishments they occasioned, and partly by teaching them to offer sacrifices, and incense, and libations, of which things they stood in need after they were enslaved by lustful passions; and among men they sowed murders, wars, adulteries, intemperate deeds, and all wickedness. Whence also the poets and mythologists, not knowing that it was the angels and those demons who had been begotten by them that did these things to men, and women, and cities, and nations, which they related, ascribed them to God himself, and to those who were accounted to be his very offspring, and to the offspring of those who were called his brother, Neptune and Pluto, and to the children again of these their offspring. For whatever name each of the angels had given to himself and his children, by that name they called them.

Justin places blame upon the human females (cf. *T. Reu.*). He certainly maintains that the lustful beings were angels, that they were able to copulate with women, and that once they had done so, they revealed secret knowledge to humans, which ultimately leads to sin and evil in the world (cf. *1 En.*). Interestingly, Justin does not say explicitly that the offspring were giants but instead calls them demons. This may reflect a value judgment on the hybrid offspring as exemplifying the sin of the angels with human women. Justin seems to depend on a number of traditions, certainly Gen 6 and 1 Enoch and perhaps others.

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[57] R. Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, pp. 245–257.
[58] See also *First Apology* 5.

J. VanderKam has surveyed the evidence for Christian use of the Watchers myth in Christianity through the fourth century CE.[59] His survey shows that the myth, whether directly or indirectly dependent upon Enoch, was widespread in Christian circles: "Consequently, one may say that Christian employment of the Watcher myth is attested throughout the Roman world."[60]

6.9 *Later Jewish Interpretations*

The predominant interpretation of the "sons of God" from Gen 6:2 and 4 in the late Second Temple period was that the beings were angels. No dissenting voice is heard until R. Simeon b. Yohai in *Gen. Rab.* 26:5 states, "R. Simeon b. Yohai called them the sons of the judges [דייניה]; R. Simeon b. Yohai cursed all who called them 'sons of God'."[61] This seems to have been the first of a number of reactions against both the literal reading of "sons of God" and also an interpretation of them as angels.[62]

Tg. Onq. and *Tg. Ps.-J* call the beings of Gen 6:2 "sons of the great ones [בני רברביה]." *Tg. Neo.* refers to the beings as "the sons of the judges [בני דייניה]," while the marginal notes to *Tg. Neo.* have מלאכייא. *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Neo.* at Gen 6:4 call the beings Giborim, but interestingly, *Tg. Ps.-J.* mentions the angels Shamahazi and Azazel (cf. *1 En.* 6–11) as having fallen from heaven.[63] Regarding the evidence from the Targumim, P. Alexander concludes:

> *O.* and *N.* represent an exegesis which originated with the rabbis shortly after the Second Jewish War—an exegesis which reflects the general

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[59] J. VanderKam, "Early Christian Uses of the Enochic Angel Story" in *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, ed. J. VanderKam and W. Adler (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996) 60–88.

[60] J. VanderKam, "Early Christian Uses of the Enochic Angel Story," p. 87.

[61] Translation from J. Neuesner, *Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis, A New American Translation*, Brown Judaic Studies 104–106 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985) 1:282.

[62] P. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis of 'Sons of God' in Genesis 6" *JJS* 23 (1972) 60–71. See also J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature: An Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 151–160.

[63] P. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis," p. 70 calls it "rather puzzling." It seems that *Ps.-J.* is at least aware of traditions like those in *1 En.* Alexander suggests that *Ps.-J.* was changed in light of *Tg. Onq.*

> struggle to wean Jews from beliefs out of keeping with the essence of Torah Judaism. *Ps-J.* (in its original form) and Nmg. represent the old Palestinian Targum, current before the Second Jewish War, which the *O.* tradition was intended to replace.[64]

This suggests that there was an ongoing interpretation of the beings of Gen 6:2 and 4 as angels. Some of the rabbinic tradition seems to work to dispel such a reading, but even so, that tradition (*Tg. Neo.* marginal notes and *Tg. Ps.-J.*) reflects an angel interpretation.

Conclusions

The story of divine "sons of God" who come to earth to take human wives in Gen 6:1–4 is an enigmatic tale that was foundational for a substantial amount of subsequent literature in the Second Temple period and beyond. From early on, entire works were dedicated to expounding this tale. The Book of Watchers (*1 En.* 1–36) seems to have been an early interpretation that made clear that the beings were angels and their offspring giants. This interpretation was apparently influential throughout the Second Temple period and beyond. The evidence of the LXX was ambiguous, but at least one version contained the term "angel." The evidence from Qumran showed that the story was common among the extant texts. The fragments of a Book of Giants also show that there was significant speculation about the hybrid offspring. Moreover, other fragments made reference to the Watchers. Copies of both 1 Enoch and Jubilees were found at Qumran, showing that the story was found in a wide variety of texts. Jubilees appears to be dependent upon Gen 6 as a core narrative but was likely influenced by contemporaneous interpretations such as in 1 Enoch. Other works, such as the Testament of Reuben and 2 Baruch, showed just how widespread the tale was in Second Temple Judaism. Josephus said the beings were angels and that their offspring, the giants, were not virtuous and even violent. Philo had more to say, dedicating an entire treatise to the giants, although much of it was not specifically about the Watchers' story. Evidence from the New Testament and early Christianity showed that the narrative continued to be widespread. Later Jewish interpretations in the

[64] P. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis," p. 71.

Targumim and the rabbinic writings downplayed the role the angels played, but evidence of the angel interpretation still appears.[65]

From early in the tradition, perhaps within Gen 6 itself, the fundamental problem with the "sons of God" (angels) coming to earth and taking human wives is their transgression of the boundary set at creation. Their union with human women creates a hybrid, interpreted as "giants," that were not meant to exist.[66] It seems, then, that humans and angels were distinct beings. Problems *only* arose when angels transgressed predetermined boundaries and mated with human women.[67] Many interpreters understood this as the very source of evil in the world. Virtually all took it as the reason for the Flood and re-creation of the world.

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[65] This would fit well with M. Mach's suggestion that the rabbis downplayed angel beliefs (*Entwicklungsstadien*, pp. 330–332). It may also represent one of the precursors to the rivalry identified between humans and angels in P. Schäfer, *Rivalität*, pp. 75–218.

[66] There is a need for further study of the issues of gender and sexuality in relation to angel beliefs. Much has been made of the idea that angels were celibate (from the passages in the gospels [Matt 22:23–33, Mark 12:18–27, Luke 20:34–40]). However, the gospels are the only texts that mention such an idea in extant Second Temple literature. The large body of literature examined in this chapter suggests that at least one group of angels was not believed to have been celibate. Also, in the vast majority of cases where the physical appearance of angels is described, they appear as men or young males. The only women described as angelomorphic were the daughters of Job in *T. Job*, and perhaps Aseneth in *JA*.

[67] P. Alexander, "The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls" *in The Dead Sea Scrolls after 50 Years*, ed. P. Flint and J. VanderKam (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999) 2:350.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION: LIMPING TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

The aim of this book has been to add to our understanding of the diverse angel beliefs of the late Second Temple and early Christian period by investigating the relationship between humans and angels as demonstrated in the extant literature. This final chapter seeks to summarize the conclusions that can be drawn from this investigation and to consider the implications of these conclusions for current scholarship in the areas of cosmology, Christology, and early Jewish and Christian mysticism.

The following conclusions are offered with full awareness that the angel traditions discussed may well represent only a small portion of the diverse beliefs about angels from the Second Temple period, since the beliefs for which written records remain likely represent only a fraction of all the beliefs that existed in the Jewish and early Christian cosmology. Furthermore, in making any kind of summary it is important not to oversynthesize disparate units of evidence. The evidence considered above comes from a wide range of dates, provenances, and social situations, so it is handled with due consideration for its variety.

7.1 *The Relationship between Humans and Angels*

Three main issues are involved in understanding the relationship between humans and angels. First, the semantic range of the terms for angel (ἄγγελος and מלאך) allows for reference to either angelic or human messengers. This range of meaning does not necessarily imply any fluidity between angels and humans, however. Terms derive meaning from their context. There are few, if any, occasions when the context does not supply a clear meaning for "angel." And, where there is confusion, it likely represents more of a modern hermeneutical problem than any understood fluidity in the category (e.g., Mal 3:1).

Next, as noted above, the physical manifestation of a heavenly entity in human form does not necessarily imply its equation with a human being. The form that angels assume in their initial appearance to humans is often anthropomorphic (e.g., Gen 18, Josh 5, *et al.*), but this seems to be for the benefit of the seer, since bright light, fear, and even fear of death are often associated with angelophanies. By taking on a human form, angels can deliver their news without hindrance. Often once they do so, they again assume an angelic form and return to heaven (e.g., Judg 6 and 13).

Perhaps the most interesting and challenging material is the appearances of humans as angels. The vast majority of the material involves discussion of righteous individuals. Many of the individuals examined are in fact described in angelomorphic terms; that is, they are described in ways often associated with angels. Nevertheless, there does not seem to be good reason to suppose that they were considered anything other than human beings. Their angelomorphic description is analogous to the way in which God can be described in anthropomorphic terms without being human. Examples in this group include Noah, Stephen, and Taxo.

Some cases, however, are more ambiguous, such as Melchizedek, John the Baptist, and Paul. These individuals are portrayed in angelomorphic terms, and it seems that some type of identification is implied. Ultimately, however, it remains unclear whether they were meant to be understood as anything more than human. In the cases of Adam and Moses, however, their "theomorphic" image seems to be stressed. For the sake of precision in modern discourse, it may be worthwhile to stress this theomorphic character over their angelomorphic character. Only in the cases of Seth(el), Enoch, and Jacob/Israel does it seem clear that humans have transformed into angels. Yet in these cases the transformation is usually understood as having occurred in the heavenly sphere.

Third, in those instances when the interaction between humans and angels is particularly close or intimate, there still does not seem to be any indication that separation between angels and humans is not maintained. Texts involving issues of living in communities, eating together, and even procreating were examined. In a number of the cases of angel-human communities, purity issues arose (e.g., War Scroll, 1 Cor, *Hist. Rech.*). If the human members did not maintain a heightened level of purity, then angels could not be present in the community. This suggests that indeed there was a qualitative difference between humans and angels.

In the case of hospitality and food, humans often offered hospitality, including a meal, to angelic guests (especially Gen 18–19), but it was regularly the case that they were unaware of the true nature of the strangers. It seems a common understanding in the Second Temple period that angels did not eat human food. This fact shows another way in which angels and humans were thought to differ.

The issue of humans and angels copulating offers perhaps the most intriguing material. Transgression of the created order by some angels (Gen 6:1–4) was seen as extremely problematic and was understood by a number of interpreters as the very origin of evil in the world (*1 En.*). The union of angels and humans brought forth hybrid giants who were usually understood to have been destroyed in the Flood. That angels were not believed to have sex or procreate highlights a significant difference between humans on earth, who must procreate for survival of the species, and angels in heaven, who do not.

To sum up briefly, my investigation shows that in the literature from this period there was a wide range of understanding about how angels looked and how they interacted with humans. A significant set of these understandings focused on angels looking like humans and, when they did, having intimate interaction with them. Despite this similarity of *appearance* and closeness of *interaction*, there does not seem to be any reason to suppose that there was any blurring of categories between angels and humans. When there was an apparent transformation from the human to the angelic (Enoch = Metatron or Jacob-Israel), it was a one-time transformation that occurred beyond the earthly sphere. In some sense, the evidence for humans achieving angelic status is the exception that proves the rule. Only humans of exceptional righteousness and who had a special relationship with God appear to have had the opportunity to become angels; no other humans enjoyed such a special status.

7.2 *Cosmology and Angelology*

This study in some sense also represents an attempt to understand the general cosmological outlook of the late Second Temple and early Christian literature and, more specifically, the place of angels, and to a lesser extent humans, in that cosmos.[1] Angels are like God

[1] This is not to suggest that there was a single cosmology (especially across late Second Temple Judaism *and* early Christianity), but instead these conclusions aim to discuss what can be gleaned broadly from the material.

in that they reside in heaven and are incorporeal, having no need for food or procreation. However, angels are like humans in that they are created by God and can at times dwell on earth, even taking on human form. Additionally, angels travel between two separate spheres—the heavenly and the earthly.

In response to the work of Fletcher-Louis on identifying an angelomorphic humanity tradition in late Second Temple Judaism, J. O'Neill states, "these claims to ontological identity are simply misunderstandings of the Jewish evidence," adding, "there is a clear and consistently maintained difference in kind between God and angels and human beings."[2] My findings strongly support O'Neill's assertion. Rather than think of the categories as "open and fluid" as Fletcher-Louis does, it is perhaps more valuable to think about the boundary between them as fixed but not absolute. It is not absolute because we see that angels regularly come to earth and take on human form, and on some very rare occasions, humans can ascend to heaven and even become like angels. Angels and humans are very different beings, but this does not mean that they never interacted—many texts describe how they did interact. However, in large part they remained separate from one another.

On the notion of separation between earthly and heavenly denizens, M. Himmelfarb writes:

> It is not only what God reveals to the visionary that is important, but the very fact that God is willing to bring a human being near him. Under certain circumstances, according to the apocalypses, human beings can cross the boundary and join the angels.[3]

Elsewhere she writes regarding her analysis of ascents in various apocalypses, "Indeed it turns out that the boundaries between humans and angels are not very clear. One group of apocalypses offers great heroes of the past as examples of how close human beings can come to God."[4] It need not be the case that "the boundaries between

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[2] J. O'Neill, Review of C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts* in *JTS* 50 (1999) 225–230.

[3] M. Himmelfarb, "Revelation and Rapture: The Transformation of the Visionary in the Ascent Apocalypses" in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquium*, ed. J. Collins and J. Charlesworth (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 90.

[4] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 70. For similar ideas about the importance of key individuals, see J. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as an Angel in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980) 135–151, and J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985) 333.

humans and angels are not very clear." It need only be the case (as the evidence bears out) that the boundary between the two largely separate realms (earthly and heavenly) be able to be crossed. Despite this critique, I very much agree with her assessment that the "great heroes" of the past offered examples to those who would seek to commune with God. Some humans did achieve angelic status but only in heaven, when they were already near to God. Himmerlfarb also sees another stream of tradition in the apocalypses that, "if ordinary human beings are righteous, after death they can take their place in the heavenly hierarchy."[5] Again, even if this is part of the tradition of apocalypses, humans are not attaining an "angelomorphic" life on earth. Such status is attained in heaven, when humans are in close proximity to God.

7.3 *Christology and Angelology*

Next, we consider the implications of this study for the development of early Christology. C. Gieschen has, I believe, offered a persuasive case for seeing angel traditions of late Second Temple Judaism as influencing the development of early Christianty.[6] Nevertheless, I would offer some critique here of one aspect of his case. In his section on "angel nomenclature" Gieschen states:

> Because angels often appear in the form of men, the distinction between what is anthropomorphic and what is angelomorphic is difficult to maintain. What one person may interpret as an anthropomorphism, another could see as a concrete description of an angelomorphic figure.[7]

While some texts may be difficult to interpret for the modern reader (e.g., Mal 3:1), ancient authors were not apparently in any way ambiguous in their presentations or their understandings. Moreover, that later interpreters could exploit the ambiguity in a term does not mean an ambiguity was originally intended. Recognition of the importance of the context in which the angel tradition appears is the key to avoiding such confusion.

Gieschen offered categories under which humans might be understood as "angelomorphic."[8] These categories were: Patriarchs, Prophets,

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[5] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, p. 71.

[6] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997).

[7] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 28.

[8] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, pp. 152–183.

Priests, Kings, Apostles, and Elect Ones. Individuals in these roles often enjoyed a privileged status relative to God and in some senses functioned as mediators between humanity and God. Even though we may categorize the material in this way today, ancient authors did not apparently think in these terms. The results of my research indicate that there was not a coherent idea of "angelomorphic humanity" in late Second Temple Judaism. At best, such ideas may have applied to a select few individuals.

Gieschen states that these categories "push the reader to a broader understanding of what an angel was considered to be in first century Judaism and Christianity."[9] I would argue that without synthesizing the material into these categories, the evidence does not support the idea that there was in the first century a coherent angelomorphic humanity concept that in turn could have been a building block for early Christology.

C. Fletcher-Louis has offered the following in his summary of Jewish angelomorphic traditions:

> We submit that an approach to the data . . . which does not impose a rigid dualism, but rather accepts the openness and fluidity of human, angelic and Divine categories, allows for simplicity of interpretation, and does most justice to the texts' own worldviews(s). Accordingly our label 'angelomorphic', has proved heuristically invaluable.[10]

While the term "angelomorphic" may be heuristically valuable in making sense of angel traditions related to Christology, it should not be taken to imply any identification of humans and angels. "Angelomorphic" must be employed with caution to discussions of humanity in general. A rigid dualism is not being "imposed" upon the evidence but is present in the evidence. Instead of seeing "fluidity" between categories, we should recognize that the evidence shows there was some possibility of crossing the boundary between the earthly and heavenly sphere, especially by angels and on rare occasions by very righteous humans.

Nevertheless, Fletcher-Louis has drawn our attention to the rich variety of angel beliefs from the period, especially in the Qumran literature. In his more recent book, *All the Glory of Adam*, Fletcher-Louis sees the Temple as the locus "in which ordinary space and

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[9] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, p. 183.

[10] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology, and Soteriology*, WUNT 2.94 (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1997) 211.

time, and therefore human ontology, are transcended," adding that the worshipping community would "experience a transfer from earth to heaven, from humanity to divinity and from mortality to immorality."[11] While it may be true that Jews understood the Temple as a special location, it is not clear from Fletcher-Louis's analysis whether he envisions such a change as temporary or permanent and in what ways participants were transformed. This leaves us with the question of whether or not we should see this as a case of "angelomorphic humanity" or simply a "mystical" experience of the Temple or liturgical space. I am inclined to think that the Temple was a special locus where first-century Jews believed that they could commune with God, but I am less inclined to believe that they envisioned themselves as transformed into angels (or angelic humans) on earth due to the experience.

Thus, the assertion of Fletcher-Louis and Gieschen that there was an identifiable "angelomorphic humanity" tradition in late Second Temple Judaism is significantly weakened, though not altogether precluded, by the results of my investigation.

Although my analysis undermines the case for any "angelomorphic humanity" concept being prevalent in the late Second Temple period, it does not mean that angelomorphic categories did not inform early Christologies—it should be clear that they did. As C. Rowland has persuasively argued, the imagery often associated with angelophanies was appropriated into early Christology.[12] Imagery is a more solid foundation and is then likely the more fruitful route for future studies of the angelomorphic background of early Christologies. The recent work of R. Bauckham seems to signal, however, that the scholarly debate is far from over.

In his book, *God Crucified*, R. Bauckham argues that in the cosmology of the late Second Temple and early Christian period there was God and everything else.[13] He states, "Jewish monotheism clearly

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[11] C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002) 476.

[12] C. Rowland, "A Man Clothed in Linen: Daniel 10:6ff. and Jewish Angelology" *JSNT* 24 (1985) 99–110.

[13] R. Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998). These ideas are also developed in his article, "The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus" in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, ed. C. Newman, J. Davila, and G. Lewis (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999) 43–69.

distinguished the one God and all other reality."[14] Bauckham stresses the idea of the "divine identity" over the idea of "divine nature" as the paradigm that first-century Jews would have used for recognizing God. So Jews would not be concerned so much for what God is but who God is. Following from this, Bauckham argues that Jewish monotheism could not accommodate any type of semidivine being, viceroy, subordinate deity, or the like. In contrast to Gieschen, Fletcher-Louis, and most notably Hurtado, Bauckham believes that Jewish intermediary figures such as principal angels and exalted patriarchs therefore did not play an important role in the development of early Christology.[15]

Bauckham argues that Jesus was then subsumed into the unique divine identity—a move that he describes as a "radically novel development, almost unprecedented in Jewish theology."[16] He also says that the decisive step of including Jesus in the divine identity through exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures was "a step which, whenever it were taken, had to be taken simply for its own sake and *de novo*."[17] What remains unclear from Bauckham's discussion, however, is *why* the early Christians would make such a novel and unprecedented identification. If God was truly unique, then why did they ever decide to include Jesus in that identity?

It seems more plausible to me to suggest that the significant amount of literature that talks about intermediaries would have influenced early Christology on some level. This is not to say that all Christians used this line of interpretation or that it was maintained in the tradition. Nevertheless, it seems that angels, especially in their function as mediators between heaven and earth, could have provided and did provide the earliest Christians with an example by which Jesus—a human being—could be understood as a superhuman or heavenly being.

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[14] R. Bauckham, *God Crucified*, p. 4.

[15] R. Bauckham, *God Crucified*, pp. 4–5, 16–22. Contra C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*; C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*; and L. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*. This also goes against the work of others such as C. Rowland and J. Fossum. Just prior to completing the edits to my page proofs, I learned of the release of L. Hurtado's new book *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). I was not able, therefore, to take it into account in this monograph. I am encouraged, though, to see that his discussion on pp. 27–78 has points of contact with my own work.

[16] R. Bauckham, *God Crucified*, p. 4.

[17] R. Bauckham, *God Crucified*, p. 28.

Bauckham says that a "strict Jewish monotheism" could not accommodate intermediary figures. However, to say that a strict monotheism could not accommodate such intermediary figures is very different from saying that these figures did not exist in Jewish cosmology; clearly they did. To ignore this fact is to miss an important piece of the overall picture. The danger here lies in not seeing a development of Christology based upon a confluence of traditions. It seems unnecessarily implausible to suggest that Jesus was immediately incorporated into the divine identity as part of an unprecedented move in Jewish theology. What seems more plausible to me is that a variety of traditions influenced early Christian speculation about Jesus and that intermediary figures such as angels, who enjoyed a unique relationship to both humans and God, were a logical starting point for the early Christians as they pondered the significance and identity of Jesus. To suggest that angelological suppositions had nothing to do with their earliest speculations and that the early Christian identification of Jesus with God was novel and unprecedented seems somewhat disingenuous.[18] So we close here with a word of caution from C. Rowland:

> So recognition of the existence of traditions of this kind [Jewish angelological beliefs] should cause us to pause before we suppose that the Christological developments of early Christianity necessarily indicate an inventiveness and unique creativity which cannot be paralleled in early Judaism.[19]

7.4 *Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism and Angelology*

Lastly, my investigation has potential implications for the study of early Jewish and Christian mysticism. Several important traditions discussed in this study would have influenced these mystics. Although the earthly and heavenly realms and beings were largely conceived

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[18] One final note regarding the above critique of Bauckham: his monograph and article are only steps in a direction that he will expound more fully in a forthcoming study, so my comments are only in response to his initial work. Scholars who believe in the importance of angel categories for the development of early Christology will certainly need to engage with his fuller study once it is available. In his article, "The Throne of God" (p. 49), Bauckham notes that his more complete study is provisionally entitled "Jesus and the Identity of God: Jewish Monotheism and New Testament Christology."

[19] C. Rowland, *Christian Origins*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 2002) 36.

as separate, the boundary between them was not seen as absolute. This meant that the *possibility* existed for the mystic to reach beyond the earthly realm to the heavenly. The goal of the Jewish mystics was to see God enthroned. The only beings regularly able to cross between the two realms and also constantly present in the throne room besides God were the angels, so traditions and speculation about them would likely have been very important to anyone trying to get to the throne room.

That some righteous humans had ascended to heaven (e.g., Enoch, Isaiah) meant that there was a model for others to follow. Additionally, some human beings were thought to have transformed into angels in the afterlife (especially Enoch); such a conviction would have emboldened mystics to believe they might attain the same status. These notable exceptions stood out prominently as models for the early Jewish and Christian mystics.

In sum, I find that the evidence supports an understanding of the literature of the period that sees the authors as envisioning God, angels, and humans as beings that for the most part existed in separate spheres, the earthly and heavenly. Angels mediated between these two realms and, though they often *appeared* as human beings and regularly *interacted* with them, they were nevertheless *distinct* from them. A select few righteous humans did transform into angels in heaven. These exceptional cases acted as an important model for early Jewish and Christian mystics as they sought to commune with God in the divine throne room.

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MODERN AUTHOR INDEX

SUBJECT INDEX

ANCIENT LITERATURE INDEX

OLD TESTAMENT

NEW TESTAMENT

OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

PSEUDEPIGRAPHAL LITERATURE

QUMRAN LITERATURE

PHILO

JOSEPHUS

RABBINIC LITERATURE

SAMARITAN LITERATURE

TARGUMIM

GRAECO-ROMAN LITERATURE

APOSTOLIC FATHERS

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA
(Including Nag Hammadi Codices)

PATRISTIC LITERATURE