

Following the Traces of the Serpent in the Old and New
Testaments and the Early Jewish Interpretation

Genesis 3:1-15 in Light of Its Reception History

De sporen van de slang volgend in het Oude en Nieuwe
Testament en de vroeg-Joodse uitleg

Genesis 3:1-15 in het licht van de receptiegeschiedenis

(With a summary in Dutch)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Protestantse Theologische Universiteit te Amsterdam – Groningen,
op gezag van de rector, prof. dr. M.M. Jansen,
ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen te Amsterdam
op donderdag 14 februari 2019 om 15.45 uur

door

Sergey Vladimirovich Lagunov

geboren op 1 december 1974 te Sverdlovsk (Rusland)

promotor: Prof. dr. K. Spronk

co-promotor: Prof. dr. J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten

Table of contents

List of Abbreviations.....	4
Acknowledgments.....	6
Chapter 1: Introduction and Method	
Introduction.....	8
1.1 Status Quaestionis.....	10
1.2 The place of the present study in the current discussion.....	15
Chapter 2: The Old Testament Texts	
Introduction.....	18
2.1 Genesis 3:1-15.....	19
2.1.1 Tensions and contrasts.....	20
2.1.2 Comparison of the MT and the LXX.....	21
2.1.3 Exegesis of Genesis 3:1-15.....	23
2.1.4 Conclusion.....	44
2.2 Isaiah 14:4b-23.....	48
2.2.1 Introductory note.....	48
2.2.2 The immediate context.....	50
2.2.3 Exegesis of Isaiah 14:4b-23.....	53
2.2.4 Conclusion.....	60
2.3 Ezekiel 28:11-19.....	62
2.3.1 LXX and MT differences.....	63
2.3.2 Exegesis of the Ezekiel 28:11-19.....	65
2.4 Conclusions to chapter two.....	80
Chapter 3: Genesis 3:1-15 in the Second Temple Literature	
Introduction.....	81
3.1 The Book of <i>Jubilees</i>	84
3.1.1 Introduction.....	84
3.1.2 The interpretation of Genesis 3:1-15 in the book of <i>Jubilees</i>	85
3.1.3 Possible motives for Rewriting Genesis 3 in <i>Jubilees</i>	91
3.2. <i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>	94
3.2.1 Close reading of the text.....	95
3.2.2 Conclusion.....	102
3.2.3 Short summary.....	105
3.3 Philo of Alexandria.....	106
3.3.1 Philo's main approaches to writing biblical commentaries.....	106
3.3.2 The <i>Questions and Answers on Genesis</i>	108
3.3.3 The <i>Allegorical Interpretation</i>	120
3.3.4 <i>On the Creation</i>	132
3.3.4.1 Conclusion.....	137
3.4 Flavius Josephus.....	138

3.4.1 The Jewish Antiquities	139
3.4.2 The serpent's portrait before and after the fall (Gen. 3:1-15)	146
3.4.3 Motives behind Josephus' rewriting	147
3.5 Genesis 3 in Other Second Temple Treatises	
3.5.1 <i>The Life of Adam and Eve</i>	149
3.5.2 <i>The Apocalypse of Abraham</i>	156
3.5.3 <i>The Second Book of Enoch</i>	164
3.5.4 <i>The Third Book of Baruch (the Greek Apocalypse of Baruch)</i>	171
3.6 Conclusions	180
Chapter 4: Echoes of Genesis 3:1-15 in the New Testament	
Introduction	185
4.1 Luke 10:18.....	187
4.2 Revelation 12:9	197
4.3 Conclusion of chapter four	210
Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion	212
Bibliography.....	214
Samenvatting.....	227
Curriculum Vitae.....	229

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>AB</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Commentary</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>American Commentaries</i>
<i>ACCS</i>	<i>Ancient Christian Commentaries on Scripture</i>
<i>ANE</i>	<i>Ancient Near East</i>
<i>AQ</i>	<i>American Quarterly</i>
<i>ASV</i>	<i>American Standard Version</i>
<i>ATR</i>	<i>American Theological Review</i>
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BCE</i>	<i>Before the Common Era</i>
<i>BDB</i>	<i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon¹</i>
<i>BECNT</i>	<i>Baker's Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>
<i>BETS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
<i>BHQ</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i>
<i>BR</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBC</i>	<i>Cambridge Bible Commentary</i>
<i>CSB</i>	<i>Catholic Study Bible</i>
<i>CTJ</i>	<i>Catholic Theological Journal</i>
<i>DOT</i>	<i>Dictionary of the Old Testament²</i>
<i>EJ</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i>
<i>ELB</i>	<i>English Literary Bible</i>
<i>ESV</i>	<i>English Standard Version</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>GLAE</i>	<i>Greek Life of Adam and Eve</i>
<i>GSC</i>	<i>Geneva Series of Commentaries</i>
<i>IB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Bible</i>
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>ICC</i>	<i>International Critical Commentary</i>
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBQ</i>	<i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>KJV</i>	<i>King James Version</i>
<i>KTU</i>	<i>Keilalphabetische Texte aus Ugarit</i>
<i>LAE</i>	<i>Life of Adam and Eve</i>
<i>LXX</i>	<i>Septuagint</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>Masoretic Text</i>
<i>NAC</i>	<i>New American Commentary</i>
<i>NASB</i>	<i>New American Standard Bible</i>

¹ F. Brown, S.R. Driver and C.A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999).

² T.D. Alexander, D.W. Baker, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* v.1 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

<i>NCBC</i>	<i>New Cambridge Bible Commentary</i>
<i>NCBC</i>	<i>New Century Bible Commentary</i>
NEB	New English Bible
NIB	New Interpreter's Bible
<i>NIBC</i>	<i>New International Biblical Commentary</i>
<i>NICNT</i>	<i>New International Commentary on the New Testament</i>
NIV	New International Version
<i>NIVAC</i>	<i>New International Version Application Commentary</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SIOR	Studies in Oriental Religion
TEV	Today's English Version
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
<i>TMSJ</i>	<i>Traditional Midrashic Studies Journal</i>
<i>TWOT</i>	<i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WBC</i>	<i>World Biblical Commentary</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are several very important figures in my life whose love and support have been crucial to my reaching this stage of my theological career. It is quite a difficult task to find room for all of them on just these two pages of this work, but I will try to do that to the best of my abilities.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my mother, Lagunova Anna Nikolaevna, for bringing me into this world, and giving me the most of what she could, especially in my childhood, and to my granny, Alexandra Ivanovna, who we have missed terribly since 2003, but who always believed in me, and in fact, became my second mother, so to speak.

The third, but perhaps the most influential person to leave such a huge and unequivocal impression on the second part of my life is my beloved wife, Khristina. I can hardly imagine myself trying to achieve something without her constant prayers and encouragement. She has been an unfailing source of love and support since our wedding in 2003, and therefore no significant decisions have been made so far without her most valuable advice and comments.

The very next person, who simply must be on my list, is a former rector of the North Caucasus Theological Institute (NCBI), Andrei Kravzev, who in 2007, believed in me and gave me an opportunity to grow in all kinds of ways by sending me to the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague, receiving my masters degree in 2010. Further, I would like to thank several of my professors from that seminary: Peter Penner, Parush Parushev, Keith Jones, Lidie Kucova, and many others for being so patient with me and for being available, and generally making my life at IBTS as academic, and positive as possible.

The next stage in my life began in 2011, when I met Valeriy Alikin, whose personal involvement in the process of my academic growth has been so enormous ever since, that it cannot be described by one or two casual sentences. One thing must be acknowledged here and now for sure: without him, I would not be in Holland now, preparing for the very last stage of obtaining my doctoral degree in Philosophy. It was he who introduced me to Professor Spronk, and who did everything possible to assist me in entering the PThU in Kampen. The sponsors, whom Valeriy brought with him from Fuller Theological University in 2012, have also been very important participants in my present academic growth, and must not be forgotten in this list.

During these last three and a half years of my Dutch phase of life, Professor Spronk has become the one who, like a skillful captain of a huge international liner, has patiently and successfully guided me through all kinds of storms, turbulences, and even tsunamis which are the necessary part of every doctoral or academic journey. He taught me how to manage the process of writing a thesis, which like an unbroken horse did everything to get me off the saddle. However, it was in the very beginning, now I see myself gaining maturity in terms of rendering the text and academic style. These, and many more, are our joint achievements with professor Spronk and later on with prof. Van Ruiten.

One final acknowledgment must be made to the Baptist church in Kampen. “De Schalmei” has made a tremendous impact on my understanding of “Western Hospitality”, as before that I had never thought people could be so open-minded, generous, and welcoming. The way we were treated during our first days of settling down in Kampen in the cold February of 2012 can be described as something miraculous. We have never encountered such kindness, Christian love and care anywhere else before. Therefore, I would like to list some of those who welcomed us with open arms: Gijs and Rianne de Bree, the entire Van der Veen family: Dave, Irma, Judith, Liron, Lois, and Thirsa. The entire Kalle family: Martin, Erica, and the children. The Koelewijn family: Henrik, Esther, and the children. The Legemaat family: Willem, Desiree, Dorine, and Jisca. The Hoekman family: Jan and Rieke. The Beimers family: Rense, Monique, and the children. Thanks also to Daniel and Elizabeth Vermeer, Sietske Bosgraaf, and many, many other present and former members of “De Schalmei” Baptist church who were so kind to us during our stay in Kampen. I will never forget what you did for my family and me, and will cherish these memories forever.

Sergei Lagunov

CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Method

*“If exegesis raised a hermeneutical problem, that is, a problem of interpretation, it is because every reading of a text always takes place within a community, a tradition, or a living current of thought, all of which displays presuppositions and exigencies – regardless of how closely a reading maybe tied to the quid, to ‘that in view of which’ the text was written”.*³

(Paul Ricoeur)

Introduction

The account of mankind’s fall, as portrayed in Genesis 3:1-24⁴ has been universally admired as one of the greatest pieces of biblical literature since the time it was written. It’s ambiguous, though at the same time magnetic and intriguing nature has continued to attract readers and scholars through the centuries. The present research is no exception and it will certainly not be the final voice among the great polyphony of scholarly opinions provoked by this text.

Many scholarly efforts have been devoted to resolving the great many ambiguities found in the text. These include attempts to fill in the gaps deliberately or not left by the writer of the story and to narrow down the centuries-old gulf, separating all following generations of readers from the original Israelite audience, to whom the text of Genesis 3 was initially directed. Thus, it is correct to say that the ambivalent nature of the text incited Jewish and Christian writers to rewrite, review, extend, and eventually adapt previously existing oral and written interpretations of Genesis 3:1-15 to the needs of their local communities – and this process seems to be endless.⁵

This is not, however, my primary motive for researching the text. To explain the motives as to why I have written on the subject of Genesis 3:1-15, I will commence from quite general remarks, gradually advancing towards more particulars. Every country has its own religious, cultural, historical, social and other different backgrounds that determine the way peoples of that country perceive their surrounding reality. When coming to more narrow issues, such as interpretation of the Bible, it is safe to say that the very same backgrounds and dominating principles work there as well. Thus, Russia has its own set of relatively unique

³ Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 3-4.

⁴ The reason for limiting the present study to 3:1-15 is described in section 1.2

⁵ Cf. James Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it Was at The Start of the Common Era* (London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 1.

interpretative traditions, varying quite considerably from those used in other places of the world. It is a complex mixture of Russian Orthodox, protestant and evangelical influences, merged into a large, competing system of interpretative positions, opinions and approaches, appearing at different stages of Russian history. However, even if we leave this huge interpretative hub of interdenominational points of view and interplays aside, and focus only on the Russian evangelical setting, we will still be confronted by too many points of disparity, which exist between them. What is unique in all these disagreements, however, is their more or less univocal approach to interpreting Scriptures in relation to the story of the human fall in more or less analogous terms, thus arrogating the main fault for trespassing the God's command given in Genesis 2:16-17 to the devil.⁶ This is the point, where most of Russian Baptists, Pentecostals, and all sorts of other evangelicals find themselves on the same ground. This is the way they have interpreted and reinterpreted Genesis 3:1-15 for centuries, seeing the devil in the text, claiming that this tradition of scriptural interpretation takes its roots in famous Church Father's and Russian Orthodox fathers' prolific writings and therefore, have enough authority to trust and follow.

In the present study the reception history of Genesis 3:1–15 leading to this specific interpretation of the reference to the snake will be described and evaluated. It will start with an analysis of the Hebrew text – its immediate setting, and the closest historical settings – and of the two texts that in the history of interpretation often have been related to Genesis 3: Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19. These two Old Testament texts will be followed by a study of the Second Temple literature dealing with Genesis 3 in chapter 3.

In these relatively wide and muddy waters of the reception of history, I'll endeavor to find the answers to the following questions: 1) does the Bible (Genesis 3) really say something about the Satan in the Garden of Eden? 2) Where lies the assumed origin of the tradition of finding the devil at work in the story of Genesis 3? 2) In how far is it appropriate to relate the devil to Genesis 3 and related Old Testament texts?

⁶ This is the exact context to which Bruce Waltke's opinion would fit the most, as when interpreting Genesis 3:1 he writes: "Here the serpent is a symbol of antigod. Although not named here, he is the adversary of God and humanity, called the Satan (Hebrew *satan* (adversary, persecuter, or accuser) in the Old Testament and the devil (*diabolos*, the Greek equivalent) in the New Testament. He originates in heaven, standing outside earth's natural order." See Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 90.

1.1 Status Quaestionis

This section will briefly summarize how Genesis 3 has been interpreted throughout both the Old Testament and early Jewish history. Although a more detailed study can be found in chapters 2 and 3, here, in this section I will draw a general trajectory and point to the main milestones to stay on the road. The final part of this section will provide a brief description of the various Christian interpretations of these texts from the early church to the present day as well.

No one knows for sure whether what we see written in Genesis 3 is the original Garden of Eden story, or a result of centuries-old transmitting activities. In fact, it can be either a brief sketch, left for future generations to explore, a carefully elaborated redaction, a paraphrase, or a more or less untouched or verisimilar narration. However it may be, the biblical text we have at our present disposal seems to be the only written source related to the Garden and Eden story to a large degree. There are many similar extrabiblical (ANE) materials that in one way or another reflect on the themes of creation, human origin and what follows, but none of them boasts of telling us the story that took place in the Garden of Eden, describing it in such complexity of details.

It strikes therefore as odd how stingy and niggardly biblical materials reflect and react on our text in question, as the only three additional sources that touch upon the subjects mentioned in Genesis 3 within the entire Old Testament corpus seem to be Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 and 31⁷. The first two seem to be the only texts, which are traditionally linked up with the Genesis 3 story, though it becomes obvious *prima facie* that they both convey quite different and perhaps even an alternative version of the Genesis 3 story, as several versions of the same story could have existed simultaneously (in parallel), or at different time periods without necessary interacting with each other.

All other Old Testament writers seemed to be less driven or perhaps motivated to shed any supplementary light on the Genesis 2:4-3:24 account. Were they familiar with the Garden of Eden story at all, we have no definite answer.

In the matter of the New Testament corpus the general idea is very much the same. Despite the fact that early Christians tended to view the Garden of Eden story as a pivotal, theologically significant turning point of our human history, there are only two New Testament

⁷ Ezek. 31 will not be examined in chapter 2 of the present research, as it is not part of the early Christian tradition that correlates certain Old Testament texts with Satan (cf. Isa. 14:4b-23 and Ezek. 28:11-19). Thus, although it builds its arguments on similar grounds, it doesn't have any distinctive marks within the text to correlate it with Gen. 3 except such words as: "in the garden of God" (vv.8 and 9) and "Eden" (vv. 9, 16, 18). These words are closer to pointing to Gen. 2 rather than Gen. 3. It is worth noting though that the idea of hubris, as well the following presentation of its consequences, are very similar to both the picture and the language given in Ezek. 28:11-19.

texts available (Luk. 10:18 and Rev. 12) that are universally considered as more or less related to Genesis 3. Therefore, both related Old Testament passages will be paid more attention in the second chapter, deriving from their pivotal status of important witnesses within the Old Testament corpus that point to some additional textual sources / interpretative traditions that could have existed both after and apart from the one that had influenced the writer of the Genesis 3 text. Both more or less related New Testament texts will be dealt with in chapter four.

Thus, deriving from the denoted above-mentioned textual vacuum the following questions immediately arrest our attention: 1) why is there such a scarce amount of biblical texts in the Old Testament corpus in relation to Genesis 3? 2) Can we presume that it used to be a marginal account related to a quite insignificant event, while such a burst of literary activities in the Second Temple period can be explained by the intervention of various outside forces such as: political, historical, cultural and social factors that led representatives of the Jewish diaspora in Alexandria and other places to reconsider their own past and suggest that they had a great deal of literary, historical or theological interest in the Garden of Eden story? 3) Does it all suggest that the topic of Adam and Eve's unfortunate attempt to glorify themselves had been forgotten until the early Jewish literature breathed a second life into it? 4) Or perhaps we may surmise that there could have been some ancient Israelite texts about someone's reaction to the first couple's fall, which escaped becoming part of the Old Testament corpus or were simply destroyed or lost? In the absence of such supplementary texts I am not positive anyone can answer these difficult questions until more historical or literary evidence appears. Therefore, what we know for certain is that only two prophetic texts within the entire Old Testament corpus broach the subject of our interest, although quite perfunctorily. Why is it so, is hard to say with any certainty.

As for the early Jewish biblical interpretations, they seemed to be motivated by: a) new unavoidable circumstances (i.e. the Babylonian captivity); b) the absence of the Temple along with its ritual practices, which was one of the pillars of Israelite self-identity; c) a rapidly growing historical and cultural gap between the time of the patriarchs, the Exodus, Joshua and the Judges on one side, and various representatives of the exilic and later post-exilic diaspora on the other; d) the end of the transitional stage, marking the close of the movement from oral to written sources; e) the existence and respectively growing significance of written biblical sources in Hebrew; e) language variation, such as Aramaic versus Hebrew. Some scholars believe that the process of rewriting Scriptures was inspired by the appearance of the book of Chronicles and the flood of similar writings, as these books contained "mainly interpretations

of Scripture rather than original writings”.⁸ This suggestion seems to be very plausible, as the book of Chronicles was written in the post-exilic period and, therefore, certainly reflects some different realities in comparison with the books of Samuel and Kings, mainly written from the pre-exilic and exilic perspective.⁹

In the early Jewish period, the tendency of reinterpreting and sometimes rewriting the Bible flourished, especially within the Greek-speaking Jewish diaspora (i.e. in Alexandria and the surrounding areas), though Qumran and other Palestinian communities also contributed.¹⁰

Among the most important writings, which clearly contain some comments or additional accounts of the story in Genesis 3 one may emphasize: the *Book of Jubilees*, *Ben Sira*, *Testaments of the XII Patriarchs*, *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *the Book of Enoch*, *The Life of Adam and Eve (LAE)*, *1 and 2 Enoch*, *2, 3 Baruch*.

Ginzberg claims that early rabbis mostly interpreted Genesis 3 with the view to Israel’s fate and destiny.¹¹ For many of them Adam and Eve’s transgression was not the source of the original sin at all, but rather an analogy of, or the beginning of a long tendency of a continuing and constantly repeating description of the human nature.¹² It is worth mentioning in this regard that most early rabbinic literature continues to keep the interpretative line which it had been given by its predecessors in this field, indicated in this study as the proto-rabbis, who in their turn can also be called keepers rather than inventors of what later became known as a Jewish tradition of interpretation.¹³ Thus, *Genesis Rabbah*, *Avot de Rabbi Nathan*, *Targum Onkelos*, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* and other rabbinic writings, played their decisive roles in the development of Jewish interpretative traditions.

The majority of the early Church Fathers, as well as some of the early Jewish commentators, firmly believed that the serpent, described in Genesis 3:1-15, was none other than Satan, who either disguised himself by acquiring the image of a serpent, or had embodied a serpent’s body just before he addressed Eve.¹⁴ According to Bernard Sesboue it was Irenaeus

⁸ Lester L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 331-332. See also Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

⁹ Cf. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 11-12.

¹⁰ See Harold W. Hoehner, “Between the Testaments”, in Frank E. Gaebelien, (ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* vol.1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 192: “the appearance of the Septuagint as well as other para-biblical writings is marked by an increased interest of Greek-speaking diaspora in more detailed explanations of Hebrew Bible’s accounts”.

¹¹ Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), 71.

¹² Cf. R.N. Whybray, “Genesis” in John Barton and John Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 43.

¹³ Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 17.

¹⁴ Craig Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2004), 42. See also Dwight O. Troyer, *Genesis 1-2-3: Creation: There and Now* (New York: Word to the Nations, 2007), 98. See also Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-11*, WBC, (Waco:

of Lyons who first came to this idea and made a sketch of what later became to be known as the doctrine of original sin.¹⁵ As Sesboue puts it: “He was able to show that the salvation accomplished by Christ goes back to Adam himself, otherwise God would be thwarted by the sin of humankind”.¹⁶ Origen and Augustine, who are considered to be responsible for systematizing and finalizing the doctrine in terms of argumentation and structure, picked up this idea.¹⁷ Thus, slowly but steadily the serpent became a fixed part of theological speculations.

Considering the fact that many, if not all Church Fathers were Platonists in one way or another, Eugene Teselle assumes that one of the most demanding and ambiguous projects for them consisted in reconciling Platonic and Stoic ideas with the Bible. This is exactly why early Christians appreciated and borrowed from Philo, who had been busy with combining Jewish interpretative tradition with Greek philosophy. This is just one example, demonstrating the fact of a possible dependence of some among the Church Fathers on early Jewish interpretative sources such as Philo, who in their turn were deeply dependent on Greek philosophical thought. We will return to this topic in the third chapter of the present study.

Further exploration in this area reveals that a great deal of Christian theologians in the Middle Ages held the writings of Church Fathers in such high regard that they practically never questioned or challenged the validity of their opinions as seriously pertinent neither to the interpretation of the third chapter of the book of Genesis, nor to the other books or passages as well. Thus for example in the Roman Catholic Church, Anselm and Thomas continued the line of argumentation put forward by Augustine, that inevitably led to the Council of Trent, having confirmed both the doctrine of original sin and its theological value.¹⁸

The situation drastically changed by the time of the Reformation, when many of the Church Fathers’ opinions and teachings were questioned, challenged, revised or sometimes totally rejected, although the idea of the serpent from Genesis 3 being a Satan remained firmly intact.¹⁹

Speaking of the modern and postmodern eras, an extensive philosophical exploration of existentialism, utilitarianism, structuralism, postmodernism, poststructuralism, and deconstructive

Zondervan, 1987), 72. Cf. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, Andrea L. Weiss, *The Torah: A Woman’s Commentary* (New York: Women of Reform Judaism, 2008), 13.

¹⁵ Bernard Sesboue, “The Theological Rationalization of Original Sin”, in Christophe Bourdeux and Christoph Theobald (eds), *Original Sin: A Code of Fallibility* (London: SCM Press, 2004), 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 12-15.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 15.

¹⁹ See Suchocki Hewitt Marjorie, *The Fall to Violence: Original Sin to Relational Theology*, (New York: Continuum, 1994), 23, who claims: “the distinctive Reformation variation was its emphasis upon unbelief rather than pride, and since Augustine too, spoke of the failure of the first pair to believe in God, the Reformers stayed within the fundamental framework of the Augustinian structure.”

phenomena, has also riveted the attention of many Christian theologians towards some new perspectives, which appeared to be tremendously attractive to them, especially in such fields as: sociology, archeology, anthropology, psychology, physics, biology, and environmental issues. In addition, Hanneke Reuling states: “Christian theology in the second half of the twentieth century came to recognize its Jewish roots and developed a highly critical attitude towards the Hellenistic elements introduced by the Church Fathers”.²⁰ Within this variety of interpretative approaches the present research hopes to add something to the discussion by attempting to answer the questions formulated at the end of the introduction, on the basis of a close reading of the relevant texts, in the hope that this will also be relevant for modern discussions about the relation between God, man, and evil.

²⁰ Hanneke Reuling, *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16-21* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 3.

1.2 The place of the present study in the current discussion

The present research will in many ways intersect with or follow some previously published studies. Thus it comes very close to the study of Manuela Martinek “Wie die Schlange zum Teufel wurde: Die Symbolik in der Paradiesgeschichte von der Hebräischen Bibel bis zum Koran” (1996), but it will also differ to a considerable degree, as Martinek’s research has its focus on exploring the use of the words “Satan” and “Serpent” within a broad context of early Jewish and early Christian interpretative traditions with the climax on their consequent influence on the Koran.²¹ The major similarity with Martinek’s research resides in describing the relevant material within the Bible, as well as in various early Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

The main variances with the work of Martinek are: 1) the absence of an exegesis of Genesis 3:1-15, Isaiah 14:4b-23 or Ezekiel 28:11-19, which in Martinek’s research are only presented in the form of a hermeneutical paraphrase. 2) The question as to whether the image of the serpent from the Genesis 3:1-15 text is also attested in other places in the Old Testament. Her research includes the references to Satan. This broadens the spectrum of her research to a considerable degree and includes texts and references that are of no interest for the present research.²² 3) The fact that she is not interested in the reception history of Genesis 3 as such leads her to not including such important early Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, such as the book of *Jubilees*,²³ the work of Philo, Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*, LAE, and the *Apocalypse of Moses*, which deal with Genesis 3. 4) On executing her research she concentrates on “Satan und Satanbegriffe in den Jüdischen Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen”²⁴ and “Die Schlange in den Jüdischen Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen”²⁵ respectfully, exploring such texts as: *Judith*, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, the book of *Sirach*, the Greek version of *3 Baruch* and the *Slavic version of Enoch*. Thus, when dealing with these texts she examines them from the point of view of the use of the words “Satan” and then “serpent” only. It is natural therefore, that she nowhere juxtaposes those texts with Genesis 3.

Unlike the studies of Korpel & De Moor and other scholars who published recently on related subjects, the present research will not deal with investigating the origin of the serpent from Genesis 3. Korpel & De Moor claim that the Genesis 3 story should be read in light of a

²¹ Manuela Martinek, *Wie die Schlange zum Teufel wurde: Die Symbolik in der Paradiesgeschichte von der Hebräischen Bibel bis zum Koran* (SIOR 37, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1996).

²² *Ibid*, 56-69.

²³ One of the Dead Sea Scrolls that were discovered in caves 4a and 4b. It will be examined in chapter 3.

²⁴ Martinek, 69-93.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 97-103.

specific Canaanite myth.²⁶ They assume a link between a number of Ugaritic tablets and Genesis 2:4-3:24.²⁷ Whereas Korpel & De Moor and scholars like Walton and Day discuss other parallels between the Hebrew Bible and ANE religious texts, the present research will focus on the reception history of Genesis 3:1-15 only and will explore its reception in the Old and New Testament and early Jewish literature, thus not touching upon any questions regarding its origin.

This means that the present research will not explore or compare any of the ancient Near Eastern conceptions in Egyptian, Ugaritic, Canaanite, Hittite, Sumerian, Akkadian, or any other materials, images, or artifacts, despite the fact that the potential influences of the abovementioned cultures and traditions on Genesis 3:1-15 cannot be underestimated.

The present study will also take the traditional Christian interpretation seriously when dealing with two New Testament passages (e.g. Luke 10:18 and Rev. 12:9; chapter 4 of the present study), which, according to the traditional Christian interpretation, reflect a great deal of the so-called Satanic story (his fall, his becoming a serpent, seduction of the woman). In the history of interpretation it is often suggested that there is a link between the story of the fall of man in Genesis 3 and the stories of downfall in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. In order to evaluate these associations, extra attention will be given to the analyses of these chapters.

In the study of the history of interpretation the Dead Sea Scrolls play an important part. Relevant for our research are the following texts: *Jubilees* 1QJub (a, b) (1Q17, 1Q18), 2QJub (b) (2Q20), Genesis 1QGen – 1Q1 (Gen. 3:11-14), 4QGen (k) – 4Q10 (Gen. 3:1-2), 4QExod. 4Q11 (Gen. 3:1-4), and Isaiah 4QIsa (c) (4Q57) and 4QIsa (e) (4Q59) (see chapters 2 and 3 of the present study).²⁸

The arrangement used in the present study will be mostly chronological, although one should keep in mind that some of early Jewish treatises could in fact be later works than the New Testament books. Moreover, dating of various Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha is also very rough.

The present study will be limited to an exploration of the first 15 verses of Genesis 3 only.²⁹ Thus any preceding or following verses play a secondary role. The reason for this approach is simple and straightforward, to explain the figure of the serpent as it is presented in Genesis 3 (chapter 2 of the present study) and compare it with later, early Jewish interpretations

²⁶ Marjo C.A. Korpel & Johannes C. De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning* (Second Enlarged Edition; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015). Cf. the survey by John Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11* (LHBOTS 592; London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 35-37.

²⁷ Korpel and De Moor.

²⁸ Text will be quoted from Florentino García Martínez, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1999).

²⁹ Also the setumah after verse 15 suggests that 3:1-15 can be read as a unit.

(chapters 3 and 4).³⁰ Therefore, I will deal with neither Genesis 2:4-2:25 nor 3:16-24, though I am well aware that the preceding context and the rest of chapter 3 are closely connected with 3:1-15. My main point consists in the fact that the figure of the serpent is nowhere present except the above-designated passage. Thus, the surrounding context will be considered as important but secondary source. For the very same reason, I will not explore the relation to the story in Genesis 6:1-4, although I am well aware of the fact that Genesis 2:4-3:24 and Genesis 6:1-9 are often related within both early Jewish and Christian interpretations.

³⁰ There is no such figure as a serpent in Genesis 2 or 3:16-24. Considering that he is the focus of the present study, we see no sense in exploring passages that have no relation to the serpent in the Genesis 3:1-15 account.

CHAPTER 2: Old Testament Texts

*“Interpretation does not spring from nowhere, rather one interprets in order to make explicit, to extend and so to keep alive the tradition itself, inside which one always remains”.*³¹

(Paul Ricoeur)

Introduction

As has been already explained in the previous chapter, the primary focus of the present study lies in the exploration of Genesis 3:1-15 within the framework of the traditional Christian history of reception (chapter 4) and early Jewish interpretative tradition (chapter 3) respectively. Together these two traditions create certain theological time frames, enabling one to make some assumptions about when, where, and how the need for transforming the serpent into Satan could have grown within the early Jewish and then Christian communities.

I will begin this chapter by exploring all relevant Old Testament passages, starting with the Genesis 3 text itself. As the Christian interpretative tradition shows the only relevant passages in the entire Old Testament corpus that often linked up with the text in question are claimed to be Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, and therefore, they will be given a close reading and exegetical analysis.³² They will be treated as secondary, but very important voices within the Old Testament as a whole.

However, before dealing with any secondary witnesses, I will thoroughly examine Genesis 3:1-15, compare the MT and LXX texts and cross-check their theology in order to underline all those instances of non-completion, ambiguity, gap, and indeterminacy within the story, purposely or unintentionally left by its writer, which he kept for future generations to decipher.

³¹ Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 27.

³² For more explanation see 2.2 of the present research.

2.1 Genesis 3:1-15

According to most biblical scholars Genesis 1-11 is a set or collection of legends, myths, folk and epic tales, which were selected, shaped, edited, and then amended or revised. Many scholars assume a connection with ancient Near Eastern mythology. To study this is a difficult task, for many reasons. To understand the phenomenon of the Near Eastern mythology, the researcher is required to understand the language of the text, which not only entails dealing with the grammar of this or that text, but often in considering the features of this or that genre or tradition, and the historical, cultural, political, sociological, and other background data existing at the time of writing. However, even all these characteristics do not fully exhaust the spectrum of problems interpreters face every time they deal with the issue of language.

To define the exact nature of biblical narratives, placed within the frame of Genesis 1-11, many scholars use the term “myth” to point out the many obvious parallels that exist between the Genesis narratives and Near Eastern mythology in general.³³ Despite constant use of this term, biblical scholars have not yet reached any agreement in regard to its actual nature, especially in the light of the fact that “the term ‘myth’ is not a biblical one,”³⁴ and therefore was imposed upon the Bible for the purpose of explaining some of its obscure parts.³⁵ As Hayes explains:

In the form in which the myths have come down to us, the Greek gods and heroes often behave in a manner unworthy of civilized people. This posed a problem the Greek philosophers, long before the coming of Christ, solved by allegorizing the legends in terms of philosophy and science.³⁶

Therefore, it is not surprising to see that sooner or later the idea of allegorizing biblical narratives in terms of philosophy and science was introduced first to Jewish scholarship by Philo and others, and then to early Christian interpreters, and eventually to pre-modern, modern, and post-modern biblical scholarship. It was during the Enlightenment that scholars first began measuring the Bible with the same standards as applied to any other literature,

³³ See Terence E. Fretheim, “Genesis” in Leander Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter’s Bible: General and Old Testament Articles, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus vol. 1* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 335: “Scholars generally agree that there is admixture of narrative and numerative materials, but a more precise understanding of the former has been difficult to achieve, whether it be in terms of saga, legend, myth, fairy tale, etiology, story, or theological narrative.” Cf. Bruce Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to Ideas & Issues of the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 372.

³⁴ Rogerson, *Oxford Handbook for Biblical Studies*, 482. T. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 62.

³⁵ Cf. Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Guildford, London: Lutterworth Press, 1977), 107-108.

³⁶ R.C. Fuller, “Mythology and Biblical Studies to 1800”, in John H. Hayes (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation vol.2* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 188.

thereby ultimately bringing the idea of myth into the Bible. As a result, dozens of speculations appeared in the succeeding centuries, every one claiming to be correct. Rogerson describes this situation in the following words: “These speculations by Greek philosophers anticipated in a remarkable way the theories regarding myth that have been prevalent from the end of the eighteenth century to the present time.”³⁷

In accordance with all above-mentioned definitions, one provisional conclusion can be drawn: any attempt to identify the biblical narratives as legends, myths, and fairy tales, can be seen as useful in terms of defining a literary genre or the exact origin of this or that primeval story only, whereas such seems to be very confusing and even destructive when used to extract or decipher the actual message. With Fretheim and others I note a certain confusion existing among many biblical scholars in relation to identifying the nature of the Genesis narratives.³⁸

It appears to me that some people use the words “myth” or “saga” as a key, a pass, allowing them to do with the text whatever they please, i.e. to interpret it according to their own intentions. They claim that, at most, myth contains only 10% of truth, which, over the course of time, has become overgrown with many depositions and outgrowths and therefore, represents a rather suspicious metamorphic structure.³⁹ There is a completely opposing view however, although one built on the same premises, claiming that there is no truth in any myth at all.

2.1.1 Tensions and contrasts

Within Genesis 1-3 one notes a number of very interesting tensions and contrasts:

Chart 1:

Genesis 2	Genesis 3
2:9 – every tree was pleasing to see and eat	3:6 – one particular tree was pleasing to see and eat
2:9 – tree of life (planted in the very center of the Garden of Eden)	3:2 – unspecified tree 3:22 and 24 – tree of life
2:9 and 17 – tree of knowledge of good and evil (KGE)	3:2 – unspecified tree 3:11 = 2:16-17 – “the tree, which I commanded you not to eat from it”.
2:15 – Adam is put in the Garden of Eden	3:23-24 – Adam is cast out from the Garden of Eden
2:15 – Adam is commissioned to toil the ground	3:24 – cherub is commissioned to guard the tree

³⁷ Ibid, 479.

³⁸ See Fretheim, “Genesis”, 324.

³⁹ Cf. Hans J.L. Jensen, „The Bible is (also) a Myth: Lévi-Strauss, Girard, and the Story of Joseph”, *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture*, vol. 14, 2007, p. 39: “according to Levi-Strauss (at least in certain passages), myth as a statement about the world is basically empty, to Girard it is basically lying.” See also Robert D. Miller II, “review of Thompson, *The Mythic Past: Biblical Archeology and the Myth of Israel*,” *CBQ* 62 (2000), p. 535: “the old Israel constructed by the New Israelite authors never existed.” See also Havrelock, 17, “Accounting for Genesis as a collection of legends began with Hermann Gunkel at the dawn of the twentieth century (1901). The legends, according to Gunkel, do not record historical events but rather point toward popular, pre-national memories.”

and guard it in the Garden of Eden	of life from Adam and Eve 3:23 – Adam and Eve are driven away from the Garden to toil the ground somewhere else
2:17 – do not eat from the tree of KGE 2:17 – or you will surely die (God does not lie) 2:17 – Adam receives the command alone 2:17 – God is always described as good, though He is responsible for planting the tree of KGE and thus for introducing a dichotomic concept of good and evil in this world. Moreover, before this time, evil was not known at all, thus God is the first to introduce it.	3:6 – the woman eats from the tree of KGE 3:4 – you will surely not die (the serpent does not lie) 3:2 – the woman cites the command in terms of «us» and «we», thus applying it to Adam and herself (collective perception). 3:1-15 – the serpent is universally perceived as an evil personage, though he is described in the text simply as more subtle than all the rest – no more characteristics are added by the author anywhere within the passage. The serpent never introduces evil, or advertises it.
2:19 – it seems that all animals are created with equal abilities and status.	3:1 – the serpent suddenly appeared to be more clever (subtle) than all the rest (including people).
2:23 – Adam is glad to see the woman 2:23 – naming the woman	3:11 – Adam is not really glad to see the woman , as this was she, who has brought him into all kinds of troubles. 3:20 – renaming the woman
2:25 – naked, but not ashamed (<i>arom</i>) – the cognitive similarity within one and the same root «arm» – עָרוּמִים from עָרוֹם. ⁴⁰	3:1 – the serpent is more subtle (<i>arum</i>) – a word play – עָרוֹם; 3:10 and 11- they knew that they were naked and therefore were ashamed
1:26-27 – Adam and the woman are put over all the animals to rule over them	3:1-7 Adam and the wife are ruled over by the serpent (an animal)
Chapter 2 – Adam likes and collaborates with God quite willingly	3:10 – Adam is afraid of God
Chapter 1 – God blesses his creation two times (1:22 and 1:28) and acknowledges that his creation is good – 6 times: 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.	Chapter 3 – God curses his creation three times: 3:14 (the serpent); 3:16 (the woman); 3:17 (the earth) – הָאֲדָמָה ⁴¹

2.1.2 Comparison of MT and LXX

There are some differences between the Hebrew (Masoretic) text and the Greek translation (in the LXX) of Genesis 3, which will be given close attention in this chart. All major differences are marked by the use of bold.

Chart 2

MT	LXX ⁴²	Comments
3:1 – מְבֹלֵי תַחַת הַשָּׂדֶה	πάντων τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς	The MT phrase, “the living beings of the field” is replaced in LXX with the phrase: “all the beasts (animals) on the earth”.

⁴⁰ More information is given below, in the exegetical analyses.

⁴¹ *Adama* the same root with *Adam*, thus Adam is directly or indirectly touched by this curse as well.

⁴² I am fully aware that I cannot speak of LXX as of a one, fully accepted translation, as it is a matter of an ongoing dispute, here I refer to the version, as it is presented in the Göttingen edition.

		Some linguistic features of the Greek language can explain this replacement. It does not change the meaning entirely, although it narrows things down to a certain extent.
3:1 – וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁרָה	καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ὄφεις τῇ γυναικί	The word “serpent” is added in LXX to avoid any confusion in terms of who is to be responsible for what words that follow – God or the serpent.
3:1 – אַךְ	Τί ὅτι	The particle “surely” is replaced by LXX with the phrase Τί ὅτι, bearing a slightly different meaning, namely: “what that” (i.e. what did God say)?”
3:6 – וְנִחְמַד	ὡραῖόν	The word “desirable” is replaced by LXX with “beautiful”. The word “tree” is missing in LXX.
3:7 – עֵלֶף	φύλλα	Singular “leaf” in MT is replaced by LXX with the plural form “leaves”.
3:8 – לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם	τὸ δειλινόν	The phrase, “in the coolness (literary: wind, spirit) of the day” is replaced in LXX with the word “evening”, perhaps in order to explain the potential coolness of that period of time or due to some other reason.
3:9 – אֲלֵה־אָדָם אֵיכָּה:	καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ἀδὰμ ποῦ εἶ	Two words are added by LXX, whose nature is rather confusing. Thus, LXX renders the situation, as if Adam asks God where He is, and not the other way around. ⁴³
3:11 – בְּגַן	περιπατοῦντος ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ	To clarify who addresses whom, LXX adds one word, belonging to God’s description in v.8, namely: περιπατοῦντος or “walking”, while MT has just “in the garden”. The second phrase ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ does not actually reflect the MT meaning, but bears a connotation of a place of luxury or paradise.
3:11 – אֲשֶׁר צוּיְתִיךָ לְבַלְתִּי	οὗ ἔνετειλάμην σοι τούτου μόνου μὴ φαγεῖν ἀπ’	LXX stresses the word “only”, or “just one”, while MT does not have this accent in the text.

⁴³ This could be an attempt to demonstrate Adam’s confusion as a result of what has taken place.

אֲכָל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֲכָלֶתָּ	αὐτοῦ ἔφαγες	
וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה – 3:14	πάντων τῶν θηρίων τῆς γῆς	LXX replaces “from all living creatures of the field” of MT with “all wild beasts (animals) of the earth”, similarly to what it does in 3:1.

How different is the LXX’s rendering of Genesis 3:1-15 compared to the MT? It can be noted that the ancient Greek translation simply adds some minor comments to the Hebrew text, which in most cases can be explained as clarification.

2.1.3 Exegesis of Genesis 3:1-15

Before engaging the actual text of Genesis 3 it is appropriate to say something about the actual setting of the story, which plays a crucial role in what unfolds in the narrative. Although the first impression gives us a feeling that we dealing with a normal earthly garden, several features within the Genesis 2-3 text overtly suggest that this is not the case. Thus, Walton points at various similarities that are part of both biblical and ancient Near Eastern accounts: “the garden into which Adam was placed would be a familiar setting for sacred space in the ancient world.”⁴⁴ He gives us a list of what makes this garden sacred: 1) It is sacred space that reflects the fact that God is dwelling there (notice that Ezek. 28:13 refers to Eden as “the garden of God”; cf. Ezek. 31:8.⁴⁵ 2) The words “keep” and “serve” do in fact “convey priestly” connotation.⁴⁶ 3) Similarities in terms and description with other ancient ANE and Egyptian accounts (source of rivers, mountains, serpents etc.).⁴⁷ 4) Genesis 2 can be seen as picturing a center of the cosmos (cf. Ezek. 31:8 and 47).⁴⁸ 5) Later references in various biblical and apocryphal books (Psalms, Prophets, Ezekiel, and *Jubilees* etc.).⁴⁹

Genesis 3:1

וְהַנְחֵשׁ הָיָה עֲרוֹם מִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ
מִכָּל עֵץ הַגָּן:

⁴⁴ John Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2015), 104.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 105 and 116-117.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 105.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 111-114, 116-127.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 111-114.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 113-114, 117.

“The serpent was more subtle than all *other* living creatures of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: did God really say do not eat from any tree of the garden?”⁵⁰

With regard to the structure of 3:1 Zevit has rightly noted that in general Hebrew sentences begin with the verb, except in those cases when the author intends to emphasize something very important. As an example, in Genesis 3:1a, the writer stresses the noun *nachash*, putting it in the very front of the sentence. “This Subject + Verb word order signals a break with the sequence of activities described in the immediately preceding verses, all of which begin, in Hebrew, with verbs in the first position.”⁵¹ Does this introduction mean that the serpent was not part of the previous scenario? By no means, he certainly was, and the purpose of this emphasis is totally different: to single the serpent out of all other creatures of the field and make him a new temporary key figure of the passage. He jumps up out of nowhere, does his business and disappears again, once and forever. Had the writer intended anything else at all, the introduction in 3:1a would have been much longer.

The word *nachash* is usually translated as “a snake, or a serpent”.⁵² It is related to Ugar. *nḥš* and corresponds to the LXX *ophis*.⁵³ *Nachash* is used in the Pentateuch, in Genesis 49:17; Exodus 4:3; 7:15; Numbers 21:6, 7, 9; and Deuteronomy 8:15, with reference to either ordinary serpents or to the bronze ones, (the same root, cf. Num. 21:9).⁵⁴

Apart from the Pentateuch the word *nachash* is found in 1 Samuel 11:1-2, 12:12, 2 Samuel 10:2, 17:25, 17:27, 1 Chronicles 4:12 (as a person’s name), 19:1-2 (as a person’s name), 2 Kings 18:4; Job 16:12; Psalms 58:4, 140:4, Proverbs 30:19; Ecclesiastes 10:8,11; Amos 5:19, 9:3, Isaiah 14:29; 27:1-2; Jeremiah 8:17; Daniel 2:32, 7:19, every time referring to the ordinary serpent, except for Amos 9:3 (cf. LXX τῷ δράκοντι), and Job 26:13 (cf. LXX δράκοντα), which

⁵⁰ This and following translations of Genesis 3:1-15 are mine.

⁵¹ Zevit Ziony, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 292.

⁵² Victor Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 187.

⁵³ R.C. Stallman, “Nachash” in T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (DOT; Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 84.

⁵⁴ It is interesting, however, that the word חַיָּוִי meaning: “venomous, fiery, flying, deadly serpent,” also mentioned in this passage (Num. 21:8), is a serpent of a slightly different nature.⁵⁴ Similar confusion exists in Deut. 8:15, where the same two words חַיָּוִי וְחַיָּוִי appear one after another, and which is usually translated as just “fiery serpents” (Deut. 8:15 RSV), instead of perhaps more accurately, “serpents and fiery serpents”. LXX prefers to ignore the problem, and translates it as ὄφεις δάκνων (Deut 8:15 LXX), that is “biting serpents”. According to Karen Randolph Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament* (Haddonfield: Haddonfield House, 1974), p. 52, “it is difficult to deny that a seraph is a kind of serpent, possibly with Egyptian associations.” Perhaps these precise associations led the writers of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha to the idea of combining the image of Satan, a fiery seraph, and the serpent from the Garden of Eden.

most likely have in mind a dragon (a sea dragon) and a fleeing serpent (eclipse-dragon) respectively.⁵⁵

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the root *nchsh* is quite extensively used throughout the Bible. The following derivatives come from one or similar roots: 1) נְשֵׁת – “materials or items made from bronze (see Gen. 4:22; Num. 21:9; 2 Sam. 8:10; 1 Kgs 7:14; 2 Kgs 25:13);⁵⁶ 2) נְשֵׁת – “harlotry, lust, or uncovered nakedness” (see Ezek. 16:36);⁵⁷ and 3) נְשֵׁת – as a bronze-snake-idol (see 2 Kgs 18:4).⁵⁸ As a verb: 4) נָשַׁת – which according to BDB means: “divination, enchantment” (Num.23:23 and Num. 24:1).⁵⁹ Adjective: 6) נְשֵׁת – “of bronze,” (Job 6:12);⁶⁰ noun: 7) נְשֵׁת – “copper, bronze” (Lev. 26:19); 8) נְשֵׁת – “copper, bronze” (Job 40:18);⁶¹ 9) Gesenius makes a point that the second meaning of this root can probably mean “shining”.⁶² Therefore, in summary, we can say that all these words could in a collective sense bear the general idea of something shining, bright (copper, bronze), or deceitful (i.e. snake, harlotry, lust).

Charlesworth rightly emphasizes that the serpent in the Garden of Eden was surely not the serpent we all know today.⁶³ Considering his having two or four legs, which he used to walk on, he did not crawl on a belly, and definitely had another look. This makes him look more like a monitor lizard, dinosaur, or dragon, thus overtly connecting dinosaurs with the human history (cf. Job 40:10-41:26, where two other representatives of the dinosaurs family are vividly depicted).

⁵⁵ BDB, 638. See also Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scripture*, (London: Samuel Bagsters and Sons, Paternoster Row, 1860), 544. Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, notes that there are approximately 120 uses of the word “snake” in the Old Testament, including Isa. 6:2; 6:6; 14:29; and 30:6, although many of them represent a huge range of various snake types, and not just one and the same kind.⁵⁵ Thus she has made an extensive list of other uses of snake-like words existed within the Old Testament: 1) נָחָשׁ – though sounding close to a python, it is actually a cobra, a venomous snake, or adder, as translated by LXX as δράκοντα, – a dragon (see Ps. 91:13; Isa. 11:8, etc.). 2) נָחָשׁ – a venomous snake, or adder, again in LXX as ἀσπίδων (see Isa. 11:8; 59:5 etc.). 3) נָחָשׁ – crawling creatures (snakes), cf. LXX as θυμαῦ σαρπόντων ἐπὶ γῆς, i.e. literary the “wrath” (or “venom” in ESV, NAS, and RSV) of crawling upon the earth (see also Mic. 7:17 and 1 Kgs 1:9). 4) נָחָשׁ – a viper, an asp, cf. LXX as ἀσπίδες (Isa. 30:6 BGT) (Isa. 30:6; 59:5, and Job 20:16). 5) נָחָשׁ – a viper, translated in LXX as ἀσπίς (Ps. 140:3). 6) נָחָשׁ – an arrow-snake, a tree snake, cf. LXX as ἐχίνος (Isa 34:15). 7) נָחָשׁ – a horned viper, translated in LXX as ὄφις (Gen. 49:17), Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, 3-7.

⁵⁶ Ibid. LXX has here χαλκοῦ, “a bronze”.

⁵⁷ LXX – τὸν χαλκόν, “made of bronze”, though it is not logical and probably means the same as in Hebrew, otherwise the sense of the sentence is lost forever. The primitive explanation could be that as the bronze shines under the sun and strikes one’s eyes, in the same way nakedness strikes one’s eyes as being uncovered.

⁵⁸ LXX- ὄφιν τὸν χαλκοῦν, i.e. “the snake made of bronze”. See Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, 62: “bronze serpents have been found in the cultic areas of several Ancient Near East cities. At least seven such serpents have come from Palestinian cities.” Among these cities are: Megiddo (2), Gezer, Hazor (2), Shechem (2).

⁵⁹ Ibid. LXX – οἰωνισμὸς, i.e. “divination,” see Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, 2.

⁶⁰ BDB, 639.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Cf. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, 187: “this connection with bronze suggests a shiny and luminous appearance, which would arrest Eve’s attention.”

⁶³ Charlesworth, 313.

It is difficult to say anything with certainty of the actual nature of the serpent from the Garden of Eden, as it disappears from the scene in the middle of chapter 3 in the same way as it appeared at the start, namely, suddenly and abruptly, without any verbose explanations from the writer.⁶⁴ Thus, what one has are just two brief descriptions of his feral nature in 3:1 and 14. The final end of the serpent and his experiences after the cursing by God remain an indiscernible mystery. Perhaps this explains his reluctance to expose the very truth about this mysterious animal.

The second interesting word within this sentence is *arum*. Regrettably, almost none of the meanings for this word in English convey to the reader an adequate understanding of the nature of *ha nachash*. According to Luc “the root ‘*rm* is attested in Aramaic, and Syriac as ‘shrewd’, and in Arabic as ‘ill-natured’, or ‘ill-omened’.⁶⁵ Charlesworth adds some more distinct characteristics of this word: “clever”, “crafty”, “sly”, “wise”, “sagacious”, “prudent”, and “intelligent”.⁶⁶

While *arum* may hold both positive or negative meanings, traditional Christian interpretation usually prefers to dwell on its negative aspects only,⁶⁷ though a positive usages of this word is found in Proverbs 12:16 and 23: “to denote a wise or prudent man in contrast to a fool” as well.⁶⁸ The word *arum* basically describes “an attribute or act that is characterized by prudence and wisdom,” and thus cannot be seen as predominantly negative.⁶⁹ Thus, what can be derived from this is the fact that the serpent was an unusually wise, and intelligent creature, i.e. unlike any other animal in the field. He is not compared with the two human beings, but it catches one’s eye that the writer does everything to show that his prudence and knowledge go far beyond human characteristics. Besides, Zevit has correctly emphasized that nowhere in the Hebrew Bible is the serpent is referred to as a *rāša* ‘, a wicked or evil⁷⁰ creature, and therefore should not be perceived as such.⁷¹ John Day disagrees with the positive picture of the serpent and criticizes Charlesworth’s approach to imparting rather positive characteristics to it.⁷²

⁶⁴ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 41.

⁶⁵ A. Luc, “Arum”, in T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (DOT; Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 539. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 290, argues that the last two terms are very misleading, because he is described as a very intelligent creature.

⁶⁶ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 291.

⁶⁷ See the list in *Ibid*, 292.

⁶⁸ See more about snake and wisdom in Joines, 21-26. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 291: “it is rather neutral.” See Christoph Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” in Nathan MacDonald, Mark W. Elliot, Grant Macaskill (eds.), *Genesis and Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2012), 94: “this characteristic is by no means a negative one.”

⁶⁹ Luc, “Arum”, 539.

⁷⁰ The use of the word “evil” in its current use in English isn’t the same as the meaning of the Hebrew behind it in the Old Testament context.

⁷¹ Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 295. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 297, in the history of research the snake has been related to the Wisdom female figure described in Prov. 1-2, and

A derivative from the root *'rm*: עָרוֹם, “naked” is used in Genesis 2:25, referring to Adam and his wife as poor, unprotected persons in the cold.⁷³ If one pushes the wordplay between 2:25 and 3:1 a bit further, one can apply both meanings to someone possessing or not possessing knowledge. Therefore, it is possible to compare the first couple and the serpent both as possessing (3:1, the serpent) and not possessing knowledge (2:25, the first couple), assuming that the first couple’s nakedness could be seen as the absence of a certain (divine or any other) knowledge as well as so called “intellectual innocence”. In other words, while the first couple appears rather illiterate, ignorant, and uneducated in regard to possessing some of God’s deeper knowledge, the extraordinary serpent certainly does not. In this sense, the serpent seems to be clothed with both wisdom and a protective skin in this story, while both of his luckless “masters” seemed to be naked in all senses of this word, i.e. physically and intellectually.⁷⁴

The Greek equivalent for the word עָרוֹם in LXX is φρονιμώτατος, which is derived from the word φρονέω, “to be minded, to have understanding, to be wise, to be prudent”. The adjective “φρονιμώτατος” means “concerned with thought, prudent, wise, the most intelligent”.⁷⁵

Therefore, one can surmise that the primary intention of the author of Genesis was to describe the serpent briefly and succinctly while showing little interest in depicting the nature of the creature in more details.⁷⁶ The main idea of this passage seems to be about God and people, whose behavior one needs to examine, as God is the original mastermind, the initiator of the temptation of Adam and the woman (cf. Gen. 2:17-18), its instigator, and eventually prosecutor and judge, in one and the same period of time, while people are those, who respond to God’s actions.⁷⁷

Following this line of thought, one may conclude that, 1) the snake has become supernatural quite accidentally, by mere chance or combination of circumstances; 2) this was part

6-7, as well as to “Lady Folly”, but all these correspondences are rather doubtful and not well grounded, due to the use of masculine verbs in Gen. 3:1-6 attributed to him. See more on the significance of the serpent’s image in biblical and para-biblical books,” Ibid, 298.

⁷² Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 35.

⁷³ Boyd V. Seevers, “Arom”, in Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (DOT; Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 532-533.

⁷⁴ Cf. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope for Immortality*, 11-13, and 69-70, where he speaks about nakedness and clothing in terms of distinctive signs between human beings and animals. See also Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 130.

⁷⁵ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 291; Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon* vol.1 (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1925), 1955-1956. See also T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain-Paris-Walpole: Peeters, 2009), 720: φρονέω, “to be wise, to conduct yourself wisely, to give thought to,” and φρόνιμος, “to be shrewd in judgment”.

⁷⁶ Cf. Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz, *Genesis* vol.1 (New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1977), 113.

⁷⁷ See Stallman, “Nachash”, 86: “Genesis 2 introduces the snake (...) as one of God’s creations, not a dualistic counterpart to Yahweh.” See also Wenham, *Genesis*, 72.

of the original plot, and intention of God Himself, Who decided to make the serpent shrewder and more cunning than all of its peers in order to test the first couple; 3) the snake was more shrewd than the other animals and humans due to some unmentioned reason. Charlesworth supposes that the serpent might have been the first one to actually have eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.⁷⁸ After all, it was the man who was forbidden to eat from the tree of knowledge, not the serpent (cf. Gen. 2:17-18). Consequently, the serpent seemed to have a free choice in whether or not to eat what and where he liked. “Surely, knowing demands experiencing,” adds Charlesworth.⁷⁹ Arguments against this idea are: 1) it is not mentioned in the Bible; 2) the fruit of the tree was not intended to be eaten by animals, otherwise all the animals would have been wise one day, much wiser than man; 3) the author drops this idea in Genesis 2:17-18, leading one to surmise that the serpent had some reasons for eating from the tree.

The last part of Genesis 3:1a consists of one, very interesting phrase:

מִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים: “from all living creatures of the field that the LORD God had made”

The phrase חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה “living creatures, or beasts of the field” is widely used in the Bible in reference to ordinary beasts or animals, populating the planet, which usually live in fields, savannas, and forests, (see for example, verse 2:19 clearly explaining their origin):

וַיֵּצֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאֲדָמָה כָּל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לִרְאוֹת מֵהַיְקָרָאֵלָו וְכָל־
אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵלָו הָאָדָם נִפְשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ:

“And out of earth, the Lord God formed all living creatures of the field and all birds of the sky, and brought them to the man to see how could he call them and whatever Adam called a living soul, that was its name.”

This verse explains that all living creatures of the field and sky were made or formed in the same way, following one and the same pattern, and this could actually mean that while forming them the Lord might use the very same earth, (ground, mud, soil), which He used for creating the first man (Adam), (cf. Gen. 2:7):

וַיֵּצֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאֲדָמָה כָּל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה

⁷⁸ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 304.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

The same verb “to form” is used there as well as the source: “the earth, the ground”.⁸⁰ The only two differences between them consist in the fact that all living creatures were not made in the image of God, neither were breathed in their nostrils the breath of life, although this could be a purposeful writer’s omission, (in the second case), to underline the difference existing between animals and man.⁸¹

The end of 2:7 considers Adam as a living soul, thereby having to share the same structure with all living creatures of the field, (cf. Gen. 2:19b).⁸²

This comparison suggests that the serpent from Genesis 3:1, which was purposely defined by the writer as one of the living creatures of the field, and thus also formed out of the ground or mud, should in fact be considered an ordinary earthly creature, equipped with extraordinary mental capacities, while neither possessing God’s image, God’s breath, nor any other exclusively human or supernatural attributes. Bauckham, however, citing Genesis 7:22, maintains that God’s breath “though not specifically mentioned in the account of the creation of the animals (2:19), (...) must be assumed, because otherwise the animals would not be alive.”⁸³

The serpent does not look like a guardian of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as he is not placed there and seems to walk wherever he wants. This feature, therefore, makes Genesis 3 quite unique in the sense that most mythological snakes in other cultures of the Near East are depicted as mostly guardians of the tree, which they are responsible for.⁸⁴

While struggling with where to put the serpent or how to perceive him, Levin exalts the serpent to the level of “the woman’s alter ego”, “for it hardly puts forward anything that in these circumstances the woman might not have said for herself.”⁸⁵ And once again, “the woman has to have an interlocutor; but on the stage of world history, except for her, only two beings were endowed with reason: God and the man.”⁸⁶ This assumption disputes and questions the very need for the serpent, though his physical presence in Genesis 3 is rather indubitable and therefore cannot be ignored so easily.

⁸⁰ Cf. Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” 91. See also Richard Bauckham, “Humans, Animals and the Environment in Genesis 1-3”, in Nathan MacDonald, Mark W. Elliot, Grant Macaskill, (eds.), *Genesis and Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 187.

⁸¹ As a matter of fact Eve was also deprived of this procedure, at least this is how it looks like in chapter 2. Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2*, 105. See Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 36.

⁸² Cf. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope for Immortality*, 37. See Bauckham, “Humans, Animals and the Environment in Genesis 1-3”, 187: “Nothing in their created constitution differentiates humans and animals.”

⁸³ See Bauckham, “Humans, Animals and the Environment in Genesis 1-3”, 187. See the discussion of this point in Barr, 37-38. See also Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and symbolism of the Eden garden in biblical Hebrew literature*, 238.

⁸⁴ Cf. Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” 100.

⁸⁵ Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” 95.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

While stepping back from this hermeneutical discussion, one cannot help noticing that we are in the middle of a quite uncomfortable dialogue (which in fact appeared to be an intellectual discussion occasioned by the need to interpret God's command, given in 2:16-17) not knowing all we would have liked to know about the serpent's actual intentions at this point.⁸⁷ Why is this part of the dispute so important for the writer and nobody else in the whole Bible? Why does he present his serpent asking those provocative questions and grants him the privilege of being the sole of God's animal creation to have ever spoken in the first chapters of Genesis?

The choice of the serpent as God's opponent is not accidental for Levin, as he surmises that the serpent is, "a representative of forces that are annihilation and healing, evil and good."⁸⁸ Therefore, he claims that the serpent was the only beast to match the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in this respect. The serpent, "is free of all responsibility" before God's command and therefore, "is allowed to raise a question, hypothetical though it may be."⁸⁹ His role in the story is the role of a provocateur and antagonist, though he never dares to throw down a challenge to God and looks more like a tester, sent to verify Adam and the woman's loyalty, rather than God's adversary.

To conclude what has been said so far, one has to admit with Stratton that, "the narrator gives us no direct indications of the serpent's credentials and motives, suggesting neither that it wants to trick the woman, nor speculating on why it converses with her rather than her man."⁹⁰

Genesis 3:2

וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנָּחַשׁ מִפְּרֵי עֵץ־הַגָּן נֹאכָל:

"And the woman said to the serpent: from the fruits of the trees of the garden we can eat".

From 2:23 to 3:20, the woman is called "the woman" and not Eve.⁹¹ This relates her to her previous state of being with her husband, of whom she saw herself as a necessary part. Hence, her use of "we" instead of "I" all the way through her dialogue with the serpent, can be explained by the fact that at that time, she did not consider herself a separate individual yet, but regarded herself as part of her husband instead. Stratton suggests that the woman could not eat

⁸⁷ Cf. Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 42, 153, who argues that this was done in order to prevent us from seeing who else might be there (e.g. Adam; 3:6).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 96.

⁹⁰ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 43.

⁹¹ According to Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 306, this name was "perhaps inserted in its place by a later editor (redactor)." Another motive for renaming the woman could be to escape the feeling of total frustration and being doomed to death as Eve means "life".

from the tree of knowledge of good and evil on her own, and therefore must have looked for her husband's consent, who at that time stood next to her (cf. 3:6).⁹²

What is amazing in this sentence is that the woman shows no amusement or surprise at the serpent's address. She reacts as if it were quite normal for a human being to be addressed by an animal. Some commentators avoid making any statements about this issue, while others feel quite secure in claiming that all animals of the field could have been granted the ability to talk at that time.

Genesis 3:3

וּמִפְרֵי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ-הַגָּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ פֶן-תָּמּוּתוּ:

“But *as for the* fruit from the tree, which is in the middle of the garden, the Lord God said: do not eat from it and do not touch it lest you die.”

It is often emphasized that the woman knows more than is given in God's command (2:16-17). Where did she get “and do not touch it” from, is never mentioned. An attentive reader is obviously well aware of this, as the command was purposely given by the author in the middle of the previous chapter in order to be able to juxtapose the words of God with what follows (2:16-17). The origin of the woman's knowledge cannot be under or overestimated here, as it also contributes to the overall confusion, purposely created by the writer in chapter 3.

As the tree of knowledge of good and evil appears to grow in the middle of the garden,⁹³ it could have been surrounded by many other trees and therefore, not specifically marked.⁹⁴ This raises a couple of questions: how does the woman know where is this *middle* of the garden? How does she know which of the trees in the middle of the garden is the one in question? How was she going to find it, if she had never seen it before? If she has already seen it before, or was shown by Adam, when was that and why did he do that to her, as the best alternative would be to keep her as far from the tree as possible? It might well be that Adam

⁹² See Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 159, who maintains that before eating from the tree Eve had never seen herself as individual, but in relation to her husband, only. This could be right, as she never uses the term ‘I’ in Gen. 3:1-6.

⁹³ See Claus Westermann, *Genesis: A Continental Commentary* (Augsburg: Augsburg Publishing House, 1993), 326, who refers to Gunkel in an interesting commentary: “in v. 3 ist der verbotene Baum nur als ‘der Baum in der Mitte des Gartens’ bezeichnet; dieser Satz zeigt, daß der Baum vorher noch nicht als ‘Baum der Erkenntnis des Gutes und Bösen’ bezeichnet sein kann.” This speculative thought can lead to the conclusion that Eve did not know what the nature of the tree actually was, though this would seem rather doubtful.

⁹⁴ Cf. Hill, *Genesis*, 83-84: “In the garden of Hesperides of Greek mythology, there grew the tree with golden apples, which is usually interpreted as the tree of life.” See Arville Cooper, *Genesis: A Verse by Verse Study* (Bloomington: West Bow Press, 2014), 176: “Symbols of the tree are: the pillar, post, notched pole, a branch, etc., all of which are often accompanied by a serpent, bird, stars, fruit, and various lunar animals.” It is important that he mentions here a serpent among those who accompany the tree all the time. “

could have shown her its precise location to warn her though considering that this is not in the text, it is not so obvious and clear as one wants it to be.

Moreover, in 3:3 the woman speaks as if she stands at some distance from the tree in question, as she does not say, “We are not allowed to eat from just this very tree”, but says, “from the one, which is in the middle of the garden”. She does not point to the one, which is next to her, but tells the serpent its approximate location. Therefore, it seems that their actual conversation is located either somewhere in the garden, or on their way to the prohibited spot, which they might have reached by 3:6. At that point she is attracted by the beauty of the tree and stretches out her arm to pluck the fruit.

Another interesting question is: why does the woman call this tree “the one that is in the middle of the garden”, and not the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Does she know its real name, or did Adam simply not tell it to her, to keep her attention as far away from it as possible? Levin suggests that she does not pronounce its name purposely as she “wants to avoid putting a name to its true meaning.”⁹⁵

Barr, Stordalen, and many others underline the existence of a theory about two separate accounts, which could have coexisted simultaneously, one about the tree of the knowledge and the other about the tree of life.⁹⁶ Was this really the case, and if so, why does the writer of Genesis 3 pay almost no attention to the tree of life in chapter 3? This remains something we simply cannot explain.⁹⁷

Genesis 3:4-5

וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּחַשׁ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה לֹא־מוֹת תָּמָתוֹן:
כִּי יֵדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בַיּוֹם אֲכָלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִפְקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וְהִייתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:

“But the serpent said to the woman: you will surely not die, but God knows that at the day when you eat from the tree your eyes will be opened and you will become like God knowing good and evil.”

The serpent’s answer is decidedly: לֹא־מוֹת תָּמָתוֹן, “you will surely not die”. It is apparently meant to overcome God’s similar words in 2:16-17: מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת, “in the day when you eat it you will surely die,” or literally: “you will die dying”. The serpent’s words proved to be right (cf. 3:22).⁹⁸ The serpent did not lie to the woman, because both she and her husband did not fall down in an instant after they had touched and eaten from the fruit of the tree. That

⁹⁵ Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” 97.

⁹⁶ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and symbolism of the Eden garden in biblical Hebrew literature*, 194-195. See also Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope for Immortality*, 57.

⁹⁷ Levin, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” 96-97.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 97.

leaves us with the question: what God could have had in mind while warning him of a death penalty? Does it mean that it was God, who lied in his command, or what was his intention after all?

Moreover, where did the serpent get this knowledge/assurance from? No one knows, as this is not in the text. One thing is clear, however: once again the serpent seems to possess some extra knowledge from somewhere, and quite willingly boasts about his superiority over a pair of gullible humans. Once again, he plays the role of a “perfect helper” (or perhaps even an overseer or patron?), who seeks for every opportunity to open human eyes on the subject of a hidden knowledge, which, in his opinion, God was averse to reveal to the first human beings at all.⁹⁹ However it may be, his double assurance and its later confirmation provided by the writer himself, show his high level of awareness, which is usually not inherent in earthly creatures.

In verse 5 the serpent gives another statement and appears to be perfectly right again, when he says: “but God knows that at the day when you eat from the tree your eyes will be opened and you will become like God knowing good and evil.” His predictions are confirmed in 3:22: “Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil”.¹⁰⁰ No exhaustive explanation is given either in 3:5, or 3:22 in regard to the actual nature of the likeness between God and the humans. Therefore, it is not clear what kind of earthly, divine, or superhuman attributes have become accessible to Adam and the woman since they became like God. What has changed? Did they experience something in their minds or bodies, apart from the feelings of shame, nakedness and fear, as these are definitely not the elements of God’s likeness? If not, did the writer think that their wits in some way now matched God’s wisdom and strength?¹⁰¹

Is the act of the woman to be interpreted as rebellion, revolt, or a rebuke against God or was the woman simply enticed by the physical characteristics of the tree and the confusing interpretation of God’s command, given by her addle associate?

However it may be, it is impossible to say with Stordalen, that before the tragedy happened the first couple had no knowledge at all. The knowledge they had before must have been explicitly human, while after the incident took place, they seemed to obtain or experience

⁹⁹ Cf. Westermann, *Genesis*, 327.

¹⁰⁰ See Manfred Lurker, *Wörterbuch Biblischer Bilder und Symbole* (München: Kösel, 1987), 318: „Die gespaltene Zunge der Schlange wird in Übereinstimmung mit ihrer Doppelzüngigkeit erkannt.“ Cf. Martin McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* vol. 1A (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 60: “you will be like *angels before the Lord*, knowing to distinguish between good and evil.”

¹⁰¹ Cf. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and symbolism of the Eden garden in biblical Hebrew literature*, 236, who maintains that the act of becoming like God was inappropriate for one simple reason: to know good and evil was exclusively God’s prerogative, therefore their indubitable fault consisted of a willingness to become equal with God, and thus rejecting His superiority.

something that had initially been beyond the scope of their human abilities, although its precise nature remains unclear.¹⁰²

Genesis 3:6

וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמַאֲכָל וְכִי תִאֲוָה-הִוא לְעֵינֶיהָ וְנִחְמַד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׂכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִיָּו וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם-
לְאִישָׁהּ עִמָּהּ וַיֹּאכַל:

“And the woman saw that the tree is good for food and that it is attractive to her eyes and that it was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruits and ate and gave to her husband, who was standing next to her, and he ate also”.

It is odd to see what kind of sudden transformation the serpent’s words have produced in the woman’s thinking, as a moment before this tree was no more than a matter of curiosity. Now, since the serpent said his enticing words, the tree of knowledge of good and evil has suddenly become very attractive. Why? Is it because the serpent’s words have become so convincing to her that her uncontrollable feelings and desires, having been restrained all this time, have suddenly burst forth? What has become so special about that tree? In the end, however, it was Eve who first recklessly launched human history into the unknown. Stratton suggests some of those feelings, which might have occupied the woman’s head at that moment, as the writer does not supply us with any. She claims that various feelings could have become active as a result of the woman having acknowledged that the tree was beautiful and good. It is doubtful that this tree was more beautiful than others; rather it was equally or somehow peculiarly beautiful in comparison with all the rest. What was so special about that tree we will never learn, as this is once again not mentioned in the text. The writer limits himself to a pair of basic descriptors and does not go into any particulars.¹⁰³

Another interesting thought from Stratton is that it should have taken some time for the woman to evaluate the fruit, as she stood there admiring its merits. She did not eat it in haste, as her husband did later on. She took her time, enjoyed the beauty of the tree, and perhaps of the fruit itself, and only then, considering the pros and cons, tore the fruit away and ate. What kind of fruit it was, the reader does not know, as the writer keeps his silence.¹⁰⁴

Verse 6 brings the culminating tension to its ultimate zenith, as it appears from this verse that Adam was most likely standing all the time somewhere only a short distance from his wife. Considering that there is no additional explanation in relation to Adam’s coming from somewhere or approaching her, it seems that during the entire scene he has been standing next

¹⁰² Ibid, 237.

¹⁰³ The serpent could have done both, touching and eating in front of her, as this command was no concern of his.

¹⁰⁴ See Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 308.

to her, keeping his silence. Thus, while standing so close to his wife he could, most probably, hear the entire conversation¹⁰⁵ going on between his wife and the serpent, without interrupting it or saying at least a word, though he was the primary recipient of God's command, and knew that it was he who would be responsible for everything that might happen next.¹⁰⁶ Levin, however, confronts this view and presents Adam as totally ignorant of what was going on around him. He even says that, "whether he knows what he is eating is left open. His protestation that the woman gave him the fruit from the tree (3:12) suggests that he did not."¹⁰⁷ Although one remains ignorant about Adam's whereabouts at that moment, his protestation looks like a lame attempt to exclude himself from the list of the suspects when, in fact, it is just an attempt to throw the blame over from himself to his wife. All of this obscurity, therefore, makes for an ambiguous account.

A potential presence of Adam next to his wife at the moment of the serpent's delivering his speech is well emphasized by Hamilton, who tries to demonstrate a skillful play of plural/singular forms in the serpent's interpretation of God's command. According to other scholars, the serpent could simply make his statements, having in mind both Adam and the woman, while talking to the woman only (i.e. in a collective way), as the man and the woman were meant to be one.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, both must share the blame of not being faithful to God's command. Although the writer's intentions in this verse are not clear, this suggestion is certainly possible.¹⁰⁹

The tempting scene could not have been so powerful if Adam had not, while passing God's command to his wife, overlooked the importance of Eve's staying away from the tree by all possible means, including touching it. Hence, both people failed in the equal degree, though Adam's tacit passiveness must be reproached more severely. God, as a matter of fact, eventually made Adam responsible for his crime, though not in the way one would expect.

Charlesworth has pointed out that the serpent did not force the woman to eat from the tree. It was her voluntary decision to examine the tree and its fruit.¹¹⁰ His overtures would not

¹⁰⁵ The text shows that Adam was with her, as: "she gave it to her man (who was) with her and he ate". Cf. Larry Crabb, *The Silence of Adam* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 11.

¹⁰⁶ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 48. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 323, rightly notes that the main characters of the Genesis 3:1-15 story are not God and Adam, but the serpent and the woman. God and Adam play in this story rather a supplementary role. Cf. Crabb, *The Silence of Adam*, 11.

¹⁰⁷ Levin, "Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation," 93. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?*, 307.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, 188.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Rosenberg, *Genesis*, 52: "She gave her husband of the fruit so that he should remain with her, both in life and death."

¹¹⁰ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 323.

have met with any response, if the woman's heart had not been already prepared to disobey her Creator or if there had not been such potential possibility for her to deviate from God's way.¹¹¹

The first couple would have needed incredible intrepidity and a strong sense of practicability to overcome this temptation. However, it seems obvious that they simply had neither of them, as first the woman, and then her husband, ate from the tree without any inner struggle, shame, or any other signs of a troubled conscience (at least there are no indications of any struggle in the text). The writer of Genesis seems not to be interested in revealing their feelings at all.

Stratton rightly notes that in this verse, God does not intervene into what the woman is about to do, as He does in 4:7, where He warns Cain about the possible consequences of his misbehavior.¹¹² Why is this so? Did He regard the following catastrophic consequences of the woman's action as necessary and unavoidable? Was there room for another scenario?

Genesis 3:7

וּתְפַלְחָנָה עֵינֵי שְׂנֵיהֶם וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי עֲרֻמָּם הֵם וַיִּתְּפְרוּ עֲלֵהּ תְּאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חִגְרֹת:

“Their eyes have become opened and they learned that they were naked, thus they sewed some fig leaves and made covering for themselves.”

For a third time, the serpent did not lie. First they did not die; secondly, they became like God, knowing good and evil, and now their eyes were indeed opened.¹¹³ This means that some new realities had become accessible to their eyes and minds, which had not been accessible before the incident took place. However, what were these new realities exactly? Nakedness, fear and shame, or was there something else?¹¹⁴

The following consequences revealed the fact of the serpent's guile as well as humanity's inability to be equal to God in any respect. This includes an exhaustive demonstration of human foolishness and rashness in regard to believing in fairy tales, delivered by the creature, which had initially been intended to occupy a lower position in the world

¹¹¹ To decrease possible chances of the Fall, the first couple should have run from the place of temptation, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil had, unfortunately, been made too attractive from three different perspectives, as Hamilton, 188, counts them: “1) it was physically appealing (good for food), 2) aesthetically pleasing (a delight to the eyes), and 3) sapientially transforming (desirable in acquiring wisdom).” In other words a chance of avoiding the temptation was inconceivably insignificant. This is not to blame God for making it so attractive, but to take into consideration all the difficulty of the situation in which the first couple quite suddenly found themselves in v. 6.

¹¹² Ibid, 104-105. See also Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 304-305.

¹¹³ Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 309.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 154, who argues that in 2:25 the nakedness was considered as good. Now, after eating from the tree the same nakedness has become something bad. This means that now they could start comparing things. Cf. Zevit, 310.

system in comparison with the first humans, and therefore, found themselves being ruled and guided, instead of ruling and guiding people (cf. Gen. 1:26).

The serpent was precise in one part of his prediction about their opened eyes, but unclear in the other. When their eyes were opened it was only to show how filthy, wretched, and miserable they in fact were. Was this on purpose, or was the serpent simply experimenting, not knowing what the actual outcome of their opened eyes would be?

At first (2:25), they were naked without realizing it, therefore they were not ashamed. After eating the fruit(s) they came to full realization of their nakedness in a negative sense, as shame and embarrassment came along. It is difficult to infer whether they felt embarrassed before each other, before other creatures of the field, or both.¹¹⁵

The statement about their knowing how to deal with the fig leaves is also astonishing, as one can hardly imagine that they had sewed any fig leaves ever before.

Genesis 3:8-11

וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מְתַהַלְלִים בְּגִן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹד עֵץ הַגֵּן:
9 וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל-הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אַיֶּכָּה:
10 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת-קוֹלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגִן וְאִירָא כִּי-עֵרָם אָנֹכִי וְאֶחְבֵּא:
11 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הַגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עֵרָם אֶתָּה הַמִּן-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵבִלְתִּי אֲכָל-מִמֶּנּוּ אֲכַלְתָּ:

“8: Then they heard the sound of God, walking in the midst of the garden in the wind of the day and they hid themselves, Adam and his wife, from the face of the Lord God in the midst of the trees of the garden. 9: And the Lord God called for the man saying, ‘Where are you?’ 10: and he said: ‘when I heard the sound of your voice in the garden I was afraid because I am naked, therefore I hid myself’. 11: And He said, ‘who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree, of which I had commanded you not eat from it?’”

The impression we get from verse 8 is that God appeared almost immediately after Adam and his wife had committed the act of disobedience, though a considerable amount of time may have passed since the moment the incident took place. Once again, the writer is not precise here, as he seems to be far from being interested in fixing the exact time, space, and date. According to Stordalen, God “appears to be taken by surprise over the turn of events”.¹¹⁶ Is that so? It is very doubtful, though the writer is silent.

God appears to judge and did not use His opportunity to take some preventive measures (cf. 4:6). Does it mean that God learns from His mistakes and does to Cain what He did not do to Adam, or we should interpret it differently?

¹¹⁵ Cf. Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 163: “Their cover nakedness in God’s presence is now a symbol of their status as social beings.”

¹¹⁶ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 240.

Adam and Eve's immediate reaction to what has just happened seems to be quite right in our eyes, at least to the degree that their fear and embarrassment, probably unknown to them before, having now become real, may have awakened feelings of guilt and shame, leading them to their following actions. This eventually resulted in Adam's decision to play "hide and seek" with God, though the game seems to fail in the very beginning, and therefore had no success.

Their new knowledge seemed to possess two main characteristics: 1) to show the real state of things, i.e. as they actually are; and 2) to show the real state of God. Therefore, it suddenly appeared to the first couple that a gap much more complex than anticipated existed between God and man. It could not be overcome by any existing means. The writer does not give us the impression that they wanted to usurp even part of God's power. They are pictured more like blind and deaf children, full of various desires, easily misinformed, misguided, and misdirected.

Therefore, the most important question, in this section is: how on earth did the first couple let the animal lead them away from what God had told them to obey (2:16-17)? How was it possible for the serpent to obtain much more information in comparison with the human beings? Why was the serpent much more knowledgeable in what God really does and does not want, compared to Adam, the actual recipient of the command? Why all this confusion, when Adam and Eve could simply have asked God whether or not what the serpent said was true, and therefore avoided making such a costly blunder?

Stratton rightly notes that God's feelings are not revealed at this point and, therefore, one has to imagine what God thought of it all and what His actual intentions were.¹¹⁷ God's first question is pretty simple: "Adam, where are you?"¹¹⁸

There are two possibilities in interpreting God's question: 1) God did not know what took place in the Garden; 2) God did not want to know it and, therefore, purposely limited Himself to grant the first couple more freedom.

As for God's second question, it was once again straight to the point: "who told you (Adam) that you are naked"? The Bible does not provide Adam's answer to this question.¹¹⁹ Perhaps it was too obvious for either of them to dwell on it any longer.

Genesis 3:12-13

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נִתְּנָה־לִּי מִן־הָעֵץ וְאָכַל:¹²
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאִשָּׁה מִהֲזֹאת עָשִׂית וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הַנֶּחֱשׁ הִשִּׂיאֵנִי וְאָכַל:¹³

¹¹⁷ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 53.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 318.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 284.

“12: And Adam said: ‘this woman whom you gave me, she took from the tree and I ate.’ 13: And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘what is this that you have done?’ And she replied: ‘the serpent deceived me and I ate.’”

Stratton is right again in noting that God does not address both defaulters, addressing only Adam, to whom He gave the command to observe to (2:16-17).¹²⁰ Adam looks as if he does not know what to do or say. He begins to make one mistake after another, trying to whiten his own faults and thus aggravating his miserable condition even further. As he could not blame God openly, he attempted to blame Him indirectly, artfully but stupidly, using all his resourcefulness and quick-mindedness in saying that the woman, who God Himself had given to him, was actually the one to blame.

The only thing he failed to consider was the fact that he was absolutely naked before God in all senses of the word, i.e. not just physically, but in terms of his inner world, thoughts, inclinations and intentions. It would have been wiser for him to acknowledge his overall nakedness before the Lord straight away, that is, as soon as he disobeyed, and thus present all his wrongdoings before his Creator. Alas, Adam obviously failed to do so.

The second possible explanation of his absent-minded behavior could be seen as “a total lack of awareness that any misdeed has been committed or could have been committed: God had given him the woman, and she could certainly be trusted.”¹²¹ This understanding of God’s command however, makes us think that, for Adam, God’s words, which He said in Genesis 2:16-17, must have been perceived as nothing like a command at all. They had lost their power or any restrictive effect on his mind from the moment the woman gave him the fruit.¹²²

Whether or not this is the case, one can not say absolutely, although Zevit’s further comment is very interesting to ponder: “The tactical objective of his response is to deflect the focus of God’s question. It implies that he, the man, implicitly trusts the actions of the woman whom God has made for him.”¹²³ By shaking off all blame from Adam and the woman’s shoulders God is made responsible for the entire tragedy.¹²⁴

The woman’s role in this passage is not entirely clear. On the one hand, in Genesis 2:21-25 she is clearly depicted as a certain blessing for her husband, while by the middle of chapter

¹²⁰ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 56. Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 318.

¹²¹ Ibid, 321.

¹²² Cf. Ibid, 320.

¹²³ Ibid, 321.

¹²⁴ Cf. Ibid, 318 and 322.

3 she appears to be very different, that is, not as a man's helper, but exactly the opposite, as a hindrance or his foe.¹²⁵ How did this happen and why? The writer does not tell us.

Zevit maintains that "God's question to the woman is rhetorical, a plaint rather than a request for information. Although the words are translated as, 'What is this that you have done?' they mean something like, 'How could you do such a thing, upsetting the order that I established (Gen 3:13)!"¹²⁶

The woman quickly realizes all her faults, but announces that she was deceived and, therefore, no sign of repentance is visible at this stage of the drama. Once again, it is important to note that the serpent did not push her towards making any decision; all decisions that she made, she made either by her own will, or together with her husband. However, despite this obvious truth, the serpent got his punishment first.¹²⁷

Genesis 3:14

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ בִּי עָשִׂיתָ זֹאת אֲרוּר אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל־תַּיִת הַשָּׂדֶה עַל־גִּחְוֹנֶךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְעָפָר תֹּאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

"And the Lord God said to the serpent: 'because of what you have done, cursed are you among all the animals and all the living creatures of the field, on your belly you shall walk and will eat dust all days of your life'."

The serpent is cursed without any hesitation. He is not interrogated or cross-examined. He is proved to be undoubtedly guilty in what has happened, without giving him an opportunity to defend or explain himself.¹²⁸ Does it mean that God had known the source of his guilt from the very beginning, or did He come to this conclusion after weighing all the variables? Does it mean that the serpent knew much more than he had already said before, and therefore must have been silenced? Or perhaps the author has left out the serpent's defending speech, as it might have contained too harsh information about God for his intended readers to handle.¹²⁹

Adam, on the other hand, was not cursed directly in either this or following verses, but the earth and the woman's womb have become the primary objects of God's curse instead. Is it proper that Adam received an indirect punishment for his passivity during Eve's temptation?

¹²⁵ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 50.

¹²⁶ Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 323.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 326.

¹²⁸ Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 56. Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?*, 358. Even if it appears to contemporary sensibilities that the serpent's instigation was unethical, in Israelite jurisprudence it was not illegal. Thus, the not-so-innocent serpent was not guilty of anything. This explains why the divine sentences in verses 14–15 do not impart a real punishment. Besides, "observant Israelites may have thought that the serpent failed to hear a word that God said because snakes lack external ears." Therefore, he could have misinterpreted God's word not due to his malicious nature, but due to his physical problems.

¹²⁹ Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 325.

Both of the active participants in the act of disobedience, the woman and the serpent, were found guilty and therefore received their harsh sentences (3:14-16). Adam, the passive participant of the story is sentenced to heavy labor, though no part of his body seems to be affected by that. Both active trespassers experienced their bodies being transformed, though not for good, but for bad.

The writer repeats his statement about the nature of the serpent in 3:14, though after the serpent is sentenced he appears to be even more feral than in verse 1. His animal belongings are overtly emphasized once again, similar to what has been already stated earlier, in verse 1:

“The serpent was craftier (subtler) *among* all living creatures of the field which the LORD God had made”, creating something like a line of brackets or a thematic sandwich that could mean only one thing – a deliberate intention on the part of the writer to use this repetition as a confirmation of its previous description.¹³⁰

The serpent is sentenced to lose his limbs, causing him “to crawl on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life.”¹³¹

The writer vividly shows us that the serpent has at least three common animal attributes: 1) a belly, 2) two or more legs,¹³² and 3) that he must eat to survive. Day notes:

Serpents with feet and legs are attested elsewhere in ancient Near Eastern iconography. However, since nothing explicitly is said of the serpent’s having feet and legs and being deprived of them here it is perhaps preferable to think of the serpent as originally having a good sense of balance so that it could move upright without legs.¹³³

God’s sentence containing the words “on your belly you shall go” could imply that before the sentence, the serpent’s locomotion was based on something other than his belly, though some commentators think otherwise.¹³⁴ Thus Walton refers to the Egyptian Pyramid Texts, where

¹³⁰ NASB. Cf. Robert Alter’s view, concerning the use of repetition in the Bible, *The Art Of Biblical Narrative*, (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 88-113. See also Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 302. Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 343: “In biblical Hebrew, in contrast, to *be ’ārūwr* is to be in a diminished, disempowered, weakened, impoverished state (Gen 49:7; Deut 27:16–26; 28:18–19; 1 Sam 14:24–28).”

¹³¹ See Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, 196. The idea of a quadruped dragon is also a possibility here.

¹³² Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 350: “Some commentators think, as did Luther, that God’s words to the serpent indicate that he had feet, like the Egyptian serpent god Nehebkau. If Nehebkau lies in the background of the story, then the account has to be explained as clarifying how and why a protective intercessory figure became a hostile, threatening one that lost its feet and high status. That theme, however, is not part of the story line in the biblical narrative.”

¹³³ Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 36.

¹³⁴ Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 351: “A proper interpretation of this incident must begin with the observation that neither the Hebrew word for foot, *regel*, nor any other word suggesting limbs that the serpent may have used for locomotion occurs in the narrative. Nothing in the statement to the serpent suggests

“among 700 utterances are several dozens of spells and curses on snakes that may impede the king’s progress” in his journey to the afterlife.¹³⁵ He claims that this sentence calls on “the snake to lie down, fall down, get down, or crawl away” (Pyramid Text 226, 233, 234, 298, 386). Another says that he should “go with his face on the path (PT 288). This suggests that when God tells the serpent that he will crawl on his belly, there is no suggestion that the serpent had legs that he now loses”.¹³⁶ In his opinion the text rather speaks in favor of the fact that “the serpent on his belly is nonthreatening, while the one reared up is protecting and attacking.”¹³⁷ This could be too far from how we perceive snakes nowadays. This could have been a dragon or an unfamiliar type of a serpent, we do not know.

What we know is that none of the snakes on earth actually eats dust.¹³⁸ What could this phrase mean then? A similar idea of snakes eating dust can be found in Isaiah 65:25, though that prophetic passage definitely speaks of the future. Does it mean that Genesis 3:14 must be seen in the same way?¹³⁹ Walton assumes that “Eating dust is not a comment about the actual diet of a snake. It is more likely a reference to their habitat. Again the Pyramid Texts show some similarity as they attempt to banish the serpent to the dust”.¹⁴⁰

Why did God need to deprive him of his usual way of locomotion? This was most likely done to teach the serpent a lesson by means of experiencing humiliation and vulnerability, which must have changed his position in God’s order in this world. Day argues that this was the way for God to transform him from one of the “highest” (smartest, cleverest) animals on earth to one of the lowest, literally (physically) and perhaps intellectually to think of himself less.¹⁴¹

Stratton rightly asks how the serpent’s sentence is related to what he has done.¹⁴² His actions were not committed with hands or legs, but with words. Thus, it would be logical to deprive him of either his tongue or his ability to speak. Perhaps both these actions were done as well? Moreover, some of the snakes became poisonous, though the poison they bear is placed not in their tongues, but in their fangs. Just as God created the world in six days by using words, the serpent created chaos in the Garden of Eden in one day by using words.

Furthermore, the serpent’s sentence has nothing to do with his death or mortality. He was not called mortal; he is not sentenced to die. However, neither is he told that he will never

that he moved or would move differently after the pronouncement than he had before his conversation with Hawwa.”

¹³⁵ Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve*, 129.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 129-130.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, 130.

¹³⁸ LXX suggests here earth instead of dust, but the idea is generally the same: καὶ γῆν φάγη.

¹³⁹ Cf. Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden*, 356.

¹⁴⁰ Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve*, 130.

¹⁴¹ Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 36.

¹⁴² Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 57.

die. Moreover, at the end of the story only Adam and Eve were escorted from the Garden of Eden, while the serpent seems to remain in the Garden. Is that possible? Charlesworth believes that he did not remain there on the grounds that Adam was a head of the entire animal kingdom and, therefore, his withdrawal must have immediately caused the consequent withdrawal of all his subjects.¹⁴³

Both the serpent and the woman have their sentences connected with the belly (or a womb in the woman's case). Is there any significance to this? The instigator would have to crawl on it (this could have been very painful, considering the fact that the serpent was not used to doing so), while the one who was tempted/deceived, the woman, would have to experience suffering from pain in her womb (belly) every time she gave birth. Does this have something to do with the place where the fruit was actually digested, to bring them a constant irritant to remind them of what they had done?

Genesis 3:15

וְאִיבָהּ | אֲשֵׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זְרַעֲךָ וּבֵין זְרַעָהּ הִוא יְשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ וְאִתָּהּ תִּשׁוּפְנוּ עֵקֶב: ס

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; he will strike your head and you will strike his heel.”

The idea, which the writer presents in this clause, is regrettably obscure and difficult to grasp. It is not altogether clear whether it should be regarded as a prophecy, or as God's reaction to the situation, where a certain friendship (or perhaps partnership) between the serpent and the woman might have expressed itself. It has already been noted above that the idea of a friendship or partnership between the woman and the serpent could have existed, but there is no reason for speculations over sexual matters based on the text itself. This conclusion inevitably leads to the view that the sentence pronounced in v. 15a could have been built just around amiable relationships, which would certainly resemble our normal human everyday behavior.¹⁴⁴

Therefore, when the friendship of two individuals brings them to a disastrous or terrible end, a responsible judge would usually support the idea of not letting the two offenders see and interact with each other anymore.¹⁴⁵ The same idea may be applied here, where God plays the

¹⁴³ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 309.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 37: “In its original meaning, cohering with the character of Gen 3:14-19 as an aetiology of the state of the world as the Israelites knew it, this is clearly referring to the enmity between snakes and human beings, with snakes biting the heels of human beings and humans treading on snakes' heads”.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Rosenberg, *Genesis*, 55.

role of a perfect judge or a provident parent who knows and acts in the wisest manner possible.¹⁴⁶

Walton refers to the Pyramid Texts again and notes that, “Treading on the serpent is used in PT 299 as an expression of overcoming or defeating it: the ‘Sandal of Horus tramples the snake underfoot’ (PT 378) and ‘Horus has shattered (the snakes) mouth with the sole of his foot’ (PT 388).”¹⁴⁷

As for the ambiguous word הַיָּרֵךְ meaning, “her offspring,” there have been many attempts made to link this seeming prophecy with Jesus Christ, all the while ignoring the immediate context and overall meaning found in the text. Thus Charlesworth states in regard to this verse that, “the double use of the verb 'bruise' (strike) tends to unite the fate of the serpent and humans, thereby making the serpent a simple animal once again.”¹⁴⁸ Day agrees with him and adds that, “There is no indication that one side would be victorious over the other in the ongoing hostilities (even if striking the head sounds more severe than striking the heel) and an eschatological meaning would be completely out of place in this aetiological context.”¹⁴⁹ Walton once again draws an ancient Near Eastern parallel and maintains that, the “information about the serpent in the Genesis account can be documented in various ways in the ancient Near East.”¹⁵⁰ According to him the strike to the heel “is a potentially mortal blow”, a riposte to a similar human act, as both words are in fact represented by the very same verb.¹⁵¹

2.1.4 Conclusion

- 1) The original intention of the writer of the Genesis 3:1-15 narrative is not very clear. What his original idea was is not clearly explained and therefore, is left open. It is not clear whether the author wanted to present a brief sketch of what had actually happened in the Garden of Eden, or perhaps, was editing some other, most likely oral story or stories, based on this very idea. Was he forced to limit himself by writing down just

¹⁴⁶ Cf. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 167: “I interpret this simply to mean that there should always be the hostile strife between the human race and serpents, which is now apparent; for by a secret feeling of nature, man abhors them.” See also Von Rad, 92: “one must, under all circumstances proceed from the fact that the passage reflects quite realistically man’s struggle with the real snake; but one must not stop there, for the things with which this passage deals are basic, and in illustrating them, the narrator uses not only the commonplace language of everyday, but a language that figuratively depicts the most intellectual matters. Thus by serpent he understands not only the zoological species (which in a Palestinian’s life plays a quite different role from in ours), but at the same time, in a kind of spiritual clear-headedness, he sees in it an evil being that has assumed form, that is inexplicably present within our created world, and that having singled out man, lies in wait for him, and elsewhere fights a battle with him for life and death.”

¹⁴⁷ Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve*, 130.

¹⁴⁸ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 309.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 304.

¹⁵⁰ Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve*, 131.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*.

several of the “most important” phrases? Was he pressed by a lack of space or material, (given that the parchment upon which the writer of Genesis recorded his story was an exceedingly expensive item in the days of Moses)? One will never know.¹⁵² What we do know for sure is that he wanted to: 1) describe the character of God; 2) reveal the reason for human beings not living in paradise anymore; 3) explain the reason for the animosity which exists between humans and snakes; and 4) explain the nature of the serpent’s inability to walk.

- 2) The actual nature of the serpent is very obscure: on the one hand he is one of the beasts of the field, as is clearly stated twice, (at the beginning and the end of the narration, vv. 1, 14), while on the other hand he has the ability to speak and shows superiority in terms of possessing special knowledge.¹⁵³ Considering these two advanced features of the serpent’s nature, one may conclude that the serpent must obviously be looked at as being superior to the first human couple, i.e. dominating over them.¹⁵⁴ According to Joines, “the serpent of Genesis 3 represents the embodiment of a strange combination of life, wisdom, and chaos.”¹⁵⁵ Walton agrees with him and urges us to perceive the Genesis 3 serpent as a chaos creature, which was not necessarily “thought of as evil”.¹⁵⁶
- 3) The writer does not tell us what the serpent originally looked like. Was he more like a dragon, a dinosaur, or a monitor lizard? A reptile? A bird-like reptile? A seraph? Did he really have some legs or were they just a pair of wings, which the serpent used to move in the air?¹⁵⁷
- 4) A sudden disappearance of one of the main characters of the story, namely, the serpent in v. 15, brings us to three inevitable inferences: a) by the end of verse 15 the serpent’s mission has come to its logical and official conclusion (the serpent is no longer needed); b) the serpent was deeply distressed by his new circumstances as caused by the implementation of God’s curse and, therefore, disappeared from the scene by his own will; c) the writer simply lost sight of the beast, and had no subsequent knowledge. All

¹⁵² Cf. Jean-Luis Ska “Genesis 2-3: Some Fundamental Questions”, in Schmid and Riedweg, 11, where the author speaks of “the law of economy, or the law of thrift”.

¹⁵³ Cf. Ed Noort “Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible” in Gerard Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* vol. II (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1999), 36. See Charlesworth, 289, who quotes G. von Rad, who “pointed out, what the Yahwist has put into focus is not ‘what the snake is’ but what the Nachash says.”

¹⁵⁴ See Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, 17: “beneath these verses doubtless lay the narrative of an ancient Semitic tradition in which the serpent was a demonic antagonist of both Divine and mankind, but the Yahwist has modified it for his own purposes.” See Joines, 26: “The Yahwist has used the serpent to objectify chaos, but not to personify it.”

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 30.

¹⁵⁶ Walton, *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve*, 132.

¹⁵⁷ Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 312.

three conclusions nevertheless show us his unimportance in the eyes of the writer. In other words, if the serpent had been an angelic being, something of a foreshadowing of Satan, the writer would never have abandoned him and would have certainly included the idea of cosmic interruption in the subsequent narratives. However, this idea of cosmic interruption does appear three chapters later (in Gen. 6), and therefore shows that Genesis 3:1-15 has nothing to do with such.

- 5) It is not altogether clear whether the serpent was acting either: a) on his own; or b) “under cover”, that is, as God’s agent, who was sent “on a mission” of sorts. There is no indication in the text that he was performing either his own or God’s enterprise. There is also no indication in the text either that he was following Satan’s directives or was used by some living being as an empty vessel, ready to be filled, as there is nothing about Satan at all. The narration firmly rejects any possibility of potential obsession or demonic possession, which makes the process of deciphering the idea of the narration even more complex and intriguing. Thus, the idea of satanic or evil spirit-possession is not present, as a teaching about Satan was most likely not familiar to the writer of the book.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, only two plausible options remain: 1) either the serpent worked under God’s supervision, which inevitably raises more questions; or 2) the serpent could have followed his own intentions, which are not really known to us.¹⁵⁹
- 6) The serpent’s ability to speak, to possess a divine knowledge, and to walk on his feet could be part of God’s original design, but is nowhere explained by the writer. It seems that the writer is not concerned by or interested in the serpent’s “extra normal” abilities. He just states everything as if it was something quite ordinary or normal for him. Furthermore, if the serpent had been created as a supernatural being from the very beginning of the narrative, he would have been crowned and described as such – instead of the humans in 1:26 and 2:19 – and therefore would have been offered a post as a ruler over the earth, instead of the “primitive man”. However, this idea has no actual grounds in the text. Contrariwise, the serpent is described as a creature, formed in the same way as the first man, that is, from the dust of the earth, and therefore, must be perceived as one of those animals which played a subordinate part in 2:19. He received his name, “serpent,” from Adam, and not the other way around.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament*, 27: “When the Satan does emerge, he is a member of the Heavenly Court, in contrast, the serpent is a creature of the dust.”

¹⁵⁹ See some comments on verse 15 in above.

- 7) It is nowhere explained where the serpent got his knowledge of the tree of good and evil from.¹⁶⁰ Was it overheard? Was he a casual witness to God's action of giving the command to Adam in 2:16-17? Was he granted to be God's partner or servant, tool, or "man on a mission"?
- 8) What kind of nakedness did the writer have in mind in relation to Adam and his wife in 3:7? Physical only? Spiritual? Intellectual? All three of them?
- 9) Why did the serpent choose to interact with the woman? Did he view her as a victim or simply easy prey? Why not Adam?
- 10) Did the serpent lie to the first couple, as many biblical scholars argue? Or not at all? Who lied then? God?¹⁶¹ Can we say that? Charlesworth argues extensively that the serpent has not lied.¹⁶² All his statements appear to be true: 1) they did not die instantaneously; 2) their eyes were eventually opened; 3) they did not become like gods to the extent they wanted to be. However, the writer himself quotes God as acknowledging the fact that Adam "has become like one of us," that is, like God (3:22), precisely in agreement with what had been predicted by the serpent before. On the contrary, both of God's statements seem to fail. Was it the writer's intention to present God as a liar?
- 11) Adam's and the woman's action is not called "a" or "the" sin. The first use of the word "sin" is in Genesis 4:7, and relates exclusively and solely to Cain, and his potential actions, rather than to his parents.¹⁶³
- 12) Why did God choose a serpent to be the shrewdest animal in the field, but not a zebra or an elephant? Does this choice have something to do with the strong influence of Near Eastern mythology, as Gunkel and others suggested?¹⁶⁴
- 13) There is no reason to blame the serpent for bringing sin into the world, as "good and evil conception" is introduced by God alone, what can be supported by 2:16-17. All this had taken place before the serpent entered the scene in 3:1.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ See Ska, "Genesis 2-3: Some Fundamental Questions", 8-9, who offers three examples to explain this phenomenon. His main point is: "we must not forget that the principal addressee of the narrative is always the reader (or the hearer), not the character in the story. It is more important to inform the reader than some character of the story."

¹⁶¹ See Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 309.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 307-308.

¹⁶³ Schmid, "Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2-3 and its early Reception", 60.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Hermann Spieckermann, "Is God's Creation Good? From Hesiodus to Ben Sira," in Konrad Schmid and Christoph Riedweg (eds.), *Beyond Eden* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 79, 82.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Ska, "Genesis 2-3: Some Fundamental Questions", 21: "the account of Genesis 2-3 is well aware of the presence of evil in the world. We have seen that it is difficult to cancel 2:9 from the original text."

2.2 Isaiah 14:4b-23

2.2.1. Introductory note

In the later history of biblical interpretation several biblical texts were in one way or another linked up with Genesis 3:1-15,¹⁶⁶ though none of them have been so closely and thoroughly related to as Isaiah 14:4b-23¹⁶⁷ and Ezekiel 28:11-19.¹⁶⁸ This might have happened due to many factors, some of which include both their quite explicit mysterious content, and their implicit, and therefore not always plainly visible connotations as well. Although there are many divergences between Genesis 3:1-15 and Isaiah 14:4b-23 in terms of: genre, style, form, setting, characters, and plot, some common grounds nevertheless could be noted here, namely: 1) the main leitmotif (the main idea) in both accounts, i.e. the moral and ethical aspects (a lesson) which could be drawn from both stories;¹⁶⁹ 2) their common resemblance with Ezekiel 28:11-19, which is well seen in both of them, though with relation to different points, (as Genesis 3 barely relates to Ezek. 28:11-19 in a direct mode);¹⁷⁰ 3) early Christian interpretative traditions, which has been merging these two accounts together for centuries in quite relentless fashion.¹⁷¹

It should be noted from the very beginning that for early Jewish readers of these two biblical texts, the linkage between the examined text and the following two, (which in opinion of some conservative contemporary Christians is very obvious), could have been either barely existed or what is more likely, not existed at all. Thus in comparison to early Christians who had a scarce knowledge of Ancient Near Eastern parallels, both Isaiah or Ezekiel contemporaries might have immediately recognized quite familiar scenes from the surrounding Canaanite

¹⁶⁶ See the whole list of Old Testament texts in Stordalen, chs. 13 and 14, i.e. pp. 333-408. See also S.H Widyapranawa, *Isaiah 1-39: The Lord is Savior Faith in National Crisis* (Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1990), 88.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 386: "Sometimes it is even declared to be a different edition of the Eden myth." Cf. John L. Mackay, *An EP Study Commentary: Isaiah 1-39* vol. 1 (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2008), 351: "Some early writers linked this passage (14:12-15) with Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:8-9, and referred it to the fall of Satan." The actual fall of Satan took place for them in the Garden of Eden; hence the link between these two passages was unbreakable for them. Cf. Patricia K. Tull, *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary: Isaiah 1-39* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing Inc., 2010), 281: "through subsequent interpretation beginning by the first century, the storyline of Isaiah 14, and the name of Lucifer, came to be connected to the fall of Satan from heaven."

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. See also George Buchanan Gray and Arthur S. Peake, *A Critical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX* (Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1928. See R.E. Clements, *The New Century Bible Commentary: Isaiah 1-39* (Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1980), 142. Cf. John D. W. Watts, *World Biblical Commentary: Isaiah 1:33* (Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1985), 208.

¹⁶⁹ Stordalen, 387: "This is quite expectable, considering the tendency to convergence in different "fate stories" driving at related "lessons."

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 386.

¹⁷¹ John Goldingay, *Isaiah* (NIBC, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), 105. See reference 2 in above. This argument will be overtly demonstrated in chapter 4 of the given research.

mythology, which had been very much widespread before Isaiah wrote his prophesy and perhaps later on as well. Therefore, it seems not plausible and consequently very problematic to assume that the prophet Isaiah could have offered any sophisticated, logical as well as valuable explanations of the obscure Genesis 3:1-15 passage to its immediate Jewish audience. Quite the contrary, in my opinion, this idea has never entered Isaiah's mind. What he did instead is very different. He provided his contemporaries with a story that contains both biblical and extra-biblical sources to support the point he presents in his reproach.

Although it is quite arduous, (if possible at all), to establish the precise authorship of the person, responsible for a forceful merging of Genesis 3 and Isaiah 14 texts in order to come up with some "deeper theological" explanations of the obscure Genesis 3:1-15 passage, one thing is quite obvious, – in order to arrive at this point, this hermeneutical and theological fusion must have surmounted a great deal of preliminary theological and hermeneutical stages in terms of both perception and time and was probably formed as a result of a long travel from one man to another, though its first very much distinct traces could be seen beginning with III-IV CE in the works of the so-called Church Fathers.¹⁷²

The New Testament writers, and especially apostle Paul have overtly shown a certain degree of acquaintance with the way Genesis 3 had been interpreted before them, though their works show the lack of any interest in the serpent, as they quite resolutely left him behind the spheres of their ultimate theological scrutinies.¹⁷³

However it may be, the fusion between these two linguistically related and at the same time very much unrelated biblical texts had surprisingly lasted until the time of the Reformation as almost nobody had seriously questioned the validity of this relation before it broke out. However, since the time of the great Protestant reformers, when at least two of them, Luther and Calvin, showed their decidedly critical attitude towards a possibility of combining these two Old Testament passages, their successors, one by one, have become more and more dissatisfied with the way Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 had been linked with Genesis 3 and interpreted before them.

The appearance of extrabiblical, parabiblical and archeological sources has only strengthened this critical assumption that resulted in today's strong skepticism with regard to the fact that the idea that Isaiah 14 can actually offer something valuable to clarifying or

¹⁷² See also John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39* (Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1986), 320: "Some of the church fathers, linking this passage to Luke 10:18 and Rev. 12:8, 9 took it to refer to the fall of Satan described in those places. However, the great expositors of the Reformation were unanimous in arguing that the context here does not support such an interpretation."

¹⁷³ This idea will be thoroughly explored in the chapter four of the given research.

interpreting all the obscurities, which exist in Genesis 3:1-15 narrative, does not look any convincing and attractive anymore.

Therefore, I will examine Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 in connection with Genesis 3:1-15 not due to my personal inclination towards any pros and cons with regard to the Church Fathers' opinion, but because of the fact that such opinions have been existing so far.

2.2.2 The immediate context

According to Patricia Tull we are dealing here with “one of the most evocative poems in Scripture.”¹⁷⁴ The structure of the text can be outlined as follows:¹⁷⁵

Introduction to the lament	14:3-4a
Death of this oppressive king	14:4b-8
King's spirit enters Sheol	14:9-11
King's fall from heaven	14:12-14
King's humiliation	14:15-21
God's judgment of Babylon	14:22-23

The actual address to Babylon does not begin with chapter 14, but commences with 13:1, which in its turn belongs to an even larger cluster of thematically arranged reproaches (chapters 13-23), pronounced by the prophet Isaiah against foreign nations.

הַמְּשֹׁל הַגָּדוֹל עַל-מַלְכוּת בָּבֶל (13:1) can be literary translated as “a pronouncement or oracle *against* or *concerning* Babylon.” This heading bears a relative resemblance with the second address in 14:4, which is addressed to “the king of Babylon” in particular הַמְּשֹׁל הַגָּדוֹל עַל-מַלְכוּת בָּבֶל.

This kind of heading is repeated over the entire section, nine times in total: 13:1; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1; 11, 13, 22:1; 23:1.¹⁷⁶ The second heading (14:4) changes the subject from general to particular; that is, from the name of the state to the name of its ruler. Because no particular name is mentioned in either chapter, one may assume that “a personification of the Babylonian imperial is intended.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Patricia K. Tull, *Isaiah 1-39* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2010), 277.

¹⁷⁵ Gary V. Smith, *An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture, Isaiah 1-39, vol. 15a* (NAC; Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2007), 311. The same structure is found with John N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 208-210. Cf. Mackay, *Isaiah 1-39*, 341-343.

¹⁷⁶ Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39* vol. 19 (AB 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 271. See also Arthur Peake, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX* vol.1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 234.

¹⁷⁷ R.B.Y. Scott, “The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39,” in George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible*, v.5 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 258.

Apart from the heading, 13:1-16 could be addressed to just about anyone, i.e. not necessarily to Babylon, as it speaks of the Day of the Lord in general, rather than of a fate of Babylon or the Babylonian empire in particular.¹⁷⁸ Hence, after the heading in v. 1, the first, more or less concrete reference to the Babylonian kingdom appears in v.19.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, one is left to guess to whom 13:2-18 was actually addressed. Is it a later insertion, or ought it to be perceived as a general foreword to the following text? What is the function of 13:1, if it does not extend its idea over the entire passage? There are some points, interestingly, which suggest that it does.

1) The two expressions: **מְמַלְכוֹת גּוֹיִם נֹאסְפִים** “kingdoms and nations are gathering” (v.4), and **בְּאֵיִם מֵאַרְצֵי מְרֻחָק מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם** “they are coming from the distant earth, from the end of heavens,” (v. 5), are quite abstract, though in combination with the knowledge of general history and v. 17, we can surmise that these kingdoms and nations in vv. 4-5 could be the Medians, as Israelites might have considered Persia and Media as the end of the civilized world in those days. Why does the writer refer to them coming from “the ends of heavens”? It is very likely that **מְרֻחָק מֵאַרְצֵי מְרֻחָק** and **הַשָּׁמַיִם מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם** could bear one and the same meaning, and therefore, be complementary expressions.

2) There may be a word play between **עַל-תִּבְלֵי רָעָה** “*tebel raa* – wicked world” (v.11) and the name of Babylon” (vv.1, 19). This verse (13:11) can also be seen as resembling 14:5 since the verbs **שָׁבַת** and **שָׁבַר** bear a relatively similar meaning: “to break up or to destroy”. The main objects of both sentences are **רְשָׁעִים** “wicked or unrighteous people”, whose arrogance and pride must be demolished.¹⁸⁰

3) The use of the image of Sodom and Gomorrah in 13:19 must have been intended to suggest to an ancient Israelite reader, who might have been well acquainted with the Genesis 19 imagery, the idea of divine judgment and divine wrath coming from heaven in the form of fire.¹⁸¹ The following verse 20 completes this idea perfectly, and therefore, clearly corresponds with v.9, where the same kind of fate seems to be predicted for the Babylonian empire, which by that time had already filled the cup of God’s wrath in a similar way to the peoples of Sodom

¹⁷⁸ J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1993), 128. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 277.

¹⁷⁹ S.H. Widyapranawa, *Isaiah 1-39: The Lord is Savior Faith in National Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 78.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Scott, “The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39,” 256.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39* vol. 19 (AB vol 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 280. See also Arthur Peake, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX* vol.1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 234.

and Gomorrah long before them (cf. 13:9; 13:19-22; and 14:22-23). All these similar images overtly suggest that the Babylonians shall share the same fate in return for what they perpetrated against others (cf. 13:19-20 and 14:17). Thus, the idea “gehört zum Motivkreis der Umkehrung, der radikalen Verwüstung von Sodom und Gomorra.”¹⁸²

One can actually wonder just what is the meaning of the Day of the Lord imagery in the description of the reproach against the wicked Babylon? Motyer claims that these verses demonstrate the “universal and cosmic work of God”.¹⁸³ In his opinion, Isaiah seems to show that all these local perturbations are part of God’s original plan for humanity, which consists in wiping out all unrighteousness from the face of the earth and consequently leaving only those who will be loyal and obedient to God’s intentions. Thus, God’s reproach against Babylon is just a small frame within a complex system of God’s plans for this earth.

Blenkinsopp maintains that, “the poem ends with a final admonition that all this will come about in the near future (cf. Jer. 51:33).”¹⁸⁴ In his opinion, all this leads back to the idea of the Day of the Lord, as “nothing happens apart from the intention and design of God.”¹⁸⁵

Chapter 14 continues the same topic, adding some extra and sometimes even more complicated images than those which have been already been shown. The addressee is also changed.

14:1-4a serves as a bridge between two chapters. 14:1 clearly corresponds with the Day of the Lord imagery, and the end of v. 3 with the sequel in vv. 4-23, speaking of what would happen to the Israelites, living in the midst of all these events.

The following section 14:4b-23, commences with **תָּאֵל**, which marks this section as a separate unit, skillfully distinguished from 14:1-4a, and yet flowing out of its imagery.¹⁸⁶ The same sign is used at the beginning of 14:12, though this passage (vv. 12-15) looks to be an insertion, or at least a deliberate, interpolation made by the writer himself, rather than a natural part of the poem’s structure. In other words, the writer could have inserted the fragment (vv. 12-15) for various reasons, but mainly as an illustration, taken from a legend or Canaanite myth, quite familiar to its potential recipients. What is immediately noticeable is that the poem itself plainly conveys its idea even without this fragment being included.

All these points can be observed on the following chart, which presents the main structure of the chapters in question:

¹⁸² Willem A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja 13-27* (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Verlag Herder, 2007), 54.

¹⁸³ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary*, 129.

¹⁸⁴ Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 280.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 54.

Chart 5:

The passage	Isaiah 13	Isaiah 14
The addressee	Babylon (13:1)	The anonymous king of Babylon (14:4)
The main idea of the passage	Babylon will be totally destroyed	The king will be destroyed and thrown down to Sheol
Methods or instruments of destruction	Foreign armies (vv.2-5) and Medes (vv. 17-18)	God will throw the king down to Sheol (vv. 5, 11, 15, 19), and destroy him (v. 22-23).
The result of the destruction	Babylon will share the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah (vv.19-22), though not to the degree of being burned down.	The king will be destroyed completely (vv. 19-20+23).
The second leitmotif of the pronouncement	The Day of the Lord (vv.6-16)	The unidentified Canaanite myth (vv. 12-15)
The function of the second leitmotif	To present a bigger picture of the scene from God's point of view	To present an extra-biblical comparison to the king of Babylon
The main character of the second leitmotif insertion	The Lord on His Day	Helal, Son of Dawn
The third leitmotif	Isaiah 14:1-4a Israel and its reaction on the fall of Babylon	None
The function of third leitmotif	To serve as a bridge between 13:1-21 and 14:4b-23	None

2.2.3 Exegesis of Isaiah 14:4b-23

Isaiah 14:4b-23 is presented as a taunting song, addressed to the unnamed king of Babylon.¹⁸⁷ It is a combination of a song of lament, which starts with מִן־שָׁמַיִם, and a song celebrating the downfall of the “lamented” king.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ See Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, (London and Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 127, who claims that originally this taunt song could be addressed to the Assyrian king, presumably Sargon II, “especially because his death appears more closely to parallel that of the taunt (vv. 19-21).” See also Blenkinsopp, 287: “we hear that Sargon II (+705) was not buried in his own house, but that does not mean he remained unburied (pace Barth 1977, 136; Erlandsson 1970, 161). Sennacherib (+682) looks more promising since we know members of his own family murdered him, and the biblical text elsewhere confirms his overbearing attitude (Isa. 37:23-29).” See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 153: “All these verses belong to the actualization of the original taunt, which targeted a far minor king, probably a Phoenician king.”

¹⁸⁸ Cf. also Tucker, *Isaiah*, 158, who believes that this poem could also belong to the genre of ‘mocking sayings’ (e.g. Deut. 28:37; 1Sam. 10:12; Jer. 24:9, or “funeral or dirge songs. Like the dirge, it uses the common cry ‘How’, (vv. 4, 12).”

Isaiah 14: 4-11

וְנָשְׂאתָ הַמִּשְׁלַל הַזֶּה עַל־מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל וְאָמַרְתָּ אִיךְ שָׁבַת נֹגֵשׁ שְׁבַתָּה מְדַהְבָּה:
5 שִׁבְרַתְּ יְהוָה מַטֵּה רְשָׁעִים שִׁבְט מַשְׁלִים:
6 מַכָּה עַמִּים בְּעִבְרָה מִכַּת בְּלַתֵּי סִרְהָ רָדָה בְּאֵף גּוֹלִים מְרַדְּף בְּלֵי חֲשָׁד:
7 נָחָה שְׁקֻטָּה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ פָּצְחוּ רִנָּה:
8 גַּם־בְּרוֹשִׁים שָׁמְחוּ לָךְ אֲרָזֵי לְבָנוֹן מֵאִז שָׁכַבְתָּ לֹא־יַעֲלֶה הַכְּרַת עָלֵינוּ:
9 שְׂאוֹל מִתַּחַת רִגְזָה לָךְ לִקְרֹאת בּוֹאֵךְ עוֹרֵר לָךְ רְפָאִים כָּל־עֵתוּדֵי אָרֶץ הַקִּיּוֹם מִכְּסֻאוֹתָם כָּל מַלְכֵי גּוֹיִם:
10 כְּלֵם יַעֲנֶנּוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ גַּם־אַתָּה חֲלִיתָ כְּמוֹנוּ אֵלֵינוּ נִמְשַׁלְתָּ:
11 הוֹרֵד שְׂאוֹל גְּאוֹנֶךָ הַמִּיִּת נְבִלֶיךָ תַּחְתֶּיךָ יִצַּע רִמָּה וּמַכְסִּיךָ תוֹלַעָה:

You will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon: "How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased!

⁵ The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers,

⁶ That smote the peoples in wrath with unceasing blows that ruled the nations in anger with unrelenting persecution.

⁷ The whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing.

⁸ The cypresses rejoice at you, the cedars of Lebanon, saying, "Since you were laid low, no hewer comes up against us."

⁹ Sheol beneath is stirred up to meet you when you come, it rouses the shades to greet you, all who were leaders of the earth; it raises from their thrones all who were kings of the nations.

¹⁰ All of them will speak and say to you: "You too have become as weak as we! You have become like us!"

¹¹ Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, the sound of your harps; maggots are the bed beneath you, and worms are your covering."

The recipients of this message are most likely the people of Israel, as it is stated in the previous three verses (14:1-4a), and especially in the last one: "you (Israel) will sing".¹⁸⁹ Therefore, this song was most likely written to be sung at the day of Babylon's fall.

The idea of the entire passage is very simple: the pride and arrogance of an earthly ruler finds no support in God's eyes. Just the opposite, God rebukes and punishes him. All wicked rulers eventually go to Sheol,¹⁹⁰ though they believe (and what is worse: they force others to believe) that they are gods.

The point of his reproach could be a comparison between a well-known Canaanite myth, which he introduces in the form of a background screen (vv.12-15), and the surrounding reality. Thus vv. 11, 12 and 15 presumably can bear the same meaning, expressed in two different ways.

¹⁸⁹ See Martin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* vol. XVI (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 213. See Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, vol. 24, 208. See also Seitz, who fully agrees with him at this point, Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39*, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1993), 134. Cf. Childs, *Isaiah*, 123, "the second major oracle of the section, 14:4a-21, is clearly a taunt song delivered against the king of Babylon." See also John Goldingay, *New International Biblical Commentary: Isaiah* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), 102. A. S. Herbert, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible: The Book of the Prophet: Isaiah 1-39* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 102.

¹⁹⁰ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary*, 120, rightly notes that Sheol is not simply the grave, or the end of everything, though it can be compared with the grave, but it is "the place, where the soul continues in life."

This is most likely one of the reasons for calling this part *mashal*, which bears several different meanings: “a proverb, a parable, a saying, wisdom saying, or a mocking song”. Whatever it is, all these meanings seem to bear the idea of two mixed spheres of human existence, one realistic and the other metaphorical.

They can be described as abstract and metaphorical structures, mostly concerned with all possible ways, methods, or styles of presenting information, rather than with the verity of content itself. This means that for Isaiah it could have been more important to make this juxtaposition, shaping it in the form of a code, which his readers had to crack, rather than to explain it plainly. The rest was left to his readers to decide how to decipher his message. In the end, what can be made of it all?

Isaiah 14:12

אֵיךְ נִפְלְתָּ מִשָּׁמַיִם הַיְלֵל בֶּן־שָׁחַר נִגְדַעְתָּ לְאָרֶץ חוֹלָשׁ עַל־גּוֹיִם:

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!¹⁹¹

The word אֵיךְ in the beginning of v. 12 marks a commencement of a presumably Canaanite myth insertion, which Isaiah purposely saved until the end of his reproach to perform the role of a culminating rebuke.¹⁹² This suggests the possibility that his audience should have been familiar with the account and therefore should have immediately recognized the moral lesson of the myth as well as all intended connotations in order to draw all necessary conclusions.

The idea of a “son of a dawn” is unknown anywhere in the Bible, as this is the only place it is used. Therefore, its meaning is not as clear as we would like it to be. Is it a personification, a well-known ancient Near Eastern character, or just a title of a presumably Canaanite god? No one seems to know with even relative assurance.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 153: “we regard only Isa. 14:12-15 as belonging to the original satire badgering a Phoenician king, who was ridiculed because he assumed to get a place among the celestials on the mountain of El after his death.”

¹⁹² See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 153, who also refer to Margaret Barker, who states that “although there may have been a Canaanite background for Isaiah 14 ‘the closest parallels are in the OT itself and suggests that it was the Hebrews who told of some being thrown from God’s presence because of his pride or sin’, see *Ibid*, 155.

¹⁹³ Cf. *Ibid*, 159-163, where they suggest that this text is based on the story of one of the Ugaritian gods, – Horranu, “who was probably cast down into the Netherworld after his attempt to seize Illu’s throne” (p. 161). In their opinion “this provides a better background for Helal’s downfall in Isaiah 14:12-15 than any other proposal hitherto made.”

Watts agrees that this poem is based possibly on Canaanite mythology, though as he further admits: “yet no such myth has been found in Canaan or among other peoples.”¹⁹⁴ The answer of Clements on this remark of Watts is very simple: “whether there was a coherent myth of the ‘fall’ of a high-god from the heavens to the underworld is not yet firmly established, although it appears plausible enough from various fragmentary echoes in the Old Testament and elsewhere.”¹⁹⁵ Motyer assumes that this expression “alludes to the Canaanite myth of Helal/Ishtar who attempted a heavenly coup that failed.”¹⁹⁶

Watts argues that the word שָׁהַר “is known as both a god’s name and personal name in Ugaritic and generally Phoenician context”.¹⁹⁷ Goldingay claims these two words to be “two titles of Canaanite gods.” From his point of view, therefore, “the poem utilizes motifs that an Israelite audience would recognize as coming from foreign myths.”¹⁹⁸ These two deities were, according to Herbert, “minor deities in the pantheon of which El is the head.”¹⁹⁹ Clements argues that “the title Day Star, son of Dawn must certainly be a reference to the morning star, the planet Venus,²⁰⁰ and the deity consistently associated in the Canaanite mythology with this planet is Attar.”²⁰¹

Gray mentions the derivation of the word הַיְלָל from its verbal form of הָלַל, “to dawn” which occurs several times throughout the Bible, mostly in Job 13:10; 29:3; 31:26; and 41:10.²⁰²

Furthermore, there is a certain resemblance existing between Greek, Hebrew, and Canaanite mythology. Watts emphasizes the Greek term used to translate הַיְלָל as ὁ ἑωσφόρος, ‘the morning star’, which has close resemblance to Lucifer in Hesiod’s *Theogonia*, 378.²⁰³

¹⁹⁴ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary*, 209. See Buttrick, *Isaiah*, 261: “the use in these materials derived from Canaanite myths is unmistakable, and the point is made that the meaning of what the tyrant has done is set forth in the myth of Helal, the Day Star, or ‘Lightgiver’, (cf. Vulg. Lucifer), son of *Shahar*, Dawn.”

¹⁹⁵ Clements, *Isaiah*, 142. Cf. John F. A. Sawyer, *Isaiah* vol. 1 (DSBS, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 143.

¹⁹⁶ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary*, 120.

¹⁹⁷ Watts, *Isaiah 1-39*, 210. See Scott, *Isaiah*, 261: “we know that there was a god ‘Shahar’ in Canaanite (Ugaritic) mythology, the god of dawn or the morning star, and ‘Helal’, son of ‘Shahar’ is mentioned apparently in one of the texts from Ugarit.”

¹⁹⁸ Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 103.

¹⁹⁹ See A.S. Herbert, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah 1-39*, (CBC, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 103.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Childs, *Isaiah*, 126.

²⁰¹ Clements, *Isaiah*, 142. Cf. Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 103, who speaks of the tyrant as “he will collapse as readily as does Venus, the morning star, when it falls each day from the height of the sky.”

²⁰² Mark Gray, *Rhetoric and Social Justice in Isaiah*, (New York and London: T&T Clark, 2006), 255. Sawyer, *Isaiah*, 145, believes that Helal “has traditionally been understood as Venus, ‘the morning star’ or ‘Lucifer’, which would fit the idea of the falling of a deity (e.g. Hephaestus), or an angel (e.g. Satan; Luke 10:18) from heaven to hell or ‘the Pit’ (v. 15).”

However, there are many who oppose this point of view, trying to establish a clear connection with Phoenician or Canaanite mythology only.²⁰⁴ Thus Blenkinsopp claims that:

The closest parallel is that of Phaeton's son of Helios (the sun) or of Eos (the dawn) who came to grief, when attempting to drive the chariot of the sun, he lost control of the vehicle and was struck by one of Zeus's thunderbolts. Like several of the ancient Greek myths, this one may derive from a Phoenician-Canaanite source inspired by the rise of Venus the morning star and its rapid disappearance at sunrise.²⁰⁵

Thus, although the point Isaiah intended to make in this verse is not clear for us, it certainly must have been clear enough for his audience. Otherwise, the purpose of selecting and setting up this foreign insertion within the prophecy would be pointless. There is also a possibility that Isaiah is not referring to a myth here, but to the belief of the king that he will be deified after his death.²⁰⁶

However, though I must admit that the process of identifying the hero of this reproach is a fascinating one, the present research moves in a different direction.

Isaiah 14:13-15

וְאָתָּה אָמַרְתָּ בְּלִבְבְּךָ הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶעֱלֶה מִמֶּעַל לְכוֹכְבֵי־אֵל אֲרִים כְּסֵאִי וְאֲשָׁב בְּהַר־מוֹעֵד בִּירְפְתֵי צָפוֹן:
 אֶעֱלֶה עַל־בְּמֹתַי עַב אֲדַמָּה לְעֵלְיוֹן:¹⁴
 אֶדְ אֶל־שָׂאוֹל תּוֹרַד אֶל־יְרֵפְתֵי־בּוֹר:¹⁵

“You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north;

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High.’

¹⁵ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit.”

In v.13 the mountain Zaphon is mentioned, which was usually described as the “mountain of the assembly in the far north” and is “an allusion to the concept in Near Eastern

²⁰³ Watts, *Isaiah 1-39*, 210. This idea might have been attractive to early Christians as the compared Luke 10:18 and the use of the word ἀστραπήν there, which is similar to “Helal”. See the last comment to the reference 168.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 211. Childs refers to scholars, who “appealed to the Babylonian-Assyrian myth of Ishtar’s descent to the underworld (*ANET*, 106 ff.). However, with the discovery of the Ugaritic texts, the evidence mounted for seeing a far closer parallel with Canaanite mythology,” *Isaiah*, 126. Cf. Alexander, “Isaiah”, 159: “in fact, the scene closely resembles the myths of the Canaanite gods as reported in the Ugaritic texts. The idea of god would be ‘brought down to Sheol’ (v. 15) lives on in the later tradition of Lucifer (Luke 10:18; 2 Pet. 2:4).”

²⁰⁵ Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 288. For more detailed exploration of this verse see Spronk, “Down with Helel! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa. 14:12,” 722, who finds the closest parallel is the Ugaritic myth of Keret (KTU 1.16.I: 1-23) and states that “Helel is not the name of a god.” Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 157 and their rendering of KTU 1.15:V.16-17.

²⁰⁶ Spronk, “Down with Helel! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa. 14:12,” 721-722.

mythology.”²⁰⁷ Motyer agrees with this idea and claims that: “Mount Zaphon in north Palestine was the seat of the Canaanite gods. It is mentioned in this regard in Psalm 48:2.”²⁰⁸ It is interesting however, that most translations simply ignore the name “Zaphon”, and prefer to translate it not as a particular name, but as a certain location, bearing the meaning of “far north”, or something similar to it.²⁰⁹

The conception of cosmic mountains was widely used in both Canaanite and Israelite religions, as is well demonstrated by G. Anderson.²¹⁰ Therefore, this must not be seen as something extraordinary, but rather an example that would have been familiar to the first readers.

Spronk points to the use of divine names within the passage. Thus, he rightly notes that the name Yahweh is used at the beginning and at the end of the poem (vv. 5 and 22), while verse 13 is neatly associated with the divine name “El”, which bears a Canaanite influence.²¹¹

Jensen agrees with Spronk’s conclusions, and maintains the idea that referring to the “Most High” having put His throne on the mountain Elyon (vv. 13-14) is not necessarily of Hebrew/Israelite origin, though it is quite often present in the Bible (cf. Gen. 14:22; Num. 24:16; Deut. 32:8; Ps. 7:17; 9:2; 18:13, etc.).²¹² Sawyer claims that, “the ‘Most High’ was a Canaanite title of God as the Melchizedek legend suggests (Gen. 14:19-20).”²¹³

Verses 13-15 are called to emphasize the contrast between the king’s ambitions, and the existing reality. Thus, the king intended to ascend, but instead fell to the depths.²¹⁴ Ezekiel 28:14 demonstrates the ambitions of the king, which will never come to pass. This idea makes the texts of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 look very similar.

Although v. 11 corresponds with v. 15, this could be an intentional device used to bracket the insertion (vv.12-15) within the repeated idea of v. 11 in v.15.

²⁰⁷ Irving L. Jensen, *Isaiah & Jeremiah: A Self-Study Guide*, (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1968), 147. See also Sawyer, *Isaiah*, 144. According to Herbert, 103, it can be compared to the Greek mount Olympus.

²⁰⁸ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary*, 120.

²⁰⁹ See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 161-162, who maintain that this “phrase can be rendered as both ‘on the mountain range of Mt Zaphon’, as well as ‘on the mountain range of the north’. The rendering ‘on the mountain range of the north’ might be a reference then to the two tops of Mt Ararat, formerly the mountain of the highest god El/Ilu.”

²¹⁰ Gary A. Anderson, “The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity”, in Gregory Allen Robbins (ed.), *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden* (Lewiston / Queenstown: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 192.

²¹¹ Spronk, “Down with Helel! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa. 14:12,” 720. Cf. also Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 25-26.

²¹² Jensen, *Isaiah & Jeremiah*, 147: “but one in earlier and wider use and often given to Baal.” According to Scott, 262, “the mount of is clearly mythological element.” He further presumes that both accounts, namely Isa. 14:4b-20 and Ezek. 28:11-19, may refer to one and the same mythical mountain.

²¹³ Sawyer, *Isaiah*, 144.

²¹⁴ Cf. Oswalt, *Isaiah*, 210.

Isaiah 14:16-20a

רְאִיךָ אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁגִּיחוּ אֵלֶיךָ יִתְבּוֹנְנוּ הַזֶּה הָאִישׁ מְרִיזוּ הָאָרֶץ מִרְעִישׁ מִמְּלָכוֹת:

¹⁷ שֵׁם תִּבְלַח כַּמִּדְבָּר וְעָרָיו הָרָסוּ אֲסִירָיו לֹא־פָתַח בַּיְתָהּ:

¹⁸ כָּל־מַלְכֵי גוֹיִם כָּל־שָׂכְבוֹ בְּכָבוֹד אִישׁ בְּבֵיתוֹ:

¹⁹ וְאַתָּה הִשְׁלַכְתָּ מִקְבְּרֶיךָ כְּגֹזֵר נִתְעַב לְבוֹשׁ הַרְגִים מִטְעֲנֵי תָרַב יוֹרְדֵי אֶל־אֲבֵנֵי־בּוֹר כְּפָגַר מוֹבָס:

“Those who see you will stare at you, and ponder over you: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms,

¹⁷ who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?’

¹⁸ All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb;

¹⁹ but you are cast out, away from your sepulcher, like a loathed untimely birth, clothed with the slain, those pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the Pit, like a dead body trodden under foot.

²⁰ You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have slain your people.

The same idea continues in these verses, which add some extra descriptions and details to the story itself. Oswalt believes this description could fit in with the death on the battlefield, whoever the king could be, either Sargon II, or of someone else.²¹⁵ In favor of Sargon II is 14:25, where the Lord pronounces the breaking of the Assyrians. The reproach against Assyria closely follows 14:4-23 to the extent that it is difficult to distinguish whether v. 24 belongs to 14:4b-23, or to 14:24-27.

Isaiah 14:20b-21

לֹא־יִקְרָא לְעוֹלָם זֶרַע מְרָעִים:

הִכְיֵנוּ לְבָנָיו מִטְבַּח בְּעֵזֶן אֲבוֹתָם בַּל־יִקְמוּ וְיִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלָאוּ פְּנֵי־תִבְלַח עָרִים

(Isa 14:20b-21)

“May the descendants of evildoers nevermore be named!

²¹ Prepare slaughter for his sons because of the guilt of their fathers, lest they rise and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities.”

These two verses put forward a hope that the usurper’s seed will never come again, thus the destruction would be complete. Sawyer summarizes the moral aspect of the poem by paraphrasing vv. 20b-21 as follows: “so perish all evil-doers and their descendants!”²¹⁶ This moral application must not be underestimated, as from the present writer’s point of view; this is most likely the intentional summary of the entire narration.

Oswalt, however, claims that the initial poem most probably “ended at verse 20a, with verses 20b-21 added later.”²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Ibid, 211: “thus, Sargon and Sennacherib together may have provided models for this stanza.”

²¹⁶ Sawyer, *Isaiah*, 145.

²¹⁷ Oswalt, *Isaiah*, 210.

Isaiah 14:22-23

וְקָמְתִי עֲלֵיהֶם נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְהִכֹּרְתִי לְבַבֶּל שֵׁם וּשְׂאָר וְגִיז וְנִכְד נְאֻם יְהוָה: ²³ וְשִׁמְתִּיהָ לְמוֹרֵשׁ קַפְדִּי
וְאֲגִמִי-מַיִם וְטֹאטְאֵתֶיהָ בְּמִטְאָטֵא הַשְּׂמֵד נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

22 "I will rise up against them," says the LORD of hosts, "and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, offspring and posterity, says the LORD. 23 And I will make it a possession of the hedgehog, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction, says the LORD of hosts."

As was already stated above, these verses bear a close resemblance with 13:11 and 19-22, which makes them the final word of judgment in this reproach.

2.2.4 Conclusion

Due to the limited goals of the present research, the presentation of the text given above has not been intended to explore the interpretation of the passage in all possible detail. The main goal of this exploration has been simply to demonstrate some of the major difficulties existing in this passage. In summary, those difficulties are:

- 1) The addressee of this reproach is unknown and, therefore, could be any king of Babylon, Assyria or any other presumed character, or state.²¹⁸ For the purposes of the present study, the precise identification of the personage behind the image of Helel is neither necessary nor required. It is enough to recognize the list of possible candidates and especially the motives, which led Isaiah to include the myth in his writings. The main motive seems to consist in making an illustrative comparison between the myth and the point the prophet wanted to make. This seems to be the only reason for inserting this foreign poem into the reproach.
- 2) The addressee in vv. 12-15 is also unknown due to the title he bears and the imagery surrounding him. The image in Isaiah 14:12-15 barely (if at all) corresponds with any image or character from the Genesis 3 story. Many speculations have resulted from attempts to crack Isaiah's code and interpret the text. How scholars have tried to do this is the subject of the following chapter.
- 3) The general idea of the passage, despite all interpretative problems, is very clear: someone wanted to become equal to God, but as there is only one God this person was consequently lowered down and eventually deprived of everything he had possessed, as a punishment for not paying homage to the true God.

²¹⁸ Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 153, who speak in favour of a Phoenician king.

4) The idea expressed in the passage is clearly not of entirely Israelite origin, but has some definitely foreign elements (Canaanite, Ugaritic, Babylonian, and perhaps Greek) incrustated in it. It remains unclear whether there were two separate accounts at the time of Isaiah: one, some combination of several ancient primordial accounts, and another one entirely Israelite (used in Genesis 2-3), and whether the second one must be regarded as appeared at the later stage of the history and, therefore, not known to Isaiah.²¹⁹ Hence, it is impossible to say with relative assurance whether Isaiah used a non-Israelite version (maybe a mix of several versions) or whether he himself combined two or more primordial stories in order to produce some effect on his audience.

5) Isaiah uses imagery, both with and without reference to Israelites. Therefore, it could be used both as an exhortation for Israel, and a rebuke to the Babylonians, though it is doubtful that this song was ever read to or by any king of Babylon.

²¹⁹ Cf. Ibid, 158: "In the song about the fall of Helel no woman plays a role. Since this is also the case in Ezek. 28 we regard this as a strong indication that the underlying myth cannot be Gen. 2-3. Some other narratives must have inspired these writers."

2.3 Ezekiel 28:11-19

The following chart makes a brief comparison of Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19. Key similarities are highlighted in bold font:

Chart 6:

The Text	Isaiah 14:4b-23	Ezekiel 28:1-19
The main hero	The king of Babel	The king of Tyre
The main problem	Arrogance and pride (vv. 13-14)	Arrogance and pride (vv. 1,6, 9,16-17)
The actual pretenses made by the main hero	To climb up into the sky and put his throne above all stars, to sit on the mountain Zaphon in the midst of gods	To sit on a divine throne in the heart of the sea (v.1); He thought he is as wise as God (v.6); He called himself God (v.9); He actually had been on the mountain of God, but was expelled from it after he had made some of his ambitious pretenses known (v. 16); His heart was filled with pride because of his beauty (v. 17).
The image, which the main hero is compared with	The son of the dawn	Someone, who was (or who was with) the cherubim
The main motives for making a comparison	To mock the king of Babylon and lower him in status and reality	To mock the king of Tyre and lower him in status and reality

Ezekiel 28:11-19 should be examined in its immediate context, which is Ezekiel 26-28. In the present state of composition, Ezekiel 28 is to be perceived as part of a threefold structure, consisting of three chapters, each of which is devoted to the subject of reproaching the city of Tyre.²²⁰ These three chapters in turn belong to a larger cluster of reproaches, covering the subject of pronouncing sentences on some of the surrounding nations.²²¹ Thus, according to

²²⁰ Cf. Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel* (The Forms of The Old Testament Literature XIX; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 178.

²²¹ According to Bruce Vawter, Leslie J. Hoppe, *Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 119, “the arrangement of this collection of oracles against the nations and their placement in their present position in the book of Ezekiel are probably the work of an editor.”

Ronald Hals “a total of seven nations are addressed, that seven separate prophecies devoted to the seventh nation, Egypt, and that in the seventh of those prophecies against Egypt, seven nations are surveyed as the other inhabitants of the underworld.”²²²

Chapter 25 addresses the surrounding nations of Ammon (1-7), Moab (8-11), Edom (12-14), and the Philistines (15-17), describing the wrath of Yahweh as having fallen on them because they all, “acted revengefully against the house of Judah”. Chapters 26:1-28:1-19 depict the fate of Tyre, one of the greatest and the most pompous Phoenician cities ever built, followed by a protracted description of what will happen to Sidon, Egypt, and Ethiopia one day (chapters 28:20-24; and then 29-32). Thus, these eight chapters create a kind of circle around the land of Judah, passing sentences on almost every surrounding nation, (or in the Tyrian case, a city), one after another. Vawter argues that Ezekiel did not include oracles against Babylon primarily because he and Jeremiah, “believed that Babylon was God’s instrument of judgment against unfaithful Israel.”²²³

2.3.1 MT and LXX differences

It is worth noting that LXX and MT have two, significantly different approaches to presenting their basic information here. Therefore, from the very beginning of the passage (v.12) and almost to the very end of it (v. 17 included), the MT and LXX go in two basically opposite directions:

Chart 9:

Verses	LXX	MT
12	The ruler The signet of likeness Omission of “full of wisdom” “The crown of beauty” ²²⁴	The king The signet of perfection ²²⁵ “The entire beauty”
13	“You were in the luxury of the paradise of God” ²²⁶ The word “Eden” is absent No counterpart for “your covering” ²²⁷ No counterpart for כִּנְיָנוּ, “they were prepared”	“You were in Eden, the garden of God” ²²⁹ “The phrase גִּן-אֵדֶן is only found in this chapter and in 31:9 in the OT.” ²³⁰ Different order of stones presented

²²² Hals, *Ezekiel*, 178. Cf. Lamar Eugene Cooper, Sr., *Ezekiel* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994), 242.

²²³ Vawter & Hoppe, *Ezekiel*, 125. Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 243.

²²⁴ Ralph H. Alexander, “Ezekiel” in Frank E. Gaebelien (gen. ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with NIV* vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1986), 882.

²²⁵ Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48* vol. 29 (WBC, Waco: Word Books, 1990), 90. See R. Alexander, 885.

²²⁶ See Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB vol. 22a; London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1997), 581.

²²⁷ It is *hapax legomenon*, see R. Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 885.

	“The LXX inserts all twelve stones from Ex 28 into Ezek 28:13. However, there is no substantial reason for assuming any relation to Exod 28:17-20 on Ezekiel’s part.” ²²⁸	
14	“With a cherub you were” ²³¹ No counterpart for מְשַׁח, “anointed” ²³² or and הַסֹּכֵךְ, “who covers” No counterpart for הַתְּהַלְכֵת ²³³ , “who walked”	“You were the anointed cherub” Priestly or ritual imagery: anointed, who covers, who walks on fiery stones
15	Replaced by ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις – “in those days”	בְּדַרְכֶיךָ – “in your ways”
16	Replaced by “the cherub led you away from the midst of the burning stones” – ἤγαγεν σε τὸ χερουβ ἐκ μέσου λίθων πυρίνων. «Whether LXX omitted הַסֹּכֵךְ «protected» (BHS) is disputed». ²³⁴ «LXX seems to represent an earlier tradition in applying וְאַבְדָּךָ «and he banished you» with cherubim as subject.» ²³⁵	“I’ll cast you from the mountain of God, and a cherub drove you out from the midst of fiery stones” וְאַחֲלֵלְךָ מֵהַר אֱלֹהִים וְאַבְדָּךָ בְּרוּב הַסֹּכֵךְ מִתּוֹךְ אֲבָנֵי אֵשׁ
17	“You destroyed your knowledge” (ἐπιστημῆ)	“You corrupted your wisdom” חֲכָמָתְךָ

Therefore, it is safe to say that the two texts have two, quite dissimilar perspectives, which are demonstrated throughout each narrative. These dissimilarities cannot be explained easily, unless we surmise that there could have been straightforward witnesses of the existence of two independent ancient traditions of interpretation of Ezekiel 28:11-19, circulating at the time LXX and MT were written down.²³⁶ Thus, Alexander claims that, “This is one of the more difficult passages in the Book of Ezekiel – if not in the whole Bible. The reason for the difficulty lies mainly in the lack of sufficient data to reach precise conclusions.”²³⁷ The second possibility is that one of them (either LXX or MT) purposely deviated from the traditional

²²⁹ Joseph S. Exell, *The Biblical Illustrator: Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 336. Alexander, 885, notes that the expression “garden of God” is only found in this chapter and in 31:9 in the OT.

²³⁰ Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 885.

²²⁸ Ibid, 885-886: “The LXX inserts all twelve stones from Ex 28 into Ezek 28:13. However, there is no substantial reason for assuming any relation to Exod 28:17-20 on Ezekiel’s part.”

²³¹ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 91.

²³² This term is «textually and semantically problematic. It is lacking in LXX», see Ibid. It is another *hapax legomenon*, see Alexander, 886.

²³³ This term is also lacking in LXX”, Allen, 91.

²³⁴ Allen, *Ezekiel*, 91.

²³⁵ According to Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 91, the LXX seems to represent an earlier tradition in applying וְאַבְדָּךָ, “and he banished you,” with cherubim as subject. Cf. Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 886.

²³⁶ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 91.

²³⁷ Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 882.

interpretation to present its information from a different perspective as a reaction to the way the text had been presented by its opponent. Therefore:

- a) The presented images are different in terms of the ruler's function in the passage, as well as his general perception. Neither of the texts gives a detailed picture of the Tyrian ruler. Both depict him in quite abstruse terms, which shed no light on his actual identity.
- b) LXX seems to be less connected to any priestly, Jewish Temple, or even Jerusalem imagery, while MT bears some distinctive marks of all three. Therefore, the main concern of LXX seems to lay in turning its readers' attention from any Jewish imagery to a purely pagan, Tyrian one.
- c) LXX's omissions do not clarify the idea of the text and do not contribute to a better understanding of the passage. The LXX presentation reduces the number of obscure words in the passage, but not to the degree of making the text more understandable for the reader.
- d) The correspondence with Genesis 2-3 is found in both texts, but it remains unclear to what degree Canaanite imagery was employed.

2.3.2 Exegesis of Ezekiel 28:11-19

In light of all the disagreements between LXX and MT regarding the actual words and sometimes even phrases within this text, I will present them both, followed by English translations.

Ezekiel 28:11-12

וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:¹² בְּנֵי-אָדָם שָׂא קִינָה עַל-מֶלֶךְ צוּר וְאָמַרְתָּ לּוֹ כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אֱתָהּ חוֹתֶם תִּכְנִיתַּ מְלֹאחַבְמָה וּכְלִיל יָפִי:

“And the word of God came to me saying: “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.”

υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου λαβὲ θρήνον ἐπὶ τὸν ἄρχοντα Τύρου καὶ εἰπὸν αὐτῷ τάδε λέγει κύριος κύριος σὺ ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως καὶ στέφανος κάλλους

“Son of man, (take) sing a dirge over the prince of Tyre, and say to him, thus says the Lord GOD: “You are the signet of likeness and the crown of beauty.”

Although this song is called a lament, this song does not sound as such, but rather as mocking poetry: “expressions of grief are entirely lacking.”²³⁸

²³⁸ Cf. Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), 863. Blenkinsopp disagrees: “The lament is over the king of Tyre, but it is also addressed to him. This is what we would expect in the context of a funeral service during which the attributes of the deceased are memorialized.” Joseph

One of the most important remarks to be made here is that the word “king”²³⁹ is most likely the result of either inconsistency or of a deliberate deviation from the previous description in MT 28:1, where the ruler of Tyre is called מֶלֶךְ צוֹר, meaning “prince or ruler,” or ἄρχοντι Τύρου in LXX.

In 28:12 LXX continues the same line of addressing the ruler, i.e. ἄρχοντα Τύρου, while MT switches from this word to the expression מֶלֶךְ צוֹר which means “the king of Zor (Tyre)”.²⁴⁰ The reason behind this change is unclear. Some scholars believe that these two words in Hebrew are interchangeable and therefore should be understood synonymously.²⁴¹

The participle הוֹתֵם could mean either “a seal”, or “a signet ring” used to seal important documents. Zimmerli points to the fact that this is a participle; therefore, the meaning of this word is not “a seal”, but as “a sealer”, i.e. the person, who “goes about with the seal,”²⁴² and therefore an extremely important person.²⁴³

As for the word תְּכֵנִית it has no counterpart in LXX, but is replaced by ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως, instead, e.g. “a seal of likeness,” and not “a seal of perfectness, measurement.” Cook claims that the Hebrew expression is to be understood as “sealing the measure,” “which is supposed to mean a complete proportion.”²⁴⁴ The second time, the word תְּכֵנִית is used (Ezek. 43:10), it stands for “measure”. In other words, this image can resemble the one given in 28:13, meaning “there is no one like you in wisdom and beauty,” suggesting that this person is a standard, to be taken as an example to follow.²⁴⁵ Therefore, the phrase “you are indeed wiser

Blenkinsopp, *A Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching: Ezekiel* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 123.

²³⁹ According to Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 580, the ruler is called “the king” in “anticipation of his disgrace in the sight of his royal peers”, Greenberg, 580.

²⁴⁰ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 335. See also Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, “The Book of Ezekiel” in Leander Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. VI (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 1391, who points at the shift in address between verses 2 and 12, and claims that perhaps these are simply two different ways of referring to the same human ruler. But because the name of Tyre’s principal deity, Melqart, means “the King of the City,” it is also possible that Ezekiel’s lament intended to stir thoughts of both entities: the mortal king and the god he serves / represents.” This seems especially plausible, as the king is not addressed by his name. See also Walter Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, (Michigan: Fortress Press, 1979), 90, who suggests vv. 2 and 12 are two separate oracles, which in the course of time, were combined together under the same title. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 27-35*, 572, claims these two names to be synonyms of the same monarch.

²⁴¹ Hals, *Ezekiel*, 200.

²⁴² Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 81. Gressman, *Messias*, 166. Cf. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48*, 849.

²⁴³ Cf. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 94: “Is the seal or signet ring simply an object of artistic beauty or does it consciously have a royal reference, as in Jer 22:24; Hag 2:23?”, Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel*, 123: “All we can say is that the signet ring (*hotem*) symbolizes royalty (cf. Jer. 22:24; Hag. 2:23). *Hoten toknit* is “an obscure expression, meaning, perhaps, ‘you are consummated, perfectly measured’”. Cf. also Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 580.

²⁴⁴ Stephen L. Cook & Corrine L. Patton, *Ezekiel’s Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tired Reality* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), 315.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you” can be regarded as the corresponding characteristic of 28:12.

Consequently, all three phrases “you were the seal” or “you have the signet of perfectness (likeness),” and “you are the sealer of perfection” can be understood as a description of the ruler’s importance, shrewdness, and his outstanding achievements in the sphere of earthly wisdom. However, 28:13 gives us an extract from God’s rebuke, where He denounces the Tyrian ruler for making his heart as the heart of God. To say it differently, the Tyrian ruler makes his ability to reason, his official status, his wisdom, equal to God’s, and God is not happy about it.

The MT phrase מְלֵא הַחָכְמָה, “full of wisdom,” is simply dropped in the text of the LXX (despite its appearance in LXX vv. 4,5,7,12, and 17). This could have happened, “perhaps because the translators could not understand it in this context.”²⁴⁶ Thus LXX goes straightly to στεφανος κάλλους, i.e. “the crown of beauty.”²⁴⁷ It is also possible that LXX is based on earlier version than MT.²⁴⁸ The Greek word ἐπιστήμη, however, following its counterpart in all previous verses, is not present here, either.

The idea behind this expression “full of wisdom” can be either a mocking one (as a mortal man simply cannot be full of wisdom, regardless of whatever he undertakes) or it could be used to single him out from the others, surrounding him, to present him in a special way.

The phrase וְכָלִיל יָפִי is unique in the Hebrew bible. The word כָּלִיל “entirety, whole” can be found in such passages as Deuteronomy 33:10 and Psalm 51:21 with the reference to a whole burnt offering. Hence the combination of these two words, namely: וְכָלִיל יָפִי creates a certain difficulty, somehow connected with a priestly imagery.

Ezekiel 28:13

בְּעֵדֶן גֶּן-אֱדֵמִים הָיִיתָ כָּל-אֲבָנֵי יְקָרָה מְסֻכָּתֶיךָ אֲדָם פִּטְרָה וַיְהִלִּם תְּרִשִׁישׁ שֹׁהַם וַיִּשְׂפֹּה סַפִּיר נֶפֶד וּבְרָקֶת זָהָב
מְלֻאכֶת תְּפִיחַ וּנְקֻבֵיךָ בָּךְ בַּיּוֹם הַבְּרָאָה כּוֹנְנִי:

“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and onyx, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.”

ἐν τῇ τρυφῇ τοῦ παραδείσου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγενήθησαν πᾶν λίθον χρηστὸν ἐνδέδεσαι σάρδιον καὶ τοπάζιον καὶ σμάραγδον καὶ ἄνθρακα καὶ σάπφειρον καὶ ἴασπιν καὶ ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον καὶ λιγύριον καὶ ἀχάτην καὶ ἀμέθυστον καὶ χρυσόλιθον καὶ βηρύλλιον καὶ ὄνυχιον καὶ χρυσίου ἐπέπλησας τοὺς θησαυροὺς σου καὶ τὰς ἀποθήκας σου ἐν σοὶ ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας ἐκτίσθης σὺ

²⁴⁶ Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48*, 849.

²⁴⁷ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 337.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

You were in the luxury of the paradise of God, and there were all precious stones adorned: camellia, topaz, emerald, charcoal, sapphire and jasper, and silver and gold and moonstone and agate, and amethyst, and chrysolite, and beryl, and onyx, and the finest gold, your treasures on the day of your creation.

Who is this “you”? In multiple commentaries, the Tyrian king is associated with Adam. Within the present context, however, this makes no sense, as Adam has never worn any priestly garments or precious stones in his life, and is never depicted this way in the Garden of Eden, where the only clothes ever mentioned in connection with him are leaves from a fig tree, and some leather garments made by God Himself.²⁴⁹ Therefore it is very unlikely that Ezekiel imagined Adam as a counterpart of the Tyrian ruler. Thus, by saying, “You were in Eden, the garden of God,”²⁵⁰ he clearly means the king. However, this does not solve the puzzle, as the king of Tyre has also never been in Eden, that is, the Garden. What then does this word “Eden” mean here?

If we presume another addressee instead of the king of Tyre, as suggested by Bevans and others, namely the high priest in the Jerusalem Temple, we would see that all these priestly images are exactly where they actually are supposed to be, though the word “Eden” will still create some unsolvable hermeneutical problems.²⁵¹

This motive could have pointed to those perfect conditions in which the ruler of Tyre lived.²⁵² Thus Anderson maintains that the word “Eden,” (which is absent in LXX!), must be understood here as a description of the actual nature of the garden, (i.e. its perfect, luxurious conditions, its calmness and tranquility, as well as its peculiar status, being the garden of God), rather than an, “explicit geographical location.”²⁵³ In other words, Anderson suggests the idea that the living conditions which the Tyrian ruler enjoyed were sufficiently perfect to compare them to the Garden of Eden, while paying no attention to the actual geographical location. He

²⁴⁹ Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 82. Cf. W. Carley, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 191, 191. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 168: “the king was exposed before all other kings (Ezek. 28:17).” Allen, *Ezekiel*, 94: “Yet this version knows nothing of the serpent or the first woman; it credits the first man with wisdom and adorns him in bejeweled clothing and apparently leaves him dead”, Allen, 94.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 94: “The description of the garden as the garden of God” accords with 31:8-9 and is comparable with the phrase “garden of Yahweh” in Gen 13:10 and Isa 51:3”, Allen, 94. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 581: “The attractive conjecture that the name of the mythical biblical garden/region means “abundance, luxuriance”.

²⁵¹ Cf. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 338 and 349; Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 167; and Lisa Schachter, “The Garden of Eden as God’s First Sanctuary, *JBQ*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2013, 75.

²⁵² Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 92, believes this description could refer to “a place in Upper Mesopotamia.” See his further discussion of Ezek. 27:23; 31:9; 16; 18; and 36:35. See Craigie, who claims that “the king of Tyre is presented as the primeval man in the Garden of Eden,” though Adam is nowhere in the Bible depicted as full of wisdom and beauty. Cf. W. Carley, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 191, and Greenhill, *Ezekiel*, 617.

²⁵³ Anderson, *Ezekiel*, 195. Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 169: “Eden clearly is used to also as a simile to portray the splendor of a given geographical area, like the Jordan Valley viewed by Lot in Genesis 13:10”. Cf. also Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 882.

backs up his argument with the help of similarities, which exist in Aramaic-Akkadian vocabulary, where the root *'dm* means: “luxury, abundance.”²⁵⁴ This is where the LXX translation has much more to offer, as it begins its translation of this verse with exactly this idea in mind (see my underlining above).

Taylor points to the existing inconsistency in the text, as the writer refers to two completely different ideas in succession: one to “Eden, the garden of God” (v.13), and the other to, “the holy mountain of God” (vv.14 and 16). The acceptance of his inconsistency makes any interpretation of this verse extremely confusing, especially in light of the fact that these two ideas could be of two different origins: one Israelite, and the other Near Eastern.²⁵⁵ Stordalen argues, however, that the association between Eden and God’s mountain could be centuries old, rendering this seeming inconsistency quite consistent.²⁵⁶

Day focuses on the abundant use of various mountain and water images in the description of Eden within both the oracles in Ezekiel 28:2-10 and 11-19. On the ground of several persuasive arguments he claims that, “El traditions could lie behind the garden of Eden story”:

”First, El in the Ugaritic texts dwells on a mountain at the source of the rivers. There is a reference to the waters in the first oracle, but no mountain; it is the second oracle that refers to ‘the mountain of God’ (Ezek. 28.14,16). Secondly, Ezek. 28.12-19 is a variant of the garden of Eden story in Genesis 2-3; note the references to the Eden, cherub (im) and the casting out of the man in both instances. In Genesis 2.10-14 the garden of God is at the source of the rivers. No mention is made of this in Ezek. 28.12-19, but there is a reference to the watery nature of the divine dwelling in Ezek. 28.2.”²⁵⁷

These and other arguments lead him to consider the Ugaritic motives of El’s place of dwelling as suggestive for being used within Ezekiel 28:11-19.²⁵⁸

Zimmerli points out that the word *מְסַכְתָּהּ* which he translated as “a covering,” (though with many difficulties), closely resembles “that of the high priest.”²⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that LXX does not offer any counterpart to *מְסַכְתָּהּ*, which is usually translated as “a covering,” and once again simply drops it, reading “there were all precious stones adorned,” and lists the

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 194-195.

²⁵⁵ Taylor, *Extra Canicals: The Holy Apocrypha*, 196.

²⁵⁶ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 337.

²⁵⁷ Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 28-29.

²⁵⁸ Cf. Alexander, “Ezekiel”, 883: “The concept of the Garden of Eden presents one of the major difficulties in interpreting this section as Tyre’s literal human king. A possible solution may be found in understanding ancient Near Eastern temples. These ancient temples normally encompassed a large enclosure with a garden, not just a building.”

²⁵⁹ Hummel, 851.

names of the stones. The only problem is that instead of twelve precious stones, Ezekiel lists only nine, plus gold, which was not on the garment of the high priest.²⁶⁰

All these stones can, in one way or another, be seen as a counterpart of generalized luxury images, stated in 28:4-5. Another hint of the beautifully embroidered garments is given in 26:16, where the Tyrian ruler is mentioned as wearing just this kind of garment. The similarity between his royal/priestly clothes and those of the Jerusalem priests both may and may not be seen an issue here.

Genesis 2:12, on the other hand, mentions only three precious elements: gold, bdellium, and onyx, so just a fraction of those mentioned in Ezekiel 28:13. Moreover, it appears that הַבְּדֵלֶלֶחַ, “bdellium,” is not part of Ezekiel’s list at all. Therefore, the only material in common is onyx, (one out of nine stones). Not much on which to build a scientific assumption.

The ending of the sentence reads as follows: בְּיוֹם הַבְּרָאָהּ כּוֹנְנֶנּוּ, “on the day you were created, they were established, (produced, manufactured),” pointing to the precious stones perhaps. The interpretation of this ending is not without its difficulties, though it certainly fits with descriptions of both the Tyrian ruler and the Jerusalem high priest. LXX suddenly stops after “on the day you were created,” leaving out the idea of jewels having been prepared. This makes the sentence look rather different from that communicated in the MT.²⁶¹

Ezekiel 28:14:

אֶת־כְּרוּב מִמְּשַׁח הַסּוּכָה וְנִתְתִּיד בְּהַר קֹדֶשׁ אֱלֹהִים הָיִיתָ בְּתוֹךְ אַבְנֵי־אֵשׁ הַתְּהַלְכָתָּ:

"You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire..

μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ ἔθηγά σε ἐν ὄρει ἁγίῳ θεοῦ ἐγενήθης ἐν μέσῳ λίθων πυρίνων

"With a cherub you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked."

The Hebrew text addresses the Tyrian king as, “you were the cherub,” thus claiming the ruler himself to be a cherub, while Stordalen, and some English translations firmly read “אֶת” as “with” and not as “you.” According to Stordalen, this interpretation, “remains conspicuous” and most scholars rather read אֶת, as ‘with’ as in the LXX.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Cf. John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Intervarsity Press, 2000), 714.

²⁶¹ According to Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 341, כּוֹנְנֶנּוּ was interpolated at the end of the verse in order to harmonize the entire statement with the following verse 14.

²⁶² Ibid.

The MT phrase “you are the anointed²⁶³ cherub, a guardian₂”²⁶⁴(if this is what these two words really mean²⁶⁵), creates a variety of problems, and LXX simply drops them and reads the text as: μετὰ τοῦ χερουβῆθικά σε ἐν ὄρει ἁγίῳ θεοῦ, “with (a) cherub you were on the holy mountain of God.”²⁶⁶

Who is this cherub? Even if Ezekiel meant the exact cherub from Genesis 3:24, he placed him in his text in a very abstruse way, claiming that he (the cherub) had been with the king of Tyre (for an indefinite amount of time perhaps), while in the Garden of Eden, the cherub was placed at the very end of the story to prevent Adam and Eve from reentering the paradise. Therefore, the missions of these two cherubs are completely different. It seems, then, they have most likely have nothing in common.

What is the mission of the cherub in Ezekiel 28:14 (LXX)? Just to be with the king? What for? To perform a role of a personal guardian, to protect him? Maybe, but from whom? Conversely, if the Tyrian ruler was the cherub, what was he doing in Tyre?²⁶⁷

If we accept the MT idea, everything would be confused even more than that, as the prince of Tyre (v.2) suddenly transforms into the king of Tyre (v.12), and then two verses later becomes a cherub, with no clear purpose in mind (v.14). What a recondite and confusing transformation! Does it suggest that an angelic being once upon a time was an earthly ruler, or that one ought to read this verse as a hidden metaphor? Even if this is a metaphor, where does it point to? To the important status of the king? To his achievements and his extreme wealth?

The meaning of the rest of this sentence is also very unclear. The range of scholarly opinions is quite wide, though some are inclined to interpret this sentence in terms of priesthood, connecting מְסַכְתָּהּ with הַסֹּכֵךְ as the king of Tyre was known to be a high priest of Marduk in his city-state.²⁶⁸

²⁶³ Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 85, notes the difficulty in interpreting this word and suggests reading it as *mashah*, “to measure out” instead of “to anoint.” He also rightly notes that LXX simply drops this word. Cf. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 221.

²⁶⁴ See NIV, ZUR. See also Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48*, 854.

²⁶⁵ See the discussion in Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48*, 854.

²⁶⁶ Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 85. Cf. LXX, RSV, NRS, ELB and T. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 342, who believes that before the Massorets added vowels to the text, the first *et* could have meant rather “with”, than “you,” and hence, the Massorets have vocalized it differently. Cf. Stordalen, 342.

²⁶⁷ Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 169-170, suggest that the cherub could be a symbol, or a personal representation of members of the royal dynasty of Tyrian kings as, “when she became the ruling queen mother, the Phoenician queen Jezebel had a seal made on which she was depicted as a cherub.” Thus, if members of the Tyrian royal family understood themselves as cherubs, Ezekiel’s mockery would become much more understandable and meaningful at the same time.

²⁶⁸ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 95.

The reference to the Holy Mountain of God could be a counterpart to the Garden of Eden or a reflection and paraphrase of the previous verse.²⁶⁹ On the other hand, as the city of Tyre was built on the rock (26:14), this could be just a statement of the fact that the Tyrian ruler sat above all his subjects and, in terms of geography, was higher and on firmer ground than the surrounding nations (cf. 28:2). Eden might also have been built on the rock and therefore could have been, “an enclosed space with only one entrance, for otherwise the cherub could not have successfully guarded access to the tree in the center of the Garden.”²⁷⁰ Schachter claims that the Garden of Eden “is not only a lush garden, but also a sacred place”.²⁷¹

The expression **בְּתוֹךְ אֲבִנֵי־אֵשׁ הַתְּהִלְכָתָּהּ**, “in the midst of the stones of fire you walked,” is of both unknown origin and meaning.²⁷² Questions such as, “Who walked?” “Why?” and “For what purpose?” have generated endless speculation. One of the most plausible suggestions is that it points to a sacrificial practice or a sacred place, where the burnt offerings were being offered. This could be another parallel with the Garden of Eden imagery.

Ezekiel 28:15

תָּמִים אָתָּה בְּדַרְכֶיךָ מִיּוֹם הַבְּרָאָה עַד־נִמְצָא עוֹלָתְךָ בְּךָ:

“You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.”

ἐγενήθης ἄμωμος σὺ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις σου ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας σὺ ἐκτίσθης ἕως εὐρέθη τὰ ἀδικήματα ἐν σοί.

“You were unblemished in those days of yours; from the day you were created, until a wrong thing was found in you.”

The meaning of the phrase that the main hero the king of Tyre was blameless from the day he was created, is not clear, though it is worth noting that the end of the first part of the sentence could be a repetition or a paraphrase of the statement made in v. 13. Therefore, the phrase “you were in the luxury of paradise...on the day you were created,” and “you were blameless in those days of yours, from the day you were created,” could be related, though the first one describes the nature and condition of the place, while the second only points to the nature and condition of the king who lived there.

The surrounding context does not clarify the author’s meaning either. If we assume that the text is referring to Adam, we would have to admit that the Bible never calls Adam blameless, though this could be an implied element in the story of his creation (Gen. 2).

²⁶⁹ Regarding this topic, see my commentaries above. Cf. Schachter, “The Garden of Eden as God’s First Sanctuary”, 74-75.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 74.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 170, who suggest that: “the description of ‘fiery stones’ in the mountainous dwelling of El in Ezek. 28:14, 16 finds its easiest explanation in the volcanic nature of Mt Ararat.”

However this may be, this phrase is the point of potential similarity between the otherwise quite dissimilar stories of Genesis 2 and Ezekiel 28:15.

LXX reads here “in those days of yours”. Quite different from: “in your ways,” as in MT. This is interesting, as LXX offers a significantly different perspective: you were blameless or unblemished in those days, that is, from the days of your creation and until something wrong (an iniquity) was found in you. What was this iniquity, what was the nature of this “wrong thing”, or who actually found this iniquity, when and why, is never explored. Is this the same, or at least the same kind of iniquity that Adam and his wife committed?

Thus, while summarizing the range of interpretational possibilities of the previous four verses (12-15), we can assume that from his priestly perspective, Ezekiel could have pronounced a reproach on the king-priest of Tyre for abandoning his royal-priestly duties and leading his people astray – something which could not have been the case in the very beginning of his (or in a collective sense their reigns, having in mind a succession of Tyrian rulers) reign. The second possibility could be in accord with Amos 1:9, where the city is blamed for violating its bond with Israel, probably referring to the one, established between Hiram and David, and later Solomon. This time could have been referred to as “you were in Eden, in the garden of God,” meaning that during this period Tyre was granted access to God’s kingdom and the true faith.

However, one must not exclude Ezekiel’s priestly interests and his general priestly orientation from the meaning of the text entirely. He could have juxtaposed all these abstract images, including fire, precious stones, and even wisdom and beauty, with all the possible priestly attributes Ezekiel knew, as used in the Jerusalem temple.²⁷³ Following this line of thought, Ezekiel might have imagined Adam as being the first priest ever, who, from his point of view should have kept the godly order in the Garden of Eden, his sanctuary, the first and the most natural temple on the face of the earth.²⁷⁴

Reasoning from this perspective, Adam could have been potentially blameless from the very beginning (v. 15a), but then had failed to perform his priestly mission properly, and was later on expelled from the sanctuary in the same way as the king-priest of Tyre was (16b). However, it may well be that this priestly version barely fits in with the flow of the entire passage, though v. 18b speaks of a profanation of the Tyrian sanctuaries by unfair trade.

²⁷³Hummel, *Ezekiel 21-48*, 859. Cf. Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 177: “the lament over the king of Tyre in 28:11-19 contains so many images and themes from the temple and its priesthood that it seems quite possible that Ezekiel originally directed the oracle at the priests, and that Ezekiel’s priestly editors only secondarily redirected it at the rulers of Tyre.”

²⁷⁴Cf. Schachter, “The Garden of Eden as God’s First Sanctuary”, 75-76, who notes the association made in Talmud and Midrah between the Garden of Eden and the temple. Ibid, 76: “The correspondence between temple and Eden is found in both the Talmud and Midrash.”

The idea of a blameless life does not correspond with any verse from the first oracle of this chapter; unless we assume that vv. 4-5 somehow contain this idea.

We can presume that the initiation of this enterprise, as well as its first stages had been good, until the trade market became violent and corrupted, and many originally positive initiatives became perverted through commercial politics, as is the subject of v.16.

Ezekiel 28:16:

בְּרַב רִבְלִיתֶךָ מָלֵךְ תִּזְכָּר חֲמָס וְתַחֲטָא וְאַחֲלִלְךָ מֵהַר אֱלֹהִים וְאַבְדֶּךָ כְּרוּב הַסֵּבִיב מִתּוֹךְ אַבְנֵי-אֵשׁ:

“In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from the midst of the stones of fire.”

ἀπὸ πλῆθους τῆς ἐμπορίας σου ἐπλησας τὰ ταμεία σου ἀνομίας καὶ ἡμαρτες καὶ ἐτραυματίσθης ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἤγαγέν σε τὸ χερουβ ἐκ μέσου λίθων πυρίνων

In abundance of your trade you were filled with lawlessness, and you sinned, therefore you were thrown away from the mountain of God, and the cherub led you away, from the midst of fiery stones.²⁷⁵

The very first part of the verse, (16a), makes a sudden shift from the Garden of Eden imagery to the real picture of Tyre’s everyday life (corrupt but thriving trade, cf. 28:5). This is followed in the second part of the verse where the king (or just the city of Tyre) is described as being expelled from his paradise city by a cherub.²⁷⁶ Once again, Ezekiel does not explain this act overtly, though here one can at least see an apparent dissimilarity with Genesis 3:24, where God (and not His cherub) has expelled Adam and Eve from the paradise. The function of the cherub in Genesis 3:24, on the other hand, was not to expel the first human couple, but to keep them from returning.

In 28:16, we see that the Tyrian king was expelled from the mountain of God by God’s cherub, something which would be impossible if before this time the Tyrian king had been a cherub himself – unless we assume that one cherub had expelled another one.

However, it is more logical to presume that the Tyrian king had been with the cherub until a certain point, when, due to his persistent wrongdoings, he was expelled from the “holy mountain of God” forever. However, what is also important to note here is the fact that the Tyrian ruler is actually expelled not from the Garden of Eden (where he was according to v.13), but from the holy mountain of God.

²⁷⁵ See Noort, “Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible” 23-24, who quotes Zimmerli’s translation: “Through the abundance of trade you filled your heart with violence and sinned. Then I thrust you away from the mountain of God into uncleanness, and the guardian cherub drove you into destruction out of the midst of stones of fire.” Noort himself believes that in this case the MT should be considered as original. Later on, he comes to the conclusion that “there is no better reading. The MT and LXX have clearly different concepts. Both versions work with certain motifs of a paradise myth.”

²⁷⁶ Allen, *Ezekiel*, 221, offers another translation: “And I will destroy you, o covering cherub,” can be equated with “guardian cherub.”

This imagery of expulsion is the only clear correspondence with the end of Genesis 3, though it gives us no information about when and in what way the Tyrian ruler was cast out.

Ezekiel 28:17:

גָּבַהַ לְבַבְךָ בְּיָפְיֶךָ שַׁחַתְתָּ חֻכְמֹתַי עַל-יַפְעֹתַי עַל-אַרְצִי הַשְּׁלֵכְתָּי לְפָנַי מִלְכִּים נִתְתִּי לְרְאוּהָ בָּךְ:

“Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you.”

ὕψωθη ἡ καρδία σου ἐπὶ τῷ κάλλει σου διεφθάρη ἡ ἐπιστήμη σου μετὰ τοῦ κάλλους σου διὰ πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν σου ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἔρριψά σε ἐναντίον βασιλέων ἔδωκά σε παραδειγματισθῆναι

Your heart has become proud because of your beauty and you destroyed your knowledge with your splendor because of many transgressions you have made upon the face of the earth, thus I throw you down in the sight of kings to give you as an example.

Verse 17 is quite difficult to interpret, although it clearly corresponds with 28:5. It continues describing the previous thought, using additional overtones.

LXX uses the image of corrupted knowledge, while MT sticks with the image of a corrupted wisdom. These two terms can be used interchangeably, though at the same time they can single out two different aspects of the same idea.

The MT idea “for the sake of your splendor” is transformed in LXX by “with your splendor,” pointing out the fact that according to LXX the knowledge or wisdom was corrupted by the Tyrian ruler, not for the sake (MT), but along with a splendor, i.e. altogether (LXX).

Stordalen rightly notes that the phrase: διὰ πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν σου is simply absent in MT v.17, but is present in v. 18 with additional overtones: καὶ τῶν ἀδικιών τῆς ἐμπορίας σου. Stordalen assumes it to be “an explanatory doublet if its text-critical status in the Greek translation so indicated.”²⁷⁷

The exact nature of the king’s beauty is not explained in any detail.

Ezekiel 28:18:

מִרְבַּ עֲוֹנוֹיךָ בְּעוֹל רַכְלֹתֶיךָ חָלַלְתָּ מִקְדָּשַׁי וְאַצְוֹא-אֶשׁ שָׂמַתִּי בְּךָ הִיא אֲכַלְתָּ וְאַתָּנָה לְאַפְּךָ עַל-הָאָרֶץ לְעֵינֵי כָל-רְאוּיָה:

“By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought forth fire from the midst of you; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.”

διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν σου καὶ τῶν ἀδικιών τῆς ἐμπορίας σου ἐβεβήλωσας τὰ ἱερά σου καὶ ἐξάξω πῦρ ἐκ μέσου σου τοῦτο καταφάγεται σε καὶ δώσω σε εἰς σποδὸν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς σου ἐναντίον πάντων τῶν ὁρώντων σε

“By the multitude of your iniquities and the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries; thus, I brought fire from the midst of you, to devour you and I turned you into ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all who will see you.”

²⁷⁷Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 345.

This verse could be seen as a paraphrase of v.16, though v.18 contains some additional information, indicating the exact reason for God being so resolute: he can no longer bear the unrighteousness of the trade and other iniquities. This sin is the only one called by name. The exact nature of the other iniquities remains unclear. The phrase **מִקְדָּשֶׁיךָ** along with the Greek corresponding words: *τὰ ἱερά σου*, “your sacred places, temples”, is very interesting, but not clear enough to come to any more or less certainty.

The meaning of another phrase, **וְאוֹצְאֵה שָׁמַיְךָ מִתּוֹכָהּ הִיא אֶכְלֶתְךָ**, “I brought or will bring fire from your midst,” is also not clear. What fire did the author have in mind and how is the fire going to destroy (eat) the Tyrian ruler? The image of fire corresponds to two similar images from Zachariah 9:2b-4, and Amos 1:9-10. It seems once again that Ezekiel refers either to an ancient Near Eastern account, with which we are not familiar, or perhaps to the future of Tyre, when Alexander the Great would destroy the city using “fire” several centuries later, in 332 B.C.E. Thus, this phrase could simply mean a future destruction coming upon Tyre, though the fire imagery seems to be directed only to the sacred places of Tyre.

Ezekiel 28:19:

כָּל־יֹדְעֶיךָ בְּעַמִּים שָׂמְמוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּלִהְיוֹת הָיִתְּ וְאִינָהּ עַד־עוֹלָם

“All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”

καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐπιστάμενοί σε ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν στυγνάσουσιν ἐπὶ σέ· ἀπώλεια ἐγένου καὶ οὐχ ὑπάρξεις ἔτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

“All who know you among the nations are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more into the ages to come.”

Verse 19 pronounces a sentence, which would come into effect because the king of Tyre did consider these words seriously. Here, in Ezekiel’s picture, God is depicted as more merciful and tolerant in comparison with the Genesis narrative, where He does not want to wait until His cup of anger will be filled up, but immediately expels the first couple after their first act of disobedience.

The idea of **עַד־עוֹלָם וְאִינָהּ הָיִתְּ**, “You will be no more forever,” (cf. 26:19 and 27:36) cannot be applied to an angelic being, but could have referred to either an anonymous Tyrian ruler, or to an anonymous Jerusalem high priest.

It can be concluded that:

1. The initial intentions of the author regarding what kind of effect he was going to achieve in the hearts and minds of his readers, are unclear in Ezekiel 28:11-19. It is very doubtful that he intended simply to mock the foreign ruler. Thus, the primary intention may have been either a lesson for the nation of Judah, or a disguised/camouflaged message for the high priest in Jerusalem.
2. Similarly to Isaiah 14:4b-23, Ezekiel must have combined one or several extra-biblical (most likely Canaanite) myths with the Genesis 2 account, although it is difficult to discern his intentions.²⁷⁸ Thus Allen points:

To what extent Ezekiel is retelling an oral tradition known to him we cannot know. He obviously adapts the tradition to the Tyrian situation, but whether to this end he created other elements that do not belong to the Adam and Eve story in Genesis and/or whether he is fusing different creation myths known to him is tantalizingly uncertain.²⁷⁹

3. The identity of the Tyrian king remains a mystery; it could be anyone or no one. One thing is more or less clear though, as Korpel & De Moor observe, “time and again Ezekiel emphasizes that the king is a mere human being.”²⁸⁰
4. The reason for addressing an anonymous Tyrian king remains unclear.
5. The historical-cultural background of the address is quite opaque. It could be both a Tyrian ruler (MT) and a Jerusalem high priest (LXX), who might be the main target of this reproach.²⁸¹ If we accept the view that the first reproach (Ezek. 28:1-10) is a mirror reflection of, or at least very similar to the following Ezekiel 28:11-19, we would be more inclined to the first hypothesis – that the author of Ezekiel 28:11-19 described and focused his narration on a Tyrian ruler, and not on a Jerusalem high priest. At the very least as was shown in one of the charts in above, the king’s geographical location, his passions and weaknesses and wicked trade are well highlighted in Ezekiel 28:2-6.²⁸²

²⁷⁸ Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 167-168: “As John Day argues convincingly, it is true that Ezek. 28 is based on Canaanite El traditions, but the chapter is more in the line of ‘the strong’ creator god El who still headed the Canaanite pantheon.”

²⁷⁹ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 94.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 158. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 168.

²⁸¹ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, 394. Anderson, *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*, 194-196. Noort, “Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible”, 25: “The Solomonic temple preserved the meaning of Eden, the garden-sanctuary, for its walls were adorned with figures of guardian cherubim (Gen. 3:24), palm trees and flowers (1Kings 6:29, 32).” See also Noort, 27.

²⁸² Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning*, 168-169.

6. The priestly imagery and language cannot be ignored and, therefore, demand a separate and more thorough exploration.²⁸³

7. Patmore rightly notes:

While these two texts (*Gen. 3:1-15 and Ezek. 28:11-19*), share a number of common elements; they are also differing in several important respects. There is no woman or serpent in the Ezekiel text, for example; the events take place on the Holy Mountain in Ezekiel, yet there is no mention of a mountain in Genesis; Ezekiel’s lament condemns the figure to complete and immediate annihilation, whereas Adam is banished from the garden to a life of hard toil.²⁸⁴

While a comparison between Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 was provided at the very beginning of this section, I would like to compare Isaiah 14:4b-23, Ezekiel 28:11-19, and Genesis 3:1-15 respectively in order to demonstrate the various similarities and differences which reveal their aims and goals.

Chart 5:

	Isaiah 14:4b-23	Genesis 3:1-15
Addressee	An unknown Babylonian or Assyrian king (v. 4)	No addressee
Main idea	Arrogance and pride (vv. 13-14)	Disobedience as a reaction to God’s test (3:1-7)
The main character(s) of the story	A king, or ruler with some cosmic-angelic attributes	God, Adam, the woman, and the serpent
The immediate setting	v. 14 – mount Zaphon, holy mountain of God;	The garden of Eden
The tempter	None	The serpent (3:1)
The downfall	King of Babylon has become very proud and announced himself a god	The woman had eaten the forbidden fruit and then gave it to Adam (as they wanted to become gods)
The reason(s) for downfall	Self-pride	Disobedience and violation of God’s command
God’s sentence	v. 15: “you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.”	3:14-15 – God curses the serpent 3:16 – God sentences the woman 3:17-19 – God sentences Adam Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve are cast out from the garden of Eden (3:23-24) The serpent’s fate is unknown.
Larger setting	Part of a larger picture: ch.13-14	The Garden of Eden (chs.2-3)

²⁸³ See Noort, “Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible”, 25-26.

²⁸⁴ Patmore, “Adam, Satan and the King of Tyre”, 6.

As will be seen in the chart below, attempts to link Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Genesis 3:1-15 appear to be more logical and understandable than connections between Isaiah 14 and the Genesis narrative.

Chart 6:

	Ezekiel 28:11-19	Genesis 3:1-15
Addressee	An unknown Tyrian ruler (king) (v. 12)	No addressee
Main idea	Arrogance and pride (v. 15-17)	Disobedience as a reaction to God's test (3:1-7)
The main character(s) of the story	A ruler with apparently priestly attributes	God, Adam, the woman, and the serpent
The immediate setting	v. 13 – you were in Eden , the garden of God; v. 14 – you were on the holy mountain of God;	The garden of Eden
The tempter	None (narcissism)	The serpent (3:1)
The downfall	King of Tyre has become very rich and proud and announced himself a god	The woman ate the forbidden fruit, followed by Adam (wanted to become gods?)
The reason(s) for downfall	Self-pride	Disobedience and violation of God's command
God's sentence	vv. 16: "I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you"; v. 17: "I cast you to the ground ; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you;" v. 18: "I brought fire out from your midst ; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you."	3:14-15 – God curses the serpent 3:16 – God sentences the woman 3:17-19 – God sentences Adam Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve are cast out from the garden of Eden (3:23-24) The serpent's fate is unknown.
Larger setting	Part of a larger message: chapters 26-28	The Garden of Eden (chapters 2-3)

The resemblance between Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 is quite noticeable. Both might have referred to El as the main deity of comparison.²⁸⁵ The serpent, however, so important in Genesis 3:1-15, finds no counterpart in the Isaiah and Ezekiel narratives.

²⁸⁵Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 25-29.

2.4 Conclusions to Chapter Two

1) The exegesis and comparison of Genesis 3:1-15, Isaiah 14:4b-23, and Ezekiel 28:11-19 demonstrate that the idea of the serpent from Genesis 3 has no clear correspondences or unambiguous parallels within the rest of the Old Testament corpus.

2) In neither Isaiah 14 nor Ezekiel 28 is there a clear correspondence with one of the main agents of the Genesis 3 text, the tempting serpent.

3) Additionally, neither of the prophetic utterances offer clear exegetical links or hermeneutical parallels to clarify the obscurity constituted in Genesis 3:1-15.

4) Therefore, there are no reasons to assume that the author of Genesis 3:1-15 or his primary or secondary Israelite recipients of the narrative entertained any notion of the serpent being Satan in the Garden of Eden.

It is now time to explore the later Jewish sources, which in one way or another touched upon the subject of the serpent from Genesis 3:1-15, with the goal of answering two basic questions: 1) which of the early Jewish Second Temple treatises could have influenced and inspired the New Testament writers and then the Church Fathers to identify the serpent from Genesis 3 as the Devil and 2) what kind of motives or reasons, did they have, for pursuing this task?

CHAPTER 3: Genesis 3:1-15 in the Second Temple Period Literature

If it is true that there is always more than one way of construing a text, it is not true that all interpretations are equal.

(Paul Ricoeur)²⁸⁶

Introduction

Many writers of the Second Temple period wrote commentaries on the subject of the stories depicted in Genesis. The main purpose of these explorations and commentaries seems to consist in their adjusting, adding, rewriting, or reinterpreting the Genesis narrations, seeking to adapt them to the needs and current circumstances of their local communities.²⁸⁷ The majority of these writers, however, showed no interest in exploring the serpent's nature as briefly described in Genesis 3:1, 14.

In this chapter I will examine some of the treatises that do explore the nature of the serpent in Genesis 3. It is my goal to understand why some writers of the Second Temple period chose to interpret Genesis 3:1-15 by scarcely altering the image of the serpent,²⁸⁸ while others made substantial alterations, which often had little connection with Genesis 3.²⁸⁹

One possible reason for this disparity is that the writers of the Second Temple period had to deal with either one or several essentially divergent versions of the story of Genesis 3, or perhaps with some interpretative traditions common at that later time. Thus, they may have faced the difficult decision of which text or interpretative tradition to hold to. Their decision might have been influenced by their own particular needs, or the needs of their local communities.

However, which traditions were regarded as authoritative, by which community and when, is difficult to answer. Hence, "the goal of rewriting was not to replace, but rather to honor the past, while re-presenting it to their distinctive audiences".²⁹⁰ It is hard to imagine that they did not alter or replace anything at all, considering the fact that there were varieties of diverse interpretations, which were available to them at that time.

²⁸⁶ Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 57.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003), 41.

²⁸⁸ Thus calling him "a/the serpent" all the way through.

²⁸⁹ Particular examples of this phenomenon will follow below (see the next section).

²⁹⁰ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 41.

We do not know in what form Genesis 3 was familiar to the writers of the Second Temple period. Did it exist? Was it authoritative for all the writers of the Second Temple period, or perhaps just for some of them? Why do we witness any divergence at all, if there was some kind of fixed pattern for understanding Genesis 3? Perhaps things were not as stable and fixed as we want them to be.

It seems that we have two groups of writings: one that only minimally alters the image of the Genesis 3 serpent, and one that transforms it almost completely. *The Book of Jubilees*, three writings of Philo (*On Creation, Questions and Answers*, and *The Allegorical Commentary*) and Josephus' *The Judean Antiquities* make only small alterations to the Genesis 3 portrayal of the serpent. Some possible motives for their not doing so will be proposed in the following sections, while those treatises, which alter the Genesis 3 portrayal almost beyond recognition, will follow afterward.

The second group of writings, which profoundly alter the Genesis 3:1-15 account, include works such as: *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *2 Enoch*, *3 Baruch*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, and *the Life of Adam and Eve*. All these five treatises have their own story about the serpent; often unrecognizable when compared to Genesis 3. Hence it seems to me that in doing what they did they could have either referred to another version of Genesis 3:1-15, or had some fundamentally opposing assumptions with regard to how it should be interpreted. This could have come about because of their not being familiar with or relying on any of the existing traditions of their time, or perhaps some other reasons.

Therefore, in order to examine both of these groups of writings, I will go through each treatise, one by one, and point out what seems to deserve special attention.

Before examining the actual writings, however, we should start by highlighting some of the gaps in the text, which several Second Temple authors might have stumbled over while interpreting Genesis 3:1-15. This is worth noting here as these gaps could have become one of the main irritating obstacles compelling the author of this or that Second Temple treatise to interpret or rewrite the story of Genesis 3:1-15 in this or that way. The gaps are clearly visible in the text and can be a result of later editing activities or missing fragments that can seriously complicate all succeeding interpretation. In other words, in reading the story, the reader feels the constant need to “jump over” the existing gaps in the narration.

In the discussion of the text given above we came across the following gaps in the story and questions raised by the text:

- 1) The origin of the serpent is not explained in the text of Genesis 3:1.

- 2) The nature of the serpent's intentions in Genesis 3:1-15 is not thoroughly clear. What was he seeking to achieve? Was he directed by someone (God or the Devil) to test Adam and the woman's faithfulness to God (cf. Job 1-2)?
- 3) Why did God allow all this to happen? Why did he, apparently, not try to stop the serpent or warn the woman at some point, before it was too late yet? Why did He let the first couple fail?
- 4) Who is the serpent? An animal, as portrayed in Genesis 3:1, 14, or someone else, as many Second Temple writers thought of him? Why did they invest additional meaning into his character? How he could speak, and why did he do so, is nowhere explained in Genesis 3. Additionally, from where did he get his knowledge? Each of these questions is important, considering that sometimes the serpent seems to know as much as God Himself.
- 5) The reason behind the serpent's concentration on the woman – choosing her as his primary object of temptation. Why her? Why not Adam?
- 6) The overall passiveness of Adam during the episode (Genesis 3:6). If he indeed stood somewhere nearby the scene of the crime, why didn't he do anything to protect his wife from falling into the serpent's trap?
- 7) Genesis 3:15 and God's sentence. For some,

“It seemed most unlikely that the Bible here was really concerned with the future relations of humans and snakes. (Moreover, how was this ‘enmity’ between humans and snakes different from the enmity that exists between humans and lions, or bears or tarantulas, none of whom have done anything to Adam and Eve in the garden?)”.²⁹¹

Some scholars thus remain puzzled by the second part of v. 15.
- 8) Must the serpent be blamed for leading the first humans away from God?
- 9) Who is the main introducer of evil in this world? How exactly did sin enter the world?
- 10) Were human beings immortal before they sinned, or were they mortal from the beginning?

These questions demand clear answers, which Genesis 3:1-15 is simply unable to give. It is not surprising to see, therefore, that interpreters of the Second Temple period tried everything they could to explain the text, using the means available to them.

²⁹¹ Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it Was at The Start of the Common Era*, 99.

3.1. *The Book of Jubilees*

3.1.1. Introduction

The book of *Jubilees* is one of the most important witnesses for the current discussion. Having been written originally in Hebrew,²⁹² this book was later translated into Greek, and then into Syriac, Latin, and Ethiopic, where it has survived to this day. “Along with *1 Enoch* the book of *Jubilees* is among the very earliest and the most extensive representatives of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha from the Second-Temple period.”²⁹³

What is more, the author of *Jubilees* follows the Genesis 3:1-15 story quite closely. It shows that in one way or another the author is very much bound to the text of Genesis-Exodus.²⁹⁴ This does not make him, however, a “blind follower” of the Genesis-Exodus text. He has his own point of view, which he strives to present where and when necessary, placing, “in the mouth of patriarchs the commands and admonitions that he himself wishes to make to his readers.”²⁹⁵ And it is not only the patriarchs who have become skillfully manipulated – his general trajectory of biblical interpretation is very selective and therefore purposefully directed, as “he responded to both the demand for interpretation and the demand for a demonstration of authority”.²⁹⁶ Thus, he carefully picks out only that material, which coincides with the scheme and plot he had in mind.²⁹⁷

Here, I examine *Jubilees* 3:17-23, and consider how it interprets Genesis 3:1-15. I juxtapose both passages in order to demonstrate their similarities (parallels) and differences. I will make a distinction between where the author uses the Genesis material, and where he relies on some extra-Genesis source(s). After that, I suggest some motives or reasons, which might have guided the author of *Jubilees* in his interpretations. I finish this section by showing potential reasons for leaving the image of the serpent from Genesis 3 essentially unchanged.

²⁹² James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 14. See also Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 1: “Fifteen (fragmentary) Hebrew copies of the book of Jubilees, an extrabiblical book, composed in the second century B.C.E that rewrites the Pentateuch from the beginning until the middle of Exodus, were preserved in Qumran.”

²⁹³ James M. Scott, *Geography in Early Judaism and Christianity: The Book of Jubilees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 4.

²⁹⁴ Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, “The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in *Jubilees* 5:1-19,” in Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange (eds.), *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 92: “The author of *Jubilees* feels himself bound to the biblical text.”

²⁹⁵ Michael E. Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 97. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 11.

²⁹⁶ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 45.

²⁹⁷ John C. Endres S.J., *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (Washington DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 3.

3.1.2. The interpretation of Genesis 3:1-15 in the Book of *Jubilees*

I have limited myself to *Jubilees* 3:17-23, since my main concern lies in the way the author of *Jubilees* interprets the serpent from Genesis 3:1-15. Before examining the text of *Jubilees*, I will briefly describe its setting in the overall plan of the book, and compare both texts (Gen. 3:1-15 and *Jub.* 3:17-23) in order to demonstrate the depth of reliance the author of *Jubilees* has on the biblical text. Van Ruiten writes that, “The text of *Jubilees* corresponds to the text of Genesis 2:4-3:24, but a close examination of both texts makes clear that *Jubilees* 3 disagrees in many respects with its model. Apart from the additions the author omits passages, and modifies at other points.”²⁹⁸ He rightly notes, however, that “the comparison between Genesis and *Jubilees* is complicated by the fact that one should establish which Hebrew biblical text the author had in front of him when he composed his book.”²⁹⁹ In the brief scheme below, I provide an overall comparison between Genesis 2:24-3:24 and *Jubilees* 3:15-31 showing the broad context before considering the particulars.³⁰⁰ This is important to demonstrate the immediate context within which *Jubilees* 3:17-23 is placed.

Genesis 2:24-3:24	<i>Jubilees</i> 3:15-35
Time together in the garden before the temptation 2:24-25 No counterpart in the Genesis text	Time together in the garden before the temptation 3:7,15-16 3:8-14 purity ritual and the law regarding uncleanness
Temptation and transgression 3:1-7	Temptation and transgression 3:17-22
Hiding from God and accusation 3:8-13	No counterpart in the <i>Jubilees</i> text
Interrogation 3:14-15	Interrogation 3:23a
Judgement pronounced 3:16-19 No counterpart in the Genesis text No counterpart in the Genesis text 3:20 Adam calls the name of his wife 3:21 God makes garments to Adam and his wife 3:22 God acknowledges that Adam has become one of gods, knowing good and evil.	Judgment pronounced 3:23c-26 3:27 Offering 3:28 Closing the mouth of all the beasts 3:33 Adam calls the name to his wife 3:30 “And to Adam <u>alone</u> did He give (the wherewithal) to cover his shame, of all the beasts and cattle.” No counterpart in the <i>Jubilees</i> text 3:29 Sending Adam and his wife out of the

²⁹⁸ J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, “The Garden of Eden and *Jubilees* 3:1-31,” *Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie* 57 (1996), 305.

²⁹⁹ J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26-25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14-23:8* (JSJ Sup 161; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 18.

³⁰⁰ Cf. Van Ruiten’s table in *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJ Sup 66; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 73.

3:23 Sending out Adam and Eve	Garden.
3:24 Stationing the cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life. No counterpart in the Genesis text	No counterpart in the <i>Jubilees</i> text
No counterpart in the Genesis text	3:32 Giving the precise time of Adam and Eve's leaving the Garden. 3:34-35 Adam and Eve have no son to till the ground, therefore, Adam tills the ground himself, according to God's instruction.

Jubilees 3:8-14 is very important piece of information for interpreting Genesis 2:24, where the author of *Jubilees* tries to apply his perception of the Mosaic Law, stated in Leviticus 12, to the Genesis 3 narrative.³⁰¹ The phrase “And in the first week of the first jubilee” (*Jubilees* 3:15) makes, therefore, two chronological points, which clearly state “the exact” time Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden. The very next verse (3:16) simply reiterates the end of Genesis 2:25. Therefore, it seems that *Jubilees* 3:8-14 is to be understood as a deliberate insertion aimed at demonstrating that the events which took place in *Jubilees* 3:1-7 were portrayed from both a priestly and a chronological perspective.³⁰²

The following tables present the texts of Genesis 3:1-7 and *Jubilees* 3:17-23 side by side. The bolded script shows any dissimilarity that exists between the two accounts, while the regular script shows what these two texts have more or less in common.

Genesis 3:1	<i>Jubilees</i> 3:17
Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. ³⁰³ He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’”	When the conclusion of the seven years, which he had completed there, arrived — seven years exactly — in the second month, on the seventeenth, the serpent came and approached the woman. The serpent said to the woman: 'Is it from all the fruit of the trees in the garden (that) the Lord has commanded you: « Do not eat from it?» ³⁰⁴

***Jubilees* 3:17:** The author of *Jubilees* inserts a small portion of introductory material, preceding the serpent's appearance to give the exact time of his arrival. However, while doing so, he shows no interest in the serpent's nature, or his attributes, which are stated plainly in Genesis 3:1, 14. No reason is given for such indifference anywhere in the chapter. Thus, one can infer that the author might have been either familiar with the attributes of the serpent before he engaged in his writing, or this aspect of the serpent's nature simply did not interest him.

³⁰¹ Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 48.

³⁰² A thorough study of *Jubilees* 3:8-16 can be found in Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 48.

³⁰³ Here and further on I will follow the English Standard Version of the Bible.

³⁰⁴ Here and further on I will follow James VanderKam's translation of the book of *Jubilees*, *The Book of Jubilees* (CSCO 511; Scriptorum Aethiopicorum 88; Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 18.

In addition, in *Jubilees* it remains unclear whether the serpent had been sent by someone, or just simply initiated the entire enterprise himself. We only read, “He came and approached the woman”.

However, as soon as the serpent arrives in the garden, he seems to rush to the woman in order to speak to her, raising the question of the prohibited tree of the Garden, as if this was the only purpose of his coming. The author does not expand on this question. He simply states the fact of the serpent’s arrival and approach to the woman.

If the reader of *Jubilees* also knew the text of Genesis, then he would not have been surprised by the sudden appearance of the serpent without any introductory comment because this is exactly what one finds in Genesis 3 as well. Thus, both accounts seem to highlight the serpent’s coming from nowhere and then quite obviously link it with his returning there once again (cf. Gen 3:1, 15 with *Jub.* 3:17, 23). Thus, *Jubilees* – like Genesis – offers no reason for or discussion of the serpent’s appearance.

In *Jubilees* no story, explanation, or prologue is attached to the serpent’s coming and going. He seems, therefore, to have no place of his own. He looks like a shadow, homeless, and the oddest of personalities in both Genesis 3 and *Jubilees*. And this seems to be the point: due to reasons that are not entirely clear, both authors wanted the serpent to appear ambiguous and mysterious.

Another point, as remarked by VanderKam, is that the serpent begins speaking of the tree, though “those trees, mentioned in Genesis 2, have not yet appeared in the story.”³⁰⁵ This could only mean that, once again, the author of *Jubilees* assumes that his readers are aware of Genesis 2-3 or a similar account. Otherwise, the way *Jubilees* presents its information would be unintelligible.³⁰⁶

Another observation worth noting is that *Jubilees* makes no mention of the prohibition regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in *Jub.* 3:7-27 (the text refers to “the tree of knowledge in *Jub.* 4:40 only). Immediately before the serpent’s appearance, *Jubilees* 3:8-14 presents a speech, which seems to be totally unrelated to the issue of prohibition, but is aimed, instead, at cultic uncleanness and other issues of purification. These seem to be far more important to the author than the reference to God’s command in Genesis 2:16-17.³⁰⁷ Why does he pass over God’s command? Why is it not important for him? Why then does the serpent ask

³⁰⁵ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 31.

³⁰⁶ See Van Ruiten’s discussion in “The Garden of Eden and *Jubilees* 3:1-31,” 307.

³⁰⁷ Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted*, 76: “The omission of these verses can be due, of course to the fact that according to *Jubilees* man has not been yet entered the Garden of Eden. There is thus no reason to speak of trees and the forbidden fruit in the Garden.”

this question in *Jubilees*? Is he simply concerned about what the first couple is eating? No answer is given.

This absence of God’s command in *Jubilees* could be explained by the writer’s willingness to avoid any references to, and accusations against God – who, according to Genesis 2:16-17, had purposely planted the tree, which then affected the future of the entire human race. Thus, Genesis 2:16-17 overtly demonstrates that only Yahweh Himself is to be blamed for introducing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Jubilees* seems to stay away from accusing God whether directly or indirectly, and therefore must have consciously passed by the entire section 2:4-17.

As for the serpent’s ability to speak, the reader must wait until the end of the chapter to discover the following remarkable statement “on that day He (the Lord God) closed the mouth of all beasts and of cattle, and of birds, and of whatever walks, and of whatever moves, so that they could no longer speak” (*Jubilees* 3:28). This outstanding interpretation appears aimed at addressing two unclarified questions which arise in Genesis 3: 1) the shrewdness (extra knowledge) of the serpent; and 2) his ability to speak (Gen. 3:1), since, according to this interpretation, “the serpent was not the only animal that had been able to talk.”³⁰⁸ Therefore, we note that for the author of *Jubilees*, the serpent is *the serpent*, though he never focuses on his distinctive attributes.

Genesis 3:2-5	<i>Jubilees</i> 3:18-19
<p>3:2: And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3:3: but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 3:4: But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 3:5: For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”</p>	<p>3:18 She said to him: 'From all the fruit of the tree(s) which are in the garden the Lord told us: «Eat». But from the fruit of the tree, which is in the middle of the garden, he told us: «Do not eat from it and do not touch it so that you may not die»'. 3:19 Then the serpent said to the woman: 'You will not really die because the Lord knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, you will become like gods, and you will know good and evil'.</p>

***Jubilees* 3:18-19:** The author noticeably follows Genesis 3:2-5 almost verbatim, as if he gets a straight access to it. No extra information is given here in comparison to Genesis 3. The only interesting thing is the explicit use of “us” by the woman, which may imply, “the oneness, the unity, the bond” holding the first people, together. Would this mean that they made no separate decisions in regard to any problem in the Garden, or was it only the woman who thought they

³⁰⁸ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 32.

are inseparable, while Adam thought otherwise (cf. 3:12, where he immediately separates himself from her)?

Genesis 3:6-7	<i>Jubilees</i> 3:20-22
<p>3:6: So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.</p> <p>3:7: Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.</p>	<p>3:20 The woman saw that the tree was delightful and pleasing to the eye and (that) its fruit was good to eat. So she took some of it and ate (it).</p> <p>3:21 She first covered her shame with fig leaves and then gave it to Adam. He ate (it), his eyes were opened, and he saw that he was naked. 3:22 He took fig leaves and sewed (them); (thus) he made himself an apron and covered his shame.</p>

***Jubilees* 3:20-22:** The issue arising in Genesis 3:6 with regard to the question, whether Adam was standing next to his wife while she talked to the serpent, is not answered by the author of *Jubilees*. However, *Jubilees* 3:21 does lead one to think that Adam could not have been next to her, since the woman ate from the fruit alone (v. 20), and then covered herself with some fig leaves alone.³⁰⁹ This interpretational move must have been done in order to relieve Adam of all his responsibilities for violating God’s command.³¹⁰ Thus, according to *Jubilees*, although the woman still seems to play a crucial role in leading her family astray, her husband is nevertheless depicted as even more blind. Further, as a powerless follower of her desires, he should have sensed something in her unusual behavior (since she had never covered herself with any leaves before), but in fact, he did not. Instead, he willingly joined her in eating the fruit. What kind of fruit it was remains a mystery in *Jubilees* as well.

Therefore, Van Ruiten is right in saying that as it appears in *Jubilees*, both Adam and Eve should be blamed for violating God’s command. Adam waited before eating the fruit he received from his wife in order to give himself time to think things over. Besides, Adam would have noticed the fig leaves on his wife’s body (*Jub.* 3:21). Unfortunately, he makes no independent decision for himself. He simply blindly follows her instead. One could speculate, however, that he could not find anything better to eat than what she gave him. The writer of *Jubilees* thus seems to relieve Eve of her exclusive responsibility for destroying the harmony in the Garden of Eden that day.

Genesis 3:8-13	No counterpart

³⁰⁹ For another explanation of *Jub.* 3:20-21, esp. 3:21, see Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History*, 95-96. See also VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* (2000), 103-104.

³¹⁰ Cf. Van Ruiten, *The Garden of Eden and Jubilees 3:1-31*, 315.

Genesis 3:14-15	Part of <i>Jubilees</i> 3:23
<p>3:14: The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, <u>cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.</u>”</p> <p>Genesis 3:15: I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”</p>	<p>3:23 The Lord cursed the serpent and was angry at it forever.</p> <p>No counterpart</p> <p>No counterpart</p>

Jubilees 3:23: God’s appearance in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:8-13) seems to be of no interest to the author of *Jubilees*, for he omits this part completely. He begins his description of God’s sudden investigation of the crime in combination with immediate judgment. Hence, as the author sees it, God suddenly appears from nowhere and becomes angry at the serpent “forever” (*Jubilees* 3:23). Why forever? How God became aware that it was the serpent who was to blame for everything, is not stated in *Jubilees* 3:17-23.³¹¹ God’s anger at the serpent seems to allude to Genesis 3:15, where the endless conflict between humans and serpents is introduced, though this is nowhere clearly stated or explained in *Jubilees* itself.

Thus, here the serpent receives even less attention from the writer of *Jubilees* than he received in Genesis 3. The serpent quickly receives his condemnation without any accompanying explanations provided. No clues or proof of his guilt are presented anywhere. He simply receives his sentence in the blink of an eye and finds himself dismissed. Further, for reasons undisclosed, the writer of *Jubilees* skips over the section in which the serpent is sentenced to crawl on his belly (see Genesis 3:14).³¹²

In conclusion, it is worth noting that none of the questions, which cause all kinds of difficulties in the interpretation of Genesis 3 have been answered adequately in *Jubilees* 3:17-23, though some of them have at least been raised.

The section devoted to the serpent’s appearance in the book of *Jubilees* is relatively small in comparison to Genesis 3, (7 verses in total in *Jub.* 3:17-23, versus 15 verses in Genesis 3:1-15, though it should be observed that the serpent seems to play no role in Genesis 3:8-14, which dwindles his presence to just vv. 5-7). The rest of the text in Genesis 3 is relatively paralleled in *Jubilees*, apart from several minor additions or omissions. One important divergence is the complete omission of Genesis 3:14b-15.

³¹¹ For possible reasons for the omission of Gen 3:8-12, see also Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History*, 97-98.

³¹² Charles suspects a lacuna here. “It may have contained a statement to the effect that the serpent’s four feet, which it is supposed to have originally possessed, were cut off,” see Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1985), 49.

On the other hand, *Jubilees* 3:23 and 28 give some extra information about the serpent and his ability to communicate in human language. However, neither *Jubilees*' additions nor omissions add anything special to the Genesis 3 image of the serpent. This could suggest the idea that for neither writer was the serpent's role very significant.

In summary, the writer of *Jubilees*' simple description of the serpent leaves room for speculations of various kinds, since the writer has not explained:

- 1) The reason behind the serpent's coming and going;
- 2) The reason for the serpent's address to the woman;
- 3) The serpent's nature;
- 4) God's role in all these events and His intimate connections with the first couple;
- 5) Adam's thoughts in regard to violating God's command, although the writer did include some additional emphasis on the necessity of observing the law and its eternal significance for future generations of human beings.

3.1.3 Possible Motives for Rewriting Genesis 3:1-15 in *Jubilees*

The writer of *Jubilees* puts a special emphasis on the Garden of Eden imagery, thus presenting it as a sanctuary, or a temple, where Adam could perform his priestly activities. The halakhic insertion (*Jub.* 3:8-14) makes this point very clear, as both Adam and Eve had to purify themselves (40 and 80 days of purification respectively) before entering the Garden. This suggests that the Garden was a form of God's sanctuary (similar to the one—in Jerusalem).³¹³ Both Eliade and Van Ruiten maintain that the Garden of Eden was seen in the past as “heavenly prototype” of the Temple in Jerusalem, while *Jubilees* 3:12 and 4:26 overtly state that, “The Garden of Eden is the Holy of Holies, and the dwelling of the Lord” and “that it is a sanctuary”.³¹⁴ This only means that the writer of *Jubilees* understood Eden to be the Holiest Place, that is to say, where God Himself took a habitual walk. Although *Jubilees* never mentions God's walk in the Garden, its general perception of the Garden of Eden as a Holy Place must not be overlooked.

The end of chapter 3 brings up another important point. Before leaving the Garden (*Jub.* 3:27), Adam brings sacrificial offerings to God as if he were a priest, or even a high priest.³¹⁵ This makes him look very similar to Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and other patriarchs who could be

³¹³ See Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, (New York: Sheed & Word, 1996 [first edition 1958]), 282. See also Van Ruiten, *The Garden of Eden and Jubilees 3:1-31*, 311.

³¹⁴ Ibid: “It is also possible that laws concerning the Temple are applied to the Garden of Eden”.

³¹⁵ Van Ruiten, *The Garden of Eden and Jubilees 3:1-31*, 315.

looked upon as builders of altars and those who brought sacrificial offerings to them (cf. *Jub.* 3:27).³¹⁶ All these details artfully communicate the author's intention of projecting a first primordial temple, where Adam performed the role of the first high priest.

The role of the woman is not clearly explicated here (though not deviating from Genesis), apart from the fact that she is portrayed as an easy target for the serpent's attack. Thus, she is not involved in any "temple activities" in the Garden, and therefore looks rather lost and idle in the story. Does she represent someone, or should she be understood as the woman in Genesis? If she is part of the author's analogy (as the author of *Jubilees* could have projected her image on one of contemporary figures) who she is intended to match?³¹⁷ In any case the woman plays a marginal role in the story – similar to Philo's rendering of Genesis 3.

As for the serpent, he seems to be of no special interest for the author of the book, since the invasion of evil upon the earth does not begin until *Jubilees* 5. This observation seems to make the serpent no more important than any other participant in the story – simply the means by which God tested the first couple, though one will not find any clear indications in the texts confirming this or similar theory.

Therefore, the motives for rewriting the Bible in *Jubilees* 3 seem to have been the following:

- 1) The book of *Jubilees* describes itself "as Torah, using the deictic in a way that reminiscent in Deuteronomy".³¹⁸ And not as Torah only: it claims to be transmitted from heaven by means of angelic mediation of angel of the presence and Moses is used as a scribe, not as the author himself.³¹⁹
- 2) "*Jubilees* employs Deuteronomy as a model for its self-authorization, but goes beyond Deuteronomy in claiming the authority of Moses's revelation at Sinai" and stretches far beyond, referring to "the revelation of the heavenly tablets".³²⁰ This was made to attach a certain authoritative status from the very beginning of the book (1:27-29) and extend it to the rest of the book as well (50). Besides, this reference to Deuteronomy was necessary to seal the *Jubilees* authority over all those, who will read and transmit it, for those, who shall leave all other gods for the sake of serving to just One, and only God.

³¹⁶ Ibid: "The offering of incense is a privilege given to the priests, the sons of Aaron. There is a connection between the covering of nakedness and the ability to offer. The priests are bidden to cover their nakedness."

³¹⁷ See VanderKam, "The Origins and Purposes of the Book of *Jubilees*" in Matthias Albani, Jorg Frey and Armin Lange (eds.), *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 15, where Berger suggest the date of its composition somewhen around "the first half of the second century B.C.E)."

³¹⁸ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 50.

³¹⁹ Ibid, 61.

³²⁰ Ibid, 50.

- 3) Similarly to Ezekiel 28 the author of *Jubilees* may have been a priest, strongly attached to his Israelite/Jewish roots, and worried about the overall situation within the Palestinian Jewish community in his time, standing for the new covenant with the God of Israel with all sequential consequences included.³²¹ As Van Ruiten suggests: “Moreover, *Jubilees* 3:27 may contain a protest against the Hellenistic Jewish priests who are involved in Hellenistic practices.”³²² This means that the author could use the story of Genesis 3 to illustrate his patriotic/priestly points.³²³
- In this light, it seems very plausible to me that the author might have wrapped the Genesis 3 account in his own religious and political ideas, otherwise it is not clear why else he needs to put such emphasis on various law practices and the presentation of the Garden as a temple (sanctuary).³²⁴
- 4) From the frequent use of law in his narration, we may conclude that the author of *Jubilees* could not have been satisfied with the way the Torah was being treated in his day. He wants to interpret it more strictly and, therefore, gives the story of Genesis a more sanctuary-like style, thereby heightening the status of God’s Law in any way possible.
- 5) The author may have wanted to establish a certain pattern of interpreting the Bible from the early halakhic perspective.

³²¹ See the points exploring Adam’s nature in 3.1.3 above. Cf. also Barker, *Adam the High Priest in the Paradise Temple 2*. Van Ruiten, *The Garden of Eden and Jubilees 3:1-31*, 316: “Jubilees originated in a priestly milieu, and it can be an attempt to project the priesthood back to the days of creation.”

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 34-42: “Amongst texts known in the time of Jesus, the Book of Jubilees, an alternative version of Genesis, had Adam wait forty days from his creation until he could enter Eden, and Eve eighty days, since both applied to Eden the temple laws about impurity after childbirth (Jub.3.8-14). When Adam was leaving Eden, he burned an incense very like the one prescribed for use only in the tabernacle (Exod.30.34-38): frankincense, galbanum, stacte and sweet spices (Jub.3.27) Noah knew that the garden of Eden was the holy of holies, and the dwelling of the LORD (Jub. 8.19)”.

³²⁴ See VanderKam in “The Origins and Purposes of the Book of Jubilees”, 18, where he underlined as one of the main topics of the author the separation of the pure chosen from the impure Gentiles. Within the framework of its conventional theology, *Jubilees* operates with the principle that there are two camps of people which should be segregated carefully from each other; the chosen line descended from Seth and eventually through Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, and especially Jacob; and all others, however closely related to the chosen...”

3.2 *Wisdom of Solomon*

Introduction

Although one will find nothing in the *Wisdom of Solomon* about the serpent from Genesis 3:1-15 *per se*, there are yet a few allusive sentences, namely 2:23-24. Along with Isaiah 14:4b-23, these verses have been mined by various Church Fathers in their attempts to interpret Genesis 3:1-15. According to the Church Fathers the serpent from Genesis 3 and the Devil in *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:23-24 are in fact one and the same personality.³²⁵ This is the main reason for examining the treatise here.

In this section, I will briefly examine and discuss the potential background of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, including its main features as well as some of its potential motivations, which might have led the author of this treatise to change or amend the overall picture of the serpent from Genesis 3:1-15.

It is worth noting from the outset that the *Wisdom of Solomon* has its own peculiarities in regard to its reception history as neither Josephus, in his *Jewish Antiquities*, or even Philo in his three interpretations of Genesis, show any acquaintance with the treatise.³²⁶ The same can be said about the Mishnah or any other Jewish theological works, which seem to be totally unfamiliar with *Wisdom*.³²⁷

Moreover, it is generally agreed that the book has nothing to do with Solomon himself, and was most likely written hundreds of years later in Greek, though some scholars continue to look for its Semitic roots (pointing to the so-called “Hebraisms” and “Arameisms” in the text), which are, apparently, “dispersed” throughout its pages.³²⁸ It is also agreed that the book was written within period between Alexander the Great’s conquest (322 BCE), and the end of Philo’s lifetime, (approximately 50 CE). The most probable date of its composition is between the end of the 1st century BCE and the first couple of decades of the 1st century CE.”³²⁹

³²⁵ Cf. J. Voicu (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Apocrypha* vol. XV (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 54-56: “Cyprian of Carthage and Augustine, echoed by Pseudo-Ambrose and Julian of Eclanum, claim that the word ‘devil’ actually refers to the real Devil, while John Cassian on the other hand, deals with Wis. 2:23-24 rather philosophically. Ambrose clearly puts the blame for employing this action on Cain’s shoulders.”

³²⁶ Cf. B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onkelos* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 41.

³²⁷ Cf. L.H. Schiffman, *Understanding Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (Jersey City: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 2003), 7.

³²⁸ Cf. M.A. Knibb, “Language, Translation, Versions, and Text of the Apocrypha,” in J.W. Rogerson, J.M. Lieu, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 165. See also L.L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 32. See also the discussion of this topic in Andrew T. Glicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon 10: A Jewish Hellenistic Reinterpretation of early Israelite History Through Sapiential Lenses* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 8. J.W. Rogerson and J.N. Judith, (eds.), *Oxford Handbook for Biblical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). 500. See also R.A. Bullard and H.A. Hatton, *A Handbook of The Wisdom of Solomon* (New York: UBS, 2004), 1.

³²⁹ Cf. D. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* vol. 43 (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 20: “between 220 BCE and 50 CE.”

3.2.1 Close reading of the text

Wisdom 2:23-24 belongs to the larger unit of 1:1-6:21.³³⁰ The closest section adjoining 2:23-24 consists of the two consecutive units, 1:12-2:11 and 2:12-24. Therefore, in this section, I will deal with just these two units, as the primary text that I am interested in (2:23-24) is in fact part of the second one. However, it is impossible to deal with the text in question without spending some time in the two adjoining blocks of material. The first block, 1:12-2:11, has many theological parallels with 2:12-24, which will be demonstrated later. The second block (2:12-22), comprising the immediate context of 2:23-24, provides the reader with a discussion of various issues, such as: immortality, death, life, *diabolos*, and several others.

The following outline summarizes the main points of the the first block of material (1:12-2:11):

- a) The passage speaks of the place of death in God's initial plan of creation (1:12-13): 12. "Do not invite death by the error of your life, or bring destruction by the works of your hands. 13. Because God did not make death, and He does not delight in the death of the living".³³¹
- b) The status of the generative forces and righteousness in God's creation (1:14-15): 14. For He created all things so that they might exist; the generative forces (or: the creatures) of the world are wholesome, and there is no destructive poison in them, and the dominion (or: palace) of Hades is not on earth. 15. For righteousness is immortal."³³²
- c) Ungodly summoned death and (consciously or unconsciously) call God's justice down upon themselves (1:16): "But the ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him a friend, they pined away, and made covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his company."³³³
- d) Temporality and wretchedness of human existence (2:1-5).

³³⁰ J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 179, calls this the "book of eschatology," though he admits, "there are numerous variations in the text definition of these units." J. J. Collins, "The Reinterpretation of Apocalyptic Traditions in The Wisdom of Solomon," in Angelo Passaro, Giuseppe Bellia (eds.), *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research: Studies and Tradition, Redaction and Theology* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 145.

³³¹ Translation of this and the following verses is taken from the article of A. Peter Hayman, "The Mythological Background of the Wisdom of Solomon", in Judith Targarona-Borrás and Angel Saenz-Badillos (eds.), *Jewish Studies at the Turn Of The Twentieth Century* vol. 1 (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1999), 285.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

e) The worldview of the ungodly and how they waste their lives in pleasure and persecution of the righteous (2:6-11).³³⁴

This block gives an overview of the strategy of the wicked, who are well described by the author. Further, one should note that verse 1:14-15 largely mirror 2:22, where it is said, “For God created man incorruptible and to the image of his own likeness he made him”. Thus, what we see is that both 1:14-15 and 2:22 speak about God’s initial plan to make his creation perfect.

A second and similar parallel is found at 1:15-16 and 2:23-24, both of which demonstrate what life is like without God. Thus, while 1:12-14 covers the subject of God’s intentions with regard to people’s lives and therefore argues that God has nothing to do with death, and does not enjoy human suffering, the second line of the author’s argumentation (1:15-16 and 2:23-24) clearly depicts the unrighteous and their vision, which eagerly engages in death and evil and attract its adepts along with their wicked deeds. We will return to these two pairs later in order to demonstrate how the author’s argument seems to revolve around these topics, leading to a climax in 2:24.

The second logical block of material, 2:12-22, refers to what the ungodly think of their opponents (the righteous ones), and what they would like to do to them, if they were given the chance:³³⁵

12 ἐνεδρεύσωμεν δὲ τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστὶ καὶ ἐναντιοῦται τοῖς ἔργοις ἡμῶν καὶ ὀνειδίζει ἡμῖν ἀμαρτήματα νόμου καὶ ἐπιφημίζει ἡμῖν ἀμαρτήματα παιδείας ἡμῶν·
13 ἐπαγγέλλεται γνώσιν ἔχειν Θεοῦ καὶ παῖδα Κυρίου ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζει·
14 ἐγένετο ἡμῖν εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐννοιῶν ἡμῶν· βαρὺς ἐστὶν ἡμῖν καὶ βλεπόμενος,
15 ὅτι ἀνόμιος τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁ βίος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐξηλλαγμένοι αἱ τρίβοι αὐτοῦ·
16 εἰς κίβδηλον ἐλογίσθημεν αὐτῶ, καὶ ἀπέχεται τῶν ὁδῶν ἡμῶν ὡς ἀπὸ ἀκαθαρσιῶν· μακαρίζει ἔσχατα δικαίων καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα Θεόν·
17 ἴδωμεν εἰ οἱ λόγοι αὐτοῦ ἀληθεῖς, καὶ πειράσωμεν τὰ ἐν ἐκβάσει αὐτοῦ·
18 εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς Θεοῦ, ἀντιλήψεται αὐτοῦ καὶ ρύσεται αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων.
19 ὕβρει καὶ βασιάνῳ ἐτάσωμεν αὐτόν, ἵνα γνῶμεν τὴν ἐπιείκειαν αὐτοῦ καὶ δοκιμάσωμεν τὴν ἀνεξικακίαν αὐτοῦ·
20 θανάτῳ ἀσχήμονι καταδικάσωμεν αὐτόν, ἔσται γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἐπισκοπὴ ἐκ λόγων αὐτοῦ.

12. Let us entrap the just man, for his presence is inconvenient to us, and he opposes our actions; he reproaches us for our lawlessness, and charges us with falseness to our training.³³⁶
13. He professes a knowledge of God, and styles himself child of the Lord.
14. He is a living refutation of our designs. His very sight is oppressive to us,
15. For his life-style is odd, and his ways are weird.
16. He regarded us as counterfeits, and avoids us like filth; he pronounces the final lot of the just happy, and boasts that God is his father.

³³⁴ The author shares here some ideas, which were quite widespread among Epicureans, Atomists, and middle Platonists, cf. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 193-194.

³³⁵ Collins, “The Reinterpretation of The Apocalyptic Traditions in the Wisdom of Solomon”, 145, claims that this passage “brings to mind the suffering of the servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53.”

³³⁶ The translation belongs to Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 112.

17. Let us see if his statements are true, and make trial of what will happen to him in the end;
18. For if the just man is God's son, he will assist him and rescue him from the clutches of his opponents.
19. Let us afflict him with outrage and torment him, so that we may gauge the measure of his reasonableness and assay his forbearance of evil.
20. Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for on his own showing he will receive deliverance.³³⁷

These verses perfectly demonstrate that the ungodly do not live in a material, spiritual or intellectual vacuum, but clearly recognize the very real gulf separating them from their righteous opponents in both the moral and spiritual spheres of their existence. This makes them eager to reduce the advantage of their opponents by killing them, since they believed that inside the grave all people become equal (cf. Eccl. 3). Clarke rightly points out that the more the ungodly think this way, the more they realize that it becomes simply impossible for them to share one and the same space with their opponents (the righteous). Consider, for example, the following statements,

- a) “The righteous is a living condemnation of the ungodly (v. 14)”,³³⁸
- b) The unrighteous one has no choice but always to compare his life with the life of his righteous neighbor (v. 15);
- c) The righteous one openly abstains from everything evil and keeps his life in God (v. 16);
- d) The very existence of the righteous makes the life of the ungodly unbearable, as it, “tests the truth of his words.”³³⁹

Therefore they (the ungodly) find no rest until they destroy all the righteous, thus eliminating the existing difference. This is the sort of envy all the ungodly feel towards the righteous, especially in light of the fact that the righteous claim to live and reign forever.³⁴⁰ This envy might be the crucial link connecting vv. 2:12-20 with 2:24, as this spiritual war has been endless and both sides of the conflict will always be at odds with one another, as human envy admits no borders, and often ignites from the slightest spark.

The explanation of the ultimate cause of the misdeeds and misbehavior of the ungodly is quite explicitly given in 2:21-22:

³³⁷ According to Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 183, these verses accord with the argumentation of various of Plato's treatises, though he later says that the *Wisdom of Solomon* does not fully share Plato's understanding of immortality, even apart from the issue of reincarnation, which it does not share at all. Although one may regard the treatise as a complex mixture of Greek philosophy and Jewish traditions, the *Wisdom of Solomon* makes its own way through all the philosophical speculations, showing its inclination to adopt someone's argument where it is needed only, thus it deliberately acts independently. See Clarke, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary on The New English Bible: Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 25.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 183.

21 Ταῦτα ἐλογίσαντο, καὶ ἐπλανήθησαν· ἀπετύφλωσε γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἡ κακία αὐτῶν,
22 καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν μυστήρια Θεοῦ, οὐδὲ μισθὸν ἤλπισαν ὁσιότητος, οὐδὲ ἔκριναν γέρας ψυχῶν
ἀμώμων.

21. So they argued and were misled; blinded by their malice

22. They were ignorant of God's mysteries; they entertained no hope that holiness would have its reward, and passed up the prize of unblemished souls.

The author states unequivocally in this section that the ungodly are simply deprived of seeing God, since they are slaves of their own wickedness and passions, which prevent them from looking at things in a right way. Moreover, it is obvious that this is the only framework in which they can see themselves, since they can only rely on their senses (οὐδὲ μισθὸν ἤλπισαν ὁσιότητος), which are deceived by their own wickedness and therefore cannot access God's μυστήρια, which has been purposely concealed from them until they repent. On the other hand, without learning and embracing these μυστήρια, one simply cannot reach immortality.³⁴¹ This seems to be a vicious circle with no exit. The ungodly have sealed themselves away from access to immortality.³⁴²

As a result of this dilemma, the ungodly have no choice but to pursue the way they have chosen with a double effort and aggression, which, therefore, leads them to a vicious circle, to being utterly dissolved by their own activities.³⁴³ In light of this argument, death is the only tangible result they can achieve. All other avenues (such as the way to immortality) are doomed to escape their senses.

As for the righteous, according to the author's argument, they only pretend to die. They simply exchange their fleshly body at the end for the heavenly one, thus ridding themselves of their temporal capsule for a fully immortal life.

Death is a very depressing, but undoubtedly a fascinating phenomenon in *Wisdom*, since it seems to exist independently from God's intentions (1:12-14), existing, as it does, completely on its own. Collins rightly notes in this regard that, "the idea that God did not make death is such a shocking novelty in Jewish tradition that many scholars refused to accept it at face value."³⁴⁴ He also claims that death is at least partly personified in *Wisdom* in order to create an

³⁴¹ Ibid, 195.

³⁴² Cf. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 114.

³⁴³ Similar to Plato, though Collins claims that the author of *Wisdom* wanted them simply "to cease to exist," see Collins, "The Reinterpretation of The Apocalyptic Traditions in the Wisdom of Solomon", 149.

³⁴⁴ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 188. Cf. Winston, 107: "A bold statement which, without further interpretation, sounds like an echo of Zoroastrian teaching, although the author certainly did not mean to go that far." He also claims that: "in the light of the author of *Wisdom*'s Platonist view of the relationship of body and soul revealed in 9:15, it is likely that he is here referring to spiritual rather than to physical death."

artificial opposition to God.³⁴⁵ This important observation bears upon the present argumentation, which will be more clarified in the following discussion.

23 ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἔκτισε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσίᾳ καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ιδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν·

24 φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πειράζουσι δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες.

23. But God created man for immortality; and made him an image of his own proper being;

24. It was through the Devil's envy that Death entered into the cosmic order, and they who are his own experience him.

The author is convinced that the human race in general had been created immortal and enabled to reflect God: being “an image of his own eternity” (cf. 1:13-14 and Gen. 1:26-27).³⁴⁶ God’s original plan, however, became somehow distorted at some point in time.

Levison believes 2:23-24 to be, “the most cogent argument in defense of immortality” in *Wisdom*.³⁴⁷ He claims that these words should be understood as part of the author’s polemic with Greco-Roman anthropology in general and with the Epicurean rejection of the immortal soul in particular which, in his point of view, has failed to recognize a correlation between soul and body on at least the ethical level. Even if this is correct, however, this is not the only line of the author’s argumentation for his dualistic overtones regularly appear in the treatise.

Thus, the author of *Wisdom* seems to believe in the righteous, immortal, and pure soul making an impact on the body, which has no choice but to reflect every spiritual attribute. But if the soul disdains or neglects these virtues, the body will also immediately reflect this degenerate condition.

What then does the expression in 2:24, φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, “It was through the Devil's envy that (D) death entered into the cosmic order”, have to do with the preceding verses? It most likely derives from the logic of the previous two passages, claiming that the reason for the people abandoning their state of purity is to be found in a certain opposition to the established divine order, envy of which has become the means of death (or perhaps we ought to perceive Death as a person here?).

³⁴⁵ Cf. Collins, “The Reinterpretation of The Apocalyptic Traditions In the Wisdom of Solomon”, 149.

³⁴⁶ Levison believes that the author uses these verses to defend his point of human immortality, Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 50.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

The text seems to suggest that something or someone could enable death to enter our world (though when and how is not the issue for the author of *Wisdom*).³⁴⁸ To accomplish entrance, the author needs the image of someone to contrast with God. Hayman writes,

Wisdom 1:16 and 2:1 can only be harmonized if we realize that before the author's mind rises up not an abstract theological concept, but the old image of Death/Hades the devouring monster, the opponent of all the order imposed on the world when Yahweh subdued the chaos.³⁴⁹

Thus, what we see in 1:12-14 and 2:21-22 respectively is one side of the picture, while the other side is to be found in 1:15-16 and 2:23-24. These are two ways of perceiving the existing reality with two major centers of gravity: God and the evil world are very much opposed to each other. Assuming God did not create death, one would presume that the Devil or some evil powers have made death's appearance possible. Hayman puts it this way:

But here in the *Wisdom of Solomon* 1:12-16 the presumed earlier pattern is presupposed: God belongs with the wholesome generative forces of the world; Hades belongs with negative forces, especially Death. This dualistic picture of the realm of negativity and evil which can burst into and disrupt the upper world is certainly presupposed in Wis. 2:24. Here for the first time in a Jewish text the fully fledged figure of the Devil appears, possibly identified with the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and certainly the source of death in the world. I do not see here any retreat from an earlier mythological pattern in favor of an ever more clearly defined monotheism. We just get new names for old figures.³⁵⁰

He later adds, "Wis. 2:24 makes clear that death entered the world from outside through the agency of the Devil and not through any human actions. It is not created in the world, it enters it from the outside."³⁵¹ He assumes that this *diabolos* is a real figure, standing behind the image of the evil/ungodly order. The text of 2:24 does not overtly assert such interpretation, mostly preferring instead to use covert, perhaps even mythical language.

Although many of his statements are debatable, some of his points deserve attention. Thus, 1) The author of the *Wisdom of Solomon* claims that death was not created by God and perhaps appeared either by itself or by means of another's mediation. Moreover, this was not just *diabolos* alone, but his envy that made it all happen. 2) Therefore, can it be that death is

³⁴⁸ See Hayman, "The Mythological Background of the Wisdom of Solomon", 285, where he connects Wis. 2:24 with 3:1-2 and explains the verse (2:24) in terms of opposition – "between physical death and immortality, not physical death and 'ultimate' or spiritual death. What seems to have concerned the author's opponents is not an ethereal concept like spiritual death but the brevity and the sorrow of human life and the utter finality of physical death (Wis. 2:1-5). This is Death with a big D or, to give him his Canaanite name, Mot."

³⁴⁹ Ibid, 286. He notes a possible allusion on KTU 1.6. VI and KTU 1.5.II. 1-3.

³⁵⁰ Ibid, 287.

³⁵¹ Ibid, 288.

united with the *Adam the High Priest in the Paradise Temple diabolos* (the Devil?) due to their similar orientation? 3) Who is this *diabolos* from *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:24 exactly, and how is he connected to the Genesis 3 story, if at all? 4) Who created them both – the envying *diabolos* and death – if it was not God?

In trying to solve this tricky puzzle, four basic interpretative approaches have arisen among scholars. The first points to the potential theological connection between the word *diabolos* and the events that took place in the Garden of Eden, though no real evidence seems to exist either in the *Wisdom* text or in Genesis 3 to support this presupposition.³⁵² Thus, Hayman is not alone in suggesting his way of interpreting *Wisdom* 2:24.

Second, although we can assume that the word *diabolos* may have been employed to indicate the particular Jewish mythological personage – the Satan – Levison, Winston, Kolarcik and many others maintain that the real use of the word *diabolos* might have been connected with the notion of “an enemy or adversary” in very broad and general terms, rather than having any specific individual in mind.³⁵³ Collins is in agreement, saying that, “there is no real place for the devil in the worldview of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, as even death looks there as anomaly.”³⁵⁴

A third interpretation suggests that the author of *Wisdom* might have known his audience very well, and therefore, accepted the fact that it was somehow aware of various both Jewish and Greek creation stories. Thus, he might have intended to set up the opposition between God and death and *diabolos* as two counterparts of imaginative theological scales to create a chain of inferences between death and the one who, in the author’s imagination, could have stayed behind its creation in 1:14, namely the Devil.

The fourth interpretation connects the word *diabolos* with Cain’s murder of Abel, as in fact Cain brought death into the world. Thus, it was Cain who mercilessly killed his brother and immediately found himself clearly opposing God’s initial plans, as God definitely did not

³⁵² Cf. Clarke, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary On The New English Bible: Wisdom of Solomon*, 27. Cf. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 190. See also Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 538: “all other expositors take it to refer to the temptation of Eve.”

³⁵³ Cf. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 51. See M. Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6: A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation* (Roma: Pontifici Instituti Biblici de Urbe, 1990), xi, and his translation of this verse: “through the envy of the adversary, death entered the world (2:24). See also David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979), 121. Bullard, *A Handbook of The Wisdom of Solomon*, 39.

³⁵⁴ Collins, “The Reinterpretation of the Apocalyptic Traditions in the Wisdom of Solomon”, 149.

intend people to murder each other. This is exactly what the word *satan* or in this case *diabolos* means – “the one that opposes, enemy, or adversary.”³⁵⁵

Thus, it seems that the link between Wisdom 2:23-24, and Genesis 3:1-15 is artificial, because: 1) neither Genesis 3 nor Wisdom 2:24 contain a word about a devil (or the Devil); 2) neither death, nor ungodly people are mentioned in the first three chapters of the Bible; 3) the book of Wisdom does not speak about the Garden of Eden, paradise, garden, the woman, and the serpent, which constitute the major players in Genesis 3:1-15; 4) the biblical account does not suggest any dualistic way of interpreting what is taking place in the Garden of Eden, while the *Wisdom of Solomon* is clearly dualistic in outlook; 5) envy is never mentioned in Genesis 3:1-15.

3.2.2 Conclusion

Returning to the question about the way new ideas were read into the story of Genesis 3 we may note the following.

- 1) In 2:12-24, the author of *Wisdom* describes the ungodly and shows that if all human beings had faithfully followed the initial plan of God, most of them would have never been found where they are now, namely in a condition of the ongoing spiritual and moral rot and decay. In 2:22 it is summarized: “They were ignorant of God's mysteries; they entertained no hope that holiness would have its reward, and passed up the prize of unblemished souls.” This verse underlines their present condition as well as the way that led them to it.
- 2) As for the use of the word *diabolos* in verse 24, one can note that when understood as a personal name, it barely, if at all, fits in with the argumentation of the preceding sentences (2:12-22). That is, unless the author's intention was to create a sharp contrast between God and some personality standing behind the army of ungodly. Thus, similarly to 1:15-16, 2:12-22 makes a statement about humanity's right to be referred to as to the image of God (in a tight link with the issue of immortality), while the ensuing 2:24 seems to make a sudden shift back from this relatively elevated note to reason behind human depravity. It rather connects with 1:12-14 and 2:12-22, which describe

³⁵⁵ Despite its popularity among certain early Christian scholars, I see nothing in the text to support this interpretation, apart from a dozen of purely logical conjectures/speculations, masterly dismantled by Levison. See Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 51-52. See also Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 538, “Bois suggests that the reference here is to Cain, the first murderer, and Mr. Gregg adduces additional arguments for this.” See Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 121, referring especially to the interpretation given by Theophilus. Bullard, *A Handbook of The Wisdom of Solomon*, 39.

some of the consequences of wrong human choice as well as general human inclination towards everything sinful. We may suppose that 2:24 might not have been part of the original argument and, therefore, might have been inserted in the text by a scribe, editor, or perhaps a later redactor. This created a more vivid tension between 2:23 and 24, and made a picture of two spiritual dimensions instead of one, led by God. This seems to be quite plausible, though it is too easy to explain all textual obscurities by means of referring to later insertions. However it may be, in the absence of any clear evidence, we should leave this hypothesis as a potential alternative.

- 3) It is possible that the author created a contrast, or dichotomy, in his reader's minds by connecting *diabolos* with the phenomenon of death. This explanation might have been needed to strengthen several other dichotomies, which had already been planned to be in the book, namely: 1) body and soul; 2) the godly and the ungodly; 3) good and evil; 4) Death/Hades and immortality; and 5) God and his artificial adversary on the heavenly level (*diabolos*), thus projecting his universal vision, going far beyond the world. Therefore, the author of *Wisdom* could have considered the possibility of adding some extra tensions to his dualistic picture of the world, which would make it thoroughly complete.³⁵⁶

This technique consisted in employing adversaries and oppositions to make the plot much more intriguing and thrilling than it would be otherwise. Following this technique, and perhaps having Plato's philosophical dichotomy in mind, the author of *Wisdom* would naturally have assumed that the most suitable antagonist of God would be *diabolos*, (*satan* in Hebrew), though no explanation is given with regard to his actual status in *Wisdom* and the reason for his envy in this particular part of the narration.³⁵⁷

Collins maintains that, "the personification of Death and the mention of devil are part of a figurative language, a way of expressing the negative forces, which the author wants to dissociate from God and wisdom. Whatever its mythological overtones, Death is spiritualized here."³⁵⁸ Therefore, the word *diabolos* might be used here in a collective sense as an amorphous, powerful representative of the ungodly force in general, but not

³⁵⁶ Cf. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 85, who quotes several Greek philosophers (approving of dichotomy and dualism as an inevitable necessity), which were later on followed by many among the educated Jews of Alexandria, includes the author of *Wisdom*.

³⁵⁷ "The author expends little effort in clarifying whence these evils arose. The apparent metaphysical dualism of Wis. 2:24 seems inconsistent with the dominance of God and wisdom in the rest of the book," Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 190. See Hayman, "The Mythological Background of the Wisdom of Solomon", 283.

³⁵⁸ Ibid. Cf. Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6: A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation*, xi, who claims: "Death is the prime negative motivation."

necessarily a particular individual, known from other sources, including Genesis 3:1-15. His envy, or we might even say, their envy (of all ungodly people on earth) is, therefore, well connected with the general idea of the previous passages (vv. 12-20). There, the ungodly seem too long to know the mysteries of God and are eager to live forever. This, however, is a prerogative of the righteous only, and the ungodly can only envy and hate their eternal opponents, making their lives as harsh as possible.

- 4) Levison believes that “the author adapts the Genesis narrative”.³⁵⁹ While this is evident in v. 23 and its reference to Genesis 1:26-27, it is not at all certain with regard to v. 24. It is not clear to which part of Genesis this text refers, if to any, as it might refer to chapter three, four, or maybe even six.
- 5) The author did not bother himself with any explanations, as he might have been sure that his readers would immediately recognize his leitmotif, or it might have been used as a theatrical hook to hold his readers’ attention. This means that the view of the *diabolos* being responsible for the entrance of evil into this world (not our earth only, but the whole of the cosmos as well), might not have known in the Jewish context at the time of the writing and therefore it looks even more obscure than it was before.
- 6) It does not appear that the author of the *Wisdom of Solomon* regularly appeals to ancient Near Eastern images. For example, his use of Hades is a rather Greek designation of the Underworld. He might have been acquainted with some representatives of Ugarit mythology, but not necessarily refer to it, though some images can be seen as similar to those of the ancient Near East.³⁶⁰

Considering his intended audience and the themes the author of *Wisdom* is deploying, one can conclude that “his intended audience was not the pagans but rather Alexandrian Jews who needed encouragement in the face of persecutions by pagans.”³⁶¹ Thus, by using his mythological images the author of *Wisdom* could have alluded to “perverse” (from the point of view of the Israelites) Hellenistic political and religious influence, which led many Jews to abandoning the faith of their fathers. Thus, in an allegorical fashion the author of *Wisdom* could have presented his own political and religious ideas, which might have pointed at the ultimate depravity of following Hellenistic ways of life, completely alien to what God wanted for the Jews. Thus, the author could have been suggesting that those who followed this wrong direction would quickly part with

³⁵⁹ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 52.

³⁶⁰ See Hayman, “The Mythological Background of the Wisdom of Solomon”, 286, for a discussion of possible sources the author of *Wisdom* used, Hayman, 286.

³⁶¹ Andrew T. Clicksman, *Wisdom of Solomon 10: A Jewish Hellenistic Reinterpretation of Early Israelite History Through Sapiential Lenses* vol. 9 (Berlin, Boston: Walter De Gruyter GmbH, 2011), 27.

the notions of righteousness and God and, therefore, would become hostages of Greek idolatry and spiritual death. The *diabolos* in this interpretation might have been Greek religion itself, which, as a philosophical and cultural force, required the Jews to leave all those religious values they had treasured the most.

3.2.3 Short summary

Despite the author's use of Genesis 1:26-27 at the later stage of his work, he never uses any direct or indirect quotations from Genesis 3:1-15 and never refers to it even implicitly. Moreover, he never mentions the word "serpent" in his work and seems largely uninterested in him. He also makes no reference to Cain or the events in Genesis 4.

Therefore, one can note his deliberate and persistent use of a dualistic language, where two compelling ideas, images, or simply logical or philosophical opposites are used to create a picturesque image of a real and perhaps endless or at least ongoing battle between Good and Evil, that is, between God and immortality on the one side, and the Devil (or demonic, adversarial forces in general) supported by Death, on the other. The author might have employed these additional dualistic oppositions to make his plot sound as philosophical, serious, and weighty as possible, to say nothing about its chilling and thrilling effects. Additionally, they might have been intended to influence his readers to the extent of making them change their minds in favor of the powerful argument for immortality.

Similar to all other apologetic treatises presented above (sections 3.1-3.3), this one poses the ultimate problem very clearly, and supports it with all kinds of images to convince its Jewish readers to reconsider their hasty inclination to exchange true wisdom and the faith of their fathers for the doubtful and corrupted wisdom of the Greeks. This, despite its attractiveness, is a gate to condemnation and eternal death. Only God and His Wisdom could bestow His followers with immortality and everything really valuable. This seems clearly to be the author's message.

This conclusion dismantles speculations of the Church Fathers in their attempts to sacrifice every biblical and extra-biblical text to make them suit their theology. The *Wisdom of Solomon*, therefore, cannot be placed among any treatises referring to Genesis 3, since its possible relation to the Genesis 3:1-15 story remains vague.

3.3 Philo of Alexandria

Introduction

In this section I will examine Philo's basic interpretative approaches while interpreting Genesis 3:1-15, as well as the observations and conclusions he made in his three treatises: *The Questions and Answers on Genesis*, *On the Creation*, and the *Allegorical Interpretation*. Philo's treatises contain extensive commentaries on the relevant section of Genesis, which automatically makes his extensive contribution significant for the purposes of the present paper.

It seems to me that the author of *Jubilees*, Philo and Josephus are the only early Jewish writers who have not changed the literal image of the serpent while interpreting Genesis 3:1-15. This does not make them identical though, since the reasons that guided them in their rendering of Genesis 3 were most likely dissimilar. Though the ultimate result of their interpretation can be admitted as pretty much the same – the image of the serpent in any of their writings is left intact and is not turned into someone else (the Devil, Satan or any other supernatural being).

In the following section, the most important features of Philo's interpretative techniques will be explored in order to make his interpretative approaches to the Hebrew Scriptures more comprehensible. In subsequent sections, the reasons Philo might have had for interpreting Genesis 3 the way he did, will be considered.

3.3.1 Philo's main Approaches to Writing Biblical Commentaries

In comparison with the authors of *Jubilees* or *Wisdom*, Philo is a much more complicated and versatile author, who has produced a number of treatises on at least four distinct subjects: philosophy, anthropology³⁶², biblical interpretation, and ethics, though his biblical commentaries constitute the bulk of his works.³⁶³

It seems to most biblical scholars that all his biblical commentaries are in one way or another based on the LXX, which he treated "as if it were the original."³⁶⁴ This observation makes him a Greek-oriented representative of the Jewish Alexandrian intelligentsia of his time, rather than a pious first-century BCE Jew. Both he and the author of *Jubilees* seemed to fight

³⁶² In his writings, he reflects a predominantly Stoic anthropology. See John Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch*, Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 1 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 70.

³⁶³ Cf. Kenneth Schenck, *A Brief Guide to Philo* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 3: "Of the forty-eight treatises that have survived in some form, no fewer than thirty-nine are exegetical in orientation."

³⁶⁴ Adam Kamesar (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 71. Folker Siegert, "Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style" in Magne Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible. Old Testament: The History Of Its Interpretation: Antiquity* vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 173.

against a rapid grow of Hellenistic domination, though they employed different methods to achieve the intended result.³⁶⁵ Najman explains:

Philo's challenge was different from the challenge confronting the author of Jubilees and the Temple scroll. They had to authorize, to an exclusively Jewish audience, what they took to be authentic Judaism, in the face of rival practices and interpretations. Philo had to authorize Judaism itself to both Jews and non-Jews, within the relatively new context of the Hellenistic competition of cultures, a competition that was at the same time political especially in light of the even newer Roman Empire's quest to authorize itself through the approbation of the Greek philosophical and literary heritage.³⁶⁶

According to Kamesar, Philo was either not familiar with Hebrew at all, or (what is more likely) believed that the use of Hebrew was not necessary to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures, as reflected in his paying trifle attention to Hebrew.³⁶⁷ On the other hand, he admired the Greek culture so much that he devoted a great deal of his passion and time to studying many famous Greek philosophers to the degree of not just knowing most of their works, but the prehistory of their writings as well.³⁶⁸

His treatises reflect, therefore, a complex combination of philosophical, literary, and allegorical approaches which complied with the multilevel-exegesis of that day, "which is expressed, therefore, entirely in Greek terms."³⁶⁹

His literary approach is based on various non-allegorical approaches to Scripture that permeate his writings, though his own inclinations were in favor of overall allegorization, which he probably borrowed from Platonic, Stoic, and Homeric writings, written long before him. Furthermore, he tried to combine two main lines of interpretation (literary and allegorical), within one piece of work, often presenting both to his reader, sequentially. However, in *The Allegorical Commentary* and in many other interpretative writings, he largely employed allegory.

Additionally, Philo "has very little interest in Genesis narratives as historical record. Rather in his eyes, the historical part of the Pentateuch constitutes an allegorical portrayal of the ethical and spiritual progress of the individual."³⁷⁰ Thus, his interpretation of Genesis "is

³⁶⁵ Justin Marston, "Jewish Understanding of Genesis from 1 to 3," *Science and Christian Belief*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2013, 130-131.

³⁶⁶ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 70.

³⁶⁷ Kamesar, *Cambridge Companion to Philo*, 66. See David Winston, "Philo and Rabbinic Literature," in Kamesar, *Cambridge Companion to Philo*, 235.

³⁶⁸ Cf. Pieter W. van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 115.

³⁶⁹ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism*, 76. Cf. Siegert, "Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style", 164.

³⁷⁰ Kamesar, *Cambridge Companion to Philo*, 85.

similar to the Middle Platonic interpretation of the *Odyssey* which seemed to have made its appearance toward the end of the first century B.C.,³⁷¹ though at the same time it has some common exegetical techniques with some “rabbis of Byzantine Palestine,” who in Van der Horst’s opinion “wrestled with the same questions that the biblical text put before them.”³⁷²

In Levinson’s opinion, Philo often makes, “a transition from anthropology to ethics, from the neutral and rational mind to the evil and virtuous person.”³⁷³ Therefore, Levinson claims that, “Philo does not interpret Genesis; he expands its meaning through the allegory of the soul.”³⁷⁴ Thus, according to Philo, “a human being is a borderline creature who can tend toward virtue or vice. Therefore, the human race must be encouraged to pursue virtue.”³⁷⁵

Moreover, Philo was very much concerned with referring to the law, building all his ideas on and around the law, and proclaiming the law.³⁷⁶ This is the main reason why Moses plays such a crucial role in all his writings.³⁷⁷ Najman maintains:

In Philo’s world the authority of Mosaic Law itself is a live issue. Of course, Philo interprets the law in a particular way that may not have been accepted by all Jews, even Alexandria...But the question of authority arises for him primarily as a question about how to authorize the Law of Moses against competing non-Jewish traditions.³⁷⁸

3.3.2 *The Questions and Answers on Genesis*

In this section, the English translation of this treatise, taken from the Armenian, will be used. The original Greek text has survived in small fragments only and, therefore, can be referred to just episodically, which makes its use very problematic.³⁷⁹ Moreover, I am not as concerned to explore particular words here, as in a comprehensive demonstration of interpretative methods, techniques, and tactics Philo employed while dealing with Genesis 3.

It is worth noting here as well that Philo focuses his commentary upon the most burning questions of Genesis 3, such as: who is the serpent? Why does he challenge God’s command?

³⁷¹ Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria, an Exegete for His Time* (Leiden, New York, Koln: Brill, 1997), 11.

³⁷² Van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context*, 126.

³⁷³ Levinson, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 80.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 77 and 86: “Because Philo accepts a predominantly Greek view of the dichotomy between the body and the soul, he employs Genesis 1-3 as a vehicle for expressing that view.”

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁷⁶ Siegert, “Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style”, 175.

³⁷⁷ D.T. Runia, “How to Read Philo,” *Idem, Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Aldershot: Variorum, , 1990), 189, who claims that Philo limited his interest to exploring five Mosaic texts only, while “other Septuagint writings are seldom invoked.”

³⁷⁸ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 73.

³⁷⁹ Cf. Van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context*, 114.

And why does the author ignore him after 3:15?³⁸⁰ In this regard, Philo can be included in a list of the most attentive readers of the Bible. His answers are, however, far from being as straightforward as his questions.

When interpreting the Genesis text, Philo often avoids giving direct answers and subsequently aims at offering one or several possible explanations, deriving from all kinds of different philosophies of that day.³⁸¹ By doing this, he followed a well-worn path that had been trodden by at least a dozen of the most famous Greek thinkers preceding him.³⁸² This does not mean that those philosophers were acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures, but they did share similar interpretative techniques when dealing with the texts they interpreted.

Philo begins commenting Genesis 3:1-15 in QG 1:31:

Why does (Scripture) represent the serpent as more cunning, "than all the beasts"?"³⁸³

It is proper to tell the truth, that the serpent is truly more *cunning* than all the beasts. To me, however, it seems that this was said because of the serpent's inclination toward passion, of which it is the symbol. And by passion is meant sensual pleasure, for lovers of pleasure are very clever and are *skilled* in arts and means; they are *clever* in finding devices, both those which produce pleasure and those which lead to enjoyment of some kind. But it seems to me that since that creature which excelled in *cunning* was prepared to become the deceiver of man, the argument applies to a very *cunning* creature, not the whole genus, but this particular serpent alone, for the reason mentioned.

Philo seems to know how to choose the right question and what kinds of gaps of Genesis 3:1-15 need to be filled in. After dwelling momentarily on the serpent from Genesis 3 as a carnal animal, Philo rushes to explain his nature in the peculiarly philosophical and psychological categories of passion and sensual pleasure, which in his view the serpent seems to embody or personify. This appears to be of a critical importance for Philo, who treats the serpent as if he were the missing element, who would complete his intricate philosophical picture of God/human relationships. In this portrayal, the man is pictured as mind, the woman as the outward senses, and the serpent is given a role of an irritant intended to prevent human beings from a proper communication with his Author/Creator. Therefore, the rebuttal is relevant only as long as the man is not corrupted and his task seems to consist in looking for various alternative ways to bypass man's agreement with God. Thus, after the man's relationship with God is broken, the rebuttal is no longer needed. However, as soon as man

³⁸⁰ Cf. Ibid, 116.

³⁸¹ Siegert, "Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style", 177.

³⁸² Cf. Schenck, *A Brief Guide to Philo*, 16. See Runia, "How to Read Philo", 191, who shares the opinion of many other scholars in regard to the simple style of Questions and its lack of, "appeal to other biblical texts to elucidate or illustrate his exposition," which makes them think that those were just notes and not the final product at all.

³⁸³ Here and further on while quoting from this text I will refer to T.E. Page and others (eds.), *Philo: Supplement I* (London: William Heinemann LTD., 1951).

again longs for any close relationship with God, the rebuttal is once again required. This ongoing confrontation is a necessary part of human existence.

Therefore, in this section, Philo underlines some important literal details before submitting them to some philosophical/ allegorical interpretation. In other words, he admits that the serpent was a feral creature by practically quoting Genesis 3:1 verbatim. He then underlines that the serpent had a distinctive superiority in wisdom in comparison with other creatures (“beasts of the field”), though in what way and why he never mentions, since the literal interpretation of biblical passages was never his actual goal.

The serpent/pleasure thus possesses rather negative connotations in his interpretation, as several uses of the word “cunning” imply. Some positive attributes, such as “clever and skilled”, are also mentioned, which causes the reader to wrestle with how to properly understand the serpent. Thus, though the actual physical serpent is targeted in Philo’s initial comments, this more positive assessment is done just in passing. An experienced biblical hermeneut can immediately recognize the actual direction of Philo’s unfavorable treatment of the serpent. However it may seem, Philo does not apply this judgment to all serpents though, since he suggests that not all serpents were like this chosen one. Therefore, a complex mix of literal and allegorical descriptions is clearly visible.

Did the serpent speak in the manner of men? QG 1:32 (Gen. 3:2)

First, it is likely that not even in the beginning of the world’s creation were the other animals without a share in speech, but that man excelled in voice (or utterance), being more clear and distinct. Second, when some miraculous deed is prepared, God changes the inner nature. Third, because our souls are filled with many sins and deaf to all utterances except one or another tongue to which they are accustomed; but the souls of the first creatures, as being pure of evil and unmixed, were particularly keen in becoming familiar with every sound. And since they were not provided only with defective senses, such as belong to a miserable bodily frame, but were provided with a very great body and the magnitude of a giant, it was necessary that they should also have more accurate senses, and what is more, philosophical sight and hearing. For not inaptly do some conjecture that they were provided with eyes with which they could see those natures and beings and actions which were in heaven, and with ears to perceive sounds of every kind.

Philo’s ornate explanation flows around the question of the serpent’s ability to speak. However, he does it once again without giving a straightforward answer. By the end of the first sentence, Philo brings us to the point where the attentive reader can immediately grasp that his answer to his question looks like rather “no”, since not only the serpent, but all the first animals in his view could not have been able to speak the way the first man did. Therefore, this thought looks quite dissimilar to *Jubilees* 3:28, where the author of *Jubilees* seems to assume such possibility.

Philo’s second point in his answer maintains, however, that God’s original idea might have been changed when/if necessary, thus admitting that the serpent might have been granted

speech by God's choice or a miracle at some point. Whether of these is what happened is impossible to say, as no particulars are given in the text.

Philo's third argument aims at explaining two versions of the above-mentioned question – employing both physical and philosophical categories. The argument assumes a “yes” answer, proposing that the very first animals could have been able to utter words, though in more of a philosophical than literal way.

Thus, when all three are taken together, Philo's arguments make an impression of a suspended uncertainty, as the reader is left in a quandary to determine what side Philo is actually on.

Why does the serpent speak to the woman and not to the man? **QG 1:33 (Gen. 3:2)**

In order that they may be potentially mortal he deceives by trickery and artfulness. And woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man. For his judgment, "like his body, is masculine and is capable of dissolving or destroying the designs of deception; but the judgment of woman is more feminine, and because of softness she easily gives way and is taken in by plausible falsehoods, which resemble the truth. Accordingly, since in old age the serpent casts off his skin from the top of his head to his tail, by casting it, he reproaches, "man, for he has exchanged death for immortality. From his bestial nature he is renewed and adjusts himself" to different times. Seeing this, she was deceived, though she ought to have looked, as if at an example, at him who practiced stratagems and trickery, and to have obtained ageless and unfading life.

The following question (*Why does the serpent speak to the woman and not to the man?*) is an extremely interesting one even though it challenges the previous point, – if the serpent was not able to speak, then it would be pointless for him to approach the woman. However it may be, once again no particulars are given to explain how exactly Philo perceives the serpent's approach, and what means the serpent intended to communicate with the woman, if not by means of speaking.

It seems that Philo's first three sentences remain on a more literal level and therefore plunge into explaining why “woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man”, using all kinds of psychological tools available to him. Thus, what we see is that feminine nature does not look fascinating by drawing any conclusions from the text. This leaves God to blame for creating women with such a glaring disadvantage. This is more psychology than anything else, though Philo does not call it that.

Thus, Philo drew an authentic, though nevertheless sarcastic picture of two equally fallen creatures. Each had become an easy victim of their own unrestrained passions, and neither of them obtained what they had been longing for so badly.

Why does the serpent lie, saying, "God said, Do not eat of any tree of Paradise"? For on the contrary, He said, "From every tree which is in Paradise you may eat except from one." **QG 1:34 (Gen. 3:4)**

It is the custom of those who fight to lie artfully in order that they may not be found out. This is what happens now. For it was commanded that every (tree) might be used except one. But he who devises evil stratagems, coming between, says, "The command was given not to eat of any." As a slippery thing and a stumbling block to the mind, he put forward an ambiguity of words. For the expression "not to eat from all" clearly means "not even from one," which is false. And again it also means "not from every one," by which is to be understood "not from some," which is true. Thus he spoke a falsehood in a very clear manner.

The serpent's argument is laid out in a circular manner, being what we today would consider as a tool of psychology. At the time of Philo's writing this commentary, psychology was ruled and administered by philosophy. Philo sorts every word out and demonstrates how, and by what means, the woman could be deceived. He goes about explaining all the basic rules of language which, when rightly used, can lead to a plain sense, but when purposely confused and muddled, can deceive the one who is addressed.

Philo accuses the serpent of being a liar without mentioning his name, though once more nothing is mentioned about the serpent's actual aims, motives and intentions.

Why, when the command was given not to eat of one particular tree, did the woman include even approaching it closely, saying, "He said, You shall not eat of that one and not come near it"? **QG 1:35 (Gen. 3:3)**
First, because taste and every sense consists generically in its contact. Second, for the severe punishment of those who have practiced this. For if merely approaching was forbidden, would not those who, besides touching the tree, also ate of it and enjoyed it, adding a great wrong to a lesser one, becoming condemners and punishers of themselves?

Once again, the question is chosen skillfully, as it reflects a reader's natural curiosity and therefore quickly attracts one's attention.

Philo gives two complementary answers, which once again touch upon the literal, and, this time, logical fields. He claims that "every taste and sense consists generically in contact" and what one cannot touch, he cannot eat. Here, in accordance with the opinion of Van der Horst, Philo shows his familiarity with, "well-known halakhic principle, which rabbis would later call *seyag la-Torah*, a fence around the Torah."³⁸⁴ Thus, to prevent someone from doing something, one should add additional prohibitions, which cover the previous one, making it doubly secure. In this way, if "approaching is forbidden would not those who, besides touching the tree, also ate of it...?"³⁸⁵

However, Philo does not bother himself with explaining where the woman learned this idea from (i.e. husband or God), but simply continues his philosophical exploration.

What is the meaning of the expression, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil?" **QG 1:36 (Gen. 3:5)**

³⁸⁴ Van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context*, 121.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

Whence did the serpent know this plural noun “gods”? For the true God is one, and he now names Him for the first time. It could not have been a prescient quality that foresaw that there was to be among mankind a belief in a multitude of gods, which, as the narrative first proved, came about not through anything rational nor yet through the better irrational creatures, but through the most noxious and vile of beasts and reptiles. For these lurk in the ground, and their dens are in caves and in the hollows of the earth. And it is truly proper to a rational being to consider God to be the one truly existing being, but to a beast to create many gods,¹ and to an irrational creature to create a god who does not exist in truth. Moreover he shows cunning in another way, for not only is there in the Deity knowledge of good and evil but also the acceptance and pursuit of good and the aversion to and rejection of evil. But these things he did not reveal, for they were useful; he included a reference only to the knowledge of contraries, good and evil. In the second place, “as gods” in the plural was now said not without reason but in order that he might show forth the good and evil, and that these gods are of a twofold nature. Accordingly, it is fitting that particular “gods” should have knowledge of opposites; but the elder cause is superior (to good and evil).

Philo seems to play with words here either ignoring, or not knowing, that in Hebrew the word “Elohim” can refer to both God and gods. Thus, in the Hebrew Scriptures the phrase is usually read as, “You shall be like God, knowing good and evil”.³⁸⁶ Or, perhaps, according to Philo, it should be read as “gods” – plural? Why Philo chooses to play with the word “gods” in his answer is difficult to say, as he gives us no explanation with regard to where did he take this word from. Perhaps LXX gave him a bit unclear direction to follow? Or it may be the case that LXX, to which he referred, renders this word indistinctly, causing him to think of many gods. On the other hand, it may be a deliberate attempt by Philo to strike at Greek pagan worship, rituals, or practices. If so, Philo’s monotheistic tone is implied here, though the biblical text is made to call Adam and the woman gods instead in a sarcastic manner.

Philo clearly employs at least two levels of exegesis in this discussion, one literal, and one philosophical. Each builds its argumentation around the clarification of the two terms: “rational” and “irrational”. In other words, the serpent is given the epithet, “irrational and the most noxious and vile of beasts and reptiles” for his challenge to the only and true God since, from Philo's point of view, only an irrational being could suggest a possibility of becoming other gods. Thus, the serpent is treated as an earthly creature, as it is hard to image the word “irrational” applying to the supernatural beings.

Why does the woman first touch the tree and eat of its fruit, and afterwards the man also take of it? **QG 1:37 (Gen. 3:6)**

According to the literal meaning the priority (of the woman) is mentioned with emphasis. For it was fitting that man should rule over immortality and everything good, but woman over death and everything vile. In the allegorical sense, however, woman is a symbol of sense, and man, of mind. Now of necessity sense comes into contact with the sense-perceptible and by the participation of sense, things pass into the mind, for sense is moved by objects, while the mind is moved by sense.

³⁸⁶ See NLT and other English translations.

Woman's claim to priority is called into view and interestingly explained here. It seems that for Philo, woman's faith is inevitably connected with "death and vile", though her ability to make impact on the mind of the man is well emphasized. On physical levels, women are pictured as rather impulsive and emotional and, therefore, tend towards manipulating their rational husbands. These often have no time to weigh sound argumentation before they are swept away by waves of uncontrolled female emotions. Once again, the symbolic (allegorical) and psychological meanings of the soul are given expression.

What is the meaning of the words, "And she gave to her husband with her"? QG 1:38 (Gen. 3:6)

What has just been said is stated because there is almost one and the same time of appearance at the same time sense perception is received from objects and the mind is impressed by sense perception.

Although the sentence is symbolically paraphrased, one still can determine that, according to Philo, Adam was standing next to his wife. Thus, he was passively listening to the entire dialogue between his wife and the serpent, whose only goal was to deceive. Hence Philo's opinion appears to be positive with regard to the question of whether Adam was standing next to his woman at the time of the serpent's seduction.

What is the meaning of the words; "The eyes of both were opened"? QG 1:39 (Gen. 3:7)

That they were not created blind is evident from the fact that even all the other beings were created perfect, both animals and plants, and should not man be endowed with the superior parts, such as eyes? Moreover, a little while before he gave earthly names to all animals, and so it is clear that he had first seen them. Or it may be that by eyes Scripture symbolically indicates the vision of the soul, through which alone are perceived all good and bad, noble and shameful things, and all opposites. But if the eye is a separate intelligence, which is called the counselor of the understanding, there is also a special irrational eye, which is called opinion.

Philo begins answering this question by referring to its literal meaning and therefore, man's physical ability to see. Then he moves to the discussion of the soul and its "eyes," thereby jumping from the literal to the symbolic/allegorical level.

Once again, he puts two explanations to the same question under one umbrella in his final statement: "But if the eye is a separate intelligence, which is called the counselor of the understanding, there is also a special irrational eye, which is called opinion." Here he makes an anthropological-philosophical distinction between two different elements of human nature: perception (coming by the ability to see, grasp, and perceive things), and his rationalism (understanding, its limitation and relativity of the human mind) and uses both in his argument.

What is the meaning of the words, "For they knew that they were naked"? QG 1:40 (Gen. 3:7)

It was of this, that is, of their own nakedness, that they first received knowledge by eating of the forbidden fruit. And this was opinion and the beginning of evil, for they had not used any covering, inasmuch as the parts of the
--

universe are immortal and incorruptible; but (now) they needed that which is made by hand and corruptible. And this knowledge was in being naked, not that it was in itself the cause of change but that now strangeness was conceived by the mind toward the whole world.

Philo once again answers this question both literally and figuratively. Here, nakedness seems to be rather a blank page, and its loss is compared to the act of plunging into a bog of human relativity, leaving God's knowledge and guidance behind. Therefore, nakedness could have meant an innocent reflection of God's perfect world and its absence could mean the introduction of havoc, which entered the human brain after humanity had let the rebuttal to be not only stated, but also obeyed and followed.

Why do they sew the leaves of the fig tree as loincloths? **QG 1:41 (Gen. 3:8)**

First, because the fruit of the fig tree is sweeter and pleasant to the taste. Accordingly it symbolically indicates those who sew together and weave together many sense pleasures one with another. Wherefore they (the leaves) are girded round the place of the genitals, which are the instrument of greater things. Second, because the fruit of the fig tree is, as I have said, sweeter than that of other trees, and its leaves are rougher. Accordingly (Scripture) wishes to make clear symbolically that although the movement of pleasure seems to be somewhat slippery and smooth, nevertheless in truth it proves to be rough, and it is impossible to feel joy or pleasure without first feeling pain and again feeling additional pain. For it is always a grievous thing to feel pain in the midst of two painful states, one of them being at the beginning, and the other being added.

Once again two approaches are used and combined. 1) Fig leaves "are sweeter and therefore rougher than any other leaves." This is certainly the literal explanation. 2) "Accordingly (Scripture or Moses, the historian) wishes to make clear symbolically that although the movement of pleasure seems to be somewhat slippery and smooth, nevertheless in truth it proves to be rough, and it is impossible to feel joy or pleasure without first feeling pain and again feeling additional pain." This is no doubt the allegorical one. Thus, once again he employs two approaches in his commenting.

What is the meaning of the words, "The sound was heard of God's walking." Can there be a noise of feet, or does God walk? **QG 1:42 (Gen. 3:8)**

Whatever sensible gods are in heaven that is, the stars all move in a circle and proceed in revolutions. But the highest and eldest cause is stable and immobile, as the theory of the ancients holds. For He gives an indication and impression as though He wished to give the appearance of moving, for though no voice is given forth, prophets hear through a certain power a divine voice sounding what is said to them. Accordingly, as He is heard without speaking, so also He gives the impression of walking without actually walking, indeed without moving at all. And you see that before there was any tasting of evil, (men) were stable, constant, immobile, peaceful and eternal; similarly and in the same way they believed God to be, just as He is in truth. But after they had come into association with deceit, they moved of themselves, and changed from being immobile, and believed that there was alteration and change in Him.

The explanation of the question looks philosophically solid and, therefore, seems to be based on logic and deduction, rather than on the literal meaning of what was actually taking place in the Garden of Eden. To strengthen his case, Philo dilutes and seasons his assertions

with an abundant use of philosophical argumentation. No symbolic meaning is provided because in this verse it was unnecessary.

Why, when they hid themselves from the face of God, was not the woman, who first ate of the forbidden fruit, first mentioned, but the man; for (Scripture) says, "Adam and his wife hid themselves"? QG 1:43 (Gen. 3:9)
--

It was the more imperfect and ignoble element, the female that made a beginning of transgression and lawlessness, while the male made the beginning of reverence and modesty and all good, since he was better and more perfect.
--

The answer once again comes from the spheres of such contemporary subjects as: psychology, anthropology, and certainly logic, and therefore, the argument is not built on the literal meaning of the text.

Philo does not indicate where the statement that Adam was more perfect than the woman (cf. 1:33) comes from, nor does he give grounds for this suggestion. It could be something of a widespread traditional view of his time, which later on must have made its further impact on the early Christian Church Fathers as well.

Allegorization makes things look differently, thus turning the female and male into the evil and good sides of the human nature respectively. However, one question appears in this regard: how it could happen that good (the man) seemed to be manipulated and controlled by bad (the woman)? How could this be possible? No answer is given.

Why did they hide themselves, not in any other place, but in the midst of the trees of Paradise"? QG 1:44 (Gen. 3:9)

Not all things are done with reflection and wisdom by sinners, but there are times when thieves sit over the theft which they have committed, not seeing the consequence and that that which lies beside them and at their feet is already sought and hunted. So also it now befell. Whereas they ought to have fled far away from the tree whence came their transgression, in the very midst of this place he was caught, so that proof of their lawlessness was more evident and clear, and there was no fleeing. And thus (Scripture) symbolically indicates that every evil person has a refuge in evil, and every sensual person resorts to, and finds rest in, sensuality.

Here Philo calls the first couple "sinners" for the first time (contrary to Genesis 3, which in fact never calls them so) and draws a parallel with thieves sitting by their booty.

About 70% of Philo's interpretation constitutes a literal explanation, while only at the end of the paragraph does he make some symbolic connections with the previous comments, claiming that: "(Scripture) symbolically indicates that every evil person has a refuge in evil, and every sensual person resorts to, and finds rest in, sensuality." In the middle of his explanatory paragraph, he answers his question about where the man and the woman chose to conceal themselves, thus admitting that what they did was wrong and a transgression. The Apostle Paul in Romans 5 may use same line of argumentation, where he also states that the

first couple “sinned”, while the act they did clearly belonged to the category of transgression (Rom. 5:12-13). Considering that both Philo and Paul lived approximately contemporaneously (1st century CE), it would not be surprising that they would share similar theological assumptions regarding the status of the first couple.

Why does He, who knows all things, ask Adam, "Where art thou?", and why does He not also ask the woman?
QG 1:45 (Gen. 3:10)

The things said appear to be not a question but a kind of threat and reproach: where art thou now, from what good hast thou removed thyself, O man? From mortality and a blessed life, thou hast gone over to death and unhappiness, in which thou hast been buried. But the woman He did not consider it fitting to question, although she was the beginning of evil and led him (man) into a life of vileness, but this passage also has a more apt allegory. For the sovereign and ruling element in man, having reason, when it listens to anyone, introduces the vice of the female part also, that is, perception.

Here, Philo mentions two fascinating observations. First, turning God’s question into a threat, he shields God from being accused of ignorance with regard to Adam’s whereabouts.³⁸⁷ Second, he calls the woman the beginning of evil (or the cause of evil), thus suggesting that, according to his understanding, evil has some natural or perhaps even human cause, as opposed to being unnatural or supernatural. As is his custom, he finishes his remarks on this verse by putting forth an allegorical explanation of the problem: “For the sovereign and ruling element in man, having reason, when it listens to anyone, introduces the vice of the female part also, that is, perception.” This should not necessarily be viewed as a misogynous statement. Rather, it can be understood as an explanation of the tragedy that befell humanity, where each constituent part of humanity plays its own vital role.

Why does the man say, "The woman gave me of the tree and I ate," while the woman says, "The serpent did not give it, but deceived me, and I ate"? **QG 1:46 (Gen.3:11-12)**

What is so stated (literally) contains a sentiment that is to be approved, for woman is of a nature to be deceived rather than to reflect greatly, but man is the opposite here. But according to the deeper meaning, the object of sense perception deceives and deludes the particular senses of an imperfect being to which it comes, and sense perception being already infected by its object, passes on the infection to the sovereign and ruling element. So then the mind receives from sense, the giver, that which the latter has suffered. And sense is deceived and deluded by a sense-perceptible object, but the senses of a wise man, like the reflections of his mind, are not to be deceived.

Once again Philo presents a complex mix of psychology, philosophy, and allegory in order to interpret a puzzling question he himself raised in terms of the anthropology of the soul. Thus, he refers to a “deeper meaning”, and therefore treats the question respectively. Part of Philo’s interpretative strategy clearly resembles his previous comments on questions 1:33, 1:37, and 1:43. Once again, his allegorical method finds its way through the textual thickets.

³⁸⁷ See Van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context*, 122.

Additionally, this answer makes it obvious that Philo holds to a patriarchal hierarchy model, where men were always superior to females. Thus, he calls males both “sovereigns” and “ruling elements” to emphasize their higher status.

<p>Why does He first curse the serpent, next the woman, and third the man? QG 1:47 (Gen.3:14)</p> <p>The arrangement of curses follows the order of the wrongdoing. The serpent was the first to deceive. Second, the woman sinned through him, yielding to deceit. Third the man (sinned), yielding to the woman's desire rather than to the divine commands. However the order also is well suited to allegory, for the serpent is a symbol of desire, as was shown, and woman is a symbol of sense, and man of mind. So that desire becomes the evil origin of sins, and this first deceives sense, while sense takes the mind captive.</p>

The passage blaming the serpent as the first to deceive is a tricky one and could have been understood as the source or the origin of evil in general, though it is very doubtful that Philo meant something like this here. It rather looks like he simply refers to the order of the wrongdoings in the biblical sequence.

As for the question of the origin of evil, Philo never utters a word about it in *the Questions*, but once again refers to his anthropology of the soul – pondering over such terms as “desire”, “mind” and “senses”. Therefore, his routine conclusions stating that, “The serpent was the first to deceive. Second, the woman sinned through him, yielding to deceit. Third, the man (sinned), yielding to the woman's desire rather than to the divine commands”, should not be understood as suggesting something more than they were intended. Philo does not show any acquaintance with the early Jewish interpretation of this passage and simply sticks to his own.

<p>Why is this curse laid upon the serpent to move upon its breast and belly, to eat dust and to have enmity toward woman“? QG 1:48 (Gen.3:15)</p> <p>The text is plain, since we have as testimony that which we see. But according to the deeper meaning it is to be allegorically interpreted as follows. Since the serpent is a symbol of desire, he takes the form of lovers of pleasure, for he crawls upon his breast and belly, stuffed with food and drink, and has the insatiable desire of a cormorant, and is intemperate and unbridled in eating flesh. And whatever has to do with food is altogether earthy, where before he is said to eat dust. And desire has a natural enmity toward sense, which (Scripture) symbolically calls woman. And notwithstanding that desires seem to be critical of the senses, they are in reality flatterers who plot evil in the manner of enemies. And it is the custom of adversaries that through that which they bestow as gifts they cause great harm, such as defectiveness of vision to the eyes, and difficulty of hearing to the ears, and insensibility to the other (sense organs); and they bring upon the whole body together dissolution and paralysis, taking away all its health and for no good reason newly bringing many bad sicknesses.</p>
--

Philo refuses to uncover the plain meaning of the question though he refers to the existing interpretative problem, which he asserts, should be understood in terms of an allegory. Thus, once again he prefers to compare the serpent with a desire/pleasure and the woman with senses, thus going on the well-worn path of symbolism and psychological/philosophical language. Once again, he avoids interpreting the Genesis 3 text according to its own context, “The text is plain, since we have as testimony that which we see”, he himself nevertheless

ignores the literal meaning of the answer and goes direction of his own.

Conclusion

After examining all of Philo’s answers, one cannot escape the impression that the primary goal of his interpretation was not the exploration of the literal meaning of the Genesis 3 text. His goals were different. “While *Jubilees* responds to the difficulty by construing the pre-Sinaitic narratives, as having crypto-legal content, Philo interprets them as having crypto-philosophical content”.³⁸⁸ He does not dig into the past, nor does he try to reconcile, explain, or even introduce his audience to the mindset, traditions, mentality, culture, and history of the Israelite or early Jewish people. Therefore, Philo’s hermeneutical approach is directed to please a certain philosophical-oriented audience and by doing so to share some Jewish wisdom in a disguised manner with all those who claimed themselves to be the wisest men on earth – those whose culture and philosophy Philo admired a great deal.

As for the serpent, Philo is certainly not interested in unwrapping all the secrets surrounding his personality, though the questions he asks are indeed thought provoking. His inquisitive mind simply ignores the literary side of questions such as: who was the serpent? Why did he behave as he did? It seems that Philo consciously steps away from the story in Genesis 3, and concentrates only those parts of Genesis 3 that, due to this or that reason, most closely suit his philosophical approach.

It is surprising to note, however, how his allegorical trajectory passes quite far from the serpent, whom he calls various names, but never pits against God. Despite his enthusiasm for Platonic philosophy, he always knows that God is the One and therefore cannot brook any rivals. This basic assumption was missed by many early Christians in Philo’s writings, who read a powerful antagonist the serpent and called him Satan. This idea is not and could never have been derived from a plain reading of Philo’s retellings, given Philo’s strong inclination towards authentic monotheism.³⁸⁹

Chart 10:

Portrayal of the Serpent in Philo’s Writings:	Literal Description of the Serpent	Allegorical Description
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The earth-born reptile 2. Speaks in the voice of a man (not in QG 1:31) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pleasure 2. Deceitful 3. Critically important

³⁸⁸ Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 82.

³⁸⁹ Cf. Philo’s point in *On the Creation LXI* (171-172), where he contests any polytheistic ideas, considering God as One and the only supreme Being.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Very cunning (QG 1:31) 4. Knows all about God's commandment and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (QG 1:35-36) 5. The beast (QG 1:36) 6. The first deceiver (QG 1:47) 7. Receives his punishment (QG 1:48) 	<p>third element in general description of the human soul and particularly in Philo's anthropology of the human soul.</p>
--	--	---

3.3.3 The Allegorical Interpretation

It is obvious from the title of this treatise that the primary focus of this commentary lies in the genre of allegory.³⁹⁰ Though the literal meaning of the relevant biblical passages is often presented, this meaning is transformed by the use of various philosophical/allegorical terms.

Siegert claims that this happens because Philo's "work seems to echo the service in Alexandrian synagogue with its lesson from the Septuagint and the more or less rhetorical expositions, which would follow."³⁹¹ And this is exactly what one does consistently find in the treatise. In other words, though Philo's commentary "often proceeds through the Genesis text passage by passage," he "frequently digresses in it to other parts of Scripture. Yet there is usually a textual basis for his wanderings, perhaps some catchword in the text, and he customarily returns to the original passage, when he is done roaming."³⁹²

Philo seems never to be satisfied with the surface meaning and constantly looks for some "deeper" meaning, which is often sought for in this treatise by explaining Moses' actions through the use of some high philosophical principles, which from Philo's standpoint simply cannot be ignored.³⁹³ The problem lies in that the resulting interpretation often extends beyond all normal borders and therefore would seem to become ungraspable for the ordinary reader. This leads to a conclusion that Philo's audience, which he constantly had in mind, must have consisted of those in the well educated, intelligent, philosophically grounded, Greek-oriented Alexandrian Jewish Diaspora.

Whatever the reader's background, the following section will consider the section of *Allegorical Interpretation* devoted to the interpretation of Genesis 3:1-15 in order to highlight all the major interpretative approaches Philo used while writing this commentary, even though these fifteen verses are dealt with at great length over about one hundred pages and therefore

³⁹⁰ David T. Runia, "Philo, Alexandrian, and Jew," in Idem, *Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990), 5-6.

³⁹¹ Siegert, "Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style", 179.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid. See also Runia, "Philo, Alexandrian, and Jew," 6.

simply cannot be examined in-depth within the limits of this study. This means that I will deal with the passages in question by highlighting only those few sentences, which are most relevant to the discussion of the serpent.

The first reference to Genesis 3:1-15 appears in the *Allegorical Interpretation II: XVIII* (71), where Philo discusses Genesis 3:1:

Ο δέ Οφίς ἦν φρονιμώτατος πάντων τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὧν ἐποίησε κύριος ὁ θεός " (Gen. iii. 1). Δυεῖν προγεγονότων νοῦ καὶ αἰσθήσεως καὶ τούτων γυμνῶν κατὰ τὸν δεδηλωμένον τρόπον ὑπαρχόντων, ἀνάγκη τρίτην ἡδονὴν συναγωγὸν ἀμφοῖν νπάρξαι πρὸς τὴν τῶν νοητῶν καὶ αἰσθητῶν ἀντίληφιν

Now the serpent was the most subtle of all the beasts on the earth, which the Lord God had made " (Gen. iii. 1). Two things, mind and bodily sense, having already come into being, and these being in nakedness after the manner that has been set forth, it was necessary that there should be a third subsistence, namely pleasure, to bring both of them together to the apprehension of the objects of mental and of bodily perception.³⁹⁴

Without any hesitation, Philo refers to the serpent as pleasure (cf. *QG* 1:31), while calling the first man and his wife as “mind and bodily sense” respectively in both subsequent sections (71 and 72). He argues that the third element, pleasure, was needed “to bring these two together.” Levison explains this triangle by saying that for Philo “the man is the neutral mind, which is capable of virtue and vice; the woman is sense perception, and the serpent, pleasure. Desire deceives the senses to capture the mind.”³⁹⁵

Thus in *Alleg. Interp. II: XVIII* (72) Philo writes:

επειδὴ τοῖνον ἀμφω ταῦτα συνελθεῖν ἔδει πρὸς κατάληφιν τῶν υποκειμένων, τις αὐτὰ συνήγαγεν ὅτι μὴ δεσμός τρίτος ἔρωτος καὶ ἐπιθυμίας, ἀρχούσης καὶ δυναστευούσης ἡδονῆς, ἦν συμβολικῶς ὄφιν ὠνόμασε;

Since then it was necessary that both of these should come together for the apprehension of the objects about them, who was it that brought them together save a third, a bond of love and desire, under the rule and dominion of pleasure, to which the prophet gave the figurative name of a serpent?

The expression “ἦν συμβολικῶς ὄφιν ὠνόμασε”, which can be translated as: “was figuratively named a serpent”, clearly demonstrates that despite some literal interpretations that must have existed at that time, Philo does not follow or even mention them at all. Instead, he prefers to pursue the different path of allegorical interpretation, which brought out what he believed the text was saying.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ Text and translation according to F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker, *Philo* vol. I (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann, 1929, reprint 1981).

³⁹⁵ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 80, 84.

³⁹⁶ Kamesar claims that by doing this Philo followed “some currents of contemporary Greek interpretation, allegorical exegesis was viewed as ‘a healing of myth’, a *therapeia mython*.” See Adam Kamesar “Biblical Interpretation in Philo”, in Adam Kamesar (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 79.

The next three sections (73, 74, and 75) follow the previous pattern, where Philo barely touches upon the literary meaning of the text, and mostly dwells on varied philosophical/allegorical interpretations. It quickly becomes evident that only non-literal meanings hold any real interest for him. Consider the following example (73):

πάνυ καλῶς ὁ ζωοπλάστης θεὸς ἐδημιούργησε τὴν τάξιν. νουν πρῶτον τον ἄνδρα, πρεσβύτατον γάρ εν ἀνθρώπω, εἶτα αἰσθησιν τὴν γυναῖκα, εἶτα ἐξῆς τρίτον ἡδονήν.

Exceeding well did God the Framers of living beings contrive the order in which they were created. First He made mind, the man, for mind is most venerable in a human being, then bodily sense, the woman, then after them in the third place pleasure.³⁹⁷

Philo then explains why he is likening pleasure and the serpent and gives several reasons-(74):

- 1) “The movement of pleasure like that of the serpent is torturous and variable,” and then he explains what both terms mean for him.
- 2) Both pleasure and the serpent behave likewise; they swallow their victims and devour them in a blink of an eye.

The *Allegorical Interpretation* (further *Alleg. Interp.*) II: XIX and its subsections (76, 77 and 78) certainly looks like a sermon in which Philo quotes from Numbers 21:5 and 6 to support and enlarge his previous applications, thus concluding them in the following way:

For verily nothing so surely brings death upon a soul as immoderate indulgence in pleasures.

In *Alleg. Interp.* II: XX (79) Philo compares the serpent/pleasure with temperance and indulges himself in a play of opposites:

ἴως οὖν γίνεται ἴασις τοῦ πάθους; στανέτερος ὄφεις κατασκευασθὴ τῷ τῆς Ἐυας ἐναντίος, ὁ σωφροσύνης λόγος· ἡδονὴ γαρ ἐναντίον σωφροσύνης, ποικίλῳ πάθει ποικίλη ἀρετὴ και ἀμυνομένη πολέμιαν ἡδονήν.

How, then, is a healing of their suffering brought about? By the making of another serpent, opposite in kind to that of Eve, namely the principle of self-mastery. For self-mastery runs counter to pleasure, a variable virtue to a variable affection, and a virtue that defends itself against pleasure its foe.

Thus, we see that although he uses such words as “serpent” or “Eve” in these sentences, none of them in fact contains any literal meaning for Philo, but are to be seen as only shadows or symbols of those things and principles that lie behind them –those which only true philosopher can discern and bring to light.

The following subsection (79) is intended to clarify all kinds of vagueness in Numbers

³⁹⁷ “The Image of the architect is, of course, modeled on the image of the craftsman, the “Father and Maker of all” in the *Timaeus*.” See Carlos Fraenkel, *Philosophical Religions from Plato to Spinoza: Reason, Religion and Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2012. Although it is difficult to say whether such references to God were borrowed by Philo directly from Plato’s works only, one cannot dismiss such suppositions with certainty, as this is one of the most speculative areas in Philo’s writings.

21 and reveal the real motives that lied behind God's command to make another serpent (seraph in Hebrew, a fiery serpent):

τον κατά σωφροσύνην οὖν ὄφιν κελεύει ὁ θεός Μωυσεῖ κατασκευάσασθαι καὶ φησι· " ποίησον σεαυτῷ ὄφιν καὶ θέσ' αὐτόν ἐπὶ σημείου " (ib. 8). ὁρᾷς ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλῳ τινὶ κατασκευάζεται τούτον ὁ Μωυσῆς τὸν ὄφιν ἢ ἑαυτῷ, προστάττει γάρ ὁ θεός "ποίησον σεαυτῷ," ἵνα γνῶς, ὅτι οὐ παντός ἐστὶ κτήμα σωφροσύνη, ἀλλὰ μόνου τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς.

So then God bids Moses to make the serpent that expresses self-mastery, and says: "Make for thyself a serpent and set it upon a standard." You notice that Moses makes this serpent for no one else, but for himself, for God's bidding is "Make it for thyself." This is that you may know that self-mastery is not a possession of every man, but only of the man beloved of God.

Philo's new application refers to the bronze serpent from Numbers 21, which Moses is told to make in order to repel the deadly attacks of poisonous snakes against the people of Israel. He changes the biblical text's flow, however, in order to make a point about self-mastery, which cannot be obtained by man's own strength, but can be granted, according to Philo's logic, only to "the man beloved of God". There is an obvious didactic goal behind this utterance, in my view, one that could be called an application to of his previous argumentation. Thus, while the first man was not able to maintain himself and failed to become "the man beloved of God", Moses obviously reached this standard in Philo's imagination and therefore, restored everything that Adam had lost.³⁹⁸

The following subsections (80-81) are once again filled with allegorical commentaries, based on such images and words as "bronze", "virtues", and "temperance." What is interesting here is that Philo claims that the serpent was sent to the woman (81):

...That is by the serpent, which was sent to Eve...

Who sent him is not said, but that impersonal reference could only point to God. Thus, despite the fact that the fragment has been torn from its context, it is still worth noting that though Philo interprets the serpent in terms of pleasure, this does change basic point: the serpent (whether pleasure or not) was sent to the woman (senses) by someone else (the third actor) with the goal of testing or proving her ability to withstand temptation. Whatever the case, it seems that Philo believed that it was not the serpent's own idea to approach the woman with whatever was in his mind (as pleasure cannot appear on its own, unless it is sent to someone by God).

An allegorical application works well when it shares with its literal counterpart some commonalities on the background level. Without these, the allegory is completely divorced

³⁹⁸ Charles A. Anderson, *Philo of Alexandria's Views of the Physical World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 26, who claims that all Philo's philosophy was built around the figure of Moses. See also Christian Von Dehsen and Scott L. Harris (eds.), *Philosophers and Religious Leaders: An Encyclopedia of People Who Changed the World* (Phoenix: The Oryx Press, 1999), 154.

from any literary context. This observation leads me to think that here, as well as in many similar places, Philo's literal beliefs give way to his bold allegorical interpretations.

Moreover, this entire illustration clearly depicts both the serpent from the Garden of Eden and the bronze one as two mediators chosen to test Adam and Eve first and then Moses and his people. Therefore, what Philo maintains here is noteworthy: two serpents play both an important and at the same time quite marginal role as God's chosen rebuttals or irritants, in order to test those nearby. They were important because they functioned as a foil for God who required someone to make Him this foe. And marginal, because this could have been anyone, since God could have chosen any animal on earth for this purpose. Thus, once again we see that the primary objects of God's tests in both cases were people and people only. The means are important, but should not take center stage.

This application must have led Philo's readers (or perhaps even listeners) to the following conclusion: Moses passed his test and subsequently acquired temperance, while the first couple failed and subsequently acquired all sorts of problems. The only issue with this interpretation is, if the serpent from Genesis 3 worked as a mediator, why punish him? Apparently, Philo was not interested in answering this question.

Here and further on, Moses becomes for Philo an outstanding example to follow. He is the lawgiver, the man who quickly became the primary mediator between people and God in regard to obtaining access to the heavenly Torah. In this respect it is easy to understand why early Christians so much liked Philo's allusions, since Moses is often seen in Christian writings as a shadow or symbol of Christ (cf. Deut. 18:16-18, etc.).

After a prolonged lyrical digression, Philo returns to interpreting Genesis 3 in *Alleg. Interp.* II: XXVI (106), claiming that, "of all the passions the most mischievous is pleasure." The rest of section XXVI (107-108) serves as an evidence for this idea. There are no direct allusions to Genesis 3:1-15 in this part.

Philo resumes his interpretation of Genesis 3 with some thoughts on 3:8. Instead of examining the Genesis 3 text itself, he considers the meaning of the word "virtue" as well as with the question what it mean to run from God. It is surprising to see that *Alleg. Interp.* III: I-XV lists a great variety of reasons to run from the face of the Lord, including among them, consequences. Thus, while beginning with the assumption that, "the wicked man is inclined to run away", Philo develops this idea through the next fourteen sections all the while never mentioning the text in question.

In all these stories the primary figures of interest to him are, for the most part, Esau, Jacob, and mostly Moses (see *Alleg. Interp.* IV-XV). Therefore, his deviation from the book of

Genesis, looks very much deliberate and regular, as once again his notes demonstrate abstract reasoning, or perhaps a thematic sermon, rather than a full-fledged exegetical commentary.

In section *Alleg. Interp.* III: XVI (subsections 49-50) Philo resumes his reading of Genesis 3, and eventually turns to Genesis 3:9:

διά τί μόνος καλεῖται ὁ Ἀδάμσυγκεκρυμμένης αὐτῷ καὶ τῆς γυναικός; λεκτέον οὖν πρῶτον, ὅτι καλεῖται ὁ νοῦς Ὁπου ἦν, ὅταν ἔλεγχον λαμβάνῃ καὶ ἐπίστασιν τῆς τροπῆς οὐ μόνον αὐτὸς καλεῖται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ πάσαι, ἀνευ γάρ τῶν δυνάμεων ὁ νοῦς καθ' εαυτὸν γυμνός καὶ οὐδέ ὢν εὐρίσκεται μία δὲ τῶν δυνάμεων καὶ ἡ αἰσθησις, ἥτις ἐστὶ γυνή. συγκέκληται οὖν τῷ Ἀδάμ τῷ νῷ καὶ ἡ γυνή αἰσθησις' ἴδια δ' αὐτὴν οὐ καλεῖ διὰ τί; ὅτι ἀλογος οὔσα ἔλεγχον ἐξ εαυτῆς λαμβάνειν οὐ δύναται.

Why is Adam alone called, his wife having hid herself with him? Well, first of all we must say that the mind is called even there where it was, when it receives reproof and a check is given to its defection. But not only is the mind itself called, but all its faculties as well, for without its faculties, the mind by itself is found naked and not even existent; and one of the faculties is sense-perception, which is woman. Included then in the call of Adam, the mind, is that of sense perception, the woman; but God does not call her with a special call; why? Because, being irrational, she has no capacity derived from herself to receive reproof.

One single sentence is devoted to a literal exploration of this verse, while the rest of his interpretation moves to the field of symbolic imagery, describing Adam as mind and his wife as outward senses, who in comparison with mind, is incapable of receiving reproof.

Philo seems to underline the hierarchical family pattern, where man is a head of his household while the woman is understood as a faculty of his. This might be directed against some Hellenistic tendencies, which aimed at bestowing women with similar attributes of dignity as men.

Alleg. Interp. III: XVII (subsection 51): Here Philo makes some rare literal statements surrounded by philosophical discussion of the nature of God.

Το δὲ "πού εἰ" πολλαχῶς ἐστὶν ἀπο δοῦναί' ἀπαξ μὲν οὐ τὸ πειστικόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπο-φαντικόν τὸ ἴσον τῷ "ἐν τόπῳ ὑπάρχεις" βαρὺ τονουμένου τοῦ "πού εἶ." ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ὠθήθης τὸν θεόν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ περιπατεῖν καὶ ὑπὸ τούτου περιέχεσθαι, μάθε ὅτι εὖ τοῦτο πέπονθας, καὶ ἀκουσον παρὰ τοῦ ἐπισταμένου θεοῦ ῥῆσιν ἀληθεστάτην, ὅτι ὁ μὲν θεὸς οὐχὶ που οὐ γάρ. περιέχεται ἀλλὰ περιέχει τὸ πᾶν τὸδὲ γενόμενον ἐν τόπῳ, περιέχεσθαι γὰρ αὐτὸ ἀλλ' οὐπεριέχειν ἀναγκαῖον.

"Where art thou?" can be accounted for in many different ways, first as not being interrogative but declarative, as equivalent to "thou art in a place", Thou receiving the grave accent. For whereas thou thoughtest that God walked in the garden and was contained by it, learn that there was something amiss with thee in thinking this, and listen to a most true utterance from the mouth of God who knoweth, to the effect that God is not somewhere (for He is not contained but contains the universe), but that which came into being is in a place, for it must of necessity be contained but not contain.

It looks as if Philo was arguing with someone concerning the possibility of God not to be everywhere at the same time. This could mean that for Philo, God walking in the Garden of Eden was not a literal event that took place in the Garden of Eden, but rather a metaphorical expression, as God is everywhere and nowhere at the same time: "He is not surrounded, but

surrounds” (cf. *QG1:42*).

The following two subsections (52 and 53) add two other levels of interpretations – ethical and philosophical – to explain the more or less literal one in the previous subsection 51.

Far from leading Philo to another set of prolonged speculations, these thoughts have actually moved him back to Genesis 3:7, where he began discussing Adam and his wife making coverings *Alleg. Interp.* III: XVIII (55). Here his allegorical inclinations can once again be overtly seen:

καίτοι γυμνός οὐκ ἔστι νῦν ὁ Ἀδάμ· " ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς περι- ζώματα " ὀλίγω πρότερον εἴρηται· ἀλλὰ και διὰ τούτου βούλεται σε διδάξει, ὅτι γυμνότητα οὐ τὴν τοῦ σώματος παραλαμβάνει, ἀλλὰ καθ ἣν ὁ νοῦς ἀμοιρος και γυμνός ἀρετῆς ἀνευρίσκειται.

Nevertheless Adam is not naked now: "they made for themselves girdles" are the words that occur a little further back. Even by this it is the prophet's wish to teach thee, that he understands by nakedness not that of the body, but that by which the mind is found unprovided and unclothed with virtue.

The very last part of this argumentation brings us back to the example of homonymy, found in Genesis 2:25, 3:1, and 3:7, where the word “nakedness” can be understood both as spiritual and physical. Thus, Adam and the woman were physically naked (*arom*), but were not ashamed, the serpent was shrewd (*arum*), perhaps naked in the spiritual sense, unadulterated. Adam and the woman decided to become clever or wise like God (*arum*) to match God’s wisdom and become wiser than the serpent. Unfortunately, their discovery only brought them shame, as all their efforts were in vain and they remained physically naked (*arom*) as in the very beginning.

In the beginning of the next subsection (56), Philo suddenly moves to Genesis 3:12 to discuss the wording of the sentence using symbolic imagery of a human body. Thus, it appears to be very important for him to present it in the form of juxtaposition: “The expression here is very accurate, inasmuch as he does not say, ‘The woman whom you gave to me’, but, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me.’” Although this observation is syntactically correct, the primary stress of his argument focuses on the fact that senses (woman) are not fully dependent on the mind (man) and the other way around, and therefore, could exist separately. Hence, though mind strives to control the senses, they are always ahead of him and refuse to be subdued. The following subsections (57 and 58) work this idea out in more detail, as Philo believes that senses must be with mind, under its control, and by no means left unimpeded and unrestrained.

Alleg. Interp. III: XIX (59): refers to Genesis 3:13 and the woman’s answer to God’s question: “What is this have you done?”

Και εἶπεν θεός τῇ γυναικί Τί τοῦτοποίησας; και εἶπεν Ὁ ὄφεις ἠπάτησέ με, και ἔφαγον" (Gen. iii.

13) άλλο μὲν πυνθάνεται τῆς αἰσθήσεως ὁ θεός, ἄλλο δὲ αὐτὴ ἀποκρίνεται· πυνθάνεται μὲν γὰρ τι περὶ τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἢ δὲ οὐ περὶ τούτου φησιν, ἀλλὰ τι περὶ εαυτῆς, λέγουσα ὅτι ἔφαγον, οὐχ ὅτι ἔδωκα.

"And God said to the woman, 'What is this thou hast done? And she said, the serpent beguiled me and I ate" (Gen. iii. 13). God puts a question to sense-perception touching one point,' she gives an answer touching another point: for God asks something about the man; she speaks not about him, but says something about herself, for her words are "I ate," not "I gave."

Despite some allegorical comments there are some valuable points here, which are of the utmost interest. First, Philo notices that though God asks the woman what she had done, the woman deflects his insinuation, and points to the serpent, blaming him for everything. She gives no explanation for why she gave the fruit to Adam, which would, of course, immediately put her under the blame. What she does instead is simply avoid any responsibility for her own actions and by attacking the serpent.

The second observation made with the help of allegory clearly demonstrates the willingness with which the man grasped and ate the forbidden fruit, though God had prohibited him from doing that. The woman takes her own responsibility for eating, but she did not force her husband – he took the fruit from her hand and ate. This was a voluntary act by the man, which Philo emphasizes.

Alleg. Interp. III: XX beautifully demonstrates the way each of the primary characters of the story in Genesis 3 hid something from his or her neighbor. Thus, the serpent does not say from where he took this idea of testing God's word, and simply suggests it to the woman with the goal of convincing her to eat. In her turn, the woman does not say a word to her husband, hiding some of the reasons for eating from the tree and not mentioning the serpent in connection with it.

The man does not ask any questions, and subtly hides his doubts and thoughts (he, in fact, is the most passive personage in this scenario). He carries out his submissive part of eating from the fruit without saying a word. When the time comes to appear before the Lord-Judge, each of them, except the serpent, puts the blame on the other. Each recollects who did what to whom, though without too many details, lest they accidentally implicate themselves in the crime. The serpent does not say a word, and does not reveal the truth concerning his original intentions. Even if he did, Philo, for whatever reasons, would not divulge them to the reader.

Alleg. Interp. III: XXI deals with Genesis 3:13-15, where Philo interprets the sentence God brought down on the serpent. Here, Philo makes a fascinating comparison between Genesis 3:14-15, and Deuteronomy 19:17, suggesting that in the Genesis account, God does not allow the serpent to speak in his own defense, as Deut 19:17 requires. Of course, Philo ignores

the fact that the Deuteronomy passage speaks of humans, not serpents.

διὰ τίνα αἰτίαν χωρὶς ἀπολογίας καταράται τῷ ὄφει, κελεύων ἐν ἑτέροις εἰκὸς "στήναι τοὺς δύο, οἷς ἔστιν ἡ ἀντιλογία " (Deut. xix. 17) καὶ μὴ τῷ ἑτέρῳ προπιστεύειν;

For what reason does He curse the serpent without giving it the opportunity to defend itself, though elsewhere, as seems reasonable, He commands that " the two parties between whom the dispute is should stand forth " (Deut. xix. 17), and that credit be not given to the one until the other be heard?

Therefore, it seems to me that Philo does not consider the serpent to be the Devil or any other supernatural creature here, but instead treats him with a certain amount of pity, claiming that he was cursed without any opportunity to defend himself. However, how could he come to this conclusion? Was he convinced of the serpent's ability to speak, or if the serpent is to be perceived as pleasure, how could pleasure appeal to God?

Further on, Philo skillfully shows that God gives this opportunity to the woman, asking her: "what is this you have done?", but totally ignores the serpent. Philo solves this paradox by employing allegory and claiming that the woman represents the senses, which are neutral by nature, while the serpent represents pleasure, which is negative by default (66-68).

In order to prove that God's decision in regard to the serpent's behavior was just, Philo adds a substantial number of speculations, stretching from *Alleg. Interp.* III: XXI to III: XXXIV. Philo, therefore, only resumes his previous exploration of Genesis 3:14-15 in section AI III: XXXV.

As he sets out his argument, Philo maintains some assumptions regarding the relationships between body, mind, and soul in very Platonic terms. He constantly appeals to mind as being able to strive for divine virtues and therefore to submit the wicked body threatening a sensible soul. Thus, gradually, he comes to another Platonic conclusion (subsection 77):

Ὡσπερ οὖν ἡδονὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀνευ μεμίσηκεν αἰτιῶν ὁ θεός, οὕτω καὶ φύσεις ἀστείας χωρὶς περιφανοῦς αἰτίας προαγήσεν, ἔργον οὐδὲν προ τῶν ἐπαίνων αὐτῶν ὁμολογήσας.

Exactly, then, as God has conceived a hatred for pleasure and the body without giving reasons, so too has he promoted goodly natures apart from any manifest reason, pronouncing no action of theirs acceptable before bestowing his praises upon them.

Alleg. Interp. III: XXIV. Here Philo, in very "Pauline" terms claims that everything depends on God's grace. To strengthen his argument, over the course of several chapters Philo turns his attention to the following group of characters: Melchisedek, the king of Salem (XXIV-XVI), Abraham (XXVII), Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac (XXVIII), Jacob and Esau (XXIX), Jacob and Joseph (XXX), Bezaleel (XXXI), the character of man (XXXII), and Moses

once again (XXXIII-XXXIV), giving his reader a vast field of examples.³⁹⁹

Alleg. Interp. III: XXXV-XXXVII: here Philo curses pleasure in its entirety as being a possession of animals, rather than of men, and therefore denies that God is guilty for not providing the serpent with any explanations or defense.

Alleg. Interp. III: XXXVIII draws some conclusions about Genesis 3:14, especially highlighting the phrase: “upon your belly you should go.”

περι γάρ ταῦτα φωλεύει τὰ μέρη τό πάθος, τὰ τε στέρνα και τήν γαστέρα, όταν μέν έχη τὰ ποιητικά και τὰς ὕλας ή ηδονή, περί τήν γαστέρα και τὰ μετ αυτήν, όταν άπορη, περι τὰ στήθη, όπου ό θυμός· οί γάρφιλήδονοι στερόμενοι τών ηδονών οργίζονται και (115) παραπικραίνονται.

For passion has its lair in these parts of the body, the breast and the belly. When pleasure has the materials it needs to produce it, it haunts the belly and the parts below it. But when it is at a loss for these materials, it occupies the breast where wrath is; for lovers of pleasure when deprived of their pleasures grow bitter and angry.

Here he repeats himself almost verbatim, almost quoting *QG1:48*, and plunging into lengthy explanations of what the nature of passion and pleasure is, and what kind of burden they impose on their followers (see III: XXXVIII –LV, where he eventually refers to the second part of Gen. 3:14b). Once again, Moses and Aaron are called into action. And again they serve as examples supporting his argument. And once more, all this looks like a lengthy sermon, specially prepared for a certain occasion.

In *Alleg. Interp.* III: LV Philo explains this obscure command, “upon your belly you should go”, by considering all food that grows on the face of the earth as dust. Therefore, he solves the mystery of God’s command by claiming that the serpent will eat all those products of the earth (including animals, which after their death also return to dust). Speaking in these terms, however, one must include human beings, who are part of the ecosystem as well, and therefore turn to dust after death as all animals do.

Alleg. Interp. III: LVI makes a very helpful distinction between what the body consumes and what the food of the soul actually is – as between corruptible and incorruptible types of food. This distinction is very similar to the teaching of Jesus and will be picked up later on by many early Christian Fathers.

Alleg. Interp. III: LVII – AI III: LXIII present another lengthy argument in regard to the question of how to one becomes more virtuous and states that lovers of pleasure are actually lovers of dirt:

³⁹⁹ Anderson, *Philo of Alexandria's Views of the Physical World*, 154: “In his works *On Creation* and *The Allegorical Interpretation of the Laws*, he argued that central figures, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, actually embodied universal ideas and issues. This technique allowed Philo to link the concrete elements of Jewish tradition with the Hellenistic premise that really existed chiefly in abstract, spiritual ideas imperfectly reflected in the objects of the material world.”

Accordingly a man is unclean who is given up to the one thing, pleasure, as well as the man who has all four passions for his stay.

Alleg. Interp. III: LXIV-LXV refer to Genesis 3:15, and explains it in terms of intended hostility between pleasure and senses, "Although, to some persons, it appears to be especially friendly to it." As it is not the case for everyone, Philo severely attacks this friendship proving that it leads its adherents to ruin. In keeping with his style, he peppers his argument with colorful pictures taken from other places within the Old Testament.

Alleg. Interp. III: LXVII-LXIX provide an odd example of Philo's dealing with the text of Genesis 3:15, where he paraphrases the second part of the text as, "The Mind shall watch thy chief and principal doctrine, and thou shalt watch it, the Mind as it acts and rests upon its accepted tenets". Thus, although the word "watch" is hardly appropriate in the original Hebrew text, Philo employs it on account of his own reasons, since his tasks mostly concern the exact relationships mind and soul possess:

Τό δέ "αυτός σου τηρήσει κεφαλὴν, και σύ τηρήσεις αὐτοῦ πτέρναν" (Gen. iii. 15) τῆ μέν φωνή βαρβαρισμός ἐστι, τῷ δέ σημαινόμενον κατόρθωμα τῷ γάρ ὀφεί λέγεται περι τῆς γυναικός, ἢ δέ γυνή "αυτός" οὐκ ἐστίν, ἀλλ' αὕτη." τί οὖν λεκτέον; ἀπό τοῦ περι τῆς γυναικός λόγου μετελήλυθεν ἐπὶ τό σπέρμα καί[125] τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῆς ἀρχή δέ ἦν αἰσθήσεως ὁ νοῦς οὗτος δέ ἀρρηγ, ἐφ' οὐ χρεὶ λέγειν αὐτός και αὐτοῦ και τὰ τοιαῦτα. ορθῶς οὖν τῆ ἡδονῆ λέγεται, ὅτι ὁ νοῦς σου τηρήσει τό κεφάλαιον και ἡγεμονικόν δόγμα, και σύ τηρήσεις αὐτοῦ, τοῦ νοῦ, τὰς ἐπφάσεις και ἐφιδρύσεις τῶν ἀρεσκον τῶν, αἷς αἱ πτέρναι κατά λόγον εἰκάσθησαν.

The sentence "He shall watch thy head, and thou shalt watch his heel" (Gen. iii. 15) is a barbarism, but has a perfectly correct meaning. It is addressed to the serpent concerning the woman, but the woman is not "he" but "she". What is to be said then? He has left off speaking about the woman and passed on to her seed and origin; but the mind is the origin of sense; and mind is masculine, in speaking of which we should use the pronouns "he" and "his" and so on. Rightly, then, is it said to Pleasure, "the Mind shall watch thy chief and principal doctrine, and thou shalt watch it, the Mind, as it acts and rests upon its accepted tenets. This basing of conduct and principle on tenets is naturally represented by the word "heels."

Therefore, it is evident that Philo plays with the words in order to fit his argument, which is followed by a series of examples (application, AI III: LXX), using several Old Testament passages as illustrations (Gen. 27:36; Num. 28:2; Gen. 14:21; and Gen. 21:5).

Conclusion

Similar to *The Questions and Answers on Genesis*, but to a much higher degree, Philo utilizes the philosophical/allegorical approach, as might be expected given the title of the treatise.⁴⁰⁰ However, despite the dominant allegorical component, the overall style of the work is rather sermonistic, often unsystematic and barely befitting the style of commentary in our contemporary understanding.

The theme of the serpent is touched multiple times, but mostly from a non-literal perspective. There is no doubt that symbolic implementations can add much to the field of biblical interpretation. When forced, however, the non-literal perspective causes an unintended side effect, in which the extreme symbolism detracts from rather than aids the reader's attention in better understanding a given text. This approach, however, might have been a normal style of writing in Philo's day.

The treatise gives the impression of a much more complex and versatile piece of work in comparison with the previous treatise presented above. Descriptions of every participant of the interpretation are more thoroughly elaborated. Thus, all four primary figures of the story in Genesis 3: God, Adam, the woman, and the serpent, are well presented and depicted from every possible angle, except the literal. Hence, the serpent is given much attention and is mostly identified as pleasure, which, from Philo's point of view, is an inherently negative trait that cannot be characterized otherwise.

On the other hand, on numerous occasions the serpent is pictured merely as a representative agent and nothing more. Thus, it seems that the sum of his destiny is in earth, dust, and a feral natural existence. As for his climax, it appears to consist in no more than becoming a mediator in God-human relationships in both negative (Gen. 3:1-15), and positive (Num. 21:5-6) forms. All other details, though wrapped in the garb of allegory, nevertheless often expose Philo's personal beliefs on the literal level and therefore help us to better understand his perspective.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. Dorothy I. Sly, *Philo's Alexandria* (London: Routledge, 1996), 16: "Indeed, the allegorical interpretation is the hallmark of Philo's work. Although today the method seems quaint and artificial, it had impressive precedents for him."

3.3.4. *On the Creation*

This is the third treatise, in which Philo communicates some of his ideas on the subject of Genesis. Fortunately for us, this treatise has survived in Greek and so can be presented in its original form here. However, attention will be given only to those sentences that shed some additional light on the nature of the serpent in Genesis 3.⁴⁰¹ Once again, we can note that the entire treatise is literally saturated with allegory and symbolic meanings, which makes the style of this book very similar to what has already been presented in above.⁴⁰²

Philo begins with the description of the serpent only toward the end of his treatise LV (156), which seems to match Genesis 3:1:

“λέγεται τὸ παλαιὸν τὸ ἰοβόλον καὶ γηγενὲς ἔρπετον [ὄφις] ἀνθρώπου φωνὴν προΐεσθαι”

It is said that in olden time the venomous earthborn crawling thing could send forth a man's voice.⁴⁰³

Although Philo's point of departure looks far from Genesis 3 itself, some of his observations could be accepted at the level of “secondary exegesis”, as Runia calls it.⁴⁰⁴ Thus, in spite of Philo's inclination towards allegorizing the Hebrew Scriptures, it seems that he could not have allegorized a text immediately, but first needed to consider what it communicated on the literal level. While keeping this in mind we need to note that this fragment provides us with at least three important points regarding the serpent's nature. First, the serpent for Philo is an earthborn crawling thing. This point can be a paraphrase of two facts: God has made him, and the serpent “was one the beasts of the field that the Lord had made” (cf. Gen. 3:1 and 14). Secondly, the serpent, according to Philo, was venomous. How did he know that? The reader is not told, but this is exactly what he conveys. Thirdly, the serpent was able to speak in a human voice. This statement aligns Philo with both *Jubilees* (3:28), and Josephus (*Ant.* 1:41), which have some obvious parallels:⁴⁰⁵

Jubilees 3:28: “And on that day was closed the mouth of all beasts, and of cattle, and of birds, and of whatever walks, and of whatever moves, so that they could no longer speak: for they had all spoken one with another with one lip and with one tongue.”

Antiquitates 1:41: “But while all the living creatures had one language, at that time the serpent, which then lived together with Adam and his wife, showed an envious disposition, at his supposal of their living happily, and

⁴⁰¹Schenk, *A Brief Guide to Philo*, 8.

⁴⁰²Cf. D.T.Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 373.

⁴⁰³Text and English translation according to Colson and Whitaker, *Philo* vol. I (London: William Heinemann LTD, 1929).

⁴⁰⁴Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses* 373. See also Borgen, “Philo of Alexandria as Exegete,” in Alan J. Hauser, and Duane Frederick Watson (eds.), *A History of Biblical Interpretation* vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 121.

⁴⁰⁵*Ibid.*

in obedience to the commands of God.”

Therefore, this brief commentary stresses two important points: 1) it seems that the serpent for Philo simply must have been a real animal first of all, and only then pleasure. 2) The serpent’s extra shrewdness in Philo’s view could be explained by his ability to speak in a human voice, or at least somehow imitate it.⁴⁰⁶

However, to show once again that the primary goal of his treatise does not consist in exploring the literal meaning only, Philo employs the allegorical method (LXVI (160)).⁴⁰⁷

φωνήν δ’ ἀνθρώπειον ὄφιν λέγεται προΐεσθαι, διότι μυρίοις ὑπερμάχοις καὶ προαγωνισταῖς ἡδονὴ χρῆται τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ προστασίαν αὐτῆς ἀνειληφόσιν, οἱ τολμῶσιν ἀναδιδάσκειν ὅτι πάντων τὸ κράτος ἀνῆπται μικρῶν τε καὶ μεγάλων οὐδενὸς ὑπέξηρημένου τὸ παράπαν.

Again the serpent is said to emit a human voice. This is because pleasure employs ten thousand champions and defenders, who have undertaken to look after her and stand up for her, and who dare to spread the doctrine that she has assumed universal sovereignty over small and great, and that no one whatever is exempt therefrom.

Here we see him jumping from the literal meaning to the allegorical. First, he speaks about the serpent and then immediately turns him into pleasure, though the first sentence plays a crucial role for those who prefer the literal meaning over the allegorical. Philo did not see any sense in explaining the “obvious” and always jumped to something hidden or deeper.

In LV (156) Philo shows all what happened in the Garden of Eden from his own perspective, making allusion to Genesis 3:2-6:

καὶ ποτε προσελθὼν τῇ τοῦ πρώτου φύντος ἀνδρὸς γυναικὶ τῆς βραδυτῆτος καὶ τῆς ἄγαν εὐλαβείας ὀνειδίσει, διότι μέλλει καὶ ὑπερτίθεται πάγκαλον ὀφθῆναι καὶ ἡδιστον ἀπολαυσθῆναι καρπὸν δρέπεσθαι, πρὸς δὲ καὶ ὠφελιμώτατον, ᾧ δυνήσεται γνωρίζειν ἀγαθὰ τε αὐτῷ καὶ κακὰ· τὴν δὲ ἀνεξετάστως ἀπὸ γνώμης ἀβεβαίου καὶ ἀνιδρύτου συναινέσασαν ἐμφαγεῖν | τοῦ καρποῦ καὶ τῷ ἀνδρὶ μεταδοῦναι

And that one day it approached the wife of the first man and upbraided her for her irresoluteness and excessive scrupulosity in delaying and hesitating to pluck a fruit most beautiful to behold and most luscious to taste, and most useful into the bargain, since by its means she would have power to recognize things good and evil. It is said that she, without looking into the suggestion, prompted by a mind devoid of steadfastness and firm foundation, gave her consent and ate of the fruit, and gave some of it to her husband.

The above description seems to suggest that the woman was already standing by the tree of knowledge of good and evil when the serpent approached her. She was apparently caught off guard and it seems that she was all alone there. The serpent’s role in the drama consisted only in a gentle, but sufficient nudge, though the woman is depicted as having been prepared to tear

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*, 374, who claims that such, “invite the reader to interpret at a deeper level.” This is exactly what the Gnostics did with the biblical text a short time after Philo.

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. Sjoerd Lieuwe Bonting, *Creation and Double Chaos: Science and Theology in Discussion* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 65.

the fruit from the tree even without his assistance. We are told that for some unknown reason she was irresolute and hesitated. Philo uses the phrase “it is said” (line 4), though does not explain who says that, “she, without looking into the suggestion, prompted...” Where did he get that? It would be helpful to know what sources he relied on. Philo continues by telling the reader that the woman’s consent is quick and imprudent, and her actions hasty and thoughtless.

If this was the case, the serpent’s role in leading the woman astray looks as hardly evil and pressuring. From this very perspective, it looks as though the serpent never did do what he is accused of in Genesis 3:13. The woman was almost ready to commit the disobedience on her own. Thus, according to Philo’s picture, the serpent reproached the woman with her slowness and excessive prudence and pretty reluctantly (if at all), suggested his ideas to her mind. No real confrontation from her side or her husband’s side is mentioned anywhere. No opposition to God or intentions to derail His plan is connected with the serpent’s intentions anywhere in the context.

The existing distinction between good and evil is well demonstrated. The woman is presented as being interested in finding out what this difference is. The man’s role is once again very passive. Adam does not interfere in the serpent-woman dialogue and calmly waits for a pause in the action to get his share of fruit from the forbidden tree. What quickly jumps out is the absence of allegory, which Philo loved so typically used. He does not say a word about pleasure, or feelings representing the woman as in his previous interpretations.

The following depiction resembles the story in Genesis 3:7-23 and deliberately avoids all extraneous details of Genesis 3, though the general flow of the story is well preserved:

καὶ τοῦτ' ἐξαπιναιῶς ἀμφοτέρους ἐξ ἀκακίας καὶ ἀπλότητος ἡθῶν εἰς πανουργίαν μετέβαλεν – ἔφ' ᾧ τὸν πατέρα χαλεπήναντα – ἡ γὰρ πρᾶξις ὀργῆς ἀξία, ἐπεὶ παρελθόντες τὸ ζωῆς ἀθανάτου φυτόν, τὴν ἀρετῆς παντέλειαν, ὑφ' ἧς μακραίωνα καὶ εὐδαίμονα βίον ἐδύνατο καρποῦσθαι, τὸν ἐφήμερον καὶ θνητὸν οὐ βίον ἀλλὰ χρόνον κακοδαιμονίας μεστὸν εἶλοντο – κολάσεις ὀρίσαι κατ' αὐτῶν τὰς προσηκούσας.

He instantly brought them out of a state of simplicity and innocence into one of wickedness: whereat the Father in anger appointed for them the punishments that were fitting. For their conduct well merited wrath, inasmuch as they had passed by the tree of life immortal, the consummation of virtue, from which they could have gathered an existence long and happy. Yet they chose that fleeting and mortal existence which is not an existence but a period of time full of misery.

Again, for reasons unknown, no use is made of the allegorical approach. The serpent is blamed for bringing the first couple “out of a state of simplicity and innocence into one of wickedness”,⁴⁰⁸ though his (the serpent’s) guilt in all that happened looks very relative,

⁴⁰⁸ The word *πανουργίαν* does not necessarily mean “wickedness”, but in fact is capable of several other meanings, such as: cleverness, craftiness, shrewdness, cunning, evil work, see: Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel and Katrin Hauspie,

considering the woman's desire to eat from the tree with or without his prompting. Thus, I would prefer to translate the word *πανουργία* as maturity or, perhaps, craftiness. This alteration significantly changes the meaning of the text. In light of this, I would suggest the existence of certain conditions under which human decisions are rather morally neutral, until we turn them into action.

As for the woman's righteousness, we may surmise from the passage that it seemed to consist only in her lingering, thus delaying the inevitable fall, while the serpent came to front a bit ahead and outrun her own intents to pluck from the tree. Why was she standing next to the tree? Was she preparing herself to trespass God's command, or simply thinking over what God said? Unfortunately, neither the Bible, nor Philo tell us a word about that. The only picture they give us is that of the woman standing in close proximity to the tree – so close that she could stretch out her hand and pluck the fruit from it. This is exactly what the serpent may have noticed before approaching her with his deceptive plan.

The very next section, LVI (157), adds four other descriptions of the serpent, which from Philo's perspective are:

...τὸν εἰρημένον ὄφιν ἡδονῆς εἶναι σύμβολον, ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν ζῶον ἄπουν ἐστὶ καὶ πρηνὲς πεπτωκὸς ἐπὶ γαστέρα, δεύτερον δ' ὅτι γῆς βώλοις σιτίῳ χρῆται, τρίτον δ' ὅτι τὸν ἰὸν ἐπιφέρεται τοῖς ὀδοῦσιν, ᾧ τοὺς δηχθέντας ἀναιρεῖν πέφυκεν.

Following a probable conjecture one would say that the serpent spoken of is a fit symbol of pleasure, because in the first place he is an animal without feet sunk prone upon his belly; secondly because he takes clods of earth as food; thirdly because he carries in his teeth the venom with which it is his nature to destroy those whom he has bitten.

Again we see that Philo calls the serpent “the symbol of pleasure”, though this time he does describe. The serpent is characterized by, 1) the absence of feet; 2) his manner of locomotion: “crawls on his belly with his face downwards”, 3) his method of finding food to eat, and 4) the importance of his having poison in his teeth, which serves him as both a defense and a killing mechanism. Why mention all these features if they are not important? Why spend so much time depicting its features, which play no or barely any role at all? It seems that Philo is trying to demonstrate his overall determination to fuse literal and allegorical methods into one, as the following subsections LVII (162) – LVIII (163) demonstrate:

σπεύδει τε, φασί, πᾶν ζῶον ὡς ἐπ' ἀναγκαιότατον καὶ συνεκτικώτατον τέλος ἡδονὴν καὶ μάλιστα ἄνθρωπος· τὰ μὲν γὰρ διὰ γεύσεως μόνον καὶ τῶν γεννητικῶν ἐφέται ταύτης, ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος καὶ διὰ τῶν ἄλλων αἰσθήσεων, ὅσα θεάματα ἢ ἀκούσματα τέρψιν δύναται παρασχεῖν ὡσὶ καὶ

A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, revised edition (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003), 903. Its synonym in Hebrew is the word *arum* (Gen. 3:1).

ὀφθαλμοῖς μεταδιώκων. 163. λέγεται δὲ καὶ ἄλλα παμπληθῆ πρὸς ἔπαινον τοῦ πάθους καὶ ὡς ἔστιν οἰκειότατον καὶ συγγενέστατον ζώοις· LVIII ἀπόχρη δὲ δείγματος ἕνεκα καὶ τὰ νῦν εἰρημένα, ὧν χάριν ἀνθρωπίνην φωνὴν ἔδοξεν ὁ ὄφις προῖεσθαι.

And they tell us that every living creature hastens after pleasure as its most necessary and essential end, and man above all: for while other creatures seek pleasure only through taste and the organs of reproduction, man does so through the other senses as well, pursuing with ears and eyes all such sights and sounds as can afford delight. A very great deal more is said in praise of pleasure, and of the great closeness of its connection and kinship with living creatures. LVIII. But what has now been said is enough to show why the serpent seemed to utter a human voice.

In the following sections, LIX-LXI, are meant to append a bit more of allegory to conclude the task of a scrupulous philosopher-allegorist, who always keeps some dearest and most desirable thoughts until the very last moment to put them into use and make them look as a proper conclusion. This mode by which he customarily operates puts everything into its place and proves all above-mentioned suggestions regarding both Philo's intentions and style. Thus, what we see is an interesting phenomenon. Philo lays out the literal meaning first as a foundation, which he disparages. He always makes clear, however, that this first layer is no more than a starting point from which one can reach deeper and more profound layers of philosophical interpretation. This conclusion agrees with the abovementioned conclusions of 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 sections regarding Philo's style, methods, and techniques, which he employed in writing these three largely similar treatises. The audience of this treatise could not have been particularly Jewish-oriented. The themes in question, and the ways in which the material have been explored look instead to be directed at an audience not interested in what the Hebrew Scriptures say, *per se*, but behind the text – at something Gnostic or mystical.⁴⁰⁹ This means that the primary focus of all Philo's explorations lies once again in the realm of the philosophical, allegorical, and figural, rather than the literal.

3.3.4.1 Conclusion

Philo describes the serpent from Genesis 3 as he does for several reasons:

- 1) Philo was very interested in the allegorization and Platonization of sacred Jewish writings, since his intended audience was most likely the Greek-oriented Alexandrian aristocracy.⁴¹⁰ However, while doing so, he did not to abandon his own folk-traditions and beliefs. On the contrary, Philo strived to the best of his abilities to explain them to his Greek-oriented audience.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Schenk, *A Brief Guide to Philo*, 18, who calls them “cultural despisers of Judaism.”

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Borgen, “Philo of Alexandria as Exegete,” 114. See also Christopher Gilbert, *A Complete Introduction to the Bible* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2009), 17.

- 2) Philo was not interested in a literal exploration of Genesis 3 to the degree of scrutinizing the text in all possible detail. His multidimensional approach would never allow him to be limited by just one specific method. Besides, the literal reading of Jewish Scriptures was of no interest for Greek philosophers, who needed to hear the Jewish teachings in a philosophical garb.
- 3) Philo loved and admired Greek language, culture, and philosophy, and inevitably followed a Greek way of thinking rather than a Jewish one, as one can easily see from looking through his commentaries. On the other hand, his exegetical commentaries demonstrate his hidden apologetic intentions. In this, no matter how Greek-oriented his writings may have appeared; he was a Jew, concerned for the future of his countrymen as well as their scriptures. Both the author of *Jubilees* and Philo were first and foremost apologists, which led them to defending their truth in two very different ways, employing different methods to accomplish the given task. The major difference between these two authors nevertheless consists in their attitude to the Greek cultural and religious incursion. While the author of *Jubilees* preferred to resist any assimilation, Philo embraces an intermingling of the two cultures. His treatises are, therefore, to be seen as a middle ground, bridging two very different cultures under one umbrella.
- 4) Despite his Platonic background, Philo did not understand the world in exclusively black and white terms, that is, strictly divided between good and evil. Moreover, for Philo, God could not be subjected to any Platonic speculations, and consequently could not countenance the presence of His Platonic counterpart: the Demiurge, Anti-God, Satan, or whomever else.⁴¹¹ Therefore the serpent remains unparalleled.
- 5) In three treatises, the figure of the serpent is depicted as two-fold. For Philo, he is at the same time both a reptile and a symbol of pleasure with no contradiction implied, since for Philo these two images are complementary, bringing completeness to the portrait of the serpent. Be that as it may, Philo leaves no place for any kind of devil in his writings, though the overall image of the serpent remains a rather negative one throughout his writings.⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Ronald Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World* vol. 1, part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 29.

⁴¹² Cf. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*, 375.

3.4. Flavius Josephus

This section will explore that part of Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, which refers to Genesis 3:1-15. After giving a brief observation and juxtaposition of the two texts I will examine possible motives behind Josephus' writing of his history of the Jews.

Although Josephus lived in the first century C.E. and was well acquainted with Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic, he is properly regarded as a complex mix of Jewish, Greek, and Roman cultures. Moreover, he is an extremely important figure in the present study, as he produced an extensive treatise devoted to the subject in question, utilizing previous generations of Greek and Jewish historiographers.⁴¹³

According to Stone, "throughout these first ten books, Josephus basically provides an interpretive paraphrase of Scripture, embellished with diverse legendary material", based on a Greek text, though not that of the LXX and that the Hebrew text or Aramaic Targums are barely, if at all, reflected in his writings.⁴¹⁴ . On what, exactly, did he base his writings?

Josephus certainly refers to some early Greek historians in his writings, as he admits in his apologetical letter *Against Apion* and alludes to in various ways everywhere beginning with *Antiquities* 11.⁴¹⁵ According to Levison, his style is an adaptation of "Greek historiography to the extent of modeling his Jewish antiquities on the Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus",⁴¹⁶ though most of Josephus' sources of reference remain unclear.⁴¹⁷ Some scholars claim his dependence on Second Temple literature and especially *Jubilees* and Philo, though this is debated.⁴¹⁸ Attridge includes a certain amount of the Greek-Jewish apologetic literature, which according to him, was developed "during the third to first centuries BCE", and was most likely utilized in Josephus' writings.⁴¹⁹

What is crucial for the present discussion, however, is that Josephus' work, akin to *Jubilees* and Philo's writings, can easily be set within a category of apologetical treatises,

⁴¹³ Cf. Steve Mason and Robert A. Kraft, "Josephus on Canon and Scriptures," in Magne Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible. Old Testament: History Of Its Interpretation*, 219 and Louis Feldman, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998), 14.

⁴¹⁴ Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, 211. Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 31, to the contrary, claims that: "the clearest data is that which indicates the use of the LXX. Such use is obvious in the paraphrasing of books found only in the Greek version, 1 Esdra and 1 Maccabees." Cf. Per Bilde, *Flavius Josephus: Between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works and Their Importance* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield and JSOT Press, 1988), 80.

⁴¹⁵ See the list of possible referees in Bernd Schröder, *Die Väterlichen Gesetze* (Tübingen: J.C.B.Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1996), 56.

⁴¹⁶ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 99.

⁴¹⁷ Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History*, 31.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid, 33 and 37. Feldman, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible*, 15.

⁴¹⁹ Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History*, 33-34 and 43. See Feldman, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible*, 14, who lists many other names and titles as potential references which Josephus could have referred to.

though the apologetic trajectory he uses clearly reflects the variety known as “Rhetorical History”.⁴²⁰

This does not mean that no Jewish historical or apologetic treatises had ever been written before Josephus,⁴²¹ quite the opposite: the point is that in the course of time, this treatise has become a critically important witness to the intertestamental period, as well as a famous elaboration written on the book of Genesis, and therefore plays a pivotal role for the current purposes of our research.

3.4.1. *The Jewish Antiquities*

Josephus commences his exploration of the text with a preliminary introduction, stated in book 1, chapter Ant. 1.40: Ὁ δὴ τοίνυν θεὸς τὸν Ἄδαμ οὐκ αἰτὴν γυναικᾶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων φυτῶν ἐκέλευε γεύεσθαι, τοῦ δὲ τῆς φρονήσεως ἀπέχεσθαι, προειπὼν ἀψαμένοις ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ ὄλεθρον γενησόμενον.⁴²²

God, then, ordered Adamos and his wife to taste of the other plants but to abstain from that of wisdom, telling them in advance that if they touched it, ruin would result from it.⁴²³

Gen. 2:16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”⁴²⁴

Josephus rewrites Genesis 2:16-17 as if both the man and his wife received the commandment prohibiting the touching of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that it was given by God Himself, thus solving the problem of the woman’s additional words; in Genesis 3:3: “...and you must not touch it, or you will die”.⁴²⁵ Thus, he purposely uses ἀψαμένοις “to touch” to create the connection with Genesis 3:3. By introducing the idea of God forbidding the first couple to touch the tree into the introductory part of his narrative, Josephus shows that in his opinion, this part of God’s command came directly from God Himself, and therefore did not result in Adam’s or the woman’s reinterpretation of it.

The very last word of God’s prohibition is ὄλεθρον, from ὄλεθρος, which means a general calamity and destruction rather than just physical death.⁴²⁶ Therefore, Josephus deliberately shifts the reader’s attention from a physical death to something more abstract, to

⁴²⁰ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 99. Cf. Mason and Robert A. Kraft, 219-220. See also Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, 210.

⁴²¹ Cf. Bilde, *Collected Studies on Philo and Josephus*, 80.

⁴²² Here and further in the text I will refer to Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* B. Niese, Ed.

⁴²³ English translation is provided by Louis Feldman.

⁴²⁴ Here and further on I will use the NIV translation.

⁴²⁵ Cf. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch*, 100.

⁴²⁶ Cf. *Ibid*, 104.

avoid answering the question of a forfeited human immortality – the loss of which Adam and his wife could be well blamed. Josephus shields his vis-à-vis and makes them reckless rather than obstinate.

In Ant. 1:41 he resumes his narration by saying: ὁμοφρονούντων δὲ κατ'ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ τῶν ζῴων ἀπάντων ὄφις συνδιαιτώμενος τῷ τε Ἀδάμῳ καὶ τῇ γυναικὶ φθονερῶς μὲν εἶχεν ἐφ'οἷς αὐτοῦς εὐδαιμονήσειν ᾗετο πεπεισμένους τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ παραγγέλμασιν,

At that point in time when all the creatures spoke the same language, a serpent, living together with Adam and his wife, felt jealous at the happiness that he thought would be theirs if they obeyed the instructions of God;
3:1: “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

Josephus keeps away from the Genesis 3 text and makes two interesting comments, one similar and one dissimilar in comparison with the book of *Jubilees*: 1) all living creatures had one language (cf. *Jub.* 3:28) and 2) the serpent apparently lives together with Adam and his wife (dissimilar to *Jub.* 3:17, where he seems to come from somewhere else). This dissimilarity may be explained, however, by a deliberate omission in *Jubilees* to avoid answering questions concerning the serpent’s origin, rather than Josephus intentionally altering the tradition he received.⁴²⁷

One of the ensuing words: φθονερῶς, – meaning, “being envious, jealous, or grudging” – and absent in Genesis 3:1, is present in *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:24. Did Josephus make use of *Wisdom of Solomon*, or did these two writings share a common source? Josephus keeps silence, though he might well have been acquainted with *Wisdom of Solomon*.

The reason for the serpent’s jealousy is nowhere stated clearly; it does look like an extremely odd creature. Thus, though it seems that he had been coexisting with Adam and his wife for many years in the Garden, and therefore, must have been happy (εὐδαιμονήσειν) at one point, at some later time he clearly realized his own jealousy.

Josephus does not make clear against whom this jealousy was actually directed, either the first couple in general (their status or their special relationship with God, which the serpent might not enjoy), or maybe God Himself? Levison maintains that Josephus included the word “envy” simply because he “customarily seeks motivations, and because the primary motivator of evil deeds is envy.”⁴²⁸ Was the author therefore simply showing his readers the cause and effect, having no intention of digging any deeper, since this would demand more explanations?

Unlike the writer of Genesis in chapter 3:1, Josephus does not emphasize the serpent’s shrewdness. This intentional omission creates yet another similarity with *Jubilees*, where the

⁴²⁷ Here and further on in the text, Josephus uses the word ὄφις, akin to LXX.

⁴²⁸ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 105.

serpent is nowhere marked out among all other beasts of the field (*Jub.* 3:17). This might have been done to escape the necessity of explaining the term *arum* and thus demonstrating in what way the serpent seems to surpass all his fellow-animals and how/in what area could he use/apply that advantage. Foreseeing these interpretational difficulties, both authors simply bypassed the problem.

Josephus recommences his story in *Ant.* 1.42: οἰόμενος δὲ συμφορᾷ περιπεσεῖσθαι παρακούσαντας ἀναπείθει κακοήθως τὴν γυναῖκα γεύσασθαι τοῦ φυτοῦ τῆς φρονήσεως ἐν αὐτῷ λέγων εἶναι τὴν τε τὰγαθοῦ καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ διάγνωσιν, ἧς γενομένης αὐτοῖς μακάριον καὶ μηδὲν ἀπολείποντα τοῦ θεοῦ διάξειν βίον.

And thinking that they would fall upon misfortune if they were disobedient, he maliciously induced the woman to taste of the plant of wisdom, saying that in it was the means of distinguishing good and evil, through that, if it were theirs, they would live a blessed life not at all inferior to the divine.

3:2: “The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent, said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Josephus speculates here about the motives that could have moved the serpent in his actions. Though not calling him shrewd in the very beginning of his story, he nevertheless shows that the serpent knew all about the tree the life, of the gods and that his jealousy, as he called it, was no doubt directed against the first couple, though for the reasons unknown. The reason for wishing disaster upon them is not explained either, though his goal disguised as a noble one, as if he wished them a happy life.

The reason for approaching the woman is also left unspoken, though the word ἀναπείθει bears the idea of seduction and misleading, as well as persuasion.

The serpent’s evil character is revealed by the use of certain words (“envy”, “malicious”), which leads to the conclusion that his shrewdness in Josephus’ eyes was negative.

Ant. 1.43: καὶ παρακρούεται μὲν οὕτω τὴν γυναῖκα τῆς ἐντολῆς τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονῆσαι: γευσαμένη δὲ τοῦ φυτοῦ καὶ ἡσθεῖσα τῷ ἐδέσματι καὶ τὸν Ἄδαμον ἀνέπεισεν αὐτῷ χρῆσασθαι.

Thus he deceived the woman into disdaining the command of God. And having tasted of the plant and being pleased with the food, she induced Adamos to avail himself of it.

3:6: “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”

This piece of the *Jewish Antiquities* seems to restate the idea of Genesis 3:5-6 from the perspective of the serpent overcoming the woman and her overcoming Adam. Thus, the entirety of God’s order is turned upside down. The word παρακρούεται, which literary means

“to strike aside, to disappoint, to mislead”, could be used as an allusion to Genesis 3:13, where the woman speaks of her having been misled by the serpent, while she keeps silence about her own misleading of her husband in 3:6. The portrayal of the woman being persuaded by the serpent out of malicious intentions to despise God’s command looks to be at odds with the serpent’s arguments in Genesis 3:5, where he promised the woman that: 1) she and her husband will not die; 2) they will be like God; and 3) they will come to know good and evil.

The mechanism of seduction in the aforementioned texts works in an opposite way. Thus, while Genesis 3:6 stresses the visual effect of the tree, which serves as a cause for the woman to disobey God’s command and eat from the tree, Josephus approaches her actions from the opposite direction. He stresses instead the physical aspect – the taste of the fruit – first, thus claiming that the fruit affected the woman as soon as she γευσάμενη δὲ τοῦ φυτοῦ καὶ ἡσθεῖσα, i.e. “tasted of the tree”.

Ant. 1.44: καὶ συνίεσαν τε αὐτῶν ἤδη γεγυμνωμένων καὶ τὴν αἰσχύνην ὑπαιθρον ἔχοντες σκέπην αὐτοῖς ἐπενόουν: τὸ γὰρ φυτὸν ἀξύτητος καὶ διανοίας ὑπήρχε. φύλλοις οὖν ἑαυτοὺς συκῆς ἐσκέπασαν καὶ ταῦτα πρὸ τῆς αἰδοῦς προβαλόμενοι μᾶλλον ἐδόκουν εὐδαιμονεῖν ὡς ὦν πρότερον ἐσπάνιζον εὐρόντες.

And they recognized that they were now naked, and since they felt the shame of being thus in the open air, they fixed their eyes upon a covering for themselves. For the plant was the beginning of acumen and discernment. Therefore, they covered themselves with leaves of a fig and putting these before their private parts they thought that they were happier, since they had found what they had previously lacked.

3:7: “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

Here Josephus introduces the notion of “shame”, which is implied in the Genesis 3:7-10. Josephus employs this image twice in this section, the second time using the word αἰδοῦς. Both sentences of 1.44 are to be seen as complimentary and so as referring to same idea, expressed in two different ways.

Their very creative “loin covering invention” is attributed to the power of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which seems to have begun working in Adam and his wife almost immediately, sharpening, expounding their understanding of the surrounding reality. Levison claims that for Josephus the idea of a revealed nakedness leads to two opposite conclusions: 1) it is good to be able to discern whether you are naked or not (positive aspect); 2) new abilities are closely followed by shame and loss of God’s companionship, and therefore simply cannot be good (negative aspect).⁴²⁹

Whatever the case may be, Josephus focuses our attention on Adam’s and the woman’s

⁴²⁹ Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to Second Baruch*, 106.

feelings after their transgression, claiming that the first people, “have become much happier than they were before, as they discovered (ἐδόκουν– “thought of, imagined”) what they were in want of”. This statement looks like pure conjecture on Josephus’ part as it has no counterpart in Genesis 3. Levison believes it to be a use of irony, though one cannot be sure.⁴³⁰

Ant. 1.45: τοῦ θεοῦ δ’ εἰς τὸν κῆπον ἐλθόντος ὁμὲν Ἄδαμος πρότερον εἰς ὀμίλιαν αὐτῶ φοιτῶν συνειδῶς αὐτῶ τὴν ἀδικίαν ὑπεχώρει, τὸν δὲ θεὸν ἐξένιζε τὸ πραττόμενον καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ἐπυθάνετο, δι’ ἣν πρότερον ἠδόμενος τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὀμιλία νῦν φεύγει ταύτην καὶ περιίσταται.

But when God came into the garden, Adam, who wanted before to come and converse with him, being conscious of his wicked behavior, went out of the way. This behavior surprised God; and he asked what was the cause of this his procedure; and why he, that before delighted in that conversation, did now fly from it, and avoid it.

3:8-10: “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

The garden is called τὸν κῆπον (a garden, orchard, plantation), instead of the expected παραδείσου found in the LXX. Josephus gives no reason for the change.

Josephus gives more details in his retelling to revitalize the story, as if he was a painter who had begun with black and white, and then came to a point where he realized that color was needed. Levison claims that Josephus “probes the psychological state of his characters according to the techniques of Greco-Roman historiography.”⁴³¹ Hence, he fills in the gaps of the Genesis 3 story by adding some emotions to the otherwise dry and sober Genesis 3 narrative.

Furthermore, from his human point of view, Josephus appears to believe that God could have been surprised or even taken aback by the sort of behaviour Adam suddenly demonstrated, especially after He had been physically absent. The woman is not depicted as wanting to converse with God on any subject. Thus, her relationships with God seems to be more distant or formal.

Ant. 1:46: τοῦ δὲ μηδὲν φθεγγομένου διὰ τὸ συγγινώσκειν ἑαυτῶ παραβάντι τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πρόσταξιν ‘ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν, εἶπεν ὁ θεός, ἔγνωστο περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅπως βίον εὐδαίμονα καὶ κακοῦ παντὸς ἀπαθῆ βιώσετε μηδεμιᾶ ξαινόμενοι τὴν ψυχὴν φροντίδι, πάντων δ’ ὑμῖν αὐτομάτων ὅσα πρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καὶ ἡδονὴν συντελεῖ κατὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνιόντων πρόνοιαν χωρὶς ὑμετέρου πόνου καὶ ταλαιπωρίας, ὧν παρόντων γῆρας τε θᾶπτον οὐκ ἂν ἐπέλθοι καὶ τὸ ζῆν ὑμῖν μακρὸν γένοιτο.

But when he uttered not a word because he was conscious of having transgressed the command of God, God said, “I had decided, with regard to you, that you would live a happy life, unmolested by all evil, tormented in your souls by no concern, and with all things such as contribute to enjoyment and pleasure arising automatically in accordance with my providence without toil and hardship on your part. With these things being on hand, old age would not come upon you more swiftly and your life would have been long.

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

3:9: “But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”¹⁰ He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”¹¹: “And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

This is another very interesting paraphrase of Genesis 3:9-11, where Josephus adds feelings, emotions, and motivations, which, from his point of view, must have overwhelmed both Adam and God at that moment. Thus, he inserts into Adam’s mind the realization of his transgression, while God is pictured as the one who provides the first couple with everything needed for life and enjoyment. The only problem with the paraphrase is Josephus’ desire to include the woman in this conversation, while the narrator in Genesis 3 pushes her aside and presents a dialogue strictly between God and Adam.

God is shown as the only source of human provision and pleasure, without which humanity has no hope for a “happy life”.

Ant. 1:47-48: νῦν δ’ εἰς ταύτην μου τὴν γνώμην ἐνύβρισας παρακούσας τῶν ἐμῶν ἐντολῶν: οὐ γὰρ ἐπ’ ἀρετῇ τὴν σιωπὴν ἄγεις, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ συνειδότι πονηρῶ. Ἄδαμος δὲ παρηγεῖτο τῆς ἀμαρτίας αὐτὸν καὶ παρεκάλει τὸν θεὸν μὴ χαλεπαίνειν αὐτῶ τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ γεγονότος αἰτιώμενος καὶ λέγων ὑπ’ αὐτῆς ἐξαπατηθεὶς ἀμαρτεῖν, ἡ δ’ αὖ κατηγόρει τοῦ ὄφeos.

But now, by disobeying my commands, you have shown insolence to this intention of mine. For it is not through virtue that you are silent but through consciousness of your wickedness.”
Adamos tried to excuse himself for his sin and kept on entreating God not to be angry with him, blaming the woman for what had happened and saying that he had sinned through being deceived by her. But she, in turn, kept accusing the serpent.

3:12-15: “The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done? The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Some new information is given here, in regard to Adam’s asking God for forgiveness “Ἄδαμος δὲ παρηγεῖτο τῆς ἀμαρτίας αὐτὸν”, and begging Him not to be angry with him. However, this confession and plea for forgiveness must be read in light of his laying the guilt at the door of the woman, who in her turn redirected it to the serpent. Thus, although Adam seems to acknowledge and confess his sinful act, his real intentions were in Josephus’ view quite selfish and self-directed all the time.

Ant. 1:49:ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἤττονα γυναικείας συμβουλίας αὐτὸν γενόμενον ὑπετίθει τιμωρίαν, τὴν γῆν οὐκέτι μὲν οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς ἀναδώσειν αὐτομάτως εἰπὼν, πονοῦσι δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις τριβομένοις τὰ μὲν παρέξειν, τῶν δ’ οὐκ ἀξιώσειν. Εὖαν δὲ τοκετοῖς καὶ ταῖς ἐξ ὠδίνων ἀλγηδόσιν ἐκόλαζεν, ὅτι τὸν Ἄδαμον οἷς αὐτὴν ὁ ὄφεις ἐξηπάτησε τούτοις παρακρουσαμένη συμφοραῖς περιέβαλεν;

But God subjected him to punishment for yielding to womanish counsels, saying that the earth would no longer give forth anything automatically to them but would grant some things to them if they toiled and if they were worn out by their activities but would not deem them worthy of a share of others. He punished Eua by childbirth and the suffering that comes from labor-pains because she had led Adamos astray with those words with that the serpent had deceived her and thus had involved him in misfortunes.

3:16-17: "To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." **17** To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life."

Josephus suddenly moves here to 3:16-17. The serpent does not play a role, apart from the last sentence, where Josephus points out that the woman beguiled her husband in the same way the serpent had beguiled her, which "thereby brought (them) into a calamitous condition." Although Genesis 3:6 does not reveal the exact arguments the woman used to persuade Adam to eat from the fruit of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Josephus suggests that both the serpent and the woman were responsible for influencing Adam and therefore, should have received a similar judgment.

Ant. 1:50: ἀφείλετο δὲ καὶ τὸν ὄφιν τὴν φωνὴν ὀργισθεὶς ἐπὶ τῇ κακοῦθι τῇ πρὸς τὸν Ἄδαμον καὶ ὃν ἐντίθησιν ὑπὸ τὴν γλῶτταν αὐτῷ πολέμιον ἀποδείξας ἀνθρώποις καὶ ὑποθέμενος κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς φέρειν τὰς πληγὰς, ὡς ἐν ἐκείνῃ τοῦ τε κακοῦ τοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους κειμένου καὶ τῆς τελευτῆς ῥάστης τοῖς ἀμυνομένοις ἐσομένης, ποδῶν τε αὐτὸν ἀποστερήσας σύρεσθαι κατὰ τῆς γῆς ἰλυσπώμενον ἐποίησε.

And He also deprived the serpent of speech, having been angered by his malevolence toward Adamos, and he placed venom beneath his tongue, designating him as an enemy to humans and advising them to administer blows upon his head, since in that lay the danger to humans and in that place death could come most easily when they defend themselves against him; and depriving him of feet, he made him crawl and wriggle along the ground.

3:15: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

After his reflection on Genesis 3:16-17, Josephus now reverts to the previous verse 15 to consider the consequences the serpent received for his ungodly acts. It is interesting that the serpent's maliciousness is primarily directed here against Adam alone, though some sentences back, he seemed to pursue the woman (cf. 1:41-42).

The serpent receives a severe punishment to be executed in four different ways: 1) he was *deprived of speech* thus negating his ability to verbally persuade in the future; 2) some kind of poison was "inserted" under his tongue, probably as a sign of his previous misuse of this very organ; 3) God made him an eternal enemy to the man to be not able to approach him once again; and 4) he was deprived of his feet. While the first three elements are clear, since they have an obvious connection to the serpent's crime of malicious speech, the fourth punishment is more difficult to grasp. One could imagine that in his former state the serpent was able to

approach on foot. He was quick and mobile, on the same visual level with people, and therefore able to look Adam and the woman straight in their eyes and hypnotize them.

Ant. 1:51: *καὶ ὁ μὲν θεὸς ταῦτα προστάξας αὐτοῖς πάσχειν μετοικίξει τὸν Ἄδαμον καὶ τὴν Εὐάν ἐκ τοῦ κήπου εἰς ἕτερον χωρίον.*

And God, having decreed these sufferings upon them, removed Adamos and Eua from the garden to another place . Gen. 3:23: “ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.”
--

This paraphrase recalls the events of Genesis 3:23-24.

3.4.2 The Serpent’s Portrait in Josephus’ *Antiquities* before and after the Fall (Gen. 3:1-15)

Despite the fact that the serpent is not given much extra attention in Josephus’ *Antiquities*, he nevertheless has picked up some interesting attributes, which are mostly of a psychological and descriptive nature. Here one can distinguish between the portrait of the serpent before the incident in Genesis 3 and the way he is pictured afterwards.

1. **Before:** The serpent shared the same language with the first human beings and other animals (1:41). **After:** Deprived of speech as a punishment for his misusing this organ (1:50) and with poison “inserted” under his tongue (1:50) for the same reason.
2. **Before:** He had been living with the first human couple in the Garden of Eden for an uncertain period of time (1:41) before the fall took place. **After:** Separated from the first couple and made an enemy to men (1:50).
3. **Before:** The serpent felt and displayed envy towards the first couple in spite of the fact that he lived in pretty much the same pleasant conditions as they did (1:41). Together with the preceding, this raises at least three more questions: 1) Why, after so many years spent with the human couple, did he one day suddenly feel envy? 2) Does it mean that he had been enabled to feel envy from the very beginning or did he somehow develop this passion over time? 3) In the case of the latter, who is to blame for “triggering” this passion and making the serpent feel envy? No explanation is provided for any of these questions. **After:** His envy has led him to humiliation: he is deprived of his feet and becomes much more awkward and vulnerable than he was previously.
4. **Before:** He seems to know all about God’s command (1:41) and about the tree’s actual nature (1:42), since part of his envious disposition is clearly directed against the first couple’s adherence to God’s commandment. However, why was he interested in derailing their faithfulness? On this, Josephus does not say a word.

5. Before: The serpent persuaded the woman out of evil intentions to taste from the forbidden tree (1:42), which makes him rather a negative character though it remains unclear (1:43). After: It has become more difficult for him to persuade anyone without feet (1:50), though we know that serpents still do deceive while catching their prey.

3.4.3 Motives behind Josephus' rewriting

The serpent's envy is the only issue that distinguishes Josephus from the two other authors. Why was this point so important for Josephus? Why did he decide to emphasize this point while leaving the rest of the serpent's feral nature remain untouched. Since he repeatedly stresses his evil (malicious) intentions in *Ant.* 1:42-43, why did he abstain from picturing him as the Devil?

It can be noted that the portrait of the serpent is rather straightforward. He is an animal (1:41), which presumably had been living with the first couple since the first day of their creation, until the day of the fall. It is not clear what has happened to him since (1:51), as we never see the serpent being cast away from the paradise, unless we should conjecture that not only the first couple but all living beings (as having been subdued to Man's authority), were cast out of Eden because of the disobedience of both man and the serpent.

In comparison to the author of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and others, Josephus did not view the narrative of the Garden of Eden in simply black and white terms. More than that, we do not see any traces of philosophical or apocalyptic interests in Josephus' writings. Therefore, it seems he was not thinking in terms of Platonic, Persian, or any other dualistic categories and consequently did not need to create any extra tension or super-power in opposition to God. For Josephus, God seems to be the ultimate Sovereign in His domain, high above all his servants, and creatures. This view of God is similar, though not identical, to that of Philo.

In light of the evidence to this point, it looks as though Josephus presented God and His people apologetically – with an eye toward making his work attractive to the Romans. He pictured God as a powerful and omnipotent Being, who exercises His authority over all His creation and brooks no challengers (1:49-50). He seems to be not omnipresent, as He let the serpent do what he did in His absence, but this may be more a matter of a plot. Josephus understands what has happened in the Garden as a test, and therefore pictures God as a Tester, the One who likes the experiment, but who also recognizes that these “experiments” can bring all kinds of results, both good and bad. This may have been done to emphasize His distinctness and exalt the Jewish god above all Roman pantheons, making Him more understandable and worthy of their praise. The very next step consisted in depicting His people, the chosen nation,

not as senseless rebels, but as those who are worthy at least to receive consideration, if not to be followed outright.

While being a historian, and not an apocalyptic or philosophical writer, Josephus' only motivation seems to be in depicting biblical scenes in a more vivid and appealing way. Hence, he regularly sprinkles extra colors throughout the Genesis narrative, resulting in the introduction of feelings as envy, shame, and guilt (1:41, 45, 46). These tend to make his revision of the biblical story sound similar to that of the typical Greek dramas and yet not as dramatic as they were, thus retaining some Jewish traditional flavor.

Chart 11:

	The serpent's ability to speak	The serpent's relations with the first couple	The serpent's feelings	The feelings of Adam with regard to what he has done	The degree of the serpent's knowledge about God's command
<i>Jubilees</i>	The serpent was able to speak (3:28)	He joined the first couple right after the completion of seven years (3:17)	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	He knows everything about God's command and the tree (<i>Jub.</i> 3:19)
Philo	He was not able to speak (QG. 1:32) He was able to in <i>On Creation</i> LV 156	Not clear in terms of its literal meaning	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	He seems to know it (QG 1:35-36)
Josephus	He was able to speak (<i>Ant.</i> 1:41)	He had been living with them for an uncertain amount of time before the fall took place (<i>Ant.</i> 1:41).	He felt envy towards the first couple (<i>Ant.</i> 1:41)	He felt shame and came to a clear realization of his transgression (<i>Ant.</i> 1:46)	He seems to know all about God's command and the tree's true nature (<i>Ant.</i> 1:41-42)

3.5. Genesis 3:1-15 in Other Second Temple Treatises

3.5.1. *The Life of Adam and Eve*⁴³²

Considering all the complexity of the problem connected with examining and sorting out numerous *LAE* (*Life of Adam and Eve*) manuscripts, it is enough to note that the majority of biblical scholars date the *GLAE* (the Greek version of *LAE*) to the first century C.E. Further, it is typically assumed that the work has Jewish or Aramaic (Semitic) roots, though this assumption has not been entirely proved yet in light of the fact that none of these Jewish or Aramaic texts have survived.⁴³³

Furthermore, I will not engage in any discussion regarding the ways in which various *LAE* texts were edited, translated, or transmitted, including issues of textual traditions, redactions, or the numerous *LAE* editions. These complicated discussions would also exceed the limits of the present research. Lastly, I will not discuss the many differences that exist between various *LAE* or *GLAE* manuscripts.⁴³⁴

The treatise has survived in no less than six different languages: Greek, Armenian, Old Slavonic, Georgian, Coptic, and Latin. In the last several decades, each of these versions has received well-deserved attention though, again, the present paper will not interact with the various versions.⁴³⁵

Stone, De Jonge, and Tromp suggest that the Greek version of the *Apocalypse of Moses* (further *GLAE*), is the shortest and earliest among the existing versions of this treatise, or in Stone's own words, "a more original form of the work."⁴³⁶ Therefore, in the following examination I will refer to *GLAE* only.

⁴³² Cf. Marinus De Jonge and Johannes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 12. Further on in this section I will refer to it as to *GLAE*.

⁴³³ See Gary A. Anderson, Michael E. Stone, Johannes Tromp, *Literature on Adam and Eve, Collected Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 251. See also Stone, *Jewish Writings*, 116. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (SBL Early Judaism and its Literature 3; Atlanta: SBL, 1992), 43-44. See M.D. Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve: A New Translation and Introduction," in James Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol.2 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 249. Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve: A New Translation and Introduction," 251, claims that: "On the basis of supposed Hellenistic touches, especially the mention of the Lake of Acheron in Apocalypse 37:3, it has often been suggested that the author of the original document was a Jew of Alexandria." See also R.H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 123 and 129.

⁴³⁴ For more information see Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve", 250-251.

⁴³⁵ Cf. J.R. Levison, in Anderson a.o., *Literature on Adam and Eve*, 251. Cf. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 25.

⁴³⁶ Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, 6. See also Wanda Zemler-Cizewski, "The Apocryphal Life of Adam and Eve: Recent Scholarly Work," *ATR* 86:4 (2004), 676.

The text of *GLAE* reveals the following structure:⁴³⁷

1-4 Introduction: Presentation of the main characters, Adam, Eve, and Seth

5-8 Setting of the farewell scene: Adam's account of the fall

9-14 Eve and Seth's futile quest for medicine for Adam

15-30 Eve's account of the fall

31-37 Adam's death and assumption

38-43 Adam's burial, and Eve's death and burial

In this section I will deal with *GLAE* chapter 16 only, as this is the primary place where the serpent is replaced, possessed, or overwhelmed by the Devil. The surrounding context is very important for establishing a more or less precise explanation of the chapter and, therefore, will be discussed briefly below. I will leave the questions of the *GLAE*'s structure and its literary form largely untouched, and will focus my attention on the exegetical difficulties in chapter 16 only. It is worth noting, however, that according to De Jonge and Tromp, "the basic deviation from the biblical account concerns the form of *GLAE*", which is presented not in a prospective or chronological way, as it is the case in Genesis 3, but in a retrospective, diachronic manner, as it is part of Eve's recollections (*GLAE* 15-30).⁴³⁸

***GLAE* 16 (Text form IA)**

16.1 Καὶ ἐλάλησεν τῷ ὄφει ὁ διάβολος λέγων· ἀνάστα ἐλθέ πρὸς με καὶ εἶπω σοὶ ῥῆμα ἐν ᾧ ὀφελήσῃς.⁴³⁹

And the devil spoke to the serpent saying, "Rise up, come to me and I will tell you a word whereby you may have profit."⁴⁴⁰

16.2 τότε ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ ὄφεις, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος·

And the serpent arose and came to him. And the Devil said to him:

16.3 ἀκούω ὅτι φρονιμώτερος εἶ ὑπὲρ πάντων τῶν θηρίων, ἐγὼ δὲ ἦλθον κατανοῆσαί σε· εὖρον δὲ σὲ μείζονα πάντων τῶν θηρίων, καὶ ὁμιλῶ⁴⁴¹ σοι· ὅμως προσκυνεῖς τὸν ἐλαχιστότερον. διὰ τί ἐσθίεις ἐκ τῶν ζιζανίων τοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐκ τοῦ καρποῦ τοῦ παραδείσου; ἀνάστα καὶ δεῦρο καὶ ποιήσωμεν αὐτὸν ἐκβληθῆναι διὰ τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ παραδείσου, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐξεβλήθημεν δι' αὐτοῦ.

I hear that you are wiser than all the beasts, and I have come to look at you. *I have found that you are greater than all other animals and (have come to) counsel you. And yet you bow down to lesser (than you).*⁴⁴² Why do you eat of the tares (*weeds*) of Adam and his wife and not of (*the fruit of*) paradise? Rise up and *come*, we will cause him to be cast out of paradise *with (the help) of his wife (through his wife)*, even as we were cast out through him."

⁴³⁷ De Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, 20.

⁴³⁸ Ibid, 45. For more information see *ibid*, 18-20.

⁴³⁹ The form of the text belongs to text form IA, according to Levinson's classification; see John R. Levinson, *Texts in Transition: The Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta: SBL, 2000), 67.

⁴⁴⁰ Translation according to R.H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913).

⁴⁴¹ Cf. the use of the word ὁμιλοῦσί in Psalm 115:7 to mean the "sound".

⁴⁴² This is my insertion, as this sentence is absent in Charles' translation.

16.4 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ ὄφεις· φοβοῦμαι μήποτε ὀργισθῆ μοι κύριος.

The serpent said to him, "I fear lest the Lord be wroth with me."

16.5 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· μὴ φοβοῦ· οὐ μοι σκεῦος, κάγω λαλήσω διὰ στόματός σου ῥῆμα ἐν ᾧ δυνήσαι ἐξαπατήσαι αὐτόν.

The Devil said to him: "Fear not, only be my vessel and I will speak through your mouth words *in secret* to deceive *him*."

These five verses are part of Eve's story, which she passes to her posterity (*GLAE* 15:1-29:13) to inform them of what has happened. In comparison to Adam's story, mentioned earlier, (ch. 6-8), which quite closely follows the biblical story of the fall, Eve's story looks completely different and is far more extensively elaborated (cf. 6-8 and 15-30).⁴⁴³ Therefore, it appears that in retelling the story from Eve's perspective, the author intended to fill the hermeneutical-theological gaps in both the Garden of Eden narrative (Gen. 3), and Adam's account (ch. 6-8).

The author tries to portray the scene of the fall using as many colors (traditions, legends, interpretations, etc.) as were available to him at that moment, as his account is full of additional material which otherwise is unique.

Thus, he begins his narrative with Eve's recollection (15:1-3) that the Garden of Eden was separated from the outside world by a wall, and was subsequently divided between Adam and her, with each of them responsible for his or her part of the allotted territory: Adam for the east and north, and Eve for the west and south. Moreover, all male creatures were overseen by Adam, and therefore lived separately, while all female creatures were directed by Eve.⁴⁴⁴

The appearance of the Devil in 16:1 looks slightly unnatural, or even artificial, unless we presume that "the enemy", mentioned in Adam's story earlier on (*GLAE* 7:2 and 15:2-3), and the Devil in 16:1 are one and the same figure. Similarly to Genesis 3:1, *diabolos* appears in 16:1 out of nowhere, though this time not to speak to the woman, but first of all to recruit the shortsighted serpent. To this point, the author of *GLAE* has been unable to avoid the problem of explaining the serpent's behavior in Genesis 3:1-6 and the reasons for his wanting to bring the first human couple to the brink of extinction.⁴⁴⁵ Therefore, similar to many Jewish interpreters before him, he devises a relatively easy solution: the best way to explain the appearance of evil in God's perfect world is to place all blame on the devil's shoulders, thereby alleviating man's dissatisfaction with regard to any existing disorder in God's perfect plan.⁴⁴⁶ Thus, he

⁴⁴³ De Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, 46.

⁴⁴⁴ This gender division looks very artificial and substantially superfluous, and was probably added as an explanation for gender separation in either the Jewish synagogue or Christian church.

⁴⁴⁵ This motif is well explained in *Vita* xii-xvii, which is considered a later edition of *GLAE*, but obviously left out here, see Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 123.

⁴⁴⁶ According to Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 123, "the devil sometimes appears as the inspirer, sometimes rather as the alias of the serpent, Apoc. Mos. xvii."

demonstrates that the serpent's initiative in speaking to Eve (Gen. 3:1) was actually not his at all, but was because he had been possessed by the devil (*GLAE* 16:1-5).

In other words, the serpent's intentions, which are not specified in the Genesis 3:1-15 story now become very clear. According to *GLAE* 16:1-5, these motives were not originally his, but the Devil's, who raised the problem of food and injustice (the inequality between the serpent's existence and Adam's) to secure the serpent's obedience.⁴⁴⁷

Neither the enmity of the devil directed against Adam in 16:3, nor the plan to bring Adam harm through the cooperation of his wife (as seen in the final words of 16:3) is ever clearly explained. Thus, neither *he*⁴⁴⁸ nor *they*⁴⁴⁹ at the end of 16:5 bring even relative difference into the overall meaning of the sentence. Neither of these pronouns actually clarify whom exactly the author had in mind. In other words, who is this *he* (Adam, The Archangel Michael, or perhaps God as the ultimate target?), or *they* (Adam, Eve, the serpent, God, the angels, or just everyone?) he refers to?

The double nature of the devil is well underlined in both chapters 16 and 17. Thus he is colorfully presented as: 1) simultaneously one of the angels of God and yet also 2) His ultimate adversary, (cf. 16:1-5 and 17:1). This means that in *GLAE*, most likely for the first time in the history of biblical interpretation, an author tries to combine and rework the diverse motives scattered throughout the literature of the time, that described *ὁ διάβολος* not only as being able to appear as an angel of light – a rather recent theological suggestion for the author of the *GLAE*⁴⁵⁰ – but also as one who could enter another's body (cf. 16:5: λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· μὴ φοβοῦ· οὐ μοι σκεῦος, κἀγὼ λαλήσω διὰ στόματός σου ῥῆμα ἐν ᾧ, δυνήσαι ἐξαπατήσαι αὐτόν). Today, this is known, of course, as the phenomenon of a demon possession. Since nothing about demon possession appears in the Old Testament, from where did the author derive this idea? Perhaps from Greek or Persian literature, since it seems that before the book of *Tobit*, the Israelites had been unacquainted with the imagery of demonic possession.

The author now juxtaposes all the devil's attributes with God's omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence in order to make some very hasty and uneasy conclusions regarding the devil's extra abilities.

These points, however, contradict each other, since it seems that the present story must

⁴⁴⁷ However, Jan Dochhorn, *Die Apocalypse des Mose* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 311-312, rightly points out that this was yet another of the Devil's tricks, as he was not going to solve any of serpent's problems: "Die Schlange bleibt unerwähnt und der Teufel wird aus dem Himmel, nicht aus dem Paradies vertrieben."

⁴⁴⁸ Text form IA.

⁴⁴⁹ Text form I.

⁴⁵⁰ Definitely not the Old Testament idea, but the one used in the Koran and various early and medieval Christian writings, see Johnson, "Life of Adam and Eve", 253.

have taken place somehow before the Devil's ultimate rebellion in heaven and his subsequent fall, and not after it, which would be illogical, (cf. 17:1-2, where he still worships Yahweh with the other angels). He is depicted as if he had begun plotting against God and visiting the earth long before he actually rebelled. Therefore, what we see in *GLAE* is either that God continues playing ignorant with regard to the Devil's unhidden provocations and his subsequent preparations for the open rebellion, or He must have been simply unaware of them (which seems very unlikely). Regardless, these inconsistencies are presented in a rather bizarre and illogical way and have no clear correspondences with either Genesis or any other story within the Old Testament, though the New Testament does contain some similar stories (cf. Luke 8:26-39).⁴⁵¹

As for the serpent himself, his behavior in the story looks unstable and psychologically immature. Correspondingly, the only question he asks is motivated by his fear rather than by repulsion at the inappropriate proposal of the Devil (16:4-5). Once the serpent is reassured that the outcome of his action cannot be negative, he ceases asking any more questions and submissively acquiesces to what the Devil asked of him.

The broader context answers several other questions: 1) Why did Eve give the fruit to her husband (19:2-3)? 2) How was Adam deceived (21:3)? According to this story, the devil is to be blamed for everything that happened in the Garden of Eden, which makes the protoplasts helpless victims of his subtle but treacherous lies.

I agree with De Jonge and Tromp that "the reason for writing *GLAE* was not to explain the story in Genesis, nor to improve upon it, but to convey the comforting message that life in this valley of tears is not at all without prospect."⁴⁵² In other words, the author's mission was to bring some hope to those who suffered from despair, and to encourage them to believe in a more positive scenario of human history.⁴⁵³ This comparatively broad explanation applies to *GLAE* 16 as well.

Summing up our conclusions to this point, we arrive at three major challenges.

First, De Jonge and Tromp claim that the author did not have any intention of explaining the Genesis account. This assumes that the author must have been familiar with it,

⁴⁵¹ De Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, 48: "A grave inconsistency like this is conceivable only if we accept that the authors were not much interested in the exact detail. Instead, the interpretative elements were already present in the stories as they knew it."

⁴⁵² *Ibid*, 49.

⁴⁵³ See Zemler-Cizewski, "The apocryphal Life of Adam and Eve", 671, who presents some additional motives for the writing of this treatise and related secondary literature are an integral part of the early legacy of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic cultures, surviving as a vehicle for reflection on the problems of illness, old age, sin, death and the afterlife."

though he was uninterested in – or at least careless with – the basic message of Genesis 3. If he was not building upon the foundation of the message of Genesis 3 and was not familiar with it, then it seems logical that he could have accepted its substantial reinterpretation with all its omissions and inconsistencies, without any intention of explaining the Genesis 3 text itself.

Second, he does not consider his work as extended, rewritten, or changed, due to his total or at least partial unfamiliarity with the original story in Genesis 3:1-15. It looks like there was something more important for the author of *GLAE* than reinterpreting the Genesis 3 story. Thus, the text he used could have been either widely used Jewish or Christian interpretative traditions, or the existence of similar legendary stories, parallel oral traditions, or something else.⁴⁵⁴ In other words the author of *GLAE* could have become hostage to the myriad interpretations that had been built on the top of the Genesis 3 narrative by his time, thus surrounding it from every single side and therefore forcing everyone to follow the way they have already set aside, or of his presumably complete or partial unfamiliarity with the Genesis 3 account.⁴⁵⁵

Third, the author did not intend to improve upon it (the Genesis narrative), such as by exploring whether what he was presenting was correct or not. This conclusion follows from the previous one. Accordingly, the author was either not familiar with the original story, satisfied with the existing interpretations, or saw no reason to challenge them by exploring the meaning of the Genesis 3 passage any further. It seems that the author of *GLAE* simply took the traditions for granted and then added some necessary minimum to the already existing story in order to get his work to sound more solid.

Fourth, the author would have used his story to exhort, encourage, warn, and give hope

⁴⁵⁴ De Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, 48. Cf. Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve”, 252-253. Cf. Rivka Nir, “The Aromatic Fragrances of Paradise in *GLAE*,” *Novum Testamentum*, XLVI, 1, 2004, 24-25, where he claims that the use of a specific type of fragrances in *GLAE* clearly speaks in favor of its Christian origin. See also Peter-Ben-Smith, “Incense Revisited: Reviewing the Evidence for Incense as a Clue to the Christian Provenance of the Greek Life of Adam and Eve,” *Novum Testamentum*, XLVI, 1, 2004, 369, who argues that: “She (*Nir – the clarification is mine – Sergei Lagunov*) argues: the *GLAE* is very clearly Christian, and incense is the clue to this provenance. It seems however, that the evidence Nir presents is at times less than conclusive, and certainly allows room for an interpretation, which assumes a Jewish original, which has later been reworked by a Christian scribe.” See Zemler-Cizewski, “The apocryphal Life of Adam and Eve”, 675, “Although all surviving manuscripts of *the Life* were produced by Christians, there is limited and debatable evidence to suggest that the narrative originated in a Christian setting. Thus *the Life* represents what may be a Jewish apocryphal text that was embraced, transmitted and embellished by several generations of Christian authors.”

⁴⁵⁵ Cf. G.A. Anderson, *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 17-18: “The biblical text has been rewritten in conformity with an evolving interpretative tradition. For premodern readers of the Bible, whether Jewish or Christian, it took great effort to distinguish between what was in the Bible and what had grown up around it. The Bible was in their eyes a collage of biblical text and authoritative interpretation.”

to his people, i.e. to the community in which he lived.⁴⁵⁶ His overall theological foundation then was either very poor, considering the kind of goal he had in mind. He therefore turned his narration to a more practical side, while leaving the opportunity to discuss theological issues for others. Thus, as some scholars argue, the primary motives, of *GLAE* was hidden behind a “transformative” teaching based on particular well-known stories, which could have been purposely rewritten by skilled Christian writers with the goal of making the Genesis 3 narrative sound more persuasive, and to encourage certain spiritual changes within a particular Christian community.⁴⁵⁷

If we accept this assumption, this will inevitably lead to the conclusion that for the author of *GLAE*, all that exegetical, theological, or other knowledge was of secondary importance. Thus while pursuing his ultimate goal, the author of *GLAE* does not explain or make clear enough: 1) the initial source(s) of the serpent’s outstanding cleverness (Gen. 3:1); 2) his place of birth, origin, or his original habitat; 3) the nature or origin of the devil; 4) how he came into this story; 5) why he desired all this to happen; 6) why he went first to the serpent to accomplish his mission instead of going straight to the woman, unless we surmise that he knew something about the serpent, perhaps about his cleverness (cf. 16:3)⁴⁵⁸ and therefore intended to use him as a liaison between himself and the first woman;⁴⁵⁹ and 7) what the real problem was between him and Adam, considering that he so intensely wanted to cast Adam out of paradise?

⁴⁵⁶ Zemler-Cizewski, “The Apocryphal Life of Adam and Eve”, 677: “Although *the Life* is neither typically Christian, nor typically Jewish, alluding neither to Moses nor to Jesus, its central message is one of divine mercy on all who seek to obey the commandments of the Creator and are willing to repent whenever they fall into sin.”

⁴⁵⁷ See the bookreview of Daphna, J.R.C. Cousland and Dietmar Neufeld, “*And So They Went Out*”: *The Lives of Adam and Eve as a Cultural Transformative Story* in *JSOT*, 35:5, 2011, 178.

⁴⁵⁸ Just where he learned about his cleverness, the Devil did not say. Dochhorn, *Die Apocalypse des Mose*, 311.

⁴⁵⁹ See De Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*, 47, who explain these discrepancies as follows: “*GLAE* agrees with broad interpretative traditions in establishing a close connection between the serpent and the devil. No such connection exists in Genesis 3, where diabolic figures are entirely absent.”

3.5.2 The *Apocalypse of Abraham*

The treatise called the *Apocalypse of Abraham* (further *AA*) is another interesting text, which has survived in Old Slavonic, dating back to the first century CE, and most likely written in the Jewish Merkabah tradition. It is based on the book of Ezekiel, with one of the sections addressing the issue of the fall of Man.⁴⁶⁰ Many scholars claim that it was first written in Hebrew and then translated into Greek, but this remains an open question.⁴⁶¹

Although the author remains unknown, the origin of the treatise is in one way or the other connected with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE, which it uses as a starting point for its meditation over the fate of Israel as a nation and its ruination. Therefore, this treatise shares some common elements with both *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, which in a similar manner reflect on the fate of Israel after the destruction of the Herodian Temple.

For the purposes of the present study, I will limit my examination to treatise 23:4-11, singling out and comparing all those elements, which appeared there for the first time with those in the biblical account.

Before we start dealing with the text itself, it is worth showing its place in the broader context. The structure of the book is as follows:⁴⁶²

Chapters 1-8 – Abraham's progress from his search for the true identity of the Almighty God, to God's self-revelation to Abraham.

Chapters 9-14 – The occasion for Abraham's vision in the Apocalypse.

Chapters 15-18 – Abraham's ascent to heaven and his vision of God.

⁴⁶⁰ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between Bible and the Mishnah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 288. See Andrei A. Orlov, *Praxis of the Voice: The Divine Name Traditions in the Apocalypse of Abraham*, *JBL* 127 (2008), 53, who claims that *AA* "might represent one of the earliest specimens of Merkabah mysticism, the Jewish tradition in which the divine form ideology arguably receives its most advanced articulation." See also Andrei Orlov, "The Pteromorphic Angelology of the Apocalypse of Abraham", in *CBQ*, 71 (2009), 830; See also Andrei A. Orlov, *Selected Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009), 75; Kenneth R. Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden, Boston: Brill: 2011), 261.

⁴⁶¹ See also G.N. Bonwetsch, *Die Apokalypse Abrahams* (Leipzig: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 2000), 45: „Diese Legende offenbar älter als das Jubiläenbuch, kehrt nur wieder auf jüdischem, wie auf christlichem, resp. auch auf mohammedanischem Boden." See also Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem*, 251, who assumes some minor Arameic influence as well as „a Greek intermediary". See Belkis Philonenko-Sayar and Marc Philonenko, „Die Apokalypse Abrahams," in W.G. Kümmel (ed.), *Jüdische Schriften aus Hellenistischen-Römischer Zeit* Band V (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1982), 417: "Der slawische Text ist nur ein Übersetzung eines griechischen Textes. Der griechische Text selbst ist nichts anderes als die Übersetzung eines semitischen Originals." He then presents a list of arguments pointing out: „Die Apokalypse Abrahams beruht letztlich auf einem Original, das in einem hie und da aramäisch gefärbten Hebräisch geschrieben war."

⁴⁶² Cf. Bonwetsch, *Die Apokalypse Abrahams*, 41, who divides the treatise into two unequal parts: chs. 1-8, called „haggadisch" and chs. 9-32, called „apokalyptisch". See also Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 246: „The first eight chapters are a midrash on God's command to Abraham to leave his father's house (Gen. 12:1-3)." See Philonenko, „Die Apokalypse Abrahams", 416.

Chapters 19-21 – List of a series of different visions.

Chapters 22-25- A vision regarding the fall of humanity and its sequel.

Chapter 26 – Why sin is permitted.

Chapters 27-29 – The primary eschatological section of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

Chapters 30-31- An eschatological scenario called «the Punishment of the Heathen and the Ingathering of Israel».

Chapter 32 – The conclusion.

Apocalypse of Abraham 23:1-11

“Now look again in the picture, who it is who seduced Eve and what is the fruit of the tree, [and] thou wilt know what there shall be, and how it shall be to thy seed among the people at the end of the days of the age, and so far as thou canst not understand I will make known to thee, for thou art well-pleasing in my sight, and I will tell thee what is kept in my heart. And I looked into the picture, and my eyes ran to the side of the Garden of Eden. And I saw there a man very great in height and terrible in breadth, incomparable in aspect, entwined with a woman, who was also equal to the man in aspect and size. And they were standing under a tree of Eden, and the fruit of this tree was like the appearance of a bunch of grapes of the vine, and behind the tree was standing (something) like a dragon in form, but having hands and feet like a man’s, on his back six wings on the right, and six on the left, and he was holding the grapes of the tree and feeding them to the two I saw entwined with each other. And I said: “Who are these two entwined with each other, or who is this between them, or what is the fruit which they are eating, Mighty Eternal One?” And He said: “This is the world of men, this is Adam, and this is their thought on the earth, this is Eve. And he, who is between them is the impiety of their behavior unto perdition, Azazel himself.”⁴⁶³

The first thing to note is that the text is presented in the form of a dialogue between God Almighty and Abraham, who are discussing the most burning questions on Abraham’s mind. Chapter 23 should be read within the context of chapters 22-25. In this section, God reveals to Abraham the secrets of the problem of sin, as well as the reasons and motivations which eventually led the first representatives of humanity to trespass God’s very first command.

Apocalypse of Abraham 23:1-3

“Now look again in the picture, who it is who seduced Eve and what is the fruit of the tree, [and] thou wilt know what there shall be, and how it shall be to thy seed among the people at the end of the days of the age, and so far as thou canst not understand I will make known to thee, for thou art well-pleasing in my sight, and I will tell thee what is kept in my heart.”

The very first sentence commences with the claim to reveal the secrets of the serpent, though the actual secrets are not opened until the middle of the chapter, thus giving the author time to proceed from the announcement to its ultimate fulfillment.

⁴⁶³ The text of 23:4-11 will be presented in English, owing to the work of R. Rubinkiewicz, as there is no Old Slavonic text available for any wider use. Cf. R. Rubinkiewicz, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” in J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. I (New York: Peabody, 2009 [reprint of 1983]), 681-705. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 199-200, note resemblances with Ugaritic motives.

Apocalypse of Abraham 23:4-6

“And I looked into the picture, and my eyes ran to the side of the Garden of Eden. And I saw there a man very great in height and fearful in breadth, incomparable in aspect, embracing a woman, who likewise approximated to the aspect and shape of the man. And they were standing under a tree of (the Garden of) Eden, and the fruit of this tree was like the appearance of a bunch of grapes of the vine”⁴⁶⁴

This description of Adam and the woman looks like an interpretation of Genesis 3:6, revealing the author’s acquaintance with the idea of Adam standing next to Eve at the time of temptation and restraining himself from saying a word. However, another important detail, which immediately attracts our attention, is the depiction of Adam and the woman as two “fearful” giants.

The tree, which remains nameless, and its fruit (it seems that there was just one kind of fruit on that tree) are described in appearance very dissimilarly to Genesis 3:6, but very similarly to its ultimate impact on the woman with just one exception. In Genesis 3:6, the fruit becomes attractive to the woman only once she accepted the serpent’s argumentation (cf. Gen. 3:1-5), while here, in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, it seems that the tree was attractive to the couple from the very beginning. Another possible way to reconcile this slight discrepancy is to say that the scenario presented in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* when the serpent’s temptation had already begun having an effect on its victims.

Apocalypse of Abraham 23:7-8

“... And behind the tree was standing as it were a serpent in form, having hands and feet like a man’s and wings on its shoulders, six on the right side and six on the left, and they were holding the grapes of the tree in their hands, and both were eating it whom I had seen embracing”.

The problem of Genesis 3:14 is avoided here, as the serpent, or at least a creature that resembled him somehow (“...”as if it were a serpent”), is presented in such a way that it cannot be called a serpent by definition, but rather a multi-winged seraph from Isaiah 6, or perhaps a dragon. The problem with comparing this image with the one from Genesis 3:14 is that there is no mention of wings in the biblical narrative (but legs only) while the author of *the Apocalypse of Abraham* tries to present a more complex image of God’s adversary as rather a seraph to match, perhaps, the one from Ezekiel 28? Furthermore, the reason for switching from one image to another, that is, from dragon to serpent is not explained anywhere. Shall we perceive them as one and the same character, or two separate ones?

⁴⁶⁴ The idea that “Der Baum der Erkenntnis ist eine Weintraube wie in Apc Baruch (gr) 4,8 ”is very interesting one. See, Philonenko, „Die Apokalypse Abrahams“, 445.

Apocalypse of Abraham 23:9-11

“And I said: “Who are these mutually embracing, or who is this who is between them, or what is the fruit which they are eating, O Mighty Eternal One? And He said: “This is the human world, this is Adam, and this is their desire upon the earth, this is Eve; but he who is between them represented ungodliness, their beginning (on the way) to perdition, even Azazel.”

In the following sentences, the ploy of concealing the identity of the serpent is removed, and we find that it is Azazel, one of the primary personages of the book of Enoch and leader of the rebel group of fallen angels, who in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* bears the image of an unclean bird, or a bird of prey.⁴⁶⁵ However, one point differ significantly: while the author of 1 Enoch uses narration to address and interpret the Genesis 6’s interpretative difficulty⁴⁶⁶ and not Genesis 3,⁴⁶⁷ the author of the *Apocalypse of Abraham* tries to extend 1 Enoch’s interpretation of the previous three chapters of Genesis, and therefore brings one of the Enochic figures into the Genesis 3 story.⁴⁶⁸

In this light, Orlov rightly notes that the two images of Azazel, one of a bird of prey (AA 13:2-6) and one of a serpent (23:5-6), have no choice but to collide and produce confusion in terms of the overall picture of who Azazel really is. He therefore states:

Since this description is given in the middle of the Adamic story, it is not entirely clear whether this composite physique represents Azazel’s permanent form, or whether it is just a temporal manifestation acquired during the deception of the protoplasts. It is possible that here the authors of the Slavonic apocalypse are drawing on the cluster of traditions reflected in the Primary Adam Books, where the tempter uses the serpent’s form as a proxy in his deception of Adam and Eve. It is interesting, though; that the pteromorphic features of the negative protagonist are reaffirmed in the description found in the Slavonic apocalypse that portrays Azazel as a winged creature.⁴⁶⁹

Thus, he rightly notes that the existence of wings could be a result of a fusion of these two images to preserve the remnants of both traditions, and extend them in the form of just one. Orlov then goes on to say that this is not the first time the author of the *Apocalypse of Abraham* shows his acquaintance with the Enochic tradition and provides further potential references.⁴⁷⁰ Therefore, based on these observations, we can conjecture that one of the author’s goals might

⁴⁶⁵ See AA, 13:2-6 and A. Orlov, *The Pteromorphic Angelology in the Apocalypse of Abraham*, 837.

⁴⁶⁶ Bonwetsch, *Die Apokalypse Abrahams*, 65, “Das äthiop. Henochbuch erzählt viel von Azazel. Er ist es, welcher nach 9,6 S4 ed. Dillmann “alle Ungerechtigkeit auf der Erde gelehrt” hat, durch die Lehre seiner Werke die ganze Erde verderbt hat“.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, 66: “...wie ja auch nach der jüdischen Theologie Satan und die Schlange nicht streng von einander geschieden sind (Weber S, 219).”

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, 65: “Nicht ganz in sich übereinstimmend will auch erscheinen, was die Abrahamapokalypse über Azazel berichtet. Sie schließt sich zunächst mit der Stellung, die sie ihm zuweist, der jüdischen Tradition an, in welcher Azazel mit Satan und mit Sammael zusammengeschmolzen ist.” See also Jones, 249.

⁴⁶⁹ Orlov, “The Pteromorphic Angelology of the Apocalypse of Abraham”, 837.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid, 838.

have been to rewrite the story of Azazel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.⁴⁷¹ Thus, Orlov suggests:

The authors of the Slavonic apocalypse, in their reinterpretation of Azazel's figure, seem to rely on a certain angelological understanding of Azazel as found in the Enochic materials. Yet, although Enochic tradition envisions Azazel and his angelic companions as anthropomorphic creatures capable of seducing women of the earth to procreate the new race of the giants, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* insists on the pteromorphic physique of the fallen angel.⁴⁷²

This is a quite plausible explanation, to which we will return later.

And I said: "O Eternal, Mighty One! Why hast Thou given to such power to destroy the generation of men in their works upon the earth?"

And He said to me: "They who will (to do) evil—and how much I hated (it) in those who do it! Over them I gave him power, and to be beloved of them."

The last part of the chapter resembles a couple of sayings from the *Wisdom of Solomon*, especially one strikingly similar idea about the rule of Azazel (known in Wis. as ὁ διάβολος) which will be extended only over those, who will love him (cf. Wis. 2:24b: "It was through the devil's envy that Death entered into the cosmic order, and they who are his own experience him").

The translation "experience" is not really suitable here, considering that *πειράζω* means something like, "put to the test, and make a proof or trial". A better translation might be, "share his experience by living together and looking for evidence as to whether his style and way of life are suitable or not". The context of *Wisdom of Solomon* 2 shows that the wicked ones are inclined to follow their wicked way. Although in *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:24 he is not personified as Azazel in the *Apocalyps of Abraham*, the general resemblance of the two stories can be seen.

The chapter concludes with Abraham's amazement and a kind of discontent with the way things happened in the Garden of Eden, which destined the following generations to suffer as a result of Adam's and Eve's mistake. God's answer to Abraham's question does not resolve all those tensions within the story. The power given to Azazel to rule over the wicked appears to be practically unlimited, given that after the fall of humanity, no one was again able to claim himself otherwise.

Therefore, the explanation does not settle the problem, but rather reflects Jewish and early Christian beliefs about the provenance of the Devil's power. If we follow "God's logic", as presented at the end of chapter 23, God deliberately allowed Azazel to rule over all the wicked, explaining that human beings sooner or later will become victims of Azazel's power.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid, 839.

This statement makes God responsible for the existence of evil and human depravity on the earth.

Jones suggests that this treatise might be immediately connected with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. and therefore, could be seen as a reaction to this event. If this is correct, its intention could be somehow similar to the one of *4 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*.⁴⁷³

Nickelsburg points out that at least two primary motives can be detected within the treatise, as the author himself explains, and therefore, “run through the book and unify it. The first of them is the tension between Israel’s status as God’s covenant people and its fate at the hands of the Gentiles.” The second main theme is, “the practicing or the rejection of idolatry.”⁴⁷⁴ Jones adds yet another theme when he says that, “men have a choice, whether to follow good or evil.”⁴⁷⁵ In his opinion we even have here, “a perfect example of the freedom of man’s will to choose good and evil.”⁴⁷⁶

Despite the fact that these two themes are really crucial for the ultimate understanding of the purposes of the treatise in general, they ~~are~~ should nevertheless ~~to~~ be regarded as quite general topics. These topics purported to embrace and describe the primary motives of the entire book, rather than stress some particulars within its parts. What I will discuss in the following assertions will mostly concern the interest of my research in looking for the potential motives, which might have led the author of AA to introduce those foreign theological and exegetical elements. These include the Enochic and perhaps even Egyptian images which he employed in his depiction and interpretation of the Genesis 3:1-15 account and especially his image of the serpent from Genesis 3. At this point, it would be helpful to summarize the alien elements and images, which are at home in AA, but are foreign to Genesis 3:1-15:

- 1) The need for God’s extra revelation of the events, which took place in the Garden of Eden.
- 2) A long line of perverted seeds, which seem to find their root in the first couple’s depravity.
- 3) The tree is never named.
- 4) The conversation between the serpent and the woman is omitted.

For our research these are not the most striking features of the chapter. More important is the description of the serpent:

⁴⁷³ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 252, 270.

⁴⁷⁴ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between Bible and the Mishnah*, 287. Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 256.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid, 250.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, 260, therefore the idea itself had appeared long before Augustine and Luther formulated their argumentations.

- 5) He is described as a sort of seraph with, “hands and feet like a man’s and wings on its shoulders, six on the right side and six on the left”.
- 6) He is Azazel, the leader of the rebel army of angels from 1 Enoch.

In conclusion we can discern the following possible motives:

- 1) Some kind of interpretative tradition possibly existing among the Jews, which might have included parallels or a mutual interdependence with the *nachash* from Genesis 3 and the *seraph*, evident in such places as Numbers 21:6,7,9 or Isaiah 14:12-15.⁴⁷⁷
- 2) An attempt to explain the Genesis 3:14 passage in a new light, e.g. from the viewpoint of Enochic or some other tradition.
- 3) A strong influence of the Enochic tradition predominating either in the author’s immediate surroundings or in his time period, which is reflected by his use of the name Azazel.⁴⁷⁸
- 4) Since the author shows acquaintance with *GLAE*, we may suggest that he was either not familiar with it, or might have disagreed with the way it presented the story.
- 5) Because there are no exclusively Christian marks in AA 23, it is difficult to speak of any Christian influence on the AA.
- 6) The author might have desired to play with dualistic opposites, he consequently presents the angel Yohel (as a good, clean bird) and then Azazel (as an unclean bird or a bird of prey).⁴⁷⁹ The contrast is obviously deliberate and well presented. Thus, he might have intended to emphasize the two sides of God or perhaps God and His weaker opposite.
- 7) As Orlov points out, this might have been an attempt to avoid any anthropomorphic images of God: “it seems to be no coincidence that these anti-anthropomorphic developments took place in the pseudepigraphon written in the name of the hero of faith, known in the Jewish lore for his fight against idolatrous statues.”⁴⁸⁰ Therefore, he believes that these pteromorphic images, “do not appear coincidental.”⁴⁸¹
- 8) The presence of Azazel might have been included to help consider the question of the origin of evil.⁴⁸²
- 9) Jones is right claiming that, “in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* the supreme evil, as will

⁴⁷⁷ See my dealing with this passage in section 2.1.

⁴⁷⁸ Orlov, “The Pteromorphic Angelology of the Apocalypse of Abraham”, 838.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid, 830-838.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid, 840.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid, 841.

⁴⁸² Cf. Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 260.

cause to surprise, is idolatry.” Therefore, the ultimate choice of men is very important and so highlighted. “The heterogeneity of Abraham’s seed, consisting as it does of true Jews and idolaters, is explained using the somewhat mysterious figure of Azazel.”⁴⁸³ This means that within this overtly dualistic framework, Abraham and Yohel represent the leading figures of the righteous side of the human population, while Azazel represents the unrighteous one.⁴⁸⁴ Jones agrees with that assumption, maintaining that, “Azazel is in some ways, then, anti-Abraham.”⁴⁸⁵ This motive in its turn could be related to the *Wisdom of Solomon*, where God represents the camp of the righteous ones, while the devil is depicted as a leader or an embodiment (personification) of the unrighteous idolaters.

10) In this light, even the Roman emperor could have been seen as Azazel, the embodiment of the idolatrous Roman nation. This was opposed to the righteous Jewish monotheism of Abraham’s progeny, which eventually destroyed the Herodian Temple and scattered the Jews over all the earth.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Ibid, 258.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid, 259: “In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Azazel is a Luciferian figure, (the one), “who traded his heavenly abode for the earth by choice.” On the other hand, similarly to Satan from the book of Job, he is powerless, “over the righteous. Rather Azazel’s authority extends only to the wicked.” In several Gnostic traditions Azazel is closely associated even with Jesus, see Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 264.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid, 259.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid, 270.

3.5.3 The Second Book of Enoch

The *Second Book of Enoch*, which is also called *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, or the *Slavonic Enoch*, is an apocalyptic pseudepigraph, which has survived in its entirety only in Old Slavonic. An abbreviated version has been recently found in Qasr Ibrim, Egyptian Nubia.⁴⁸⁷ The treatise presents its own version of the events described in Genesis 3, adding much to it.⁴⁸⁸ For the sake of clarity, it must be distinguished from the first and third books of Enoch, since despite its many correspondences with *1 Enoch*,⁴⁸⁹ it has its own provenance, value, history, tradition, content, and eventually, circulation.⁴⁹⁰

Although the scholarly consensus dates it to around the late first century C.E., its ultimate provenance – Jewish or Greek – is connected with the issue of its original language of composition and remains uncertain.⁴⁹¹ It is difficult to locate this work within a definite historical context. It may have been written by 1) an unknown Coptic Jew who lived in Egypt, possibly in Alexandria, around the beginning of the Christian era;⁴⁹² 2) a Jewish sectarian group,⁴⁹³ which composed it around the last days of the Herod Temple;⁴⁹⁴ or 3) by one of the early Christian groups, though the primary flow of the treatise's argumentation (at least in its short form) predisposes the material more toward a Jewish interpretative tradition, than a

⁴⁸⁷ Joost L. Hagen, «No Longer Slavonic Only: 2Enoch Attested in Coptic from Nubia», in Andrei Orlov, Gabrielle Boccaccini, (eds.), *New Perspectives on Second Enoch: No more Slavonic Only* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 7-14.

⁴⁸⁸ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between Bible and the Mishnah*, 221.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, 222.

⁴⁹⁰ Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, 408; “2 Enoch is clearly part of the Enochic literature. Yet it presents a considerable number of traditions, which cannot be paralleled elsewhere in extant literature. Moreover, the atmosphere of the book differs from that of the other Enoch writings.” See R.H. Charles, *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (London: Filiquarian Publishers, Charles & Morfill, 2006), 6. See Leslie John Taylor, *Extra Canicals: The Holy Apocrypha* (London: Thinkstock, 2011), 109.

⁴⁹¹ Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, 406, claims that: “The Slavonic is clearly a translation of a Greek text, but the question of the original language remains a subject of conjecture. Similar are the matters of its composition and date, but there seems to be no good reason to doubt its early date.” H. Lichtenberger, “Biblische Figuren im Slavischen Henoch Buch” in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and Cognate Literature* (eds. H. Lichtenberger and u. Mittman-Rischert; Deuterocanonical and and Cognate Literature Yearbook, 2008; Berlin 2009), 303-336, suggests an even earlier date – from 3 BCE to 1CE. See Orlov, 133. See Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History* (Sheffield: Sheffield academic Press, 1990), 241-242, who proposes the time before 70 CE, “because the author writes when the temple is still standing.” Taylor, 109. See Annette Yoshiko Reed, who claims that around the second century C.E., Jewish rabbis began to reject the Enochic tradition, which was picked up by Christians. Thus, if we speak of the Jewish roots of this treatise, we should think of the first century C.E. as a possible date of its composition, though the tradition it appeals to can be even earlier. Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of the Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 190.

⁴⁹² Nichols, *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, 6-7, gives four reasons for Egypt as the place of writing.

⁴⁹³ Stone, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, 407: “Sacrificial practise apparently identical with that forbidden as sectarian by rabbinic sources has been detected in the book”. See also Sacchi, 239, who believes the treatise to be the “product of the fringe sect”. He mentions Anderson's opinion to its possible Essene influence.

⁴⁹⁴ See Gabrielle Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 170.

Christian one (see the end of section 3.7.2).⁴⁹⁵

Without entering into these discussions about the provenance of the text, I want to look for clues, which could disclose the reasons and motives behind the author's reinterpretation of the Genesis 3 text.

2 *Enoch* 31 belongs to the first part of the treatise's threefold structure (1-34), while its sections (chapters 35-67 and 68-73) each move in their own direction.⁴⁹⁶

1 "Adam-Mother; earthly and life. And I created a garden in Edem, in the east, so that he might keep the agreement and preserve the commandment.

2 And I created for him an open heaven, so that he might look upon the angels singing the triumphal song. And the light, which is never darkened, was pertainly in paradise.

3 And he was continuously in paradise, and the devil understood that I wished to create another world, so that everything could be subjected to Adam on earth, to rule and reign over it.

4 The devil is of the lowest places, and he will become a demon, because he fled from heaven; Sotona, because his name was Satanail.

5 In this way he became different from the angels, his nature did not change, (but) his thought did, since his consciousness of righteous and sinful things changed.

6 And he became aware of his condemnation and of the sin, which he sinned previously, and this is why he thought up the scheme against Adam. In such form he entered the paradise and corrupted Eve, but did Adam he did not contact.⁴⁹⁷

There is no word about the serpent from the Genesis 3 story.⁴⁹⁸ The author was familiar with Genesis 3 to a certain degree, though preferred to combine it with 1 Enoch's and his own theological prejudices and presuppositions, which by that time seemed more rational to him than the biblical story. The previous chapter (30) speaks of the six days of creation. This is the part of God's story that He narrates to Enoch. What is remarkable here is that in comparison

⁴⁹⁵ Nickelsburg states that there is no clear agreement about which of the recensions is original, the long or the short one, *Jewish Literature between Bible and the Mishnah*, 221. Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History*, 238. Cf. Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* vol. III.2nd Revised Edition (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 747: "Apart from obvious phrases there is nothing specifically Christian in the work."

⁴⁹⁶ This is in case of a long recension, otherwise it is just 68 chapters. Nickelsburg, 221, presents a slightly different division, namely (3-37, 38-66, 67-68). Emil Schürer's division provides a slightly different opinion: first section: chapters 1-22, second, chapters 22-37, and the last section 38-66, see Schürer, 746-747.

⁴⁹⁷ Francis Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in J.H. Charlesworth, (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. I, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 154.

⁴⁹⁸ According to Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of the Enochic Literature*, 51, the picture in 1 Enoch is very similar, i.e. the tree of life is displaced, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is omitted, no serpent, no command prohibiting the eating of the fruit, no disobedience of Adam and Eve. "In other words, it omits the very details that other exegetes would use to transform this biblical narrative into an etiology of all human sin and suffering. This dismissive reference to Gen. 2-3 thus functions to counter the biblical account of the progressive alienation of humankind from God (Gen. 1-11) with the radical assertion that evil entered the earth from above. Within the redacted whole of the Book of Watchers, the true genesis of human sin and suffering is attributed to the antediluvian activities of the fallen angels."

with Genesis 3, where Adam was created from the dust, in *2 Enoch* 30 God created a man (on the sixth day) from two totally different kinds of “materials” (“from invisible (spiritual) and from visible (physical) nature”). It looks like these two components introduce us to the dualistic understanding of human nature, both of which, in the author’s opinion, were necessarily present in the first human being. Hence, it looks like not only God’s image was his most important element, marking his distinction from all other creatures, but that his two-dimensional nature was another distinctive mark as well.

The following phrase: “he knows speech like some created thing”, could point to his ability to communicate with other creatures using common language, or to the ability of other creatures to understand or communicate in human language.

There is one more detail in this brief introduction, which adds significantly to Adam's portrait: in verse 12 it is reported that he is “a second angel”. This raises two questions: 1) was the angel a physical being? And 2) who was the first angel in such a hierarchy?

One more puzzling feature consists in God showing Adam, “the two ways, the light and the darkness” (30:13-14) as God seemed to be telling him that he ought to know which is good and which is evil. Thus, although the Gen 3 narrative provides no information about it, the narration of *2 Enoch* 30 reveals that Adam was not unintelligent or uninformed with regard to the way things worked in the Garden of Eden. Thus, it seems that while the story in Genesis 3 depicts Adam and the woman as having to figure out on their own what God actually meant by saying that the tree contained good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17), in *2 Enoch* 30 Adam is given clear instructions and it looks as if he was introduced to all basic rules and policies from the very beginning. *2 Enoch* communicates that Adam was a second angel and, therefore, he is to be understood as responsible for his every action, because he had been thoroughly introduced to God’s rules and policies before he began to act independently (though remaining accountable to God’s commands).

God created the woman despite his knowledge that she would be the source and the means of Adam's fall (30:16). Thus, every act of God seems to be thought through and it looks like He deliberately allowed Adam to possess those “instruments” which, in the course of time would lead him to his great transgression.

According to the second verse, God made the heavens open and enabled the protoplast Adam to see other angels singing. This was most likely intended to be a constant reminder to him of his relationship to his angelic brothers in heaven, and thus keep his attention away from anything evil.

2 Enoch 31:3 reveals a shocking reality developing behind the scenes. It appears that

there was another creature in God's peaceful system that had been opposed to God's original plan for quite some time. There is no clear explanation of Satanail's previous status and how, exactly, he changed himself. The author simply tells us, "he became different from the angels" (31:4). What is clear, then, is that a group of rebellious angels, led by Satanail, had openly rebelled against God and had led to his having been thrown from heaven. These motives, which were partly borrowed from the story in *1 Enoch*, are described in chapters 7, 18 and 29:3-4.⁴⁹⁹ In 29:4, God throws the rebellious leader from heaven, together with some of the angels accompanying him. Thus, chapter 29 breaks off with the words, "he was flying continuously above the bottomless."⁵⁰⁰ This raises yet more questions, such as how he got to the earth, and how was it that he could approach the first humans? Regrettably, these questions remain unanswered. All we see is that he suddenly appears in 31:3, standing next to the woman.

The author frequently follows the widely distributed Enochic tradition, which was quite influential from the third century B.C.E until the end of the third century CE.⁵⁰¹ In it, the leading Watcher had another name, either Shemihazah, or Asael. However, instead of either of these familiar names, *2 Enoch* introduces another one – Satanail (el). Andrei Orlov gives the following explanation:

This reference figure of the negative protagonist of the Adamic story appears to be not coincidental. The careful examination of other details of the fallen angels traditions found in the Slavonic apocalypse unveils that the transference of the leadership over the Watchers from Shemihazah and Asael to Satanail represents not a coincidental slip of pen, or a sign of a lack of knowledge of the authentic tradition, but an intentional attempt of introducing Adamic development within the framework of the Enochic story, a move, executed by the authors of the Slavonic apocalypse with a certain theological purpose.⁵⁰²

Moreover, there are further observations to note. For instance, no explanation is given for why Eve was seduced and not Adam. Furthermore, the author makes Eve, not Adam, the victim of Satanail's revenge. Was it because of Adam's supernatural angelic attributes or some other reason? This is not explained. We are only told of his status, which was strengthened by God's desire to introduce him to both good and evil, and to enable him to become an intelligent creature. Therefore, Adam did not need the forbidden fruit (though this part is simply missing

⁴⁹⁹ Orlov, *New Perspectives on Second Enoch: No More Slavonic Only*, 133, claims that the description of this group reminds one of the Watchers from *1 Enoch*, though this time "the leadership over the fallen Watchers is ascribed not to Shemihazah or Asael, but instead to Satanail." See also *Ibid*, 141.

⁵⁰⁰ This might be seen as the use of a commonly known tradition of the fall of Satan, though the main character's name might have been different, cf. *Ibid*, 141.

⁵⁰¹ Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of the Enochic Literature*, 190.

⁵⁰² Orlov, *New Perspectives on Second Enoch: No More Slavonic Only*, 134.

from the narration), and therefore the tree of the knowledge of good and evil does not appear in the story.⁵⁰³ Adam had already obtained all the required knowledge by that time (cf. *2 Enoch* 30:13-14) and was sufficiently elevated in terms of both his nature and status.

What is quite striking, however, is that the story barely says a word about the woman's nature, which is not defined as carefully as Adam's. Coming as she did, from her husband's rib (*2 Enoch* 30:16), did she get at least some of Adam's extra features? Is she to be considered as another angelic being as well? We do not know, as the text does not say it explicitly. The author concentrates solely on Adam; other participants in the story are of secondary importance. Thus, as in the Genesis account (cf. Gen 2:16-17), the woman appears to be unfamiliar with God's command. Further, it is not clear that she ever obtains this knowledge, since her belated appearance in *2 Enoch* 30:16 makes no reference of it. There are no grounds to assume that her husband ever communicated to her any of God's messages (at least we do not see that within the scope of the *2 Enoch* 30-31 story). If this is the case, it may explain why she became a target, though this would also mean that Adam totally abandoned her at the time of Satanail's temptation (cf. Gen. 3:6, where Adam seems to be *with her* and *2 Enoch* 31:5, where Adam's whereabouts are not clearly presented).

The chapter ends with God cursing ignorance, though whose ignorance and why is nowhere explained. In light of 30:13-14, one can guess that this is the woman's ignorance though why she was blamed for what she has been never informed about remains a mystery.

According to Orlov, the use of the new name in the well-known ancient treatise cannot be accidental. In his view, some purpose must lay behind the use of these two contradictory figures together, Adam and Satanail, in relation to the Garden of Eden story. He notices: "an unusual readiness of its authors for the adaption of traditions and motives from the Adamic trend, a tendency, which appears to be quite surprising for a Second Temple Enochic text."⁵⁰⁴ These two traditions (Enochic and Adamic) are to be perceived as two absolutely different trends within a layer of Jewish explanatory traditions, which have tried to answer the same difficult question for centuries. That question is the origin of evil on earth, through the use of two quite dissimilar stories.⁵⁰⁵ However, before *2 Enoch* appeared no one had really tried to combine these two explanatory traditions in such an obvious fashion, or to pay such attention to the figure of the first man in relation to the figure of Enoch.

I have already noted the attempt of the author of *GLAE* to pull the idea of *1 Enoch's*

⁵⁰³ Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of the Enochic Literature*, 51.

⁵⁰⁴ Andrei Orlov, "The Watchers of Satanail: Fallen Angels Traditions," in Andrei A. Orlov, *Dark Mirrors: Azazel and Satanail in Early Jewish Demonology* (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 2011), 86.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 89.

Watchers into the Genesis 3 account,⁵⁰⁶ but even this courageous try was not so straight forward as the one in the *2 Enoch*. In light of all these observations, Orlov concludes, “the extensive presence of Adamic materials in both recessions and their significance for the theology of the Slavonic apocalypse indicates that they are not later interpolations, but are part of the original layer of the text.”⁵⁰⁷ In other words, all these uses of Adam’s image in *2 Enoch* are nothing else but an intentional fusion aimed at changing and challenging many of the previously accepted paradigms and interpretive traditions. The goal of which is to create a totally new symbiosis, a brand new story, which would embrace various elements previously attributed either to the Adamic or the Enochic accounts.

However, what was the exact direction or goal of this well-thought out fusion? Why did the author of the *2 Enoch* story need this fusion at all? Why did he want to make the figure of Adam, which hardly appears in the *1 Enoch* narrative, one of the primary characters of his substantially rewritten and reinterpreted story?⁵⁰⁸ According to Orlov:

It appears that the purpose of the extensive presence of Adamic themes in *2 Enoch* can be explained through the assessment of Enoch’s image in the text, who is portrayed in the Slavonic apocalypse as the Second Adam, the one, who is predestined to regain the original condition of the protoplast, once lost by the first humans in Eden.⁵⁰⁹

If we agree with Orlov, we will see that many of those previously isolated and broadly scattered elements of the *2 Enochic* puzzle now are being assembled into a coherent unity.

It was already noted that the status of *2 Enoch*’s Adam differs from both the Genesis 3 narration, and the one in *1 Enoch*, where he seems to be just a regular man, made from the dust (Gen 2:7), while his wife was made of his rib.⁵¹⁰ Therefore, the new Adam, appearing in *2 Enoch*, is made of different elements and looks like a fusion of celestial, spiritual and physical elements. In *2 Enoch* 30-31, Adam is obviously the center and the primary focus of the author’s narration. The author uses him to contrast his soiled image and misdeeds with his the author’s

⁵⁰⁶ See section 3.5.1 of the present research.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid, 134.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid, “In the early Enochic circle, reflected in 1 (Ethiopic) Enoch, Adam does not figure prominently.” See also A. Orlov, “Without Measure and Without Analogy: The Tradition of the Divine Body in 2 (Slavonic) Enoch,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. LVI, no. 2, autumn 2005, 226.

⁵⁰⁹ Orlov, Boccaccini, *New Perspectives on Second Enoch: No more Slavonic Only*, 136. [N.B. the following quote is from his article “Without Measure”, p. 227] “For the first time, the Enochic tradition tries to portray the patriarch, not simply as a human taken to heaven and transformed into an angel, but as a celestial being exalted above the angelic world. It is therefore possible that the traditions about the exalted status of Adam were introduced in 2 Enoch, for the first time in the Enochic tradition, in order to enhance the new profile of the seventh antediluvian patriarch.”

⁵¹⁰ Ibid, “Adam’s image in *1 Enoch* is quite different from the one attested in the Slavonic apocalypse. *1 Enoch* materials do not provide any information about the elevated status of the protoplast.”

chosen substitute, Enoch, who is exhibited as perfect and righteous – the one who will correct all of Adam’s errors, and, like Jesus Christ, will restore humanity to its original state.

These various comparisons help us to see that, little by little, the entire plot seems to reveal its more or less unambiguous meaning. Now it has become clear that Obviously, then, no Christian could ever interpret the story of the fall in such a manner, as no Christian would substitute Christ (as the Christian Second Adam – cf. Rom. 5 etc.) for Enoch and praise him to such a degree.⁵¹¹ Besides, the use of the Enochic image in such a role would require the need of another “righteous figure” or an outstanding angelic hero other than Christ. Hence, all this speaks in favour of the Jewish (Alexandrian?) diaspora as the origin of the treatise.

As for Satanail, he seems to be placed in the text only because of his existing relationship with Adam. This assertion presupposes that these two, Adam and Satanail, might have been widely regarded as an almost unbreakable pair existing within the traditional presentation of the fall narrative at that time.

Therefore, after looking at the author’s potential motives we still need to look at the figure of Satanail to find out what was added to the serpent’s image in comparison with the previous treatises and why.

Thus, we find the following in *2 Enoch* 29-31:

- 1) Satanail is the substitute for both the serpent (Gen. 3), and Shemihazah (1Enoch). Thus, he is not just a clever beast, but the leader of the fallen angels.
- 2) Therefore, in the *2 Enoch* account Satanail is called to replace two significantly different personages at the same time: 1) Azazel, the leader of the rebellious Watchers (*1 Enoch*); and 2) the serpent from the Garden of Eden narrative (Gen. 3).
- 3) Whereas in all previous narratives of this kind God had unlimited power and freedom to do as he wishes, in this treatise, Satanail represents a serious opposition to Him.
- 4) Similar to interpretations of Isaiah 14:4b-23, Ezekiel 28:11-19, and Luke 10:18, the story of Satan’s fall from heaven finds support here, and therefore, continues the tendency found in many former Jewish interpretative traditions.
- 5) Satanail is called “the evil spirit from the lower places” who must have appeared in spiritual form while seducing Eve (*2 Enoch* 31:5), though nowhere does the text actually describe that event.
- 6) The “il”, or rather “el” at the end of the name “Satanail” (which turns his name into “God’s accuser/opposer”) may have arisen from both Qumran manuscripts and Jewish

⁵¹¹ Cf. Böttrich, „On the Polemical Nature of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch“, 37.

oral traditions, which might have been circulating within the ancient Near East at that time.

3.5.4 *The Third Book of Baruch (the Greek Apocalypse of Baruch)*

The final pseudepigraphon to be dealt with in this chapter is the interesting treatise, which survived in both Greek and the Old Slavonic⁵¹², called the *Third Book of Baruch*, or the *Greek Apocalypse of Baruch*. This treatise, alongside such works as *GLAE*, *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and *2 Enoch*, is to be considered yet another representative of the Enochic interpretative tradition. Though similar to its other representatives, *3 Baruch* looks as if it is constantly maneuvering between the Enochic tradition and its own way of arranging and presenting various materials.⁵¹³ Therefore, scholarly opinion generally agrees that *3 Baruch* should be understood as having absorbed and integrated various influences from the *Enochic*, *Baruchic* or even independent otherworldly traditions. This observation certainly makes this treatise not look like an independent work, but rather as one of many branches of an enormously effused diverse tree of various Enochic or pseudo-Enochic interpretative traditions.

According to Jones, “The author of these three works does not feature a figure from a period of the restoration. Rather they draw on the circle around the prophet Jeremiah to find the characters through which they meditate on the events of 70.”⁵¹⁴ In his opinion, the connection between *2 Baruch* and *4 Baruch* is the closest.⁵¹⁵ This observation sets *3 Baruch* a bit to the side, underlining its apparent distinctiveness. The primary question that all three authors seem to pose is very similar to the one of Jeremiah (1:1-2): “Where is their God?”⁵¹⁶

The relationships of the various hermeneutical and theological streams within *3 Baruch* are very complex. Although we still do not have a critical edition of either the Greek or the

⁵¹² Jones claims: “two traditions represent parallel, but separate developments.” It seems likely that the original text was written in Greek, as there are no errors that suggest a Semitic original,” *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 118.

⁵¹³ Andrei Orlov, “The Flooded Arboretums: The Garden Traditions in The Slavonic Version of 3 Baruch and the book of Giants,” in Andrei Orlov, *Dark Mirrors*, 113. See Alexander Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 3, who maintains that: “*3 Baruch* is most probably a Jewish composition, but it is universal in its interests, and the vision itself in contrast to its prologue does not explicitly mention any specifically Jewish values, concerns or religious practices.”

⁵¹⁴ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 79. Cf. Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*, 12: “There is no decisive data indicating the dating of 3Baruch. Usually any reference to the destruction of the Temple serves as an argument for the post-destruction origin of the composition.”

⁵¹⁵ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 79.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid*, 113. See Michael A. Knibb, *Essays on the Book of Enoch and Other Early Jewish Texts and Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 404.

Slavonic manuscript tradition,⁵¹⁷ it seems that neither the Greek nor Old Slavonic versions fully reflect the original edition of the treatise, but are to be understood as two different elaborations of it, aimed at answering the needs in their local communities.⁵¹⁸ According to Kulik, the Slavonic seems closer to the original⁵¹⁹ as it omits, for example, many of the clearly Christian phrases of the Greek version, “though the earlier recension of the book most likely did not include any specifically Christian materials.”⁵²⁰ This fact weighs heavily in the recent tendency to see the work as fundamentally Jewish, with later Christian reworking in the form of interpolations into the text.⁵²¹

In this survey, both the Greek and Old Slavonic will be presented, concentrating on 3 *Baruch* 9, while also referring to 4:5-7.⁵²²

The following texts more easily understood when read in their immediate context. I have, therefore, provided Kulik's structural layout for the entire treatise, highlighting the placement of the ninth and fourth chapters:

Prologue – ch.1

I. Builders: First Account – 2:1-3

Excursus: Dimensions of Heaven – 2:4-7

Builders: Second Account – 3:1-5a

Builders continued – 3:5b-8

II. Beasts: Serpent and Hades – 4:1-5G; 4:1-3aS

Excursus: Cosmic Hydrology – 4:6-7G; 4:3b-5S

Excursus: Tree of Knowledge – 4:8-17G; 4:6-17S

Beasts continued: Dimensions of Hades – ch. 5

III. Sun, Sun Bird and Sun Protection – 6:1-12

Sunrise and Predawn Call – 6:13-16

Sun's Route – ch. 7

Sunset and Earthly Wickedness – ch. 8

Moon and Heavenly Disobedience – ch. 9

IV. Lake of Birds – 10:1-7

Excursus: Cosmic Hydrology Continued – 10:8-9

V. Where Prayers Go – ch. 11

⁵¹⁷ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 114.

⁵¹⁸ Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*, 11, “There is no evidence that the Greek text of 3 *Baruch* had a Hebrew or Aramaic original. “Therefore, if we follow the logic of Kulik’s argument the Greek text, which we know, should be seen as reflecting another Greek version, the original one. “All obvious Hebraisms found in the book are biblicisms that are also attested in other Judeo-Greek texts.” See Orlov, 114, who claims that: “3 *Baruch* became first known in its Slavonic version. Only later have the Greek manuscripts of the book been discovered.”

⁵¹⁹ Cf. Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*, 5. Cf. Orlov, *Dark Mirrors*, 114.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid*, 13.

⁵²¹ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 118.

⁵²² Translated by Gaylord (G version) and presented by Lichtenberger (S version).

Flower Offering: Righteous – 12:1-5
 Flower Offering: Unrighteous – 12:6-13:5
 Behind the Door – 14
 Oil Recompense for Righteous – 15:1-2
 Locusts Recompense for Unrighteous – 15:3-16:10
 Return – ch. 17.⁵²³

3 Baruch 9

1. Καὶ τούτων συσταλέντων καὶ ἡ νύξ κατέλαβεν καὶ ἅμα ταύτη μετὰ καὶ τῆς σελήνης καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἀστέρων.
2. Καὶ εἶπον ἐγὼ Βαρούχ· Κύριε, δεῖξόν μοι καὶ ταύτην, παρακαλῶ· πῶς ἐξέρχεται; καὶ ποῦ ἀπέρχεται; καὶ ἐν ποίῳ σχήματι περιπατεῖ;
3. Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος· Ἀνάμεινον, καὶ ὄψει καὶ ταύτην ὡς μετ' ὀλίγον. καὶ τῆ ἐπαύριον ὄρῳ καὶ ταύτην ἐν σχήματι γυναικὸς καὶ καθημένην ἐπὶ ἄρματος τροχοῦ. Καὶ ἦσαν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῆς βόες, καὶ ἄμνοι ἐν τῷ ἄρματι, καὶ πλήθος ἀγγέλων ὁμοίως.
4. Καὶ εἶπον· Κύριε, τί εἰσιν οἱ βόες καὶ οἱ ἄμνοι; Καὶ εἶπέν μοι· Ἄγγελοί εἰσι καὶ αὐτοί.
5. Καὶ πάλιν ἠρώτησα· Καὶ τί ἐστὶν ὅτι ποτὲ μὲν αὔξει, ποτὲ δὲ λήγει;
6. Ἄκουσον, ὦ Βαρούχ· ταύτην ἦν βλέπεις ὡραία ἦν γεγραμμένη ὑπὸ θεοῦ ὡς οὐκ ἄλλη.
7. Καὶ ἐν τῇ παραβάσει τοῦ πρώτου Ἀδάμ παρήψε τῷ Σαμαήλ ὅτε τὸν ὄφιν ἔλαβεν ἔνδυμα· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη ἀλλὰ παρηύξησε. Καὶ ὠργίσθη αὐτῇ ὁ θεός, καὶ ἔθλιψεν αὐτήν, καὶ ἐκολόβωσεν τὰς ἡμέρας αὐτῆς.
8. Καὶ εἶπον· Καὶ πῶς οὐ λάμπει καὶ ἐν παντί, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ μόνον; Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος· Ἄκουσον· ὡσπερ ἐνώπιον βασιλέως οὐ δύνανται οἰκέται παρρησιασθῆναι, οὕτως οὐδὲ ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἡλίου δύνανται ἡ σελήνη καὶ ἀστέρες αὐγάσαι. Ἀεὶ γὰρ οἱ ἀστέρες κρέμανται, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου σκεδάζονται. Καὶ ἡ σελήνη σῶα οὔσα ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ ἡλίου θερμῆς ἐκδαπανᾶται.

1 And they had withdrawn, night arrived, and with it the moon and the stars. 2 And I Baruch said, 'Lord, explain this also to me, please. How does it depart and where is it going, and in what pattern does it travel?' 3 And the angel said, 'Wait and you will see this shortly.' And on the morrow I saw this also in the form of a woman, seated in a wheeled chariot. And in front of it were oxen and lambs near the chariot, and also many angels. 4 And I said, Lord, what are the oxen and the lambs? And he said to me, 'These are angels also.' 5 And again I asked, Why does it sometimes grow larger and sometimes grow smaller? 6 Listen, O, Baruch: This, which you see, was designed by God to be beautiful without peer. 7 **And during the transgression of the first Adam, she gave light to Sammael when he took the serpent as a garment,** and it did not hide, but on the contrary waxed. And God was angered with her, and diminished her, and shortened her days.⁵²⁴

The Slavonic version of chapter 9 differs from its Greek counterpart quite substantially and therefore needs to be presented here as well:

IX Und wiederum sprach ich zum Engel: "Herr, erkläre mir den Lauf des Mondes, damit ich weiß, wie er ist." Und er sprach zu mir der Engel: "Der Mond ist gleich einer Frau, die auf einem Wagen sitzt, und als Ochsen, die ihre Wagen ziehen, dienen Engel, und diese Ochsen sind ebenso Engel. Die Gestalt des Mondes aber ist gleich einer Frau." Und ich, Baruch, sprach zum Engel: "Herr, erkläre mir dieses, was ich dich fragen möchte: "Warum hat der Mond nicht dasselbe Licht wie die Sonne and ersteht wiederum so groß?" Und er sprach der Engel: "Höre, Baruch, so erkläre ich es dir, alles sollst du wissen. **Als nun die Schlange Eva und Adam verführte,** der Speise

⁵²³ Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*, see his Table of Content.

⁵²⁴ H.E. Gaylord, "3 Greek Apocalypse of Baruch," in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, vol. I, 673.

der Bosheit sie entblöbte, and sie bitterlich über ihre Nacktheit weinten und die ganze Schöpfung über sie weinte, die Himmel, die Sterne, and die Sonne, und die ganze Schöpfung erschüttert wurde bis zum Thrones Gottes, da erregten sich die Heerscharen der Engelsehr über die Übertretung des Adams. Der Mond allein aber lachte. Deswegen erzürnte Herr über ihn, verdunkelte sein Licht und ließ ihn bald alt und wieder geboren werden. Aber ursprünglich war es nicht so, sondern er war heller als die Sonne und hätte die Länge des Tages.”⁵²⁵

The primary discrepancies between the Slavonic and Greek version are as follows:

- 1) The author of the S version begins his text directly from the dialogue between Baruch and the angel, while the G version presents an introductory sentence, in order to explain the setting of the following dialogue.
- 2) The questions discussing the moon’s identity are stated differently in S and G respectively.
- 3) The question about the precise identities of oxen and lambs (G) is exchanged in S for the question about the reason behind the power and the brightness of the moon’s light.
- 4) The serpent is described as taken by Sammael as a garment (G), while in S he is depicted as acting on his own in his seducing of Adam and Eve.
- 5) The moon’s behavior is also presented differently. While in G the reaction of the moon to Adam and Eve’s transgression consisted in increasing her light, in S she just began laughing and thus provoked the anger of God.
- 6) The order of appearances of the sun and moon is introduced and explained in G only.

The conversation about the status of the moon and stars is connected with the primordial story of the fall of humanity. The author seems to act spontaneously, only touching on the important topic as the origin of human sin. In other words, immediately after the narration about the moon, and after unwrapping the reasons of its lesser brightness, the author suddenly inserts his understanding of the fall of Adam and Eve without ever coming back to the primordial narrative. This is the second occasion (cf. 4:8-9) when the author delves into this mysterious terrain to discover fundamental clues, which he then uses to explain why this or that event occurred, all the while avoiding any meticulous exegesis.

The idea expressed in 9:7G is not entirely clear. The sentence, “Καὶ ἐν τῇ παραβάσει τοῦ πρώτου Ἀδὰμ παρήψε τῷ Σαμαήλ ὅτε τὸν ὄφιν ἔλαβεν ἔνδυμα” could also express the idea of Sammael’s using or putting on the serpent’s skin (ἔνδυμα – garment), though no details are provided to explain the exact mechanism of this process. If, however, one is willing to look for clues five chapters earlier, there exists a connection with 3 *Baruch* 4:8-9, where the devil plants

⁵²⁵ For the English version see Gaylord, “3 Greek Apocalypse of Baruch,” 672, who presents a significantly different version in comparison with the one of Lichtenberger, *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and Cognate Literature*, and the one of Orlov. Therefore, I will follow Lichtenberger here, who is much closer to the Slavonic text.

the vine (in the garden of Eden?) in order to seduce Adam and Eve: “Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο φθονήσας ὁ διάβολος ἠπάτησεν αὐτὸν διὰ τῆς ἀμπέλου αὐτοῦ.”

Before proceeding any further, we need to compare the aforementioned text with 3 *Baruch* 4:8b-9:

Καὶ εἶπον ἐγὼ· Δέομαί σου, δεῖξόν μοι τί τὸ ξύλον τὸ πλανήσαν τὸν Ἀδάμ; Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος· Ἡ ἀμπελὸς ἐστίν, ἣν ἐφύτευσεν ὁ ἄγγελος Σαμαήλ ὅτινη ὠργίσθη Κύριος ὁ θεός· καὶ ἐκατηράσατο αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν φυτεῖαν αὐτοῦ. Ἐν ᾧ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ συνεχώρησεν τὸν Ἀδάμ ἅψασθαι αὐτοῦ. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο φθονήσας ὁ διάβολος ἠπάτησεν αὐτὸν διὰ τῆς ἀμπέλου αὐτοῦ.

And I said, I pray thee show me, which is the tree, which led Adam astray. And the angel said to me, It is the vine, which the angel Sammael planted, wherewith the Lord God was angry, and He cursed him and his plant, while also on this account He did not permit Adam to touch it, and therefore 9 the devil being envious deceived him through his vine.⁵²⁶

The Slavonic version of 4:8-9:

Und ich, Baruch, sprach wiederum zum Engel: “Herr, zeige mir den Baum, mit der die Schlange Eva verführte, und sie selbst brauchte es und gab es Adam, und deswegen vertrieb sie Gott aus dem Paradies.” Und es sprach zu mir der Engel: “Höre Baruch. Als Gott den Adam erschuf, da befahl er dem Erzengel Michael 200003 zu versammeln, um das Paradies umzulegen. Und er pflanzte Michael den Ölbaum, Gabriel aber den Apfelbaum, Raphael die Zuckermelone, Iopail den Nussbaum, Sarazail den Schneeballstrauch, Satanail aber pflanzte den Weinstock. Und gleichermaßen pflanzen alle Engel besondere Bäume. Und wieder sprach ich, Baruch, zum Engel: “Herr zeige mir den Baum, mit dem die Schlange Eva und Adam verführte.” Und es sprach zu mir der Engel: “Höre Baruch, der erste Baum ist der Weinstock, der zweite Baum aber ist das sündige Verlangen, das Satanail über Eva und Adam goss. Und deshalb verfluchte der Herr den Weinstock, weil Satanail ihn pflanzte und mit ihm Adam, den Erstgeschaffenen, und Eva verführte.”⁵²⁷

One immediately notices that the S version is much longer and much richer in details with regard to the question of who was responsible for various activities. It shows that various angels planted different trees, whereas Satanail was noticed planting the vine only (cf. G 4:8, where Satanail is the only angel mentioned and the only one who plants something). The length of the S version can be partly explained by the fact that it includes Baruch’s twice-repeated question.

Both versions make us feel that Satanail is in real opposition to God, as he impudently plants the exact plant that makes God angry. Further, it appears that, for whatever reason, he is left to his own disposal and is allowed to do anything he chooses. This presentation looks similar to Job 1-2, where from my point of view, Satan performs the role God has previously assigned for him. Thus, in this narrative he performs his appointed role of providing the temptation, which will bring about the fall of humanity. God then curses his vine sapling, but

⁵²⁶ Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 535-536.

⁵²⁷ Lichtenberger, *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and Cognate Literature*, 37.

the Devil (= *ὁ διάβολος* 4:8 G) acting out of jealousy or envy (4:9), the precise nature of which we know nothing about, manages to trick Adam (but not the woman cf. Genesis 3), and persuades him to eat or perhaps simply drink from its fruits. This very vine becomes a stumbling block for another patriarch, Noah, later on (4:10-14). Apart from a common reliance on the influential Enochic tradition, the use of the vine is yet another shared element in the 2 *Enoch* and the 3 *Baruch* accounts.

The Slavonic version of 4:8 understands the entire idea of the human fall slightly differently from other sources. This text is very similar to the biblical account and introduces no additional personalities to those mentioned by Genesis 3:6. In the following verse, however, we find the introduction of various angels planting various kinds of plants (3 *Baruch* 4:9), among which the angel, named Satanail, is planting the vine. The exact relationship between God and Satanail is not clear in this passage. Satanail is depicted as acting out of his free will in doing exactly the opposite of what God desired. Thus, he plants the vine sprout, which is immediately cursed. Rather than disappointing him, this action of God seems only to intensify Satanail's resolve to rebel further. It is never explained why God chooses to allow Satanail to continue to plan and carry out his machinations.

After comparing the accounts of the two versions it appears that the author of S presents these two accounts quite independently. The serpent in 9:7 and Satanail in 4:8-9 appear to be distinct figures and the serpent is not presented as being possessed by the Devil (cf. 9:7). The Greek version attempts to relate the serpent and the devil more closely, though it too continues to regard them as two different characters of the story. Thus, the Greek version seems to be unsatisfied with having two negative images practically unrelated to each other. It therefore connects them together by Satanail's use of either the serpent himself (i.e. possessing him), or by use of his discarded skin to deceive the first man.

The Slavonic version is more reluctant to connect the two figures, way and thus permitting each of the two personalities to remain within his own borders without interacting with each other. In 4:8-9S, Satanail is responsible for planting the vine, but has nothing to do with deceiving the Adam and Eve in 9:7. Therefore, it is the serpent who is blamed for seducing and tricking the protoplasts, though he has not planted the vine sprout.

The lack of any logical link between the two is clearly seen in the Slavonic version, though it is possible that the author has deliberately separated these two negative figures. However, if this is so, the question might be raised as to why did the serpent act so illogically, suddenly, and cruelly? Why did he want the first humans to be driven away from the place God had assigned for them to live? What were his motives in acting so aggressively, since it seems

that he had been living with them in harmony for quite a long time before one day choosing to betray them?

The Greek version is a different story, as in both its accounts Satanail is clearly portrayed as an active participant of the story who pursues his goal until the very end, and therefore this account looks much more consistent in its depiction of him. Thus, in G Satanail is guilty of both planting the vine and using its cursed fruits to seduce Adam and Eve by means of possessing the serpent (or perhaps just using his skin (cf. Gen. 27, where Isaac was deceived by Jacob's use of a goat's skin)). This quite substantial difference between the two versions leads me to think that the G account should be seen as a later elaboration of the original *3 Baruch* story, especially in light of its more systematic in comparison with its Slavonic counterpart.

We have to assume that both authors and redactors of the original *3 Baruch* manuscript had two substantially different audiences/communities/recipients in mind, while dealing with the text they worked on / edited. This conclusion is evident from the difference in emphasis in their argumentation and the way they engage their main characters in the story.

Thus, the Slavonic author/redactor, as a much more thorough and sequential elaborator of the original *3 Baruch* account, may have been appealing to his audience by his use of the two-dimensional sphere of existence. In this worldview, where apart from God's superior will there are beneath God's sovereign will, various angels play an important role in maintaining moral (or in Satanail's case immoral) aspects of human society. Thus, he explained the human fall from the perspective of oppositions, where God (either deliberately or unintentionally) chose not to restrict Satanail's intentions and, due to unknown motives, did not prevent him from carrying them out. In this way, the Slavonic author leaves the question of Satanail's confrontation with God unresolved.

His second excursus on this topic adds little of importance except the second negative figure of the serpent, who for unknown reasons, takes the reader off guard by his decision to mislead the humans (9:7S). In light of the absence of any clear logic between these two passages, and the serpent's familiarity with Satanail, which is never explained, the bridge between the first and the second primordial story (4:8-9 and 9:7) is left obscure. The only probable explanation is that, while writing 9:7, the author of the Slavonic version pursued his audience's needs, which, surprisingly, included neither Satanail, nor God as the two most important personages of the human fall. Why is this so? Was he attempting to protect God from any accusation of wrongdoing? Or was there some other reason for deviating from the Genesis 3 narrative? God and Satanail are quite purposely omitted in the *3 Baruch* text, most likely to reduce the tension between God's curse of Satanail's plant in 4:8-9 and Satanail's growing

resistance against God's plans for the protoplasts, which in G takes the form of the open rebellion.⁵²⁸ Therefore, the Slavonic author intentionally softens the obscurities existing between 4:8-9 and 9:7, but does so in a manner, which leaves the issues raised by his first excursus in the primordial story, practically untouched and therefore unresolved.

What we may assume then, is that the Slavonic author believed in Satanail's existence, though he apparently disconnected him from the action that took place in the Garden of Eden, thus leaving the serpent's motives for his readers to determine on their own.

The second author/redactor of the original *3 Baruch*, the Greek author, was evidently not satisfied with the way the Slavonic author or the original text had dealt with Satanail's idea to destroy humanity. In the event that he wrote or edited his version at a later stage, he favored the interpretation of Satanail's involvement in the fall of humanity to a much greater degree and therefore simply could not leave the problem of the serpent's involvement in the fall unexplained. He gives an estimate of the events, which, from his own perspective simply could not have proceeded otherwise. Besides, he was very positive that the serpent's involvement in the human fall would be much more graspable if his reader sees him as being possessed, forced, or in some way used by Satanail himself. His audience may have been more philosophical and conservative, and therefore, desired a more straightforward and systematic explanation.

If the Greek version was aimed at the Greek-speaking Christian population of the Roman empire, it is not surprising to see the author following the more systematic paths of the Christian interpretive tradition of the Genesis 3, where such texts as Luke 10:18, Revelation 12:9, and others are alluded to. The insertions in 4:15, 13:14, and others, which undoubtedly bear some Christian influence, reflect the author's intention to follow this tendency.⁵²⁹

Despite all this evidence, Jones believes that *3 Baruch* is aimed at a Jewish audience, as he claims that the answer to the question "where is their God" was of importance to the Jews after 70,⁵³⁰ rather than to Christians, though later on he maintains that *3 Baruch* does not seem to be worried about Jewish identity.⁵³¹ Therefore, both the Slavonic and the Greek authors/redactors could have altered the initial message to the needs of their local communities (parishes).

The relationship of the two serpents, one from *3 Baruch* 4, and the second one from 9:7, is very complex, since it is difficult to say whether the authors had the same or two

⁵²⁸ Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha*, 121.

⁵²⁹ Ibid, 118, "Of the three explicitly Christian elements in *3Baruch*, all but the reference to the church attendance are contained only in the Greek version".

⁵³⁰ Ibid, 121.

⁵³¹ Ibid, 142.

different serpents/dragons in mind. The creature in 4:8-9 looks more similar to Apoc. 9:12, while the one in 9:7 leans toward the description in Genesis 3. Thus, the one depicted in 9:7 seems to have nothing to do with Hades or swallowing the bodies of the wicked and drinking a cubit of the sea, while the one from 4:8-9 undoubtedly does. If there is a parallel, neither the author of G or S makes any mention of it.

If we accept that the overall message is connected with the idea of rejecting every form of idolatry, as and if *3 Baruch* is regarded as one of the responses to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., then Satanail could be seen as a representative of the evil, idolatrous forces (of Rome). If these suppositions are true, then Satanail's possession of the serpent would refer to Rome's attempt to deceive all her conquered nations (represented by Adam and Eve) by means of idolatry (the serpent), and thus impose its religious/idolatrous worldview on them.

3.6. Conclusions

Is it possible to speak of any stable interpretative tradition of Genesis 3:1-15 in Early Judaism from the time of the Book of *Jubilees* to the writing of *3 Baruch*? Or must we assume that there were any numbers of interpretations circulating during this period?

In order to answer this question, I will begin with a relatively short summary, presented in the form of two charts. The first will list the primary subjects of each treatise, and the second their most likely motives as well as the levels of their dependence on the biblical text (Genesis 3).

Chart 12:

The source and its place within the research	The serpent's identity/ image	Setting / and the serpent's ability to speak	The serpent's relations with the first couple	The serpent's (later on: the devil's) feelings	The feelings of Adam and the woman with regard to what they have done	The degree of the serpent's knowledge about God's command
LXX ⁵³² (2 nd cent. B.C.E.)	A serpent	The Garden of Eden / The serpent was able to speak (Gen. 3:1-4)	Similar to what is stated in the Hebrew text	Not mentioned	They were afraid of God and, therefore, hid themselves.	Nothing in particular apart from what is hidden behind the term 'arum.'
3.1 <i>Jubilees</i> (2 nd cent. B.C.E.)	A serpent	The Garden of Eden / The serpent and all other animals were able to speak (3:28).	He joined the first couple directly after completion of seven years (3:17)	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	He knows everything about the tree and God's command (Jub. 3:19)
3.2 <i>Wisdom of Solomon</i> (2 nd – 1 st cent. B.C.E.) Functions as a Transitional Interpretive Tradition	Does not mention anyone in particular as it mostly deals with various abstract, dualistic categories	No information / Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

⁵³² Although LXX's rendering of Genesis 3:1-15 was not part of chapter 3, it cannot be avoided in this chart, as it represents an important second century B.C.E. interpretive tradition and therefore should be treated as valuable witness.

3.3 Philo (End of 1st cent. B.C.E. – 50 C.E.)	Desire and passion	The Garden of Eden / In QG. 1:32, he was not able to speak. In <i>On Creation</i> LV 156, he was able to speak	Struggle between desire, mind and feelings, where passion or desire lead human beings to fall	A constant willingness or desire to harm a human being and subdue his mind to his feelings	Guilt and shame.	He knows everything (QG 1:35-36)
3.4 Josephus (1st cent. C.E.)	A serpent	The Garden of Eden / He was able to speak (Ant. 1:41)	He had been living with them for an uncertain amount of time before the fall took place (Ant. 1:41).	He felt envy towards the first couple (Ant. 1:41)	They felt shame and came to a clear realization of their transgression (Ant. 1:46)	He seems to know all about God's command and the tree's nature (Ant. 1:41-42)
3.5 GLAE (1st cent. C.E. -?)	A serpent , which is tricked by the devil, and perhaps possessed by him or used as a vessel (cf. 16:5).	The Garden of Eden / He was able to speak (16:4)	Not clear. Apparently not too close	He felt fear before the Lord (16:4)	Guilt and shame.	He is acknowledged as being very clever (16:3)
3.6. Apocalypse of Abraham (1 C.E. -?)	Dragon, seraph with 6 pairs of wings, Azazel .	The Garden of Eden / Not mentioned, but more probable that he was able to speak.	Very close, he was standing near and feeding the first couple with grapes. They seemed to trust him.	No information is given in the text	No information is given in the text	Not mentioned as God's command is not in-focus.
3.7. 2 Enoch (1st – 2nd cent. C.E.)	The devil, demon, Sotona, Satanail (31:4).	The Garden of Eden / Not mentioned	No information	No information	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
3.8. 3 Baruch G (1st – 2nd cent. C.E.)	A serpent used as a garment by Sammael to	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Envy, though no particular references are given.	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

cent. C.E.) ⁵³³	deceive Adam and Eve (9:7).					
<i>3 Baruch S</i> (1 st – 3 rd cent. C.E.)	A serpent, deceiving Adam and Eve.	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Envy, though no particular references are given.	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

Chart 13:

Treatises: titles and conjectural purposes of their writing:	Presumed motives for rewriting and expanding of the Genesis 3 text:	Levels of dependence on Genesis 3:
<i>Jubilees</i> – apology	To present everything Jewish in the best light possible, while attempting to diminish the value of following Greek style of life in general and Greek religious beliefs and practices in particular.	Relatively heavy dependence
LXX – translation from Hebrew	First, to provide Jews of Alexandrian diaspora with a suitable text they understand, and second, to please the request of the pharaoh Philadelphus.	Total dependence
Philo – apology	To reconcile two different worldviews – Jewish and Greek – on various matters and present Jewish Torah as well as Jewish style of life and belief in the best light possible.	Lighter dependence at times due to a particular interest in employing several Greek / Platonic interpretative instruments.
Josephus – apology	To defend the status of Jewish beliefs before the Romans.	Quite heavy though not always
<i>Wisdom of Solomon</i> – apology	To warn those who chose to follow various unrighteous paths of life, instead of following the God of Israel.	Partial dependence
<i>GLAE</i> – interpretation	To bring hope to those who suffered without it and encourage them to believe in a more positive scenario of human history in general.	Relative dependence

⁵³³ The last two texts present the same treatise, though two different variant readings of it: G and S. Therefore, they are marked by a different color.

<i>Apocalypse of Abraham</i> – interpretation?	Strong influence of Enochic tradition and other Second Temple literature.	Light dependence
2 <i>Enoch</i> – interpretation, appeared as a reaction to the fall of Herod’s Temple in 70 C.E.	To explain the role of Enoch in restoring the Adam’s fault and the reasons for the fall of the Second Temple in light of Roman’s role in it.	Extremely feeble
3 <i>Baruch</i> – interpretation appeared as a reaction to the fall of Herod’s Temple in 70 C.E.	To explain the reasons for the fall of the Second Temple and the role of Romans in it.	If at all

These two charts are not exhaustive in terms of their contents and criteria and, therefore, do not claim to interact with every aspect of the current examination. However, both charts sufficiently demonstrate those historical and literary perspectives which enable us to trace how and why the serpent in Genesis 3:1-15 gradually became the Devil, demon, Sotona, Sammael, and Satanail (also known as Satan later on).

It can be noted that, when compared to the later treatises, the earliest treatises on the chart (i.e. *Jubilees*, LXX, Philo, and Josephus, except for *Wisdom*), tended towards staying as close to the story of Genesis 3 as possible. This is clearly seen in terms of the way they referred to or utilized the Genesis 3 text. In other words, the tendency can be described as follows: the earlier the treatise is dated, the more it is inclined to follow Genesis 3; the later the treatise is dated, the more the author feels free to deviate from it (*Wisdom* is to be seen as rather sole or unique an exception to this rule). This statement can be justified by evident dependence of all representatives of group 2 and their–apparent pursuit their own social, religious, cultural, or communal goals (when compared with the group 1). It is difficult to determine their level of access to any more or less original versions of the biblical text. They may have all relied on various secondary sources.

Thus, one can see that at least three out of four treatises (3.1 The Book of *Jubilees*, 3.3 Philo, 3.4 Josephus + LXX) treat the serpent from Genesis 3 more or less as it is in the Genesis 3 text with some minor changes (as in the case of Philo). As a group, they do not investigate his nature and role and, therefore, submit to the text as if it was a rather more authoritative document for them. With this said, however, their local community’s goals, accompanied by some relevant religious, cultural, or historical background appear to have required them to present their own interpretative comments. These include filling in gaps, editing, and expanding the text, thus presenting it in a slightly different way when and where needed.

However, despite the various deviations, only Philo, *Jubilees*, LXX, and Josephus), have not altered the Genesis text significantly, though Philo's allegorical digressions can be explained by his Greek philosophical interpretive framework, rather than by his personal desire to present a different portrait of the serpent from the one in Genesis 3.

What we also see find is that within the primary development of ideas about the serpent's nature and role, there appears to be a watershed between the first century B.C.E., and the first century C.E., (see chart 12 above). Thus, *Wisdom of Solomon* should be highlighted as being one of the first works to make mention of the mysterious figure of ὁ διάβολος in 2.24 (see 3.2 section). This inclusion may have appeared at this point because of the author's adherence to a dualistic worldview, as this was the time when the Greek dualistic influence reached its apex, drastically influencing the Jewish-Greek Alexandrian diaspora in and around Alexandria. If this conclusion is true, he could be called the first author to put forth the idea of death and ὁ διάβολος as God's two most important counterparts or adversaries (1.14 and 2.24 respectively) in relation to the creation narrative, though not only.

Furthermore, considering that many, if not most first century CE treatises were written in Greek and often have indications of potential relationships with the Alexandrian diaspora, one can suggest with some assurance that no author from among those who are mentioned in the second group (section 3.5: *GLAE*, *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *2 Enoch* and *3 Baruch*) could have escaped the influence of the reigning Greek/Platonic dualism. To put it differently, all representatives of the second group seem to abandon the rendering of the Garden of Eden story in Genesis 3 for their own interpretations based on dualistic, mystical, or perhaps even mixed elements. They apparently felt the need to incorporate these changes in order to bring the Genesis account in line with their personal theological or possibly religious preferences. This was necessary in order to persuade their local communities to change their attitude towards their understanding of the nature of God and evil.

CHAPTER 4: Echoes of Genesis 3:1-15 in the New Testament

In the history of interpretation, Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:9 have often been linked to Isaiah 14:4b-23, and sometimes Genesis 3:1.⁵³⁴ According to some scholars, these texts belonged to one and the same tradition, and therefore, are to be united as referring to an ancient Near Eastern myth describing a celestial being's fall from heaven. Isaiah 14:4b-23 speaks of Helal ben Shahar, Luke 10:18 of Satan/satan, and Revelation 12:9 of the ancient dragon. In the present chapter I will look at these two verses (Luk. 10:18 and Rev. 12:9) and their immediate context more thoroughly.⁵³⁵

Beginning with various Church Fathers and continuing onward, other New Testament passages, such as Romans 5:14-21, John 3:14, Matthew 4:1-11, 2 Corinthians 15:22 and some others have been utilized to clarify some of the most obscure parts of the story in Genesis 3:1-15, but I will not explore them here.⁵³⁶ Thus, for instance, Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Timothy 2:13-15 draw upon the subject of Adam's transgression and the deception of Eve, respectively. They are not interested in the Old Testament image of the serpent from Genesis 3 as such.⁵³⁷ They deal with unrelated theological issues within Genesis 3, but ignore the serpent as irrelevant to the effect Paul wanted to achieve in the minds of his readers. Therefore, these two passages, along with 1 Corinthians 15:22, Matthew 4:1-11, and some others will be left out as they do not contribute anything to the present discussion.

John 3:14 is another New Testament text which might be seen as potentially elaborating on at least one of the serpent's qualities, i.e. his wisdom or "prudence" (cf. Gen. 3:1). In my estimation, this is better read within the context of the story of the copper snake saving the Israelites from the poisonous snakes in the desert according to Numbers 21:1-10, than to the story of the snake in Genesis 3.

Perhaps the only fully suitable New Testament text which reflects the serpent from Genesis 3 is 2 Corinthians 11:3, where the apostle Paul gives a brief portrayal of the serpent's

⁵³⁴ Darrel L. Bock, *Luke, Volume 2: 9:51-24:53* (BECNT; London: Baker Books, 1996), 1006. See also R. Alan Culpepper, "The Gospel of Luke: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in Leander Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible* vol. IX (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 224. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (NIVAC; Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 293. Robert H. Stein, *Luke* vol. 24 (AC; Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 309. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 418. Jonathan Knight, *Revelation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 92.

⁵³⁵ See Arthur A. Just Jr., (ed.), *New Testament III: Luke* (ACCS; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 175, where one can find interpretations of Cyril of Alexandria, Ephrem Syrian, Maximus of Turin and others. See also Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke 1-12* vol. 1 (Phillipsburg: PR Publishing, 2009), 524-525.

⁵³⁶ See Gerald Bray (ed.), *New Testament IV: Romans* (ACCS; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 140-141.

⁵³⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 116.

character, calling him ὁ ὄφεις (cf. LXX's rendering of *ha nachash* in Gen. 3:1). The entire sentence reads: φοβοῦμαι δὲ μὴ πως, ὡς ὁ ὄφεις ἐξηπάτησεν Εὐαν ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτοῦ, φθαρῆ τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπλότητος [καὶ τῆς ἀγνότητος] τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν.

“But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ”

This text is very straightforward and therefore does not require any additional investigation. There are nevertheless five main points which I wish to consider right now: 1) the serpent from the Garden of Eden was the serpent (an animal, a reptile) for Paul. Hence, he does not spiritualize him, nor call him the Devil, an evil angel, Satan, a demon or otherwise, though he quite frequently uses these words when needed in other contexts.⁵³⁸ 2) The serpent, in Paul's view, deceived (ἐξηπάτησεν) Eve (the woman in Gen. 3:1-15). For Paul, the serpent used his wisdom, his *arum*, and his superior knowledge in a completely unacceptable way; 3) Eve is deceived by his cunning (πανουργία), which also means “craftiness, deception, and duplicity”;⁵³⁹ 4) The story ended up tragically for Eve, since, according to Paul, she allowed her thoughts to be (φθείρω) “destroyed, demolished, or corrupted”;⁵⁴⁰ 5) Paul does not mention Adam here at all, while in 1Timothy 2:14 he explains this absence by writing, “καὶ Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν” translated as, “and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor”. He uses the same verb (ἐξηπάτησεν) to describe deception in both cases.

It can be concluded that Paul uses the serpent's image in the context of 2 Corinthians 11:1-4 only as a metaphor to describe how various false prophets usually behave. They use all their God-given cleverness and wisdom to produce and multiply evil on earth.⁵⁴¹

Luke and Revelation are contemporaries of most apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, as examined in chapter 3 (1-4 century CE), and thus their potential connection with Genesis 3 is crucial for the present discussion. I will begin my examination by exploring the Gospel of Luke 10:18.

⁵³⁸ Cf. Martinek, *Wie die Schlange zum Teufel Wurde*, 117.

⁵³⁹ Frederick William Danker (ed.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Third Edition)*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 754.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 1054.

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Martinek, *Wie die Schlange zum Teufel Wurde*, 116-117.

4.1 Luke 10:18

Luke 10:18 is part of the larger passage, 10:17-24, describing the result of Jesus sending His 70 (72) disciples in pairs on a mission (10:1-12) without specifying to whom exactly He is sending them. Thus, the previous verses are devoted to this matter. Additionally, according to verses 13-16, Jesus pronounces judgment against a group of Israelite cities which appeared to be more stubborn than the two well-known Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, as mentioned in Ezekiel 28:1-19 and 28:20-26. As the text further shows, the mission was intended for the 70 (72) disciples to get some real experience in what it means to be a real follower of Christ, while highlighting all the difficulties that they would face along the way.

It is worth noting that while listing the tasks the disciples would need to carry out, Jesus did not mention any demons, evil powers, or enemies that his disciples would need to oppose. Quite the contrary, Jesus presents His plan in certain stages of priority: 1) healing (10:9); 2) proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven (10:10); 3) peremptorily abandoning those who do not want to accept His words (10-11); and 4) eventually pronouncing judgment on all those who are not ready or do not want to accept both Jesus and His Kingdom (10:13-16). No instructions in dealing with demons are found in His agenda. What happened next is very interesting to examine:

Luke 10:17

Ἐπέστρεψαν δὲ οἱ ἑβδομήκοντα [δύο] μετὰ χαρᾶς λέγοντες· κύριε, καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ὑποτάσσεται ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου.

“The seventy (two) returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” (RSV)

“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name” (KJV).

“And the seventy came back with joy, saying, Lord, even the evil spirits are under our power in your name” (BBE).

After the mission had been completed, the disciples return to their Sender with certain reports in hand. In this statement, one finds agreement among the disciples that during their evangelical campaign, some demonic forces were subdued by the power of Jesus’ name. Thus, what is remarkable here is the fact that their first words do not match Jesus’ commands given in 10:9-16 – no mention is made of anyone being affected by or being attracted or converted to belief in either Jesus Christ or His Kingdom.⁵⁴² Luke clearly shows the real concern of their heart, which was much more along the lines of demonstrations of power and their recent

⁵⁴² Cf. John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 238 and Stein, *Luke*, 309.

victory over evil spirits, whom they call *daimonia*. Jesus' disciples seem to enjoy their great spiritual power, more than the less exciting work of saving human souls. This must have looked quite childish to Jesus, as He reacts in verse 21 by saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes" (KJV). Was He thinking of His disciples at that moment? I think it highly likely.

It appears that from the very beginning, Jesus' disciples were terribly mistaken as to their mission, as since they were sent not to interact with demonic powers, but with ordinary people. Such poor souls were to have been told the good news of the Kingdom of God, healed of their illnesses, and comforted in the name of Jesus.

Luke 10:18

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς· ἑθεώρουν τὸν σατανᾶν ὡς ἀστραπὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεσόντα.

Luke 10:18: Εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς, Ἐθεώρουν τὸν Σατανᾶν ὡς ἀστραπὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεσόντα.

"And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (RSV)

Jesus' response to their ecstasy is rather unclear at first glance. He confirms that they indeed have wreaked much havoc among the demonic forces. The most interesting word in this sentence, however, is *σατανᾶς*, though it is not certain whether we should read it with a capital letter (as in the RSV and the Byzantine text edition) or not, (personify him or not). Some scholars following some of the Church Fathers and various trends of systematic theology, combine this use of the word *σατανᾶς* with various uses of the word throughout the Bible. However, are they right in doing so? When taken in its own context, Luke 10:18 shows no sign of such simplicity in identifying the word *σατανᾶς*.

The word *satan* is used in Luke 10:18 in a singular form, though Jesus' disciples used the less concrete and plural *δαιμόνια* in the previous verse (v.17). Who are those *δαιμόνια*, and why does Jesus seem to equate or parallel these two phenomena? This is not clear from the context itself. Does He refer to their leader, and therefore to a particular Hebrew legend?⁵⁴³ The immediate context does not support this idea.

⁵⁴³Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 220.

Jesus' remark might be a simple response to His disciples' joy, in effect saying, "Yes, I saw that you did a great thing and had a mighty victory over our common enemy!"⁵⁴⁴ This sentence can actually be interpreted in two different ways.

The first understands the word *σατανᾶς* as a personal name, and so regards the addressee as a concrete personality, while the second option (similarly to the book of Job's use of this word, where the adversary is not really personified) understands *σατανᾶς* along the lines of "adversary" in the broadest sense possible. Thus, Luke 10:18 speaks of the defeat of the demonic (adversarial) army only, instead of suddenly switching the subject and speaking of just one person. Both options have their merits, though for several reasons the second one is more contextually grounded.

- 1) Except for the possibility in 10:18, the person of Satan is nowhere mentioned by either Christ's disciples or Christ Himself in 10:1-24.

Chart 14:

Verse	Words and synonyms
Luke 10:17	<i>δαιμόνια</i>
Luke 10:18	<i>τὸν σατανᾶν</i>
Luke 10:19	<i>ὄφρων καὶ σκορπίων, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ,</i>
Luke 10:20	<i>τὰ πνεύματα</i>

Correspondingly, Christ's disciples use only the abstract plural word *δαιμόνια* (demons, demonic powers) in 10:17, while Jesus uses two similar words, *ἐχθροῦ* (enemy – singular) in 10:19, and *τὰ πνεύματα* (spirits – plural) in 10:20, neither of which focuses attention on just one concrete figure, the figure of a personified Satan.

- 2) There is no goal of defeating Satan (or perhaps rather *σατανᾶς*) anywhere within the boundaries of 10:1-24.

3) Each of the other Lukan references (11:18; 13:16; 22:3; and 22:31) can be interpreted from the same two opposite perspectives: the use of abstract/collective or personal names, and prove nothing concretely.⁵⁴⁵ According to Johnson, "Through the rest of the gospel *Satanas* is

⁵⁴⁴ Cf. Richard B. Vinson, *Luke* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2008), 329: "If one takes this verse away from Luke 10, it could describe a singular moment of revelation for Jesus. In context, it describes how Jesus interprets the work of the seventy two in their foray into the towns and villages of Galilee."

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Granville: Paternoster Press, 1978), 428, who relates the word *satan* in Luke 10:18 to Rev. 12:7-10, 13 without giving any reason. See Stein, *Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of the Holy Scripture*, 309, "it is more likely however, that it refers symbolically to what exorcism performed by the seventy (two) meant."

used as a designation (11:8; 13:6; 22:3, 31).”⁵⁴⁶ It is very difficult, therefore, to demonstrate conclusively that Luke uses the personal name here, and not the more general term for a category of an adversarial spiritual being.

The desire to find in the text a reference to a personified figure of Satan may have been driven by considerations from outside the text: 1) Spiritualists, Dualists, and Platonists would find in this name an argument supporting their dualistic spiritual perception of the world. In other words, they require Satan – or any other anti-god figure – to sustain their dual-nature reality. In this universe, both the God of Israel and some adversarial equal (along with their respective forces) can interrupt and alter lives and rule over the universe as two complimentary beings who cannot exist without the other. 2) A personified Satan in Luke 10:18 would also fit well into the “Horrano/Evil/serpent Prince theory”, which claims that Luke 10:18, Mark 13:25, Matthew 24:29, and Revelation 6:13 and 8:10 “seem to describe an event similar to the fall of Hellel/Satan in Isaiah 14 and Luke 10:18.”⁵⁴⁷ 3) Finally, one point still remains unclear: why do the other synoptic Gospels and John fail to include this episode never choose to use this expression?

It is vital to note the word order Luke uses in v. 18 to present his idea and how it relates to Isaiah 14:4b-23: εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς· ἐθεώρουν⁵⁴⁸ τὸν σατανᾶν ὡς ἀστραπήν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεσόντα.⁵⁴⁹ Although his wording resembles Isaiah 14:12 quite closely: πῶς ἐξέπεσεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὁ ἑωσφόρος ὁ πρωὶ ἀνατέλλων, “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn!”⁵⁵⁰ It is nevertheless not exactly alike. The primary difference between the texts is that while Luke 10:18 spotlights lightning falling from the heavens (while relegating the verb “to fall” to the less important conclusion of the statement, Isaiah reverses this and places the verb ‘to fall’ toward the front, as is more typical for any Jewish-thinking translator).

⁵⁴⁶ Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve”, 168.

⁵⁴⁷ Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 223.

⁵⁴⁸ John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC; Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1993), 564, maintains that, “This verb is virtually never found in the aorist (BDF, 101). If we insist on an imperfect force then it will be iterative, ‘I used to see (in recurring vision).’” See Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 220. See also I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Granville: Paternoster Press, 1978), 428: “The imperfect has been thought to represent a continuous or repeated experience, but K.G. Kuhn observes that there is only one Aramaic past tense that can lie behind the verb here. It is likely that the imperfect is used because the aorist of *teoreo* was not in common use.”

⁵⁴⁹ Cf. the end of NRSV translation: “like a flash of lightning”.

⁵⁵⁰ See 2.2.3 above.

Despite that shift, both texts use two similar verb forms: πίπτω and ἐκπίπτω both meaning “to fall”,⁵⁵¹ and both referring to ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (from heaven), though then ὁ ἑωσφόρος (a morning star) and ὡς ἀστραπήν (like a lightning), while certainly not identical do not greatly affect the point in question. Both lightning and stars are cosmic objects and both produce a dazzling light and create an existential fear, though lightning is much more dangerous and familiar than stars.⁵⁵² Besides, lightning is a momentary event, while a star can be observed for years and even centuries. Was Luke trying to emphasize this difference as well and, therefore, purposely replaced ”star” with ”lightning”?⁵⁵³

Whatever his reasons, these thoughts lead me to think that Luke may have been familiar with Isaiah 14:4b-23, and therefore could have aimed at reflecting it.⁵⁵⁴ However, is that really so? Let us juxtapose these two accounts and find either proof or disproof of that.

Chart 15:

Text:	Isaiah 14:4b-23	Luke 10:17-24
Main character(s) of the story:	The king of Babylon Human being	Jesus and His disciples
Author of the reproach:	Prophet Isaiah transmitting the words of God.	Luke transmitting the words of Jesus and others.
Potential recipient(s)	People of Judah? People of Babylon? King of Babylon? Isaiah’s disciples?	Jesus’ disciples Wider circle of Jesus’ followers
Whom God/Jesus had in mind while pronouncing His words?	The Assyrian king? The unknown Babylonian king?	Satan/satan? Demonic forces? Jesus’s disciples?
The image used in the insertion:	Helal ben Shahar (14:12)	Satan/satan
Main plot of the story:	Hubris, which led the king of Babylon to believe that he is equal or more powerful than God.	Jesus sends His 70 (72) disciples on a mission and gets their first impression.
Original source of the insertion:	An unknown Canaanite myth (14:12-15)	(10:18): 1) A Canaanite myth? t. 2) Isaiah 14:12—15? in Luke’s Gospel as such.
The outcome of the story:	The arrogant king is deprived	Jesus’ disciples learned that

⁵⁵¹ Thus, in Luke 10:18 it is aorist, active participle, accusative, masculine, singular, while in Isa. 14:12 it is verb aorist, active, indicative 3rd singular.

⁵⁵² Cf. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 428: “A strape means a beam of light and refers not so much to the brightness of lightening as to its sudden and swift fall from heaven to earth.”

⁵⁵³ Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (Sacra Pagina 3; Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 168.

⁵⁵⁴ Cf. Bock, *Luke* (NIVAC), 293, who believes that “Judaism associated Satan’s end with the Messiah.” For further support of this view see Nolland, *Luke*, 563, who lists such sources as 1Qm 15:12-16:1; 17:5-8; 11QMelch 13-14; T. Levi 18:12; T. Dan. 5:10; Sib. Or. 3.796-807; T. Jud. 25:3.”

	of everything worthy and is thrown down to Sheol. That is, moved from the best to the worst place in God's domain.	the exercise of their spiritual powers was not the main goal of the mission.
Moral instruction:	Do not think of yourself more than you actually are.	Not clear from the context: God's Kingdom is the priority?
Theological instruction:	God is the only true god in the universe. All other powers are inferior to Him.	God is the only true god in the universe. All other powers are inferior to Him.

It can be concluded that despite a number similarities between the intentions of the two authors, Luke 10:18 appears to be very different from Isaiah 14:4b-23.⁵⁵⁵ It is unlikely that Jesus or Luke could have referred to an original Canaanite story (which Isa. 14:4b23 is based upon, as Korpel & De Moor surmise),⁵⁵⁶ but “alternatively, Luke may have displayed something here in favor of his own formulation based on isolated sayings from tradition.”⁵⁵⁷

The word “*satan*” is not the only debated question in Luke 10:18. Culpepper notes that it is not clear, “whether we are to read this as the report of an actual vision, or whether it should be understood as simply a metaphorical description of the significance of the apostle’s work can be debated.”⁵⁵⁸ Thus we cannot claim for sure whether Jesus speaks of the past, present, or future, though the main idea is very clear: at the end of a certain, previously prescribed and appointed time, Satan (or in a general sense, “*satan*” as representative of various evil forces) is to be defeated and subordinated to God’s power.⁵⁵⁹ According to Nolland, “Each of these possibilities has its firm supporters.”⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁵ See Nolland, *Luke*, 563, who claims that “Despite the long history of linking this verse with Isa 14:12 as applied to the fall of Satan, there is finally no adequate basis for such a connection, or for any early Jewish interpretation on the text from Isaiah as referring to the primordial fall of Satan from heaven.”⁵⁵⁵ The closest parallel to the imagery here is provided by T. Sol. 20:16-17.” Green, 418, disagrees with him at this point, insisting that, “The deployment of the Isaianic imagery is important for Luke, who thus correlates the positions of Capernaum and of Satan over against God.” Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 220.

⁵⁵⁶ Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 221-222.

⁵⁵⁷ See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *the Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, translation and Notes* vol. 28a (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: the Anchor Bible, Doubleday, 1985), 859, who refers to R. Bultmann in saying that “Bultmann regards v. 18 as inherited by Luke ‘from tradition’, but the question is whether vv. 18 and 19 were originally uttered together, and similarly vv. 19 and 20,” or not. Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 221. See Nolland, *Luke*, 562.

⁵⁵⁸ Culpepper, “The Gospel of Luke”, 224.

⁵⁵⁹ Cf. Earle Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 157. See Nolland, *Luke*, 563, who claims with reference to Zerwick, that: “ the use of the aorist participle for the verb ‘to fall’ ensures that the reference is to a final fall and not some temporal reversal, and to the fact of the fall, rather than to the movement of transition as such.”

⁵⁶⁰ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 419, comments on v.18 from a slightly aloof perspective, saying that, “Some find in Jesus’ assertion a reference to a primordial event or an event in the life of Jesus Himself, but neither of these options makes sense of the actual, ongoing exercise of satanic influence in the Lucan narrative.” See Hendriksen, who presents three interpretative versions, called to explain 10:18, Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 580. See Block, *Insights on Luke*, 1006. See Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 419: “Some find in Jesus’ assertion a reference to a

Muller makes the point that, “Jesus saw in a vision the fall of Satan actually being accomplished in heaven, and this was the basis for his confidence that the kingdom of God was now a present reality in heaven, ready to break through the earthly sphere.”⁵⁶¹

Luke 10:19

ἰδοὺ δέδωκα ὑμῖν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πατεῖν ἐπάνω ὄφεων καὶ σκορπίων, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, καὶ οὐδὲν ὑμᾶς οὐ μὴ ἀδικήσῃ.

“Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you.”

If perceived literally, serpents and scorpions were indeed quite frequent guests on various Palestinian roads at that period of time, and therefore, might have been seen as an obstacle for those who travelled along. However, was Jesus speaking literally here? It is doubtful that Jesus’ words must be taken literally in v.19 to claim that the disciples are to be busy with tramping or treading upon all kinds of horrible animals and insects on their way from one Jewish city to another.

Culpepper rightly notes that, “serpents and scorpions appear in the passage as images for the power of evil in prophetic and apocalyptic writings (serpents Gen. 3:1-14; Num. 21:6-9; scorpions 1Kgs 12:11, 14; Rev. 9:3; serpents and scorpions together Deut. 8:15; Sir. 39:30; Luke 11:11-12).”⁵⁶² Jesus has never personified or revealed who all those enemies actually are. He only points at the necessity to take them into consideration, reminding his listeners about the authority given to tread upon them and cuts off His words immediately after that. At least, this is how Luke presents His words.

However, if Jesus speaks metaphorically in verse 19, why cannot His previous words in verse 18 be taken metaphorically as well, as 19 seems to be explaining the previous verse?⁵⁶³ Thus, I argue that ἰδοὺ in the beginning of v. 19 may be translated not as “behold” only, but as: “you know/see/look”, or even “because”: I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, because I gave you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. In other words: the demons are subject to you because I let it be.

primordial event or an event in the life of Jesus Himself, but neither of these options makes sense of the actual, ongoing exercise of satanic influence in Lukian narrative.”

⁵⁶¹ See Nolland, *Luke*, 563. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 853, who would maintain, “rather, Jesus’ watching’ is a symbolic way of summing up the effects of the disciple’s mission; his contemplation revealed how their activity expressed victory over Satan’s power or influence.”

⁵⁶² Culpepper, “The Gospel of Luke”, 224. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 221.

⁵⁶³ Cf. *Ibid*, points to b and d. Cf. Culpepper, “The Gospel of Luke”, 224: “Verse 19 continues the apocalyptic imagery of the previous saying. The language of ‘giving authority’ echoes Luke 9:1, where Jesus gave the disciples authority over the demons, but here Jesus’ language is metaphorical, not literal.” See Vinson, *Luke*, 329, who sees a connection with Mark 16:18.

Luke 10:20

πλὴν ἐν τούτῳ μὴ χαίρετε ὅτι τὰ πνεύματα ὑμῶν ὑποτάσσεται, χαίρετε δὲ ὅτι τὰ ὀνόματα ὑμῶν ἐγγέγραπται ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.⁵⁶⁴

“Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”(RSV).

This verse expresses something similar to what we see in v. 17: κύριε, καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ὑποτάσσεται ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου that means: «Lord, even the spirits are subject to us in your name», though in a slightly reversed way. Jesus does not want their attention to be diverted away from the main goal, the proclamation of God’s Kingdom approaching, and from people, to whom they should proclaim the approach of God’s Kingdom too and therefore says: μὴ χαίρετε ὅτι τὰ πνεύματα ὑμῶν ὑποτάσσεται «do not be glad that the spirit are subject to you». This task would be accomplished not due to a pompous defeat of evil forces, but due to God’s Kingdom fighting its way through the clouds of darkness.⁵⁶⁵

In this verse evil forces, τὰ πνεύματα, are substituting τὰ δαιμόνια, and therefore are to be perceived as interchangeable words, which are not personified or specified at all. Hence, if Jesus was focused on Satan in verse 18, why would He not continue this line of thought further on and rapidly change the main addressee?

Luke 10:21

Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἠγαλλιάσατο [ἐν] τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ εἶπεν· ἐξομολογοῦμαι σοι, πάτερ, κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἀπέκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις· ναὶ ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου.

“In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will” (RSV).

This verse confirms the idea of the disciples’ complete misinterpretation of their actual mission, which they had been sent on. Children have one undisputed advantage: they usually feel or understand their dependent and inferior position before their parents or other adults, and mostly do whatever they are told to do by one who is more experienced and mature. These “babes” appeared a bit stubborn, though yet teachable.

⁵⁶⁴ See Nolland, *Luke*, 561, who claims: “Luke has used the original link between vv. 17 and 20 as the basis for structuring the section.” Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 418, agrees with him at this point. Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*., 858.

⁵⁶⁵ Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 860.

We are not told what exactly is revealed to Jesus' disciples, but perhaps Jesus meant the ability to see the Kingdom of Heaven coming down to earth in its full strength, as can be derived from the next verse.

Luke 10:22-24

πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου, καὶ οὐδεὶς γινώσκει τίς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ὃ ἂν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι. Καὶ στραφεὶς πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς κατ' ἰδίαν εἶπεν· μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ οἱ βλέποντες ἃ βλέπετε. λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ προφῆται καὶ βασιλεῖς ἠθέλησαν ἰδεῖν ἃ ὑμεῖς βλέπετε καὶ οὐκ εἶδαν, καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ἃ ἀκούετε καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσαν.

All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Here, Jesus clearly speaks of a more impressive and global operation, which His disciples have become part of. This operation sees its end in all opposing forces being defeated and God's reign on earth being established. However, before that all procedures necessary to accomplish this task will be undertaken. Once again, the accent is not on the evil forces, but on the fact that the Kingdom is rapidly approaching.

To conclude:

1. It remains unclear how to perceive the word *σατανᾶς* in Luke 10:18: as a personified name, or as an abstract term, thereby replacing the word *satan* with "adversary/enemy"? There are many arguments, however, against reading Luke 10:18 according to the Church Fathers' interpretative tradition.
2. It remains unclear whether Jesus speaks of a spiritual battle, or just sums up the results to which His mission has eventually led His disciples. The final defeat of His enemy is still to come. Therefore he might simply refer to a local win. In this sense, He could see Satan, not as a personified enemy, but as a collective image of all God's enemies in general (cf. my rendering of the word "devil" in the *Wisdom of Solomon*). The fall from heaven in the image of a lightningbolt could simply mean a quick end of someone's domination.
3. In spite of a temptation to examine this passage from the perspective of Isaiah 14:12-15, one should note that there is no common ground to do that (see my chart above), apart from the quite close resemblance of some words. Luke 10:17-24 does not use any examples of ancient mythology, neither perhaps any reference to Genesis 2-3, but

simply contains a similar expression which barely fits into the same category with Isa 14:12 and Ezekiel 28:1-19.

4.2 Revelation 12:9

In my view, Luke 10:18 has nothing to do with Genesis 3:1-15, either implicitly or explicitly. Revelation 12:9 is, however, another matter, having been constantly paralleled with the Genesis 3 narrative in the history of interpretation. Revelation 12:3 and 9 have been regarded as explanatory notes, unfolding the nature of the serpent from Genesis 3.⁵⁶⁶ This interpretation is based on the analogous images of the serpent in both stories.

However, are these two serpents (dragons) actually alike? Are these two images to be seen as reciprocal? Do they actually represent one and the same personage, described at two different points in time?⁵⁶⁷

I will begin by examining the images of the serpent (dragon) within the boundary of its immediate context (12:1-17) regarding its potential resemblance to the Genesis 3:1-15 serpent, and thus, on its feasible contribution to dismantling the image of the serpent from Genesis 3.

Additionally, since some scholars claim that Revelation 12:9 might have been based on an unidentified ancient Near Eastern, presumably Babylonian or Canaanite myth, I will also include this possibility in the following investigation:⁵⁶⁸

The book of Revelation is a difficult text to read and interpret, since its narration overflows with symbolic, highly complex, and picturesque imagery. Unless these images are read according to their proper literary genres – and, thankfully, the author sometimes provides interpretations of them – interpretations will be vague, unpredictable and it will be unclear just what the author originally intended. Thus, before dealing with this kind of text, one has to admit that, similar to Philo's writings or the writings of many Old Testament prophets, Revelation 12:1-17 is an extremely complex and symbolically loaded passage bearing more than one meaning (i.e. spiritual, literal, moral, etc.). Thus, one of these meanings is always lying on the surface of the text and therefore, need not be deciphered, because its meaning is obvious, while all others penetrate into much deeper layers of the text to produce more non-literal and symbolic meanings, which must be deciphered and translated into our everyday language by someone familiar with the code.

⁵⁶⁶Elaine A. Phillips, "Serpent Intertext: Tantalizing Twists in the Tales", *BBR* 10.2 (2000), 238, who claims that, "By the first century BCE and CE, the serpent had become linked with the malevolent figure of Satan, the devil, the great dragon. This connection is most comprehensively articulated for the Christian community in Rev. 12:9 and 20:1, but some aspects of the identification are evident in extracanonical texts as well."

⁵⁶⁷See Tomas C. Oden, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament: Revelation* vol. XII (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 185-187.

⁵⁶⁸Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil*, 244 and 248-249 and Joy A. Schroeder, "Revelation 12: Female Figures and Figures of Evil," *Word & World*, XV/ 2 (1995), 176.

However, my task here will not consist in interpreting all the various layers of the Revelation 12:1-17 as such, neither will it all address the various kinds of non-literal interpretations, methods, and techniques which might have been used in its composition. Instead, the investigation will be limited to a comparison of the dragon in Revelation 12:3, 9 with the serpent in Genesis 3:1-15. Thus, only those aspects of the immediate context that aid in the further understanding of the dragon will be considered.

William Shea gives the following structure of chapter 12, which in my opinion both suits it well and is understandable:

- A.vv.1-5- Early dragon-woman conflict
- B1.v.6- Intermediate dragon-woman conflict
- X. vv. 7-12 – Michael-dragon conflict in heaven
- B*. vv. 13- 16 – Intermediate dragon-woman conflict (resumed).
- A* v. 17 – Final dragon-woman conflict⁵⁶⁹

Revelation 12:1-6

1 Καὶ σημεῖον μέγα ὤφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, γυνὴ περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον, καὶ ἡ σελήνη ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς στέφανος ἀστέρων δώδεκα, 2 καὶ ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα, καὶ κράζει ὠδίνουσα καὶ βασανιζομένη τεκεῖν. 3 καὶ ὤφθη ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἰδοὺ δράκων μέγας πυρρὸς ἔχων κεφαλὰς ἑπτὰ καὶ κέρατα δέκα καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτοῦ ἑπτὰ διαδήματα, 4 καὶ ἡ οὐρὰ αὐτοῦ σύρει τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀστέρων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν γῆν. Καὶ ὁ δράκων ἔστηκεν ἐνώπιον τῆς γυναικὸς τῆς μελλούσης τεκεῖν, ἵνα ὅταν τέκῃ τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς καταφάγῃ. 5 καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν ἄρσεν, ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ. καὶ ἤρπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ πρὸς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ. 6 καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἔφυγεν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον, ὅπου ἔχει ἐκεῖ τόπον ἡτοιμασμένον ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα ἐκεῖ τρέφωσιν αὐτὴν ἡμέρας χιλίας διακοσίας ἐξήκοντα (NA28).

1. And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; 2 and she was with child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered. 3 And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems. 4 And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon standeth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child. 5 And she was delivered of a son, a man-child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days (ESV).

Tomas claims that, “The first six verses of chapter 12 furnish the plot for the whole background drama.”⁵⁷⁰ Therefore, a proper understanding of them is important in order to grasp what is going on later in the text. Likewise, Schroeder states that, “The plot of Rev. 12:1-6 is

⁵⁶⁹ William H. Shea, “The Parallel Literary Structure of Revelation 12 and 20,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 23 (1985), 42. See William H. Shea, “The Chiasmic Structure of Revelation 12:1-15:4 The Great Controversy Vision,” *Andrews University Studies*, 38 (2000), 273, where he places the passage within the frame of 12:1-13:1 and calls it “The Dragon’s War Chiasm”.

⁵⁷⁰ R. Tomas, *Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 117.

similar to pagan myths that would have circulated in the Roman Empire at the time of the writing of the Apocalypse.”⁵⁷¹ In her opinion, it is very likely that the author of Revelation 12 used not just one, but two or more similar ancient myths in both chapters 12 and 17. Although there seems to be just one evil dragon that takes part in both scenes, “the woman in chapter 12 is the mother of the Messiah and a giver of life, the woman of chapters 17-18 is the mother of harlots.”⁵⁷² In other words: “In Revelation 12 John counters the imperial version of the myth by revealing the true identity of the woman, crowned with the stars, she is the mother of the Messiah. Furthermore, the author sees through Roma’s disguise and reveals her for who she truly is, the harlot in chapter 17-18.”⁵⁷³

The difficulty in interpreting this passage is that the author chooses not to clarify his plot and does not give his reader any explanation with regard to the real status (nature) of both the woman and the dragon, thus leaving his reader to guess about whom they might actually be.⁵⁷⁴ Who the woman is, no one knows for sure, leaving room for much speculation.⁵⁷⁵ 12:3, in its turn, is a symbolically overladen description of a red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and, therefore, from the very first sight seems hardly connected with 12:9. It does, however, play a crucial role in identifying the dragon’s actual nature, considering that this is just one of two verses in the chapter where any description of the beast is given.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷¹ Schroeder, “Revelation 12: Female Figures and Figures of Evil,” 176, mentions Greek, Egyptian, and Roman myths that could have been used as a background for Rev. 12:1-6. See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 117-118: “An effort to find John’s source for 12:1-6 in pagan mythology has noted the existence of a story familiar in the ancient world... John may well have known of the pagan myths, but it is very doubtful that he would use them as a primary source for this account.” See J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB vol. 38; New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1975), 199, who also refers to the Babylonian dragon and the Greek mythology of Hercules, which might have inspired that vision. See R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John* vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1920), 325, “That supernatural beings had such a form was believed among the Semites, Egyptians, Greeks, Indians, and others.” See also Robert H. Mounce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 241: “The Babylonian account of the expulsion of Ishtar, goddess of the morning star, is paralleled.” See Craig S. Keener, *Revelation* (NIVAC, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 321. See Robert W. Wall, *Revelation* (NIBC, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 315. Cf. Wilfrid J. Harrington, O.P., (ed.), *Sacra Pagina: Revelation* vol. 16 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 132, who claims that, “The closest parallel, however, to the narrative of the woman and the dragon is a Graeco-Roman version of the legend of Apollo’s birth.”

⁵⁷² Schroeder, “Revelation 12: Female Figures and Figures of Evil,” 177.

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 121, “To identify the woman as God is to leave unexplained how God could bring forth God and then have to flee from the dragon into the wilderness. Identifying her with the people of God from the OT and NT has the advantage of recognizing that in the course of history it was national Israel which begat the Messiah (Moffatt, Ladd, Johnson, Kindle).”

⁵⁷⁵ Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 121, “To identify the woman as God is to leave unexplained how God could bring forth God and then have to flee from the dragon into the wilderness. Identifying her with the people of God from the OT and NT has the advantage of recognizing that in the course of history it was national Israel which begat the Messiah.”

⁵⁷⁶ V.3 will be given more attention in the following part of the research and will not be discussed here in any detail. For further explanation, see the exhaustive comments on the subject of potential background of the dragon (Rev. 12:3) in Keener, *Revelation*, 316-317.

Revelation 12:7-12 commences with a war that seems to break out immediately after the previous introduction (1-6):

7 Καὶ ἐγένετο πόλεμος ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Μιχαὴλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος. καὶ ὁ δράκων ἐπολέμησεν καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ, 8 καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν οὐδὲ τόπος εὐρέθη αὐτῶν ἔτι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels 8 and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.

Shea maintains that 12:7-12 is to be seen as, “a parenthetical section, which explains the origin of the dragon’s enmity towards the woman. This section of the narrative is in part descriptive (vv. 7-9) and in part hymnic (vv. 10-12).”⁵⁷⁷

Thus, from an abstract story of a woman, who according to vv.4 and 5, is trying to escape her persecutor (the dragon), the author moves to depicting a cosmic war between two constantly opposing antagonists: the “powers of good and evil”, represented by the two contesting armies, the one led by the angel Michael, and the other one by the anonymous dragon.⁵⁷⁸ How and why this dragon powerful enough to sweep “down a third of the stars of heaven,” and challenge God’s major representative, is not revealed by the text. When and why this battle took place, is also left unexplained.⁵⁷⁹

What is most remarkable here, however, are the actual figures of the two primary adversaries: Michael, who is leading his angels from one side of the battlefield, and the red dragon, who is described in v. 3 as the one, who has, “seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems.”⁵⁸⁰ In Osborne’s view, the dragon is paralleled in Psalm 74:13-14; Isaiah 51:9-10; Ezekiel 29:4-5, 32:3-8; and Jeremiah 51:34 as, “the ultimate forces of evil behind all...opposition to God.”⁵⁸¹ Therefore, while it would be difficult to state with any certainty, his image might have been borrowed and composed from these OT references and presented as their ultimate summary.

Michael is described in v.7 as a heavenly figure, set apart for his mission. Many scholars find that his image in Revelation 12:7 closely resembles the role of “the chief heavenly prince”, which he bears in Daniel 10:13, 21, and 12:1.⁵⁸² According to Wall “John no doubt

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid, 39. Cf. Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 128.

⁵⁷⁸ Those who hold that the dragon and the woman represent the Roman Empire and Israel respectively see this picture as a twofold: earthly and heavenly battles, taking place in both realms at the same time.

⁵⁷⁹ See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 128, where he presents some of his theories about a possible timing of the event. Mounce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Book of Revelation* (William Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), 240, believes that this is to be seen as a cosmic drama.

⁵⁸⁰ Ford, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 199: “The diadem is a symbol of royalty (Sir. 11:5, 47:6), wisdom (Wis. 5:16), and high priesthood (Wis. 18:24)...Our dragon is king (and possibly priest) of chaos.”

⁵⁸¹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 470.

⁵⁸² See also Osborne, *Revelation*, 469. Keener, *Revelation*, 163.

recognized Michael’s participation in this vision in terms of rabbinic speculation that gave him elevated importance in mediating God’s covenant with religious Israel. In this way, Michael had come to symbolize for many religious Jews a triumphant Judaism.”⁵⁸³

Moreover, a potential borrowing from the Essene theological tradition is very possible here, especially considering that some scholars believe that John may have borrowed of his thinking about good and evil powers from the Essene environment.⁵⁸⁴

It is difficult to infer who prevailed over whom from reading just vv.7-8. In v. 9, however, the utter defeat of the dragon is described.

9 καὶ ἐβλήθη ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας, ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην, ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἐβλήθησαν.
 “And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.”

By his repetition of ἐβλήθη, John appears to stress the dragon’s vulnerability, and highlight two different aspects of his fall, thus first of all, describing the dragon’s presumptive identity, and secondly, all those, who joined him in this war.

Most scholars agree that no single, univocal interpretation of this event is possible, as “some interpreters see it as a description of a conflict in heaven in which evil originated prior to the creation of the humankind. Others see it as a description of the victory gained by God, over the devil at the time of the incarnation of Christ.”⁵⁸⁵

As we are more interested in the nature of the serpent (dragon) than the story itself, the first question that needs to be answered here, is: Is it correct to claim that the dragon in v. 3 matches the one in v. 9? In other words: in light of their differing descriptions, are we dealing here with one and the same figure, or should we speak about two different dragons?

Chart 16:

Revelation 12:3 (par.17:7)	Revelation 12:9 (par. 20:2)
δράκων μέγας ⁵⁸⁶	ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας, ⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³Ibid. Wall, *Revelation*, 315. Mounce, and Beasley-Murray are correct in saying that: “there is no true dualism in this book between Satan and God, for there is no equality.” They mean that in 12:7-8 God does not oppose the dragon personally, as might have been expected, but stands behind the powers led by Michael. See Grant R. Osborne, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Revelation* (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2002), 469. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 241. G.R. Beasley-Murray, *New Century Bible: The Book of Revelation* (London: Oliphants, 1974). This point plays a key role in the present discussion and therefore will be emphasized later on.

⁵⁸⁴Cf. Ford, *Revelation*, 200. See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 118, who maintains that: “the possibility that John borrowed from a similar account in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Johnson) is remote, because John was not that familiar with the Qumran Community. John’s allusions to the birth of the Messiah through the Messianic community (Isa. 9:6-7; Mic. 5:2) and to the Messianic community (Isa. 26:17; 66:7) show that the OT was a primary factor in John’s thinking (cf. Isa. 54:1-6; Jer. 3:20 Ezek. 16:8-14; Hos. 2:19-20) (Mounce, Johnson).”

⁵⁸⁵ Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 240.

⁵⁸⁶ Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 122: “Red is the color of blood, and harmonizes with his murderous intentions to kill the offspring of the woman. His great size finds confirmation in his control over a third of the stars of heaven.”

πυρρός	No match
ἔχων κεφαλὰς ἑπτὰ ⁵⁸⁸	No match
κέρατα δέκα	No match
καὶ ἐπιτάσκει κεφαλὰς αὐτοῦ ἑπτὰ διαδήματα	No match
No match	ὁ ἀρχαῖος
No match	ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς
No match	ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην

The only match on this chart relates to the tremendous size of the beast, while all other criteria are unparalleled. Therefore, while from these two verses alone though it remains difficult to determine if these two dragons are the same, the following chart 17 traces the word *δράκων* throughout chapter 12 and demonstrates that it is most likely referring to one and the same evil character.

In light of the fact that the author never clearly distinguishes between two separate dragons, it seems likely that he is simply describing one dragon throughout the chapter, through the use of varied descriptions.

Chart 17:

12:3	δράκων
12:4	δράκων
12:7 Dragon (2x)	δράκων
12:9 – It seems that all six words being used interchangeably and, therefore, refer to the same dragon.	δράκων, ὁ ὄφεις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν
12:12 – what is the reason for the use of <i>diabolos</i> here?	διάβολος
12:13	δράκων
12:14 – what is the reason for the use of “ <i>serpent</i> ” here?	ὄφεις
12:15- what is the reason for the use of “ <i>serpent</i> ” here?	ὄφεις
12:16	δράκων
12:17	δράκων

Apart from the main noun, *δράκων*, six other key words require special attention in this sentence (v.9)⁵⁸⁹. ὁ μέγας – the author goes out of his way to describe the dragon as being very

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, 131, Tomas believes that, “Repeating the *μέγας* (*megas*, “great”) from v.3, the writer reiterates the title emphasizing the remorseless cruelty of this being.”

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid, 123, see his further comments on the potential meaning of the heads and horns.

large. The reason for my including this word in the list of important words is that the importance of ὁ μέγας lies in its being one of the primary modifiers of ὁ δράκων in both verses 3 and 9. Then, ὁ ὄφις – bearing the meaning “the serpent”, is well-known to the reader from the first pages of the Bible but, is not immediately pointing at in its present context, does not immediately point to the serpent of Genesis 3 nor in Revelation 9.⁵⁹⁰ However, when paired with the third important term, ὁ ἀρχαῖος, these two words create the powerful combination “the ancient (old) serpent”.

Although there is no indication of how old the serpent actually was, nor why the author thought it was important to include this detail, I would like to stress that no clear allusion is made to Genesis 3, where the serpent is simply called *arum*. Most systematic theologians, however, though not only, regularly stumble over these two words, drawing artificial parallels with the serpent from Genesis 3. This parallel is artificial, because there is no clear reference or allusion in Revelation 12:1-17 to Genesis 3:1-5. To put it differently, I am arguing here that the author does not refer to Genesis 3 anywhere in Revelation 12:1-17, because, from my point of view, this is not the point he is trying to make. Further, none of the other three main characters of the Genesis 3:1-15 story: God, Adam, or the woman, (Eve), are named or alluded to anywhere in Revelation 12:1-17. Finally, because he does not oppose the dragon personally, even God is not part of this potential comparison as He is not part of either description in 12:3 or 12:9. Regarding the fourth and fifth important terms, Διάβολος and Σατανᾶς, the question is whether we are dealing with the proper names of one of the main characters of this narrative (i.e. the dragon), or whether we should render Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, as descriptive modifiers,

⁵⁸⁹ Cf. Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 131, “To avoid any possibility of mistaken identity of the leader of this fallen bad, v.9 identifies him in five ways.” See his further thoughts on these five ways as described on pp. 131-132.

⁵⁹⁰ Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, 325: “It is not improbable that the words ὁ ὄφιςἐβλήθη are an addition on the part of the author,” or his redactors and editors. See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 131, “The “old” reaches back to the beginning of the human race and its fall (Gen. 3:1ff, cf. 2Cor. 11:3)”, though supplies his statement with no proof. All the following argumentation with regard to this issue is also very weak and sounds exceedingly hypothetical. Cf. Keener, *Revelation*, 315-316: “But for John the dragon is especially the ‘ancient serpent’ (12:9), the one in Genesis who led Adam and Eve to death by enticing them to disobey God (Gen. 3:1-15; Jub. 2:17-23)...though once again gives no evidence to his words in relation to the question: why must the serpent from Genesis 3:1-1 necessarily be seen as the dragon from Rev. 12:9? What do they have in common apart from the adjective “old”? Cf. Brian K. Blount, *The New Testament Library: Revelation* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2009), who follows the same well-worn path and does not provide his reader with any evidence with regard to his statement that, “The ancient serpent was the deceiver of the entire world. His deception of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden led to the sinful separation of the entire world from its intended relationship with God (Gen. 3).” This and the following arguments sound very unconvincing. The same idea is expressed by John Sweet, in *New Testament Commentaries: Revelation* (London: SCM Press, and Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 201. G. K. Beale, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 655-656. Simon J. Kistenmaker, *New Testament Commentary: Revelation* Baker Books, 2001), 362. Leon Morris, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1969), 160. Harrington, *Revelation*, 132.

used to broaden the overall picture of the main noun and meaning “accuser” and “adversary”, respectively?⁵⁹¹

The sixth and final important word is ὁ πλανῶν (τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην), which the ESV translates as, “the deceiver of the entire world,” though this translation does not really capture the full scale of the dragon’s action, as the noun οἰκουμένη in fact means, “the universe, humankind, the inhabited world”.⁵⁹² What role then does οἰκουμένη play in this text? Does it relate to his deceiving of the entire cosmos, or to humankind only?⁵⁹³

Therefore, who is this dragon with these six fascinating attributes? Why is he called the dragon, the old serpent, the Devil, Satan (or “satan”) and deceiver of the entire world simultaneously? Why is he depicted so cosmically in v. 3, but in such earthly terms in v. 9? Why do some scholars think he is comparable with the figure from Genesis 3, though the one from Revelation 12:1-17 differs much from the portrayal in Genesis 3:1-15?

The following chart presents the most striking characteristics of the two dragons/serpents side by side:

Chart 18:

Revelation 12:1-17	Genesis 3:1-15
Identification: Dragon – ὁ δράκων – vv. 3, 4, 7 (twice), vv. 9, 13, 16, 17. Serpent – ὁ ὄφις – vv. 9, 14, 15. He is called the serpent three times, while the dragon eight.	Serpent – ὁ ὄφις (LXX) (could be seen as a dragon when imagined with two or more legs, cf. 3:14). However, he is never called “a/the dragon” in the passage.
Nature: Ungodly, heavenly monster (12:3)	One of the animals of the field (3:1 and 14)
Surrounded by his army, consisting of heavenly inhabitants or angels (12:7) Distinguished among his servants and other angels as their chief (12:8).	Surrounded by Adam, the woman and other animals (3:1). Distinguished among other animals of the field as the cleverest of them (3:1).
Location: heaven (3-5), and the desert (9-17).	The Garden of Eden (2:4-3:24)
Main characters of the passage: The woman, the child, the dragon, Michael, God.	God, Adam, the woman, and the serpent.
The ancient (old) serpent – ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος	No match, as his age is not mentioned or emphasized anywhere within 3:1-15 pericope.
Large (huge) and fiery red – μέγας πυρρὸς (12:3)	No match
Seven heads (12:3, 13:1, 17:7)	No match

⁵⁹¹ See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 122, commenting on v. 3 when he says that, “Establishing the identity of the dragon as Satan is not difficult because of explicit statements of who he is in 12:9 and 20:2 (Alford, Scott, Walvoord). The only attempt to say he is any other than Satan is a connection with the Roman Empire. Because of similarity between descriptions in 12:3 and 13:1 and Dan. 7:7-8, 24, some view the dragon to be a combination of the empire and satanic power (Alford, Walvoord).”

⁵⁹² Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 487.

⁵⁹³ Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 202, believes that, “The deceiver of the world appears to generalize the narrative of Genesis 3 and apply it to the race (cf. Wis. 2:24).” This assumption is not correct as the author does not draw any parallel with Adam and Eve (the woman) here, and does not narrow his description to highlight the first couple only, but seems to speak about human beings in general terms instead. If the first two people in the Garden of Eden had been important for his argument in Rev. 12, he could have easily included them.

Ten horns (12:3, 15:1, 17:7)	No match
Seven diadems upon seven heads (12:3, 15:1)	No match
The deceiver of the whole world (12:9)	Deceived Adam and the woman, and perhaps through them, the entire human race (3:13)
Accuser (12:10)	No match
No match	Doubted and exposed God's command, given in 2:16-17
The one who is called satan or devil (12:9,12, 20:2)	No match
The dragon is fallen from heaven (12:7-9, 13)	No match
The one who has an angelic army (12:7)	No match
Opposed by the chief of angel, Michael 12:7	Opposed and sentenced by God Himself 3:10
Follows the woman , who is about to bear a child (12:4 and 13), aiming at: devouring her child (12:4), and making "war with the rest of her seed." (12:17)	The serpent approaches the woman (3:1) to convince her to break God's command. In 3:15 it is said that he will strike the heel of her seed while her seed will strike the serpent's head.
"The serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river" (12:15)	No match
The woman's seed (12:17)	The woman's seed (3:15)
Description: 12:1-17 – firmly negative, as the dragon is God's opposing figure	3:1 – neutral or positive 3:2-15 – implicitly, not explicitly, negative throughout the rest of the story, though he is never called evil or ungodly.

This aforementioned juxtaposition demonstrates four basic observations: 1) There are just four points of potential resemblance between the two texts out of no less than 22 criteria, which are equally important to make the dragon's/serpent's portrait complete: 1) the word ὄφις is used in both narrations, 2) the deceiving of someone, though the subjects of the verbs are different, 3) the serpent approaches or pursues the woman and 4) the serpent's dealing with the woman's seed (cf. Gen. 3:15).⁵⁹⁴

Arguments against the association of the serpent of Revelation 12 with the snake of Genesis 3: 1) 18 of the 22 criteria mentioned above are often simply ignored by those who claim that Revelation 12:1-17 resembles Genesis 3:1-15; 2) The images of the dragon in Revelation 12:3 and 9 are not based on Genesis 3:1-15 directly; otherwise, there would be more than just four agreements between them.⁵⁹⁵ 3) God, Adam, Eve and the Garden itself are not mentioned or alluded to anywhere in Revelation 12:1-17. 4) The story of the red fiery dragon

⁵⁹⁴ All four cases are highlighted in the chart with the use of a bold script.

⁵⁹⁵ See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 131.

bears no resemblance to Genesis 3:1-5, and shows little connection with the Fall of Man.⁵⁹⁶ Thus, aside from pursuing the woman in Revelation 12:4 and deceiving the woman in Genesis 3:1-15, there is no common ground on which to build an argument connecting the two accounts. 5) All other possible similarities between the two dragons, apart from those mentioned in the chart 18, seem to be suppositions, rather than conclusions based on actual textual evidence.

One of the problems that needs to be discussed is whether the nouns “satan” and “devil” are used as the personal names Satan and Devil here, and therefore refer to a particular figure, or whether their meaning should be understood, as in Luke 10:18 and Wis. 2:24, as meaning “adversary” and “accuser” only?⁵⁹⁷ Furthermore, why does the author of Revelation 12:7-17 utilize these varied descriptors of the dragon when he has already used many of them in v. 3? What did he intend by using these additional descriptors in v. 9?

Korpel & De Moor state that “in Revelation 12 there is no clear difference between the seven-headed dragon, the ancient serpent and the Devil or Satan,”⁵⁹⁸ though they do not back this claim with anything from the text itself. Many scholars are of the same opinion, but seem to oversimplify the question by not backing up their argumentation.

A number of them solve the problem by referring to extra biblical sources. Thus, for instance, Osbourne claims that the idea used in Revelation 12:9 (cf. 20:2) is an invention of the author of Revelation, based on unknown ancient sources.⁵⁹⁹ He does not refer to Genesis 3 directly, but on instead maintains that: “both Jewish and pagan traditions” must have made their impact on developing the notion of the red dragon, while Korpel & De Moor assume that all those unidentified sources go back to an unknown Canaanite myth. This sounds quite attractive though it is not supported by direct evidence from either Revelation 12:1-17, or its broader context.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁶ Despite the fact that this statement is supported by many other theologians, I have to admit that light of the chart in above, I do not see the clear identification that Mr. Osborne refers to. How can we say that it is clear when no more than two actual matches are reflected there? See Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 201.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. Osborne, *Revelation*, 472. See Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 131, where he speaks of these two names as potential designations. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 242: “In time, however, it became a proper name. Satan is the Adversary, the prosecutor who accuses men before God in the heavenly court.” Despite all these arguments it is still difficult to insist that *Satan* and *Diabolos* are proper names here, as the text itself does not prove this assumption. See Beasley-Murray, 201: “*Satan* is Hebrew for accuser, *Devil* is Greek for slanderer, accuser. It is likely that in due time the name Devil came to be established in its own right, so that John set it alongside the name *Satan*.”

⁵⁹⁸ Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve and the Devil*, 245.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 247-248. Cf. Osborne, *Revelation*, 469: I argue below that this primordial fall is the primary thrust of 12:7-9. It is likely, however, that the telescoping of time in chapters 11-12 continues here, and all three “bindings” of Satan (in primordial past, at the ministry and death of Jesus, and at the eschaton) are intertwined in chapter 12. Still, the imagery in 12:7-9 is drawn not so much from the second or third bindings as from the first, though it has implications for all three.”

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. Korpel & De Moor, *Adam, Eve and the Devil*, 248.

It can be concluded that: 1) although various Old Testament texts, texts of the Second Temple period, or Ancient Near Eastern texts might have made some kind of impact on John's writing, to distinguish between them or assert the importance of one source over all the others remains uncertain. 2) The six designations used in Revelation 12:9 are rather problematic, and are often used rather synonyms of the name "dragon". 3) Even if Koch is right, this neither solves the puzzle, nor gives a convincing explanation to the existing interpretative problems. 4) There is no clear evidence proving that one should explain Revelation 12:9 on the basis of Genesis 3:1-15.

V. 12 uses the word "the devil", though it is not obviously connected with the dragon from vv. 3 and 9. Besides, the actual function of the devil in v. 10 seems to consist in accusing John's brothers. Thus, this provides evidence that the word "devil" is not a personal name in v. 9, but rather a general designation.

Because commentators believe that the dragon's attributes are interchangeable, they make no comment on the shift from the dragon to the devil. I claim that the word "devil" suits this verse better due to its being used as a contrast to heavens and its obvious reflecting of accusing action. Devil is more cosmic designation, which in this verse amplifies negative effect of his ungodly activity.

The sudden switch from "the dragon" to "the serpent" is either ignored or only vaguely explained by various theologians.⁶⁰¹ However, if there is no difference between the dragon and the serpent, why did the author suddenly switch from one name to another in vv. 14 and 15, and then back again (v. 16)?

Harrington tries to answer this question as follows: "the dragon (Leviathan, Rahab) has some relations to the cosmic serpent, symbol of the power of evil and darkness." This statement seems more reasonable in that the serpent in Revelation 12:14-15 bears little resemblance to the one in Genesis 3. In fact, quite the opposite, he is much more powerful and ungodly than his counterpart. Therefore, if Harrington's contextually plausible contention is correct, his idea contradicts other scholars' claims of connections between the serpent in Revelation 12:3 and 9 and the one in Genesis 3.

⁶⁰¹ Cf. Tomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 139, "...The serpent is another name for the dragon." No further details are given in his notes. Kistenmaker, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, 362. Cf. Morris, *The Book of Revelation*, 164: «He is now called *the serpent* but there appears no real difference from the «dragon» (verse 13). Harrington, *Revelation*, 135. Cf. Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, 204, Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 669-670, Kistenmaker, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, 368: "This is now the third time in this chapter that John writes the word *serpent* (vv. 9, 14, 15). His choice is no merely stylistic; it attests to the craftiness of Satan, who has been losing the battle against God and the Church." This comment does not explain the shift, but the author provides no further comments.

Similar to v. 4, the dragon is once again pursuing the woman as his task is “to devour the woman’s seed”. The woman is without child now, since her child “was caught up unto God, and unto his throne” (12:5), while she “fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (12:6). Thus, both the dragon and the woman suddenly find themselves together again. In these circumstances, the dragon again pursues her. He is called the dragon and the serpent interchangeably three times, though this use of two different names hardly affects the flow of the drama. At the end the serpent (the dragon) eventually gives up pursuing her and focuses on her seed “that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus” (12:17).

This word “seed” in Revelation 12:17 is another point of potential similarity and dissimilarity between Gen 3:1-15 and Revelation 12:7-17. In Genesis 3:15, the word “seed” is also used with relation to the confrontation between the woman and serpent. However, it is obvious that the author of Revelation 12:17 does not read Genesis 3:15 as *protoevangelium*, but rather sees “the seed” (sing.) as remnants of faithful Israel, that is to say, one who is busy with “τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ” (12:17). Jesus does not need to hold His own testimony and keep God’s commandments, as He is God Himself, and thus God’s commandments are His own also, while “τῶν λοιπῶν τοῦ σπέρματος” (12:17), (the rest of the seed) can certainly do that in order to be saved. Shea rightly notes that:

There is a certain thematic link between the beginning and the end of Rev 12. Both deal with the dragon's attack upon the woman's offspring. In the first case, it is her principal offspring, the man-child, that is attacked; and in the latter case, it is the remnant of her offspring that is his target. Furthermore, the man-child at the beginning of the narrative should be interpreted as referring to Jesus, with the remnant at the end of the narrative bearing testimony to Jesus.⁶⁰²

Thus, despite difficulties with interpretative layers which one needs to unfold in order to sift the real meaning of the passage, it is evident from the text that Genesis 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:7-17 are less alike than they at first appear.

To summarize:

- 1) Chart 18 displays distinctions between Genesis 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:1-17 and clearly shows that there is no support in the text of Revelation for a direct link with Genesis 3.
- 2) The reference to ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος is not sufficient evidence to create a doctrine about the devil and the snake. It has to be taken into account that the author of Revelation suddenly

⁶⁰² Ibid, 41.

switches to the word ὁ ὄφις in 12:9 and then uses it three times more, though before and after that, he uses ὁ δράκων (see chart 17). What would have been the point in doing that, when he intended to allude to Genesis 3:1? Also, his following two uses of the dragon in vv. 14 and 15 do not support this idea and have nothing to do with Genesis 3:1.

3) Harrington's version of the serpent's identity, presented in relation to vv. 13-17, seems far more preferable in my view in comparison with all the others, as his cosmic serpent fits into the present discussion much better than the serpent from Genesis 3.⁶⁰³

⁶⁰³ Harrington, *Revelation*, 135.

4.3. Conclusion of chapter four

In light of the research to this point, it seems that of the three New Testament examples, only 2 Corinthians 11:3 refers to the real serpent from Genesis 3:1-5, while the other two New Testament passages look too ambiguous to claim anything with certainty. This is demonstrated in both preceding sections (4.1 and 4.2) and can be summarized in the following chart:

Chart 19

Text	2 Corinthians 11:3	Luke 10:18	Revelation 12:9
The Main Character of the Text	Serpent	Satan / satan	Dragon, old serpent/ devil/satan/deceiver of the entire world
Primary Description of the Main Character	Deceiver	Adversary	Ungodly adversary/ monster/serpent/ accuser/deceiver of the entire world
Connections between the NT Text and Genesis 3	Straightforward application based on Genesis 3:1-15 story	Dubious/ unconfirmed. The NT text reflects Isaiah 14 more than Genesis 3.	Dubious, though there are some connections: 1) the name, i.e. the serpent; 2) inclination towards deceiving; 3) interaction with a woman; 4) the woman's seed.
Brief Summary of the Main Idea of the Text	As the serpent deceived Eve, likewise the believers in Corinth could be easily deceived by a group of false prophets.	Jesus saw Satan fall from the sky in the context of a local spiritual defeat of the enemy.	The dragon was thrown down from the sky during the heavenly battle with Michael, the chief of God's angels.
The Main Purpose of the Passage	Used as an illustration and application to emphasize the possibility of deceit and its immediate consequences.	To illustrate that the power of Jesus' name is limitless.	To display a parallel reality which is used as a battlefield with evil by God's heavenly forces.
Possible Background of the NT Text	Not revealed	ANE mythology, Isaiah 14:4b-23, Ezekiel 28:11-28?	ANE mythology, Luke 10:18, Isaiah 14:4b-23, Ezekiel 28:11-19?

Opinion of the Majority of Biblical Scholarship	Resemblance confirmed	Resemblance rejected	Resemblance claimed, but contested here.
--	-----------------------	----------------------	--

Therefore, in my opinion, those claims that both Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:9 refer to Genesis 3 are far-fetched. In fact, those claims fail to demonstrate that these two New Testament texts reveal anything more than an indirect connection to the text in question, derived from a centuries-long relation with various early Jewish interpretative sources from the second century BCE onward.

CHAPTER 5: Summary and Conclusion

The description and evaluation of the early history of interpretation of Genesis 3 sheds a clear light on the origin of the idea that the serpent in the Garden of Eden has to be equated with Satan. This interpretation, which can still be found amongst others with most Russians Orthodox and Baptist readers, does not tally with the original meaning of the Hebrew text. It can be found first with Jewish writing in the second century BCE. It was also demonstrated that the often assumed relation of Isaiah 14:4b-24 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 to Genesis 3, in support of the “satanic” interpretation, is part of a later interpretative tradition. These two prophetic texts have in fact very little to say about the Garden of Eden incident as such. Interpreting them in light of a supposed satanic presence in the Garden of Eden as well as a satanic fall from heaven cannot be based on the intention of the original authors. Quite the contrary, the “satanic” interpretation was gradually read into both these texts over time (from the end of the first century CE onward) to make them suitable for a Greek-oriented, dualistic interpretation.

In the introduction in chapter one it is noted that a great deal of modern conservative research tends to describe the first sin and the role of the devil more in theological, rather than hermeneutical terms and rarely considers the original texts strictly within their literary contexts. For this reason, the present study intended to address this imbalance by examining the various texts from the Old Testament, the Second Temple period, and the New Testament, which supposedly contain either indirect (Isa. 14:4b-21, Ezek. 28:11-19, Wis. 2:24, Luk. 10:18, Rev. 12:9) or direct interpretations of the story in Genesis 3, postponing the questions concerning the relation to Genesis 3. Only after the close reading of the texts, potential connections, interpretations, and relations with Genesis 3 were discussed.

After the introductory chapter one it is attempted in chapter two to show that Genesis 3:15 has nothing to do with either Satan or the devil. This equation of the snake with Satan was imposed on the Genesis story—several centuries later, most likely in early Jewish Alexandrian Diaspora times, with the goal of establishing a heavily Platonic-dualistic vision of God/Anti-God to justify and explain the existence of evil in the world.

It was maintained in the second part of chapter two that Isaiah 14:4b-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 cannot legitimately be used to explain the relevant phenomena in Genesis 3. Moreover, no other Old or New Testament text can be used to shed light on what happened in the Garden of Eden, apart from what is found in Genesis 3.

The intertestamental or the so called Second Temple period literature, which often alludes to and quotes the Genesis 3 passage, is dealt with in chapter three. There, it is concluded that this body of literature should be divided into earlier and later strata. Those documents written before the first century CE typically describe the serpent similarly to what one finds in the Genesis narrative, while those written after the first century CE begin to interpolate the later Jewish and Christian interpretative traditions, which had been gradually morphing the serpent into Satan. This transformation continued, aided by a dualistic argumentation around the time of the early Church Fathers, until he was generally understood as Satan himself.

Chapter four concluded that Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:9 which, in the history of interpretation have often been related to Genesis 3, should not be read in the light of Genesis 3. This observation speaks in favor of a gradual process within the early Christian community, which developed a theological system including the image of Satan. I claim that the incipient tendency to see the serpent as Satan, which is most likely a product of the Jewish Alexandrian diaspora, may have begun to flourish within Christian communities after the books of the New Testament had been completed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander Desmond and David W. Baker (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003).
- Alexander Ralph H., "Ezekiel" in Frank E. Gaebelein (ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with NIV* vol. 6 (Grand Rapids,: Regency Reference Library, 1986)
- Allen Leslie C., *Ezekiel 20-48* vol. 29 (WBC, Waco: Word Books, 1990).
- Anderson Charles A., *Philo of Alexandria's Views of the Physical World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).
- Andersen F.I., "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. I, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 91-221.
- Anderson Gary A., "The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity", in Gregory Allen Robbins (ed.), *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden* (Lewiston / Queenstown: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988).
- _____ Michael E. Stone, Johannes Tromp, *Literature on Adam and Eve, Collected Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).
- _____ *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).
- Arbel Daphna, J.R.C. Cousland and Dietmar Neufeld, "*And So They Went Out*": *The Lives of Adam and Eve as Cultural Transformative Story* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010).
- Arnold Bill T., *A New Cambridge Bible Commentary: Genesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Attridge Harold, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976).
- Barker Margaret, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003).
- Barr James, *The Concept of Biblical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1999).
- Bartholomew Craig and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2004).
- Batchelor Mary, *The Children's Bible in 365 Stories* (Oxford, Lion Hudson plc. 1995).
- Beuken Willem A.M., *Jesaja 13-27* (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2007).
- Bilde Per, *Flavius Josephus: Between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works and Their Importance* (Sheffield: University of Sheffield and JSOT Press, 1988).
- Blenkinsopp Joseph, *Isaiah 1-39* (The Anchor Bible 19; New York:, Doubleday, 2000).

- Bloom John and John Collins, "Creation Accounts and Ancient Near Eastern Religions," *Christian Research Journal* 35/ 1, (2010).
- Boccaccini Gabrielle, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).
- Bohak Gideon, "The Hellenization of Biblical History in Rabbinic Literature," in Peter Schaffer, (ed.), *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Greco-Roman Culture* vol. III (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).
- Bonting Sjoerd Lieuwe, *Creation and Double Chaos: Science and Theology in Discussion* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005).
- Bonwetsch G.N., *Die Apokalypse Abrahams* (Leipzig: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 2000).
- Borgen Peder, "Philo of Alexandria as Exegete," in Alan J. Hauser, and Duane Frederick Watson (eds.), *A History of Biblical Interpretation* vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).
- Boulay R.A., *Flying Serpents and Dragons* (Escondido: The Book Tree, 1999).
- Bright J., *Early Israel in Recent Christian Writings*, (SBT 19, 1956).
- Bray Gerald, *Biblical Interpretation, Past & Present* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1996).
- Brayshaw James R., *Satan, Christianity's Other God: Legend, Myth, Lore, or Lie, Historical and Biblical proof of how Man Created Satan and Made Satan to be a God* (New York: Bloomington 2008).
- Bullard Howard Aubrey and Howard Hatton, *A Handbook of The Wisdom of Solomon* (New York: UBS, 2004).
- Buttrick George Arthur (gen. ed.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* vol. 4 (New York, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962).
- Calvin John, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948).
- _____, *Verklaring van de Bijbel door Johannes Calvijn: Deel 1, hoofdstuk 1-14* (Kampen: Uitgeverij de Groot – Goudriaan, 1985).
- Carley W., *Cambridge Bible Commentary: The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).
- Charles R.H., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).
- _____, *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896).
- Charlesworth James H., *The Good & Evil Serpent* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010).

_____ *The New Century Bible Commentary: Isaiah 1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).

Childs Brevard S., *Isaiah*, (London and Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

Cohn Eskenazi Tamara, Andrea L. Weiss, *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary* (New York: Women of Reform Judaism, 2008).

Collins John J., *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).

_____ "The Reinterpretation of Apocalyptic Traditions in The Wisdom of Solomon," in Angelo Passaro, Giuseppe Bellia (eds.), *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research: Studies an Tradition, Redaction and Theology* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005).

_____ *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg: P & R, 2006).

Colson F. H., G.H. Whitaker, *Philo* vol. I (Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann, 1929).

Cook G.A., *The Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1936).

Cook Stephen L. & Corrine L. Patton, *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tired Reality* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004).

Cooper Arville, *Genesis: A Verse by Verse Study* (Bloomington: West Bow Press, 2014).

Cooper Lamar Eugene, *The New American Commentary: Ezekiel* (Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994).

Crabb Larry, *The Silence of Adam: Becoming Men of Courage in a World of Chaos* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995).

Crawford Sidnie White, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

Cupitt Don, *Turns of Phase: Radical Theology from A-Z*, (London: SCM Press, 2011). .

Day John, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (Sheffield: Sheffield academic Press, 2002).

_____ *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11* (London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013).

De Jonge Marinus and Johannes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

De La Torre Miguel A., *The Quest for the Historical Satan* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

Eskenazi Tamara Cohn, Andrea L. Weiss, *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary* (New York: Women of Reform Judaism, 2008).

De Moor Johannes, "East of Eden", *ZAW* 100 (1988), 105-112.

Dochhorn Jan, *Die Apocalypse des Mose* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

Endres John C. S.J., *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (Washington DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987).

Fairbairn, Donald, "Historical and Theological Studies. Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart And The Horse," *Westminster Theological Journal* 69:1 (2007), 1-19.

Feldman Louis, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998).

——— *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill 1999ff.)

Fitzmyer Joseph A., *the Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, translation and Notes* vol. 28a (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: the Anchor Bible, Doubleday, 1985).

Flanxman, J.P., *Genesis and the "Jewish Antiquities" of Flavius Josephus* *Bib. Or* 35, 1979.

Forsyth Neil, *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

Fretheim Terence E., "Genesis" in Leander Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible: General and Old Testament Articles, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus* vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994).

Fuller R.C., "Mythology and Biblical Studies to 1800" in John H. Hayes (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* vol.2 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 185-196.

Gaylord H. E., "3 Greek Apocalypse of Baruch," in Charlesworth, 2009, vol. II, 670-673.

Gilbert Christopher, *A Complete Introduction to the Bible* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2009).

Ginzberg Louis, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937).

Glicksman Andrew T., *Wisdom of Solomon 10: A Jewish Hellenistic Reinterpretation of early Israelite History Through Sapiental Lenses* (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011).

Goldingay John, *Isaiah* (NICOT, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001).

——— *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel* vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Grabbe Lester L., *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

Gray Buchanan George and Arthur S. Peake, *A Critical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX* (Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1928).

Gray Mark, *Rhetoric and Social Justice in Isaiah*, (New York and London: T&T Clark, 2006).

Green Joel B., *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997).

Greenberg Moshe, *Ezekiel 21-37* (Anchor Bible 22A; New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1997).

Greenhill William, *Ezekiel* (GSC, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995).

Grossfeld Bernard, *Targum Onkelos* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988).

Hagen Joost L., "No Longer Slavonic Only: 2 Enoch Attested in Coptic from Nubia", in Andrei Orlov, Gabrielle Boccaccini, (eds.), *New Perspectives on Second Enoch: No more Slavonic Only* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

Hals Ronald M., *The Forms of The Old Testament Literature: Ezekiel* (The Forms of The Old Testament Literature XIX; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

Hamilton Victor, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17* (NICOT, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990).

Harrelson Walter J., *Hebrew Bible: History of Interpretation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004).

Herbert A. S., *The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible: The Book of the Prophet: Isaiah 1-39* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

Hoehner Harold W., "Between the Testaments", in Frank E. Gaebelien, (gen. ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* vol.1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 192.

Holub Robert C., *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Methuen, 1984).

Hummel Horace D., *Ezekiel 21-48* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

Jacob Edmond, *Theology of the Old Testament* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1958).

Jensen Hans J.L., "The Bible is also a Myth: Levi-Strauss, Girard, and the Story of Joseph", Michigan State University, *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture*, 14 (2007), 200.

Jensen Irving L., *Isaiah & Jeremiah: A Self-Study Guide*, (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1968).

Jobling J'Annine, "Falling in love again: interpreting transgression and transgressive interpretations of Genesis 2-3" *Critical Quarterly* 47/3 (2005), 79-89.

Joines Karen Randolph, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament* (Haddonfield: Haddonfield House, 1974).

Jones Kenneth R., *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden, Boston: Brill: 2011).

Johnson M.D., "Life of Adam and Eve: A New Translation and Introduction," in James Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. 2 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 188.

- Jungerov P.A., *Introduction into the Old Testament* (Moscow: Holy Orthodox Mission, 1914, reprint 1999).
- Kalimi, Isaac, “Targumic and Midrashic Exegesis in Contradiction to the Peshat of Biblical Text,” in Kalimi Isaac and Peter J. Haas, (eds.), *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (London: T&T Clark, 2006).
- Lee Witness, *Life-Study: Genesis, Messages 18-36 v. 2* (Anaheim: Living Stream Ministry, 1997).
- Kamesar Adam (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 71.
- Knibb Michael A., “Language, Translation, Versions, and Text of the Apocrypha,” in J.W. Rogerson, Judith M. Lieu, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 159-184.
- _____, *Essays on the Book of Enoch and Other Early Jewish Texts and Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).
- Kolarcik Michael, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6: A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation* (Roma: Pontifici Instituti Biblici de Urbe, 1990).
- Korpel Marjo C.A. & Johannes C. de Moor, *Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning* (Second Enlarged Edition; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015).
- Kugel James, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it Was at The Start of the Common Era* (London: Harvard University Press, 1998).
- Kulik Alexander, *3Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010).
- Levin Christoph, “Genesis 2-3: A Case of Inner-Biblical Interpretation,” in Nathan MacDonald, Mark W. Elliot, Grant Macaskill (eds.), *Genesis and Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2012).
- Levison John, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988).
- _____, *Texts in Transition: The Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta: SBL, 2000).
- Lichtenberger H., “Biblische Figuren im Slavischen Henoch Buch” in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and Cognate Literature* (eds. H. Lichtenberger and u. Mittman-Rischert; Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook, 2008; Berlin 2009), 303-336.
- Liddell Henry George, Robert Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1925).

- Lieb M., E. Mason, J. Roberts, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Reception History of the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- Luc A., "Arum", in T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: a Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 539.
- Lundström Steven, "Chaos and Creation: Hermann Gunkel between Establishing the "History of Religions School," Acknowledging Assyriology and Defending the Faith" in JoAnn Scurlock and Richard H. Beal (eds.), *Creation and Chaos: A Reconsideration of Hermann Gunkel's Chaostkampf Hypothesis* (Eisenbrauns, 2013), 147-171.
- Lurker Manfred, *Wörterbuch Biblischer Bilder und Symbole* (München: Kösel, 1987).
- Luttikhuisen Gerard P., (ed.), *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* vol. II (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1999).
- _____ (ed.), *The Creation of Man and Woman: Interpretations of Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).
- Mackay John L., *Isaiah 1-39* vol. 1 (EPSC, Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2008).
- MacDonald Nathan, Mark W. Elliot, Grant Macaskill, *Genesis and Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).
- Marston Justin, "Jewish Understanding of Genesis from 1 to 3," *Science and Christian Belief*, 12/ 2 (2013), 127-150.
- Martinek Manuela, *Wie die Schlange zum Teufel Wurde: Die Symbolik in der Paradiesgeschichte von der Hebraischen Bibel bis zum Koran* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1996).
- Martinez Florentino Garcia, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1999).
- Mason Steve and Robert A. Kraft, "Josephus on Canon and Scriptures," in Magne Sæbø, Louis Feldman (eds.), *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998).
- McKinion Steven A., (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Isaiah 1-39* vol. X (Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 2004).
- McNamara Martin, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* vol. 1A (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992).
- Mettinger, Tryggve N. D. *The Eden Narrative: A Literary and Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 2-3.* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007).
- Metzger Bruce and Michael D. Coogan (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to Ideas & Issues of the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

- Motyer J. Alec, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1993).
- Muraoka T., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain-Paris-Walpole: Peeters, 2009).
- Najman Hindy, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003).
- Neusner J., *Judaism's Story of Creation: Scripture, Halakhah, Aggadah*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004).
- Nielsburg George W. E., *Jewish Literature between Bible and the Mishnah second edition* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).
- Nichols Steve, *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (Chicago: Charles & Morfill, 2006).
- Nir Rivka, "The Aromatic Fragrances of Paradise in GLAE," *Novum Testamentum*, XLVI, 1, 2004, 24-25.
- Noort Ed, "Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible" in Gerard Luttikhuisen (ed.), *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* vol. II (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1999), 21-36.
- Orlov Andrei, "Without Measure and Without Analogy: The Tradition of the Divine Body in 2 (Slavonic) Enoch," in *JJS* 46 (2005), 224-244.
- _____ "Praxis of the Voice: The Divine Name Traditions in the Apocalypse of Abraham", *JBL* 127 (2008), 53-70.
- _____ "The Pteromorphic Angelology of the Apocalypse of Abraham," *CBQ* 71 (2009), 830-842.
- _____ "The Watchers of Satanail: Fallen Angels Traditions," in Andrei A. Orlov, *Dark Mirrors: Azazel and Satanail in Early Jewish Demonology* (Albany: The State University of New York, 2011), 85-107.
- Oswalt John N., *Isaiah* (NIVAC, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).
- Oswalt John N., *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).
- Ouro Roberto, "Similarities and Differences Between The Old Testament And The Ancient Near Eastern Texts", *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 49, 5-32.
- Page T.E. (ed.), *Philo: Supplement I* (London: William Heinemann LTD., 1951).
- Pagels Elaine, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).
- _____ *Adam, Eve and the Serpent* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).
- _____ *The Origin of Satan in Christian Tradition* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).

Patmore Hector, "Adam, Satan and the King of Tyre: The Interpretation of Ezekiel 28:11-19 in Late Antiquity", in David Golinkin, Alberdina Houtman, Marcel Poorthuis, Joshua Schwartz, Freek van der Steen, *Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, vol. 20, (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 6.

_____, *Adam, Satan and the King of Tyre: The Interpretation of Ezekiel 28:11-19 in Late Antiquity*, (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012).

Parpola Simo, "The Assyrian Tree of Life: Tracing the Origins of Jewish Monotheism and Greek Philosophy," *JNES* 52(1993), 192-195.

Peake Arthur, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX* vol.1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928).

Pfisterer Darr Katheryn, "The Book of Ezekiel" in Leander Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. VI (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001),

Philonenko-Sayar Belkis and Marc Philonenko, „Die Apokalypse Abrahams,“ in W.G. Kümmel (ed.), *Jüdische Schriften aus Hellenistischen-Römischer Zeit* Band V (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshause, 1992).

Pohlmann Karl Friedrich, *Der Prophet Hesekiel / Ezechiel Kapitel 20-48* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001).

Reed Annette Yoshiko, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of the Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Reuling, Hanneke. *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16-21. Jewish and Christian perspectives series*, v. 10. (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

Reyburn William D., and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Genesis* (New York: UBS, 1997).

Ricoeur Paul, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

Robbins G.A., *Genesis 1-3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden* (Lewiston / Queenstown: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988).

Rogerson J.W. and J.N. Judith (eds.), *Oxford Handbook for Biblical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

_____, "Myth" in R.J. Coggins and J.L. Houlden, *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (London: SCM Press, Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 205-208.

Rosenberg A.J., *Genesis*, vol. 1 (New York: The Judaica Press, 1993).

Rubinkiewicz R., "Apocalypse of Abraham," in J.H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. II, (New York: Peabody 2009 [reprint 1983]).

Runia D.T., "How to Read Philo," Idem, *Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990).

_____ “Philo, Alexandrian, and Jew,” in Idem, *Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990).

_____ *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993).

_____ *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

Russell Jeffrey Burton, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987).

_____ *The Devil: Perception of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977).

Sacchi Paolo, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History* (Sheffield: Sheffield academic Press, 1990).

Sawyer John F. A., *the Daily Bible Studies Series: Isaiah* vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

Schenck Kenneth, *A Brief Guide to Philo* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).

Segal Michael, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007).

Schroeder Joy A., “Revelation 12: Female Figures and Figures of Evil,” *Word & World* XV/2 (1995), 175-181.

Signer Michael A., “How the Bible Has Been Interpreted in Jewish Tradition”, in *The New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes* vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 65-82.

Sesboue Bernard, “The Theological Rationalization of Original Sin”, in Christophe Bourdeux and Christoph Theobald (eds.), *Original Sin: A Code of Fallibility* (London: SCM Press, 2004), 243-268.

Schachter Lifsa Block, “The Garden of Eden as God’s First Sanctuary”, *JBQ*, 41 (2013), 73-77.

Scharbert J., *Die Neue Echter Bibel: Kommentar zum Alten Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung: Genesis 1-11* (Stuttgart: Katholische Bibelanstalt, 1980).

Schmid Konrad, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2-3 and its early Reception”, in Konrad Schmid and Christoph Riedweg (eds.), *Beyond Eden* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 1-27.

Schiffman Lawrence H., *Understanding Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (Jersey City: KTAV Publishing House, 2003).

Scott R.B.Y., ‘The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39, *The Interpreter’s Bible*, v.5 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956).

- Scott James M., *Geography in Early Judaism and Christianity: The Book of Jubilees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Schröder Bernd, *Die Väterlichen Gesetze* (Tübingen: J.C.B.Mohr/Paul Siebeck), 1996.
- Schürer Emil, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* vol. III., Revised edition (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987).
- Seevers Boyd V., "Arom" in Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: a Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 532-533.
- Seitz Christopher R., *Isaiah 1-39*, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1993).
- Siebert Folker, "Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic Style," in Magne Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible. Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation: Antiquity* vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 130-198.
- Skarsaune Oskar, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: IVP Academics, 2002).
- Smith Gary V., *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture, Isaiah 1-39*, vol. 15a (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2007).
- Spieckermann Hermann, "Is God's Creation Good? From Hesiodus to Ben Sira," in Konrad Schmid and Christoph Riedweg (eds.), *Beyond Eden* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).
- Soulen Richard N., *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Guildford, London: Lutterworth Press, 1977).
- Spronk Klaas, "Down with Hele! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa. 14:12," in M. Dietrich, I. Kottsieper (eds.), "*Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf*": *Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient* (Fs O. Loretz; AOAT 250), Münster 1998, 717-726.
- Stallman R.C., "Nachash" in T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: a Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 84.
- Stone Michael E., *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984).
- _____ *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (SBL Early Judaism and its Literature 3; Atlanta: SBL, 1992).
- Stevenson Kenneth and Michael Glerup (eds.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Ezekiel and Daniel* vol. XIII (Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 2008).
- Stordalen T., *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and symbolism of the Eden garden in biblical Hebrew literature* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000).

- Stratton Beverly J., *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).
- Sweeney Martin A., *Isaiah 1-39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).
- Taylor Leslie John, *Extra Canicals: The Holy Apocrypha* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2004).
- Thiselton Anthony C., *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2009).
- Troyer Dwight O., *Genesis 1-2-3: Creation: There and Now* (New York: Word to the Nations, 2007).
- Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Eden narrative: a literary and Religio-historical study of Genesis 2-3* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007).
- Tuell Steven, *Ezekiel* (NIVBC, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009).
- Tull Patricia K., *Isaiah 1-39* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2010).
- Thullen Sarah Ehrlich, “Knowledge, Good or Evil in the History of Interpretation? An Exploration of Ambivalence in Genesis 2-3 in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Interpretation” (Thesis Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2008).
- Van der Horst Pieter W., *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).
- VanderKam James C., *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).
- _____ *The Book of Jubilees* vol. 511, *Scriptores Aethiopici* tomus 88 (CSCO, UCA and UCL, Lovanii: In Aedibus E. Peeters, 1989).
- Van der Toorn Karel, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst, E.J. Brill (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden, New York, Koln: Brill, 1995).
- Vanhoozer Kevin J. (gen. ed.), *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (SPCK, Baker Academic, 2005).
- Van Ruiten J. T. A. G. M., “The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in Jubilees 5:1-19,” in Matthias Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange (eds.), *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 57-73.
- _____ *Primeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the book of Jubilees* (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 2000).
- _____ *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).
- _____ “The Garden of Eden and Jubilees 3:1-31”, in *Tijdschrift Voor Filosofie en Theologie* 57 (1996), 305-317.
- Vawter Bruce, Leslie J. Hoppe, *Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991).
- Vinson Richard B., *Luke* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2008).

Voicu J. (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Apocrypha* vol. XV (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010).

Von Dehsen Christian and Scott L. Harris (eds.), *Philosophers and Religious Leaders: An Encyclopedia of People Who Changed the World* (Phoenix: The Oryx Press, 1999).

Von Rad Gerhard, *Genesis*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961).

Waltke Bruce K., *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000).

Walton John H., Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Intervarsity Press, 2000).

_____ “Creation in Genesis 1:1-2:3 and the ANE: Order out of Disorder after Chaoskampf,” *CTJ* 43 (2008): 60-63.

_____ *The Lost World Of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015).

Watts John D. W., *Isaiah 1-33* (WBC, Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1985).

Weavers John W., *New Century Bible: Ezekiel* (London: Nelson, 1969).

Westermann Claus, *Genesis 1-11*(BK; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1976).

Widyapranawa S.H, *Isaiah 1-39: The Lord is Savior Faith in National Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 88.

Williamson Ronald, *Jews in the Hellenistic World* vol. 1, part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Winston David, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* vol. 43 (The Anchor Bible; New York: Doubleday, 1979).

_____ *The Anchor Bible: The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979).

Whybray R.N., “Genesis” in John Barton and John Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Zemler-Cizewski Wanda, “The apocryphal Life of Adam and Eve: Recent Scholarly Work,” *ATR* 86 (2004), 671-677.

Zevit Ziony, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?* (New Heaven and Landon: Yale University Press, 2013).

Zimmerli Walter, *A Commentary on the Book Of the Prophet Ezekiel*, (Michigan: Fortress Press, 1979).

SAMENVATTING

De beschrijving en beschouwing van de vroege geschiedenis van de interpretatie van Genesis 3 werpt een helder licht op de oorsprong van het idee dat de slang in de Tuin van Eden gelijkgesteld moet worden aan satan. Deze interpretatie, die nog steeds gehanteerd wordt door onder andere de meeste Russische lezers met een orthodoxe of baptistenachtergrond, komt niet overeen met de oorspronkelijke betekenis van de Hebreeuwse tekst. Dit wordt voor het eerst duidelijk in Joodse geschriften in de tweede eeuw v. Chr. Ook werd aangetoond dat de relatie van Genesis 3 met Jesaja 14:14b-24 en Ezechiël 28:11-19, waar vaak vanuit wordt gegaan om de ‘satanische’ interpretatie te ondersteunen, deel uitmaakt van een latere uitlegtraditie. Het is zelfs zo dat deze twee profetische teksten maar weinig te zeggen hebben over het incident zelf in de Tuin van Eden. Op basis van de bedoelingen van de oorspronkelijke auteurs, kunnen deze teksten niet worden geïnterpreteerd in het licht van een satanische aanwezigheid in de Tuin van Eden, of een satanische val uit de hemel. Het tegenovergestelde is zelfs waar, de ‘satanische’ interpretatie werd in de loop der tijd geleidelijk aan in deze twee teksten gelezen (vanaf het eind van de eerste eeuw n. Chr.) om ze geschikt te maken voor een Grieks georiënteerde, dualistische interpretatie.

Tijdens de inleiding in het eerste hoofdstuk wordt gesteld dat een groot deel van het hedendaagse conservatieve onderzoek ertoe neigt de eerste zonde en de rol van de duivel voornamelijk te beschrijven in theologische termen, in plaats van in hermeneutische termen en dat de oorspronkelijke teksten zelden uitsluitend beschouwd worden binnen hun literaire context. Dit onderzoek wil deze onbalans daarom belichten door de verschillende teksten uit het Oude Testament, de Tweede Tempel-periode en het Nieuwe testament te onderzoeken waarvan verondersteld wordt dat ze een indirecte (Jes. 14:4b-21, Ez. 28:11-19, Wijs. 2:24, Luk. 10:18, Op. 12:9) of directe interpretatie bevatten van het verhaal in Genesis 3, waarbij de vragen over de relatie met Genesis 3 worden bewaard voor later. Pas na het nauwkeurig bestuderen van deze teksten worden de mogelijke verbanden, interpretaties en relaties met Genesis 3 besproken.

Na het inleidende eerste hoofdstuk, wordt in hoofdstuk twee getracht aan te tonen dat Genesis 3:15 niets te maken heeft met satan of de duivel. Deze gelijkstelling van de slang aan de duivel is pas enkele eeuwen later toegevoegd aan het verhaal van Genesis, hoogstwaarschijnlijk in de tijd van de vroege Joods-Alexandrijnse diaspora, met als doel het vestigen van een sterke Platoons-dualistische visie op God/Anti-God om het bestaan van het kwaad in de wereld te verklaren en rechtvaardigen.

In het tweede deel van hoofdstuk twee blijkt dat er onvoldoende basis is om Jesaja 14:4b-23 en Ezechiël 28:11-19 te gebruiken om de relevante verschijnselen in Genesis 3 te verklaren. Verder bevatten het Oude en Nieuwe Testament geen teksten die licht kunnen werpen op wat er in de Tuin van Eden gebeurd is, behalve wat er in Genesis 3 staat.

De literatuur uit de intertestamentaire of zogeheten Tweede Tempel-periode, die vaak naar de passage in Genesis 3 verwijst of deze aanhaalt, wordt behandeld in hoofdstuk 3. Daarin wordt de conclusie getrokken dat deze verzameling literatuur verdeeld moet worden in een vroeger en een later deel. De documenten die zijn geschreven vòòr de eerste eeuw n. Chr. beschrijven de slang over het algemeen op dezelfde manier als wordt gedaan in het verhaal in Genesis, terwijl de documenten die na de eerste eeuw n. Chr. zijn geschreven beginnen om de latere Joodse en christelijke uitlegtradities te interpoleren, waarin de slang langzaam verandert in satan. Deze transformatie zet zich voort, geholpen door een dualistische manier van redeneren rond de tijd van de vroege Kerkvaders, totdat de slang algemeen werd gezien als satan zelf.

In hoofdstuk vier wordt de conclusie getrokken dat Lucas 10:18 en Openbaring 12:9, die in de geschiedenis van de interpretatie vaak worden gerelateerd aan Genesis 3, niet in het licht van Genesis 3 gelezen moeten worden. Deze vaststelling ondersteunt de gedachte van een geleidelijk proces binnen de vroege christelijke gemeenschap die een theologisch systeem ontwikkelde dat onder meer een beeld van satan omvatte. Ik stel dat de beginnende tendens om de slang als satan te zien, wat hoogstwaarschijnlijk een product is van de Joods-Alexandrijnse diaspora, mogelijk tot bloei kwam binnen christelijke gemeenschappen nadat de boeken van het Nieuwe Testament waren voltooid.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Lagunov Sergei Vladimirovich was born on December 1, 1974, in Yekaterinburg, Ural region, Russia.

He is married since 2003 with Khristina. They have one daughter, Yulia.

1991 – graduated from school № 37, Yekaterinburg.

1996-2001 – Youth Leader at the Mayskiy Baptist Church, Russia, North Caucasus region.

2001-2007 – Bachelor Theology at the North Caucasus Biblical Institute.

2006-2007 – Assistant teacher Old Testament at North Caucasus Biblical Institute.

2007-2010 – Master Theology at the International Baptist Theological Seminary of Prague, Czech Republic.

2010-2012 – Teacher Old Testament at North Caucasus Biblical Institute.

2012-2019 – PhD student of Protestant Theological University, the Netherlands.

2015-2018 – Teacher Old Testament at Saint-Petersburg Christian University.

2018 – Vice-Rector's Deputy for Master Programs at Saint-Petersburg Christian University.