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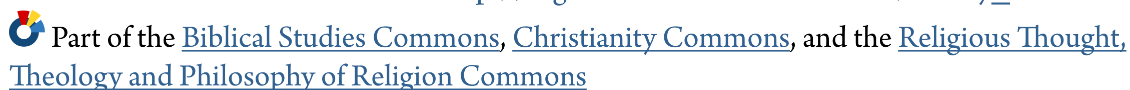
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FROM PATRIARCH TO PILGRIM:

The Development of the Biblical Figure of Abraham and its Contribution to the Christian Metaphor of Spiritual Pilgrimage

Daniel John Estes

Clare Hall

A Thesis Submitted to the University of Cambridge for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 1988

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PREFACE

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I am thankful to my wife, Carol, and to our children, Jonathan, Christiana and Joel, for their cheerful encouragement during the challenges of my doctoral program. They more than all have shared the pressures of my work and have had to sacrifice most for its completion. My mother, Katherine Estes, and my wife's parents, Leslie and Alice Towle, have been continually supportive, even though this project required a lengthy period of separation.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my father, Rev Ernest Estes, a stalwart pilgrim who taught me by his words and showed me by his life the Christian walk. He has entered already the City for which he looked. May this thesis be a small token of my love and thankfulness for him.

ABBREVIATIONS

For biblical, Jewish and patristic references standard abbreviations have been employed. In addition, the following abbreviations are used in the text of the thesis. Full bibliographic information may be found at the end of the study.

A	Aquila
BDB	*A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ed. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs.
BHS	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
BTal	*The Babylonian Talmud*
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary*
DB	*Dictionnaire de la Bible*
DBS	*Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*
GKC	*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JTal	*Le Talmud de Jérusalem*
KJV	King James Version
LAB	Pseudo-Philo. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.
LXX	Septuagint
MM	*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*. Ed. James Hope Moulton and George Milligan.
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
NIDNTT	*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*

NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
OTP	*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Ed. James H. Charlesworth.
Ps-Philo	Pseudo-Philo
RAC	*Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*
RSV	Revised Standard Version
Σ	Symmachus
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*
TestAbr	Testament of Abraham
TestDan	Testament of Dan
TestJacob	Testament of Jacob
TestLevi	Testament of Levi
THAT	*Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
UBS	*The Greek New Testament*. Ed. Kurt Aland, et al.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Concept of Pilgrimage

1.11 Pilgrimage as a Literary Theme

The pilgrimage theme is an image which in various forms has pervaded the literature of diverse cultures.[1] The frequent employment of the motif of pilgrimage has led to its use in three primary spheres of reference.[2] The literal use speaks of a "journey to a shrine or sacred place as an act of religious devotion."[3] Allegorically, "life can be viewed as a pilgrimage, that is, as a journey fraught with obstacles and difficulties through this world to the world beyond." The concept of spiritual pilgrimage denotes "an essentially interior journey toward some goal or ideal." These three uses have often been employed in conjunction with one another, as in The Odyssey and in The Divine Comedy, to represent intellectual or spiritual progress by the literary vehicle of a spatial journey.[4]

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1 Pilgrimage is part of a cluster of closely related figures. It is in particular related to the quest theme (cf. Frye, Fables of Identity 17) and the image of the way (cf. Schnapper, The Inward Odyssey 17). Though these evaluations probably overstate the evidence by ascribing to the motifs preeminent status, it is nontheless true that both the quest and the way figure prominently in much imaginative and religious literature.

2 The three distinctions here cited are defined by Olin, "The Idea of Pilgrimage in the Experience of Ignatius Loyola" 387-388.

3 This literal aspect is traced thoroughly in the patristic period by Kötting, Peregrinatio Religiosa. Sauser, "Pilgrimage" 26-28 discusses pilgrimage as a religious journey, but links it with the theological concept of the Church as a pilgrim community.

4 Navone, Towards a Theology of Story 69ff. illustrates this principle in the exodus narrative and in Luke-Acts. From the

The wide diffusion of the metaphor of the pilgrim, or more generally, of the human journey, has been reasonably attributed by Marcel to the phenomenological inevitability of viewing life in temporal and spatial terms.[5] Pilgrimage, then, is prompted by "a common response to crisis which implies the refusal to accept the present condition of confusion and suffering as final; it implies the conviction that there is a way of transcending this condition, despite all the evidence to the contrary."[6] The individual looks beyond his present circumstances to a desirable goal, perhaps only vaguely conceived,[7] which is temporally future and often spatially remote. Forsaking the customary structures of his culture, the pilgrim makes his goal the axis of his life and considers himself a traveller to that end.[8]

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perspective of the study of religious pilgrimage, Morinis, "Pilgrimage: The Human Quest" 282 reasons: "Pilgrimage as event and pilgrimage as metaphor cannot be clearly distinguished. The essence of questing for the sacred would be desiccated by any definition which excluded phenomena which have often been called 'pilgrimage', e.g. the journey of life itself."

5 He reasons plausibly in Homo Viator 8: "Nous reporter en arrière, c'est inévitablement regarder ce qui se presente comme un chemin parcouru, c'est évoquer ceux qui nous ont accompagnés, c'est-à-dire qui ont fait avec nous telle ou telle partie du voyage. L'idée de voyage, qui n'est pas habituellement considérée comme offrant une valeur ou une portée specifiquement philosophique, présente cependant l'inestimable avantage de rassembler en soi des déterminations qui appartiennent à la fois au temps et à l'espace; et il vaudrait la peine de rechercher comment s'opère en elle une semblable synthèse."

6 Navone, op. cit. 128. He considers this aspect of response to crisis as a fundamental characteristic of representations of the pilgrimage archetype.

7 Henry, New Directions in New Testament Study 250. As Roppen and Sommer, Strangers and Pilgrims 18 note, the pilgrim image is often linked with the idea of the city, depicting either the society to be rejected or the future order to be pursued. In the biblical portrayal of Abraham, both elements are in view, as he leaves Mesopotamia to be a sojourner in search of the city of God.

8 Marcel, Homo Viator 202. Cf. Morinis, op. cit. 282, who states that "a significant feature lending form and content to pilgrimage is its counterpointing everyday life as Other."

1.12 Pilgrimage as a Christian Theme

It is, therefore, not surprising that the pilgrimage theme has been appropriated frequently in Christian literature. Building upon the overlapping Old Testament motifs of the patriarchal sojourning, the enslavement of Israel in Egypt, the exodus, the Jewish dispersion, and the promised land,[9] the early Christian writers developed the concept of the church as "a migrating people, journeying towards its heavenly home."[10]

Western literature, which is manifestly deeply influenced by biblical themes and images,[11] has developed the socio-political concept of the Latin concept of peregrinus,[12] which entered with little linguistic alteration into most European languages,[13] into a spectrum of connotations, including the idea of pilgrimage to speak of the progress of the individual through life,[14] often syn-

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9 These constituent motifs which are circumscribed by the pilgrim image are noted by Stählin, TDNT 5:31 and Meyers and Strange, Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity 164-165.

10 Barr, "The Bible as a Political Document" 282 shows that by linking the church with the image of the migrating nation, one strand of the biblical tradition was employed. Other images such as the theocratic nation, the dualism between human and divine authority, the prophetic insistence on social righteousness, the eschatological new world, and liberation provided additional options which were used to varying degrees in Christian thought.

11 Cf. Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative 226-227: "The Bible, as the great and inviolable compendium of Christian sacred myth, is a store house for narrative artists who wish to reinforce their stories with traditionally meaningful materials, or who wish to borrow patterns for the articulation of their narratives."

12 Oxford Latin Dictionary 1335 defines peregrinus as "1. A foreigner, alien. 2. One of a class of free men under Roman rule, not having Roman citizenship... 3. A soldier seconded from a legion in the provinces for special police work at Rome in the 2nd century A.D. and later." Related words, such as peregrinatio, denote a distinct socio-political reference. It is this term which is found in the Vulgate of Gen 23:4; Heb 11:13 and 1 Pt 2:11.

13 For example, Middle English pelegrim, Old French pelegrin, Italian pellegrino, Spanish peregrino, French pèlerin, Old High German piligrim; cf. The Oxford English Dictionary 7:858.

14 Ibid. 7:859. Thus, pilgrimage can refer to "a journey made to some sacred place, as an act of religious devotion" and

thesizing biblical and classical motifs. In a less formal literary context, the effect of the pilgrim image can be traced through the literature of pietism up to contemporary times.[15]

The Christian image of pilgrimage encompasses several implications. At its root is a critical awareness of the world and of the self which produces a spirit of detachment from one's society. This spirit of detachment, or alienation, is linked with the concept of a search for a condition of belonging. The Christian pilgrim, then, pursues that which cannot be attained in his present world, but which he believes is ultimately realizable.

1.2 Review of Literature on Abraham

A survey of recent studies on Abraham manifests a wide range of emphases.[16] Several works have focused on the question of the historicity of the patriarch. De Vaux[17] argues that the abundant documents of the early second millennium B.C.E., the time of the patriarchs purported by the chronology of the Hebrew text of Genesis, have frequent parallels with biblical personal names, place names, sociological phenomena, customs and laws. He concludes,

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"the course of mortal life figured as a journey ... esp. as a journey to a future state of rest or blessedness" as well as to refer to specific historical movements.

15 This progression is traced by Kahle, "Pilgerschaft und Wallfahrt in der Geschichte evangelischer Frömmigkeit" 314-332. Frequent use of the pilgrim image may be noted in Protestant hymnody in Britain and the United States, which probably draws most directly from renderings of Heb 11:13 such as those of Tyndale, "straungers and pilgrems" and Wyclif, "pilgrymes and herborid men" and especially the Authorized Version.

16 In addition to the specific studies noted below, there are excellent general articles on Abraham in the biblical, Jewish and Christian literature in RAC 1:18-27; TRE 2:364-387; DB 1:74-82; and DBS 1:8-28. A bibliography of recent studies on various aspects of the Abrahamic narratives is collected by De Vries, "A Review of Recent Research in the Tradition History of the Pentateuch" 481-485. Cf. also his general bibliography on Genesis in 471-479.

17 "Les Patriarches Hébreux et l'Histoire."

therefore, that it is necessary to maintain a date for Abraham in the nineteenth century B.C.E., and that the patriarchs are solidly rooted in history. This assessment is strongly supported by the collection of essays edited by Millard and Wiseman,[18] but Dever tempers his similar conclusion with the following caveat: "it is well to observe that our preference for the Middle Bronze Age for patriarchal backgrounds is due in part to the paucity of evidence at present for the Late Bronze Age. That may be largely the result of the accidents of excavation and could change overnight with new discoveries."[19] Worschech also looks at parallels with the ancient Near Eastern environment, but from a sociological viewpoint.[20]

By way of contrast, Thompson[21] argues that the historicity of Abraham is neither proven nor implied in the biblical narratives. He discounts the alleged parallels from Mari, Nuzi and Ur-III, and claims that because the intentions of the biblical traditions are not historical, but sociological, political and religious, the quest for the historical Abraham is a fruitless endeavor. This assessment is seconded by Van Seters,[22] who regards Abraham's migration as fitting best into the sixth century milieu. He regards the narratives of Abraham as a combination of originally independent stories which were passed down by oral tradition and compiled in exilic and post-exilic times in response to the needs of the late exilic community.

Several studies have addressed the issue of the composi-

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18 Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives.
19 "The Patriarchal Traditions" 120.
20 Abraham: Eine sozialgeschichtliche Studie.
21 The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives.
22 Abraham in History and Tradition.

tion and transmission of the texts about Abraham. Blum's massive work[23] discusses the composition of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis 12-50 in terms of tradition history. Kilian[24] analyzes J and E in Genesis 12-25 and then proposes a process of composition which produced the extant text. Hunter focuses on J and regards it as exilic. He suggests that it was written to the exiles as "a challenge which might strengthen their faith and inspire them to look forward to the restoration of the land, the people and the worship which had come to be the definitive mark of being a Jew."[25]

Keller[26] views the Abrahamic traditions from the standpoint of tradition criticism, by which the redactors identified the God of Abraham with their own concepts of God. Vesco studies the stages of the Old Testament's reflections on Abraham, and endeavors to explain the reinterpretation by historical and theological factors.[27] Clements' monograph[28] is a traditio-historical investigation of the Abrahamic Covemant. His thesis that the Abrahamic Covenant was given renewed emphasis during the exilic period because of the collapse of the Davidic state is questioned by Wagner.[29] Zimmerli traces the history of the Abraham traditions, and he concludes that the narratives were shaped by "a deep reflection of Israel who have handed down the history of Abraham while reflecting by its tradition her own foundations."[30]

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23 Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte.
24 Die vorpriesterlichen Abrahamsüberlieferungen.
25 "Father Abraham" 16-17.
26 "Grundsatzliches zur Auslegung der Abraham-Überlieferung in der Genesis."
27 "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures."
28 Abraham and David.
29 "Abraham and David?"
30 "Abraham" 60.

The use of the Abrahamic narratives by later writers is the subject of several studies. Schmitz[31] presents a general survey of references to Abraham in the early Jewish writings, the New Testament, and Christian literature up to Barnabas. Vermes[32] sets forth the eleventh century C.E. presentation of Abraham in Sefer ha-Yashar and then traces the history of several of its major themes in Jewish literature. Sandmel[33] employs Philo's use of the figure of Abraham as a test case to illustrate his contrasts with other Jewish portrayals. He concludes that Philo's Abraham has very little connection with the Abraham of earlier Hellenistic Jews. Knox[34] looks at Jewish depictions of the way in which Abraham came to be called by God. He argues that whereas Diaspora Judaism emphasized Abraham's search for God, Palestinian Judaism eliminated the aspect of Abraham's search and focused on his predestination by God's grace, possibly reflecting an aversion to proselytizing. Dahl[35] considers the use of Abraham in Luke-Acts, and shows that Luke did not reinterpret the patriarch to the extent of other New Testament writers. However, he does set the historical data within his own theological framework and claims that God's promises to Abraham were fulfilled in Christ. Ward[36] compiles the references to Abraham in the early Christian literature with the specific purpose of comparing the Christian depiction of Abraham with that of the Testament of Abraham. The use of the figure of Abraham in the Muslim tradition is traced by Cragg.[37]

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31 "Abraham im Spätjudentum und im Urchristentum."
32 Scripture and Tradition in Judaism.
33 "Philo's Place in Judaism."
34 "Abraham and the Quest for God."
35 "The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts."
36 "Abraham Traditions in Early Christianity."
37 The Privilege of Man 51-75.

The theological significance of Abraham is studied by Jacob,[38] who sees the key relationship between Abraham and the nation of Israel in his role as father. In the New Testament he becomes the pattern for faith in and obedience to God. Muilenburg[39] reasons that the Church and synagogue find their ultimate historical roots in Abraham. Consequently, their mission is to call the nations to worship the preeminent sovereignty of God rather than their national interests. Wansbrough regards the central core of the Abraham stories as the patriarch's lack of knowledge of God's fulfillment of the promises He had made. Therefore, he concludes that "the importance of Abraham is neither ethnic nor political, but religious, as our father of faith."[40] Similarly, Magonet views the Abrahamic narratives structurally and theologically to determine contemporary implications for a relationship with God. Abraham is represented as "the first person to try to mould his life so as to fulfill the will of the One God."[41]

The collection of essays edited by Bogaert[42] comprises five studies analyzing the call of Abraham, Abraham in Pseudo-Philo, Gen 18:22-23, the sacrifice of Isaac, and Abraham in the Pauline writings. Martin-Achard[43] focuses in general terms on three separate issues: the archeological evidence paralleling the Abrahamic traditions, the Old Testament traditions about Abraham, and the traditions about Abraham in the writings of early Judaism, the New Testament and the Koran. Moubarac[44] details the

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38 "Abraham et sa signification pour la foi chrétienne."
39 "Abraham and the Nations."
40 "Abraham Our Father" 664.
41 "Abraham and God" 161.
42 Abraham dans la Bible et dans la Tradition Juive.
43 Actualité d'Abraham.
44 "Abraham <Ami de Dieu> dans la Bible et dans le Coran."

use of the motif of Abraham the friend of God in the Bible and in the Koran.

It is evident, then, that the figure of Abraham has been analyzed from a number of perspectives, and recent investigations have illuminated a range of important historical, sociological, compositional, redactional and theological questions. To be sure, some studies have touched upon areas which are relevant to the subject at hand, for example, Knox's discussion of the call of Abraham in Jewish literature, Clements' analysis of the Abrahamic Covenant in the time of the exile, and Martin-Achard's compilation of Abrahamic traditions in Judaism. Vermes, Sandmel and Moubarac have approached the issue of Abraham as a literary figure which influenced later Jewish and Muslim conceptions, but their particular interests do not include the relationship of Abraham to the theme of spiritual pilgrimage. This is a surprising omission in the scholarly corpus which merits specific consideration.

Therefore, the present study is both distinctive from and integrated with previous investigations of Abraham. It does not endeavor to detail the compositional history leading to the extant text, as has been done by Blum and Kilian, and the historicity of Abraham, as treated by de Vaux, Wiseman, Dever, Thompson and Van Seters, is not its focus. Instead, in a manner analogous to the traditio-historical studies of Keller, Vesco, Clements and Zimmerli, the figure of Abraham is viewed with respect to subsequent reinterpretations.

The scope of the investigation is extensive, in that it surveys the Old Testament, the early Jewish literature and the early Christian literature, a range paralleled only by Martin-Achard, although other studies have indeed dealt with limited por-

tions of the relevant corpus of reinterpretation. However, it is also intensive, for its specific interest is the literary phenomenon of the development of the figure of Abraham as it is related to the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

This study lies at the neglected intersection of four major paths of investigation. First, as has been seen, recent studies of Abraham have dealt with a number of historical, sociological and theological issues. However, little detailed analysis can be found with reference to the use of Abraham as a literary figure for spiritual pilgrimage. Second, studies of Heb 11:8-16 have usually mentioned the background to the pilgrim language in Gen 23:4; Ps 39:12(13); 1 Chr 29:15 and other minor passages in the Old Testament, and thorough comparison with the parallel Philonic passages has been made by several scholars.[45] Nevertheless, the total literary background for Heb 11:8-16 in the Old Testament, the intertestamental literature and the early rabbinic literature has not been thoroughly examined.[46] Third, the גור word group has

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45 Cf. the standard commentary treatments of Heb 11:8-16 and the following useful studies: Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews;" Braun, "Das Himmlische Vaterland bei Philo und im Hebräerbrief;" Browne, *We Have A Great High Priest*; Buchanan, "The Present State of Scholarship on Hebrews;" Filson, *'Yesterday': A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13*; Hofius, *Katapausis: Die Vorstellung von endzeitlichen Ruheort im Hebräerbrief*; Johnsson, "The Pilgrimage Motif in the Book of Hebrews;" Käsemann, *Das wandernde Gottesvolk*; Muntingh, "The City Which Has Foundations;" Spicq, *Vie Chrétienne et Pérégrination selon le Nouveau Testament*; Swetnam, *Jesus and Isaac*; Thompson, *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy*; and Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*.

46 The best discussion to date of the biblical background for the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage in Heb 11:8-16 is Schmidt, "Israels Stellung zu den Fremdlingen und Beisassen und Israels Wissen um seine Fremdling- und Beisassenschaft" 269-296. Though Schmidt cites many of the biblical references which are analyzed

been discussed in terms of pilgrim theology,[47] but the metaphorical potential of other terms used in the narratives of Genesis 12-25 with reference to the journeys of Abraham has not been sufficiently analyzed to determine their contribution to the development of Abraham as a pilgrim figure. Fourth, the voluminous literature on Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, while acknowledging Bunyan's substantial indebtedness to biblical language,[48] which he integrated with popular tales, church homily and vernacular parlance,[49] has not penetrated sufficiently behind the longstanding tradition of the pilgrim which Bunyan appropriated, so as to articulate the extent of the biblical sources of his image.[50]

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in this study, his examination is not substantiated by detailed exegetical discussion. Neither does he consider in detail the relevant evidence from the early Jewish and patristic literature.

47 See the discussion and bibliography on גור at 2.14.

48 Nuttall, "The Heart of *The Pilgrim's Progress*" 231 remarks: "Bunyan's images may be so far transmuted by his genius that they can be called his own, can even be recognized as characteristically his; but they have a source, a basis, for they are all well pegged, in the one book with which his contemporaries were familiar, the Bible."

49 Cf. Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 206-228; Tillyard, *The English Epic and Its Background* 393; Sharrock, *John Bunyan* 95; Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*.

50 Many scholars have pointed in general terms to the biblical source of Bunyan's pilgrim image, at times linking it with the exodus experience as related in Hebrews (cf. Knott, "Bunyan's Gospel Day" 445) as Bunyan himself appears to do in *The Heavenly Foot-Man*. A few have drawn direct correlation between Bunyan's pilgrim and the biblical depiction of Abraham. Thus, Stranahan, "Bunyan and the Epistle to the Hebrews" 280 argues: "... Bunyan's indebtedness to scripture in the creation of his famous work is not only general but also very specific; it is to be found in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Acting largely on suggestions from this one rich source, and drawing on copious, word-perfect stores of scriptural knowledge, his associative mind then ranged throughout the Bible in search of other relevant passages. The result is that several subordinate metaphors (taken initially from Hebrews) actually make up Bunyan's total comparison of life to a pilgrimage." On the other hand, Roppen and Sommer, *Strangers and Pilgrims*, who study the metaphor of journey in the wider context of Western literature, cite Heb 11:13 on the frontispiece, but, inexplicably, Abraham is not mentioned once in their study.

Thus, the examination of the figure of Abraham as a component in the development of the Christian pilgrim metaphor forms a distinctive contribution to several areas of study. The literary function of Abraham is given emphasis appropriate to his significance in the Christian articulation of the pilgrim image. In addition, Heb 11:8-16 is viewed in terms of its larger literary background in biblical and extra-biblical Jewish texts. The Old Testament references to Abraham are evaluated to determine their inherent metaphorical meaning and potential. In a more indirect way, the study sheds additional light on the pilgrim image employed by Bunyan.

It may be recognized, then, that this is a longitudinal study which traces a single theme across several bodies of literature. The primary fields of investigation are the Old Testament and New Testament texts, and the Jewish and Christian literature up to 450 C.E. Secondary insights have been culled from general sociological studies of nomadism, and from analyses of the development of literary motifs in literary criticism.

1.4 Thesis of the Study

This study argues that the biblical depiction of Abraham is a major component in the development of the Christian pilgrim metaphor. Several corollaries are inherent in this thesis. First, the available evidence suggests that whereas extra-biblical sources may have supported or affected in minor ways the articulation of the pilgrim image, the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage is better explained as emerging for the most part from biblical sources.[51] Second, although other biblical themes

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51 It must be recognized that the pilgrim image is not

such as the exodus, the conquest, the promised land and the dispersion undoubtedly shaped the Christian language of pilgrimage, a major factor is the figure of Abraham as reinterpreted in the biblical texts. Third, the biblical, early Jewish and early Christian literature suggests a process of development from a literal socio-political concept of sojourning through religious and metaphorical adaptations to the frozen image of spiritual pilgrimage. Fourth, the figure of Abraham is an unconscious assumption lying behind the pilgrim imagery commonly employed in Christian literature and hymnody.

1.5 Plan for the Study

Chapters 2 through 6 contain analyses of the portrayal of Abraham as a pilgrim figure in the early Jewish and Christian texts. Chapter 2 focuses on the vocabulary of movement in the Abrahamic narratives in Genesis 12-25. The Old Testament references to Abraham which use the sojourner image are examined in chapter 3. The fourth chapter investigates the Jewish literature up to 450 C.E. to determine how the sojournings of Abraham were understood. The crucial text of Heb 11:8-16 is the subject of chapter 5. Chapter 6 looks at the figure of Abraham and the theme of spiritual sojourning as they are presented in the

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confined solely to the biblical tradition. Nevertheless, a significant portion of the Christian pilgrim image is dependent at least indirectly upon the Old Testament portrayal of Abraham, which is adapted metaphorically into the concept of spiritual pilgrimage. This concept, then, becomes merged with what could be called the universal pilgrim archetype, which has produced such tales as the _Epic of Gilgamesh_, the _Odyssey_ and the _Aeneid_. Cf. Eliade, _Images and Symbols_ 168-169, who explains the diffusion of Christianity in terms of universal symbols: "... this sacred history, although in the eyes of an alien observer it looks like a local history, is also an exemplary history, because it takes up and perfects these trans-temporal images."

patristic writers up to 450 C.E.

The final chapter of the study views the data synthetically. The development from the narrative presentation of Abraham to the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage is traced. Insofar as the evidence warrants, significant factors which shaped the developmental process are articulated.

CHAPTER 2

ABRAHAM THE SOJOURNER IN GENESIS 12-25

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will examine the data in Genesis 12-25 which relate to the theme of the sojourning of Abraham. The first section will analyze the vocabulary used to define the journeys of Abraham to determine the extent to which metaphorical nuances are inherent in the terms used. After that, the specific texts referring to Abraham's movements will be studied individually. Finally, the relationship of Genesis 12-25 to its literary context will be investigated as it affects the theme of sojourning. The chapter will endeavor to ascertain the degree to which the metaphorical concept of pilgrimage expounded in Heb 11:8-16 is foreshadowed in the Genesis narratives depicting the life of Abraham.

2.1 Verbs of Movement in the Abrahamic Narratives

2.11 Verbs of Geographical Movement

Several verbs are used in Genesis to describe Abraham's journeys in geographical terms. The antonyms יָרַד (12:10) and עָלָה (13:1) are employed regularly in Genesis of the trips between Canaan and Egypt.[1] G. R. Driver argues that the precise connotation of this word pair refers to geographical direction rather than differentiation in altitude. Thus, יָרַד denotes going down coun-

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1 Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 2:345; S. R. Driver. The Book of Genesis 149. Cf. Gen 44:17,21,24.

try, or south, and עָלָה speaks of going up country, or north.[2] In Egypt the dominant influence of the Nile River on Egyptian life produced a similar but opposite point of reference. As Shibayama illustrates, Egyptian ḫdi, "to go down" the Nile, means a northerly journey, whereas ḫnti, "to go up the Nile, refers to southerly travel.[3] Though the origin of the terminology was rooted in river travel, the expressions became fixed for land travel as well.

In like manner, עָבַר in Gen 12:6 refers to Abraham's journeys in the land of Canaan: "Abram passed through (וַיַּעֲבֹר) the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh." Similarly, עָתַק in Gen 12:8 speaks of Abraham's geographical movement in his progression through Canaan: "Thence he removed (וַיַּעְתֵּק) to the mountain on the east of Bethel..."[4] Thus, it seems evident that at least in the case of these verbs a strongly literal depiction of the traveling of Abraham is given.

The verb יָצָא is used twice in Gen 12:4,5 to describe Abraham's egress from Haran and entrance into Canaan. In verse 4 the MT reads בְּצֵאתוֹ מֵחָרָן, and in verse 5 the construction is וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אַרְצָה כְּנַעַן. Hence, יָצָא defines the action which takes Abraham from Haran in preparation for his going to Canaan. As with יָרַד, עָלָה, עָבַר, and עָתַק, there appears to be no necessary intrinsic information denoted beyond the designation of physical movement. However, it should be noted that terms bearing topographical significance can in use acquire metaphorical overtones,

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2 "On עלה 'went up country' and ירד 'went down country'" 76. Parallel uses are attested in Ethiopic; cf. Leslau, "An Ethiopic Parallel to Hebrew עלה 'Went Up Country' and ירד 'Went Down Country'" 322.

3 "Notes on Yārad and ʿĀlāh: Hints on Translating" 361.

4 The Targum Onkelos reading ואסתלק and the various Greek versions (LXX - ἀπέστη; Aquila - μετῆρεν; Symmachus - ἀπῆρεν) all reflect the idea of movement away.

and this possibility should not be ruled out.[5]

2.12 Verbs Related to Tent Dwelling

Three verbs used of Abraham's travels derive ultimately from the figure of tent dwelling. In Gen 13:18 אָהַל is used of Abraham's relocation to Hebron: "So Abram moved his tent (וַיֶּאֱהַל) and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron." The same term is used of Lot in 13:12, where it is in collocation with יָשַׁב: "Abram dwelt (יָשַׁב) in the land of Canaan, while Lot dwelt (יָשַׁב) among the cities of the valley, and moved his tent (וַיֶּאֱהַל) as far as Sodom."[6]

A related expression, נָטָה אֹהֶל, "to stretch a tent," is found in Gen 12:8: "Thence he removed to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent (וַיֵּט אָהֳלֹה), with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east ..." Throughout the Pentateuch and the former prophets נָטָה אֹהֶל is used for the literal activity of pitching[7] either one's personal tent or the sacred tent of the cult,[8]

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5 Thus, Weingreen, "הוצאתיך in Genesis 15:7" 211 argues concerning יצא: "When this verb is used in a context of personal distress or danger, the qal has the meaning of escaping or being delivered from a painful situation... The Hiphʿil of this verb in such associations has the active sense of saving, rescuing." He cites examples in Prov 12:13 and Ps 18:20.

6 Rabin, "Etymological Miscellanea" 384-386 suggests the possibility that the Arabic cognates of אהל argue for a rendering "to get grazing rights in an area" in Gen 13:12,18, cf. Judg 6:5. Though this may be feasible, the Genesis context does not demand such a technical connotation, and the more general concept is preferable.

7 It is interesting to note that the LXX translates נטה by ἵστημι, the verb used also in 6:18 for the establishment of a covenant. Thus, Harl, La Bible d'Alexandrie: La Genèse 153 notes: "Ce verbe suggère toujours aux lecteurs hellénophones l'idée d'une ferme solidité."

8 Wiseman, "They Lived in Tents" 197 comments that the references to tents in the patriarchal narratives "are confined to a limited period, yet to widely dispersed sacred sites which might be interpreted as denoting the marking of land-tenure. They do not preclude an association with the common but limited trans-

though in the latter prophets it developed a range of metaphori-
cal meanings.

A third verb, נָסַע, is used in Gen 12:9 ("And Abram jour-
neyed on [וַיִּסַּע], still going [הָלוֹךְ וְנָסוֹעַ] toward the Negeb") and
in Gen 20:1 ("From there Abraham journeyed [וַיִּסַּע] toward the ter-
ritory of the Negeb..."). The Hebrew term נָסַע, like its Akkadian
cognate nisû, has the literal meaning of pulling out or withdraw-
ing (cf. Judg 16:3; Is 33:20), and thus from the practice of pull-
ing up the tent-pegs in preparation for a journey it came to be
used for a journey or march by stages.[9] The progressive charac-
ter of the action is reinforced in 12:9 by the use of the infini-
tive absolute הָלוֹךְ in conjunction with נָסוֹעַ.[10] Cassuto states that
this collocation means "going on his journeys, from place to place,
after the manner of those who wander with their flocks."[11] Thus,
Jeremiah prophesies, "And Judah and all its cities shall dwell
there together, and the farmers and those who wander (וְנָסְעוּ; or
as lay behind Aquila, Symmachus, the Targum and the Vulgate, וְנֹשְׂאֵי -
cf. BHS 846) with their flocks" (Jer 31:24).

At this point the movements of Abraham may be discussed
profitably in connection with the concept of nomadism. As Van
Seters has stated, the literature on nomadism is voluminous,[12] so
only a cursory examination will be attempted of this issue as it

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humance undertaken by town or village communities moving into tents
for the summer pasturage of cattle or sheep, for special religious
festivals or for work at harvest time."

9 BDB 652. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan 60
notes that the nominal form מַסַּע refers to the normal day's jour-
ney for a caravan.

10 GKC 113u.

11 Op. cit. 2:333.

12 Abraham in History and Tradition 13. Extended dis-
cussion of nomadism as it relates to Abraham may be found in Wor-
schech, Abraham: Eine sozialgeschichtliche Studie and de Vaux,
Histoire Ancienne d'Israel 213-223.

pertains to Abraham.

Koch states that "the patriarchs of Israel lived only in tents," which were the essence of the nomadic way of life,[13] for the very nature of nomadism demanded recurrent migration. It has been maintained that this pattern of activity was elevated by groups such as the Rechabites to an ethical norm for life separate from the corrupting influences of sedentary society.[14] However, careful analysis of the references to the Rechabites suggests that their lifestyle represented a pattern of occupation, but not a religious ideal.[15] In fact, "Jeremiah's commendation of the Rechabites (35:18-19) referred not to their way of life as such, but to their fidelity to that which they were committed: he cherished a like fidelity for Israelites generally to the commandments to which they were committed."[16]

Earlier this century Flight contended that the prophets in the eighth and seventh centuries used the pre-settlement period as a spiritual measure for the nation, thus establishing a nomadic ideal in Israel.[17] He argued that though the prophets did not conceive a return to primitiveness, they did seek to effect a

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13 TDOT 1:120.

14 Davies, The Gospel and the Land 78, but he does not view the nomadic ideal as widespread in ancient Israel; cf. Fox, "Jeremiah 2:2 and the 'Desert Ideal'" 450. Note the pseudepigraphical History of the Rechabites 9:5-9: "Then we answered him, 'We are from this your people, and from the city of Jerusalem; and we are sons of Jonadab, the son of Rechab. And when Jeremiah, the prophet, in the days of the king [Josiah] who was before you, exhorted the common folk to repent, our father heard the word of the prophet and warned and charged us not to eat bread, drink wine, be anxious again about garments, or dwell in houses."

15 Cf. esp. Frick, "The Rechabites Reconsidered" 285 who regards the Rechabites as "a guild of metalworkers involved in the making of chariots and other weaponry."

16 Davies, op. cit. 80.

17 "The Nomadic Idea and Ideal in the Old Testament" 215-223. Frick, op. cit. 279-280 gives a concise summary of the nomadic ideal concept from Budde (1895) through Humbert (1921), Flight (1923) and Talmon (1966).

return to the spiritual simplicity characteristic of Israel's earliest ages. Their goal was that "Israel might be brought back to the simple and uncorrupted faith of the fathers."[18]

The existence of a historically rooted nomadic ideal in the thought of ancient Israel has been contested on several grounds. On the one hand, Gordon contends that the use of the root סחר (Gen 23:16, cf. 34:10,21; 37:28; 42:34) indicates that the patriarchs in general, and Abraham in particular, were traveling merchants who depended upon mobility for their livelihood.[19] This view is opposed by Speiser, who argues convincingly that the root denotes freedom of movement within the land.[20] However, Albright questions Speiser's view by pointing to the same root in the Old Assyrian caravan texts with the sense "to trade, barter,"[21] and he claims that the Genesis narratives are unintelligible unless Abraham is conceived as "a wealthy caravaneer and merchant whose relations with the native princes and communities were fixed by contracts and treaties (covenants)."[22] This mercantile background is supported by Gordon from the Akkadian references to <u>tamkârûtum</u>, trading abroad.[23] But on the other hand, Fensham contends from the Mari literature that the parallels between Gen 34 and the <u>Turukkû</u> point to nomadic settlement outside established villages.[24]

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18 Flight, <u>op. cit</u>. 223. On the other hand, de Vaux, <u>Les Institutions de l'Ancien Testament</u> 1:31 makes a salutary distinction: "Ce n'est pas le nomadisme qui est leur idéal, c'est cette pureté de la vie religieuse et cette fidélite à l'alliance."

19 "Abraham and the Merchants of Ura" 28-31.

20 "The Verb <u>SḤR</u> in Genesis and Early Hebrew Movements" 23-28.

21 "From Abraham to Joseph" 12-13.

22 <u>Ibid</u>. 15.

23 Gordon, <u>op. cit</u>. 29-30. Cf. Landsberger, "Akkadische-Hebräische Wortgleichungen" 176-190. However, Thompson, <u>The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives</u> 172-186 contests the portrayal of Abraham as a caravaneer on chronological and archeological grounds.

24 "Genesis XXXIV and Mari" 89.

Van Seters distinguishes between true Bedouin nomadism in which the camel is the mainstay, and semi-nomadism or sheep nomadism.[25] Though Van Seters himself considers Abraham a late retrojection of eponymous tradition, a similar view of Abraham as a semi-nomad is adopted by von Rad. His portrayal of the patriarchs seeks to take account of the biblical depiction of the relationship between the patriarchs and the sedentary society in Canaan, with which they interacted "for reasons of commerce and connubium."[26]

Talmon goes even further in moving away from the concept of a nomadic ideal. He points out that the two most representative figures of nomads in the Bible are Ishmael and Esau, neither of whom was suitable to be set up as an ethical pattern. Talmon asserts that "nomadism is conceived as a retrogression from a higher state of society, not as a desirable goal toward which to progress."[27] As Davies argues, the wilderness, which is the site of genuine nomadic life, is in the Bible and in later Judaism representative of the transitional period before the goal of settlement within the promised land is achieved.[28] The theme of land inheritance, which gives the Pentateuch, and indeed the entire Old Testament, its theological distinctiveness, is "utterly foreign to the nomadic way of life but a fundamental principle of the settled economy."[29]

In seeking to reconcile the evident biblical aversion to

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25 Abraham in History and Tradition 13-14.

26 Genesis 171. This intermediate status is also supported by de Vaux, "Les Patriarches Hébreux et l'Histoire" 20-21.

27 "The 'Desert Motif' in the Bible and in Qumran Literature" 36.

28 The Gospel and the Land 90. Cf. Talmon, "The 'Comparative Method' in Biblical Interpretation" 332.

29 Van Seters, Abraham in History and Tradition 16.

the desert[30] with the language of tent-dwelling and geographical movement in the patriarchal narratives, a distinction has been drawn between the true Bedouin nomadism and a less restrictive type of pastoral existence.[31] However, Gottwald charges that this concept of semi-nomadism is simply an uncritical transferral of outdated concepts of nomadism to a demonstrably different cultural context.[32] Instead, he contends that the early Israelites were part and parcel of the general social pattern in Palestine.[33] Although Lemche questions the procedure and many of the conclusions of Gottwald, he is in agreement with his rejection of the earlier nomadic conception. Lemche argues that the nomadic ideal, which later became transferred to the image of the semi-nomad, was simply a romanticized notion rooted in a faulty scheme of historical development.[34]

In reality, sociological studies have shown that the very concept of nomadism is at best unclear, for it refers in general to the area of overlap between livestock rearing and spatial mo-

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30 de Vaux, Les Institutions de l'Ancien Testament 1:17 notes: "le desert était à leurs yeux le refuge des hors-la-loi, le repaire des brigands, le séjour des démons et des bêtes sauvages." Cf. Talmon, "The 'Desert Motif' in the Bible and in Qumran Literature" 42-43.

31 Schneidau, Sacred Discontent: The Bible and Western Tradition 128-129. Cf. Sarna, Understanding Genesis 105.

32 "Were the Early Israelites Pastoral Nomads?" 225.

33 Ibid. 253.

34 Early Israel 94-95. Both Talmon, "The 'Comparative Method' in Biblical Interpretation" 329-332 and Mayes, Judges 54 concur with Lemche's evaluation of the nomadic ideal as an unsubstantiated deduction rooted in an evolutionary model of anthropological development. Thus Mayes asserts: "There was no general evolutionary development from hunter to nomad or semi-nomad and from there to a settled, agricultural form of life, which is the scheme presupposed by the theory that nomadism or semi-nomadism was the life-style of the Israelites before they settled in the land... The popular understanding of the nomad as a proud desert dweller, independent of and contemptuous toward the life of the settled farmer, is based on modern conditions and has no pertinence to the ancient Near East and particularly to Israel."

bility.[35] The nomad, then, is one who in his work with livestock participates in an orderly pattern of seasonally-determined migrations.[36] The mere actions of livestock raising or geographical movement do not necessarily denote the life of a nomad. In addition, nomadism itself is, as Johnson states, "a continuum of numerous potential economic possibilities, ranging from a completely sedentary agricultural life with no movement at one extreme to a hypothetical (and non-existent) nomadism having no need for or use of agricultural products at the other."[37]

In the ancient Near East there appears to have been a symbiotic relationship between the livestock herders in the pastoral land and the agriculturally-based sedentary population. By making grazing agreements with the settled people, the nomads secured grazing and water rights, and access to agricultural products.[38] The nomadic ideal, which presupposes the antithesis between the nomadic and the sedentary, founders upon their interplay. Rather than being antagonistic forces, they were highly-integrated cooperative elements in ancient society.[39]

A further objection to the nomadic ideal points to the inappropriateness of interpreting the mention of tents as an unambiguous reference to nomadism, for throughout the Old Testament tents are used for various crafts, trades and activities of public worship and celebration.[40] Though the patriarchal narra-

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35 Dyson-Hudson, "The Study of Nomads" 23.
36 Johnson, The Nature of Nomadism 4.
37 Ibid. 17.
38 Gottwald, op. cit. 227.
39 Rowton, "Autonomy and Nomadism in Western Asia" 257-258, in describing the enclosed nomadism of Western Asia cites four basic factors: the town which acts as a link between the nomad and the state, seasonal migration by the nomad through the sedentary region, the tendency towards symbiosis, and continuous sedentarization.
40 Cf. Gottwald, op. cit. 230-231. Wiseman, "Abraham

tives do speak of pastoral activity, they also portray the patriarchs as identified with particular localities for extended periods of time.[41] It is undeniable that אֹהֶל most often speaks of a tent. But Wisemann suggests that it could also be used of a settlement or a home in general, though he does not deny that the patriarchs may have lived in tents occasionally in connection with the pasturing of their livestock.[42]

It may thus be concluded that the suggested nomadic ideal cannot be substantiated by the biblical texts or by sociological studies of nomadism. The verbal constructions with אָהַל, נָטָה אֹהֶל, and נָסַע reflect the more or less migratory type of existence of Abraham in Canaan. Though the crucial factor of the land promise (Gen 12:1-3,7) lies close at hand throughout the Abrahamic narratives, Abraham himself was living in a transitional and anticipatory state. However, the verbs related to tent dwelling do not necessarily denote significant metaphorical content beyond the mere activity of living in a non-permanent dwelling.[43] Though this leaves open the possibility of metaphorical development, as in Heb 11:9, the use of the verbs in Genesis does not demand anything beyond a literal referent.

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the Hebrew" 125-126 suggests a correlation between tents and altars in the Abrahamic narratives: "... the tents indicate not so much his mode of living as a tent-shrine set up symbolically at places where he publicly avowed the promise of the land as a token of its take-over."

41 E.g., Gen 13:18; 20:1; 21:34; 22:19.

42 "Abraham Reassessed" 141-142. This contention is supported by the Akkadian âlu, which in its wide semantic range includes the concepts of both tent and city, as noted by Muntingh, "The City Which Has Foundations" 114.

43 Myers, "The Way of the Fathers" 130-131 attempts to relate Abraham's monotheism to his tent-dwelling, but he fails to account for other tent-dwellers who hold to different theological conceptions. Similarly, Anderson, "The Role of the Desert in Israelite Thought" 41-44 is more speculative than convincing when he endeavors to explain some of the religious ideas of Israel as developments emanating from a desert environment.

2.13 יָשַׁב and תּוֹשָׁב

The most frequent verbal root used to describe Abraham's living in the land of Canaan is ישׁב. The following examples from Genesis may be noted.

13:12 Abram dwelt (יָשַׁב) in the land of Canaan ...

13:18 So Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt (וַיֵּשֶׁב) by the oaks of Mamre ...

16:3 So after Abram had dwelt (לְשֶׁבֶת) ten years in the land of Canaan ...

20:1 From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb, and dwelt (וַיֵּשֶׁב) between Kadesh and Shur ...

20:15 And Abimelech said, "Behold, my land is before you; dwell (שֵׁב) whereever it pleases you."

22:19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt (וַיֵּשֶׁב) at Beersheba.

24:3//37 ... you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell (יוֹשֵׁב) .

In each case יָשַׁב is followed by a prepositional phrase introduced by בְּ (or in one case by בֵּין - 20:1) specifying the location of the action. The verb itself merely defines the reality of living. The locative phrase defines the specific geographical location.

The derived noun, תּוֹשָׁב, is used by Abraham in Gen 23:4 to define his status among the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. Abraham says, "I am a stranger and a sojourner (גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב) among you." Several facts may be noted about this usage. First, the modifying prepositional phrase is not introduced by בְּ but by עִם (עִמָּכֶם - among you). The collocation of תּוֹשָׁב with עִם is also attested in the following passages:

Lev 25:23 The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me (גֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים אַתֶּם עִמָּדִי).

Lev 25:47 If a stranger or sojourner with you (גֵר וְתוֹשָׁב עִמָּךְ) becomes rich, and your brother beside him becomes poor and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner with you (לְגֵר תּוֹשָׁב עִמָּךְ) ...

However, it is possible that the use of עִם with תּוֹשָׁב is influenced by the presence of גֵּר. Two factors point in this direction. In Ps 39:12(13) the psalmist states, "For I am thy passing guest" (כִּי גֵר אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ), and then adds appositionally, "a sojourner, like all my fathers" (תּוֹשָׁב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי). Similarly, Lev 25:45 reads, "You may also buy from among the strangers who sojourn with you" (מִבְּנֵי הַתּוֹשָׁבִים הַגָּרִים עִמָּכֶם). In these cases גֵּר is modified by עִם. In Ps 39:12(13) תּוֹשָׁב is added with circumstantial force, whereas in Lev 25:45 the phrase הַגָּרִים עִמָּכֶם is a specification of the general expression בְּנֵי הַתּוֹשָׁבִים. In addition, the law states in Num 35:15: "These six cities shall be for refuge for the people of Israel, and for the stranger and for the sojourner among them ..." (לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלַגֵּר וְלַתּוֹשָׁב בְּתוֹכָם). Here the repetition of לְ before each societal group suggests that the specifying preposition with תּוֹשָׁב is בְּ (בְּתוֹכָם).

It appears, therefore, that the construction יָשַׁב בְּ focuses upon the location of the subject's existence, and has little to say about the nature of his life, which is communicated through different verbal roots, or about his associations, which are denoted by such constructions as יָשַׁב אֵת (Gen 24:55; 34:16,22), יָשַׁב עִם (Gen 27:44; 29:29) or יָשַׁב יַחְדָּו (Gen 13:6; 36:7). The Genesis references to Abraham which employ ישׁב simply relate the facts of the geographical locations during his life in Canaan, and by them-

selves denote nothing concerning the character of his existence there.[44]

2.14 גּוּר and גֵּר

The גור root is represented in the Abrahamic narratives by the following examples:

12:10 Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn (לָגוּר) there ...

20:1 ... and he sojourned (וַיָּגָר) in Gerar.

21:23 ... and with the land where you have sojourned (גַּרְתָּה).

21:34 And Abraham sojourned (וַיָּגָר) many days in the land of the Philistines.

23:4 I am a stranger (גֵּר) and a sojourner among you ...

35:27 And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned (גָּר).

Several other uses of the גור word group are also found in the Genesis narratives with reference to the patriarchs.

26:3 (Yahweh to Isaac) Sojourn (גּוּר) in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you ...

28:4 (Isaac to Jacob) May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your descendants with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings (אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ) which God gave to Abraham!

32:4(5) (Jacob to Esau) I have sojourned (גַּרְתִּי) with Laban, and stayed until now ...

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44 Cf. Marrassini, *Formazione del Lessico dell'Edilizia Militare nel Semitico di Siria* 18.

36:7 (Jacob and Esau) For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together; the land of their sojournings (אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵיהֶם) could not support them because of their cattle.

37:1 Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings (אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו), in the land of Canaan.

47:4 (Jacob's sons to Pharaoh) We have come to sojourn (לָגוּר) in the land ...

47:9 (Jacob to Pharaoh) The days of the years of my sojourning (מְגוּרַי) are a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning (מְגוּרֵיהֶם).

A recurrent connotation in the cited passages is the unassimilated nature of the subject. The socio-political condition of foreignness[45] is more in the picture than the location of the abode.[46] Though the locative specification is always indicated, it is not the focus of the statement.

The גור word group underwent a profound transition in its connotations, leading to two major fields of meaning in Christianity and in Judaism. This phenomenon has been traced in detail by

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45 Levine, "Late Language in the Priestly Source" 77-78 concludes: "What is common to Gen 17, 23 and 34 is that, in all of these chapters, the patriarchs are perceived by the author as non-native residents in Canaan. This is conveyed by the verb ג-ו-ר, 'to sojourn, reside,' in its various forms. This verb, in the literature we are surveying, always connotes a non-native origin, and implies the requirement of permission from the native owners, or masters, of the country to acquire land and to settle in it."

46 Contra. Wiseman, "Abraham the Hebrew" 130, who contends that גֵּר is always used of Abraham to refer to his location outside of the promised land. This view, however, compels one to regard Hebron (cf. Gen 23:4) as outside of the land granted to the patriarch by Yahweh.

several scholars,[47] so only a brief sketch of the semantic development will be presented here.

Meek compares גור with the Arabic root جار, thus defining its fundamental meaning as "one who has come to live with an alien people where he lacks the protection of his own kin and so puts himself under the protection of a particular clan or chieftain of that people."[48] Several implications are inherent in this concept. The inviolability of the guest, a characteristic of desert nomads, was adopted even in more sedentary situations.[49] However, along with the legal protection received from the patron there was the reciprocal obligation of dependence and service by the גֵּר.[50] Thus, the status of the גֵּר was an intermediate position between full assimilation (אֶזְרָח) and foreignness (נָכְרִי).[51]

The reason for becoming a גֵּר could be either external, such as famine or war, or internal, such as a desire for more favorable conditions.[52] The crucial fact to note is that גור does not deal so much with the location or type of activity as with the ambivalent relationship between the גֵּר and his society. What is

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47 Cf. esp. Kuhn, TDNT 6:728-742; Kellermann, TDOT 2:439-449; Martin-Achard, THAT 1:409-412; Sell, "Jesus the 'Fellow-Stranger'" 173-192; Fascher, "Zum Begriff des Fremden" 161-168.

48 "The Translation of GĒR in the Hexateuch and Its Bearing on the Documentary Hypothesis" 172. Cf. Görg, "Der 'Fremde' (gēr): ein Fremdwort im Alten Testament?" 10-13, who argues for an Egyptian background for the term.

49 Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites 75-76.

50 Kuhn, TDNT 6:728.

51 Mauch, IDB 4:397. Cf. Guttmann, "The Term 'Foreigner' (נכרי) Historically Considered" 1 draws this distinction: "What is characteristic of נכרי therefore is the fact that he maintains the connection with his native country or with the country which he has left. In this he differs from the גר who in reality has also come from afar, but has severed the connection with his former country. While the גר thus seeks to become a member of the new community, the נכרי persists in keeping, politically and socially, his former status."

52 Kellermann, TDOT 2:443.

implicit in the term is the sense of a movement into a new social setting, whatever the motivating cause may have been.[53] Consequently, the גֵּר was usually landless, and his rights were regulated by a ruling individual or by the social organization.[54]

An examination of the references to גור in the Genesis narratives reveals that the use of the word group is consistent with its basic sense. Several times the aspect of protection by a patron is in view (cf. 12:10; 20:1; 21:23,34; 26:3; 32:4[5]; 47:4). In 21:23 Abimelech insists upon Abraham's obligation as a גֵּר to his protector. The intermediate position of the גֵּר between the native and the foreigner is evidenced in Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah from Ephron (23:4) and in the aversion by the men of Sodom to Lot's attitude of judging over them (19:9). The blessing of Jacob by Isaac (28:4) also contrasts the anticipation of future possession (ירשׁ) of the land promised to Abraham with the fact of present sojourning. This covenantal overtone of גור may also be seen in God's charge to Isaac in 26:3.

The passages in which גור appears to be used simply as an expression of existence (cf. 21:34; 35:27; 36:7; 37:1; 47:9) should be interpreted within the context of the predominant use of the word group in Genesis. Throughout the patriarchal narratives גור contains at the least the hint of transience and lack of total assimilation. In its most distinctive nuance it is employed to define the interim existence between the covenantal promise of the land and its actual appropriation.

It may then be maintained that גור, as used in the Genesis narratives, contains the potential for metaphorical or theo-

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53 Spina, "Israelites as gērîm, 'Sojourners,' in Social and Historical Context" 323-324.

54 Weber, Ancient Judaism 33.

logical semantic content. The stress of the word group is upon the temporary and ambivalent nature of the patriarchs' lives, rather than simply stating the fact of their dwelling or its location.

In the Old Testament גֵּר was often used in conjunction with "orphan" (יָתוֹם) and "widow" (אַלְמָנָה) to denote one in special need of protection, whose defender is Yahweh. In the Pentateuch, where the term is most often employed, the range of meaning is characteristically in the socio-political realm.[55] Not only are the patriarchs sojourners in Canaan, but the people of Israel are גֵּרִים during their stay in Egypt (Gen 15:13; Ex 23:9). Because of this historical experience, they were obligated to treat the גֵּר with kindness (Lev 19:34).

However, the theocratic nature of Old Testament religion meant that the socio-political focus of גֵּר was easily transmuted to the cultic domain. Thus, in the post-exilic literature the גֵּרִים refer to non-Jews, perhaps Samaritans (cf. Ezr 4:2; 6:21), who wish to participate in the Jewish worship in Jerusalem.[56] The גֵּר was allowed to participate in nearly all the religious life of Israel, though he was required to be circumcised to take part in the Passover.[57]

By the time of the LXX an evident semantic transformation had occurred in the גור concept. The word used predominantly in the LXX to translate גֵּר is προσήλυτος.[58] It is appar-

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55 Ohana, "Prosélytisme et Targum palestinien" 317-318.

56 Vink, "The Date and Origin of the Priestly Code in the Old Testament" 47-48.

57 Kuhn, TDNT 6:729. Milgrom, "Religious Conversion and the Revolt Model for the Formation of Israel" 171, however, points out that despite this cultic assimilation the ethnic identity of the גֵּר was maintained.

58 προσήλυτος is used 77 times, πάροικος 11 times, γειώρας twice and ξένος once. Cf. Kuhn, TDNT 6:731.

ent that prior to the third century B.C.E. גֵּר was well on its way to acquiring a technical connotation of one who is ethnically a foreigner, but who has fulfilled the conditions necessary for assimilation into the Jewish religious community.[59] It should be noted, however, that the minority rendering πάροικος, which was also used to render תּוֹשָׁב, came to bear more direct influence in the New Testament.[60]

This change became even more pronounced in later Palestinian Judaism, in which προσήλυτος became the semantic equivalent of גֵּר. Thus, גֵּר "lost completely its sociological sense and became a purely religious technical term."[61] In the Mishnah the original socio-political sense cannot be found a single time, and in the rabbinic literature גֵּר came to be used exclusively as a religious term for a Gentile won over to Judaism.[62] Therefore, in Judaism גֵּר progressed beyond the socio-political reference of immigrant or resident alien to a fixed expression for a religious proselyte.[63] This sense diverges significantly from the metaphorical πάροικος used in Heb 11:9 of the sojourning of Abraham.

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59 Walters, The Text of the Septuagint 34; Martin-Achard, THAT 1:411.

60 Sell, "Jesus the 'Fellow-Stranger'" 188.

61 Kuhn, TDNT 6:734. Cf. also the use of גיר in Targum Neophyti, as noted by Delcor, "La portée chronologique de quelques interprétations du Targoum Néophyti contenues dans le cycle d'Abraham" 106: "Le verbe גיר hébreu ou araméen au peil ou au pael signifie ‚faire un prosélyte', ‚initier à la foi juive', d'ou ‚convertir'. Le même verbe se trouve précisément dans le Targoum de Jérusalem de Gen.12,5. On notera que le verbe est au pluriel, ce qui indique non seulement Abraham mais aussi sa famille sont considérés par le Targoum Néophyti comme convertisseurs d'âmes."

62 Ohana, op. cit. 322,332. Cf. e.g. BTal Yebamoth 46a, Sanhedrin 96b, Gerim 61a. Abraham is considered a proselyte in BTal Gerim 61b, Sukkah 49b, Midrash Rabbah Shemoth 1.36, Midrash Rabbah Naso 8.9 and Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael Nezikin 18.32-41.

63 Meek, op. cit. 177. This phenomena is also evidenced in Targum Jonathan; cf. Smolar and Aberbach, Studies in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets 98.

2.15 הָלַךְ and הִתְהַלֵּךְ

The final word group used to describe the movements of Abraham is derived from the root הלך. The Qal stem is used in the following three passages with reference to Abraham.

12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go (לֶךְ) from your country ...

12:4 So Abram went (וַיֵּלֶךְ), as the LORD had told him ...

13:3 And he journeyed on (וַיֵּלֶךְ) from the Negeb as far as Bethel ...

Similar uses can also be noted with other subjects in Genesis:

11:31 (Terah and his family) ... and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go (לָלֶכֶת) into the land of Canaan.

12:4 ... and Lot went (וַיֵּלֶךְ) with him.

28:10 Jacob left Beersheba, and went (וַיֵּלֶךְ) toward Haran.

It is apparent that each of the cited instances is an account of literal movement from one place to another. In each case both the point of departure and the terminus are defined. Thus, הָלַךְ seems to denote the path between two determined points.[64]

However, though הָלַךְ was in its most basic meaning a spatial concept, it was easily transferred into a metaphorical or theological concept. Reflecting the same expansion of meaning attested in the Akkadian alāku,[65] the Hebrew הָלַךְ came to define the human life as a journey.[66] This development is frequently seen in Psalms and in Proverbs, and is given classic expression

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64 Helfmeyer, TDOT 3:390.

65 CAD 1/1:300.

66 Similarly, in the Qumran Community Rule and the Damascus Document הלך is often used for the manner of life. This may also be noted in the New Testament, e.g. Eph 4:1,17; 5:2,8,15; 1 Th 4:1 with περιπατέω. Related to this is the designation of both the Qumran community and the early Church as "the Way." Cf. the discussion by Fitzmyer, Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament 281-283.

in the majestic prophetic pronouncement of Mic 6:8: "He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (וְהַצְנֵעַ לֶכֶת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ)?"

This metaphorical sense of הלך is even more pronounced in its uses in the Hithpael. Four passages make use of this form with reference to Abraham:

13:17 Arise, walk (הִתְהַלֵּךְ) through the length and the breadth of the land, for I [the LORD] will give it to you.

17:1 I am God Almighty; walk (הִתְהַלֵּךְ) before me, and be blameless.

24:40 The LORD, before whom I walk (הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי), will send his angel with you ...

48:15 And he [Jacob] blessed Joseph and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked (הִתְהַלְּכוּ) ..."

It is evident from these verses that a theological cast is overlying the original spatial notion of the verb. Though Gen 13:17 likely refers to Abraham's literal walk through Canaan as his claim by faith of the land promise, it is more importantly presented as part of a covenantal utterance. Both 24:40 and 48:15 are in the context of blessings which involve the covenant family. Each passage describes the patriarchs' lives in terms of their pattern of living[67] which pleased God.[68] Gen 17:1 is undeniably theological in purport, for the parallelism of the verse pairs "walk before me" (הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי) with "be blameless" (וֶהְיֵה תָמִים).

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67 Cf. TestJacob 4.15 alluding to Gen 48:15: "May the God under whose authority my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, served in reverence ..."

68 Cf. Philo, De Mut. Nom. 41 and Legum All. III 177 in which he translates εὐηρέστησαν.

Moreover, the Targum Onkelos פלח ("to worship"),[69] the LXX εὐαρέστει ἐναντίον ἐμοῦ, and Jubilees 15:3, "Be pleasing before me," support a theological rendering. Driver comments that to walk before someone involves living in such a way as to deserve and enjoy his approval and favor.[70]

But it can also be argued that הִתְהַלֵּךְ bears an even more profound significance in the Genesis narratives. The early chapters of Genesis contain the following uses of הִתְהַלֵּךְ:

3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking (מִתְהַלֵּךְ) in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

5:22 Enoch walked (וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ) with God after the birth of Methuselah three hundred years ...

5:24 Enoch walked (וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ) with God; and he was not, for God took him.

6:9 Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked (הִתְהַלֶּךְ) with God.

Genesis 3 presents the breaking of the intimate relationship in Eden between God and the human parents. The idyllic picture of the Lord walking in the garden[71] sets the scene for the jarring description[72] of Adam and Eve's hasty retreat to hide from the divine presence when their sin breaks intimacy with God.[73]

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69 Aberbach and Grossfeld, Targum Onkelos to Genesis 100-101. Cf. also יי דפלחית קדמוהי, "The Lord before whom I worship" in Targum Onkelos of Genesis 24:40.

70 The Book of Genesis 185.

71 Cf. the description in 2 Enoch 8:3 in paradisical terms.

72 Midrash Rabbah Bereshith 19.7 and Naso 13.2 note that at this point the Shekinah began a progressive ascent away from the sin-contaminated earth.

73 Coats, "Strife and Reconciliation" 20-21.

The two uses with reference to Enoch[74] disrupt the genealogical formula of Genesis 5.[75] In a manner distinguished from his ancestral line, Enoch maintained a direct companionship with God.[76] Cassuto suggests that there may be a play on words here, with verse 22 referring to Enoch's walking according to God's ethical norm and verse 24 speaking of his translation to the divine sphere to enter into physical association with the Lord.[77] Speiser notes the parallel between the references to Enoch and the Akkadian inscription <u>ilšu ittišu ittanallak</u> ("his god will walk with him").[78] He concludes rightly that the idiom has the force of "Enoch walked steadfastly with God." Philo follows the example of the LXX[79] in rendering הִתְהַלֵּךְ by εὐαρεστέω, with the sense of

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74 A thorough discussion of the Enoch pericope in Gen 5:21-24 is found in VanderKam, <u>Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition</u> 23-51.

75 Kidner, <u>Genesis</u> 80-81.

76 Driver, <u>The Book of Genesis</u> 77; Westermann, <u>Genesis</u> 1:485. Cf. parallel references in 1 Sam 25:15 and Mal 2:6.

77 <u>Op. cit</u>. 1:283,285. Though this is a possible rendering, the similar constructions in verses 22 and 24 are more appropriately regarded as parallels than as diverse statements. Thus, as noted by VanderKam, <u>op. cit</u>. 31, Enoch's familiar concourse with God did not end with his translation from earth.

78 "The Durative Hithpaʿel: A <u>tan</u>-Form" 120-121. In a similar vein, Dean-Otting, <u>Heavenly Journeys</u> 9-10 compares the record of Enoch with the Sumerian literature. She comments: "Behind the terse account of Enoch's disappearance lies a legend of a Sumerian king, Enmeduranki, who, like Enoch, was seventh in line. This king enjoyed a special relationship to the sun; Enoch's lifespan of 365 years indicates a similar conception. The author of the Biblical account was unwilling to divulge anything more about Enoch's mysterious end; the task was left to the pseudepigraphical writers of later centuries." Cf. 2 Enoch 67:1-3; Appendix to 3 Enoch 48C:2.

79 Harl, <u>La Bible d'Alexandrie: La Genèse</u> 123 notes that the LXX concept speaks of positive action agreeable to God: "L'idée n'est pas de ‹plaire›, au sens passif, mais d'<u>agir</u> conformément à ce qui est <u>agréable à Dieu</u>: c'est un équivalent abstract du tour hébreu concret. Des révisions hébraïsantes de la LXX reviennent au tour hébreu avec des verbes comme <u>peripateō</u>, ‹marcher› (Aquila) ou <u>hodeúō</u> (Symmaque)."

pleasing God (De Mut. Nom. 34).[80] This place of favor was rooted in his repentance (De Praem. et Poen. 16-17)[81] and was rewarded by Enoch's journeying "as an emigrant from the mortal life to the immortal" (De Mut. Nom. 38).

In Gen 6:9 the concept denoted by הִתְהַלֵּךְ is made explicit by the parallelism of the verse. Noah's walking with God is his whole-hearted commitment to the standards of God as he lived righteously within the corrupt antediluvian society.[82]

This reiteration of הִתְהַלֵּךְ in Genesis can be construed plausibly as a conscious device of the author to highlight his theological theme by use of a Leitwort.[83] Alter notes that the Leitwort is "a way of enunciating and developing the moral, historical, psychological, or theological meanings of the story. What befalls the protagonist of the biblical tale is emphatically punctuated by significance, and the Leitwort is a principal means of punctuation."[84]

What, then, is the significance of the recurrent use of הִתְהַלֵּךְ in both the primeval and the patriarchal narratives? With the exceptions of Gen 3:8 and 13:17, הִתְהַלֵּךְ in Genesis is always

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80 Cf. Ps-Philo 1.16 and Wisdom of Solomon 4:10. However, the Targums render the expression as Enoch served in the truth before Yahweh.

81 Katz, "The Old Testament Canon in Palestine and Alexandria" 210-211.

82 Cassuto, op. cit. 2:50. Cf. also the Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan rendering, בדחלתא דיי הליך נח, "Noah walked in the fear of God." Targum Neophyti reads that "Noah served in the presence of Yahweh in truth." Compare similar renderings in Ps-Philo 3.4 and Gregory of Nazianzus, The Second Theological Oration 18.

83 A classic discussion of this literary technique is found in Buber, "Leitswortstil in der Erzählung des Pentateuchs" 1131-1149. Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative 480 notes that such key terms are normally presented unobtrusively, giving the appearance of ordinary lexical items.

84 The Art of Biblical Narrative 180. Fishbane, Text and Texture xii notes that because of its use of triliteral stems, Hebrew is particularly amenable to the Leitwort technique.

connected with the name of God by means of a preposition (אֶת- 5:22,24; 6:9 or לִפְנֵי- 17:1; 24:40; 48:15).[85] Though Gen 3:8 and 13:17 do not evidence the same grammatical structure, their semantic agreement is evident. In 3:8 the guilty human parents are no longer able to fellowship with the holy God, and thus they hide themselves from His presence. In 13:17 the command to Abraham to walk through the land is followed immediately by the divine promise, "for I will give it to you."

A further point can be noted when a comparison is drawn between Gen 6:9 and 17:1. In both of these passages, the former referring to Noah and the latter to Abraham, there is correspondence between הִתְהַלֵּךְ and תָּמִים. The two terms may be related in several ways. On the one hand, הִתְהַלֵּךְ is a metaphor in which the literal reality of travel is used to communicate a pattern of life, whereas תָּמִים is an abstract designation of character as "sound, wholesome, having integrity."[86] In addition, in 17:1 the clause הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים may be construed conditionally ("if you walk before Me, then you will be blameless"), as parallel imperatives ("walk before Me, and be blameless"), or as a command and a pro-

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85 Some commentators have posited a distinct difference in level of intimacy by use of the prepositions, with אֶת denoting the most intimate intercourse, whereas לִפְנֵי and אַחֲרֵי (cf. Deut 8:19; 13:50) represent a lower level of relationship; cf. Kalisch, Genesis 167; Keil, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament 1:125; von Rad, Genesis 71,126; but contra. Skinner, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis 131 and Oliver, The Wanderer and the Way 62, citing Buber. On the whole it is difficult to sustain a lower level of intimacy between God and Abraham than between God and Noah. In addition, the divine command in Gen 17:1 הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי and its parallel with תָּמִים (cf. Gen 6:9 of Noah) vitiates the argument of its force. It may also be noted that both Philo, De Praem, et Poen. 23-24 and De Post. Caini 174, and Midrash Rabbah Bereshith 30.10 regard Abraham as of greater virtue than Noah. Cf. also Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews 5:157 and the Pesikta Rabbati 7.2 which affirm that Abraham was greater in moral stature than Adam was before he sinned.

86 Cf. BDB 1071.

mise ("walk before Me, and you will be blameless" - cf. the Samaritan Pentateuch והיי and the construction in Gen 12:2). This verse is classified by GKC 110f in a conditional sense in which "the first imperative contains ... a condition, while the second declares the consequence which the fulfillment of the condition will involve." Though this rendering seems most appropriate, whatever the precise grammatical relationship between the two terms, their use together indicates that הִתְהַלֵּךְ is strongly theological in its connotation. To walk with God or before God is to live in such a way that fellowship with the holy God is maintained. As Gen 24:40 and 48:15 indicate, the command to Abraham in 17:1 was met with obedience on the part of the patriarch. It is little wonder that later biblical literature designated Abraham the friend of God.[87]

It is manifest, therefore, that the הלך word group attests both a spatial sense (in the Qal) and a theological sense (in the Hithpael) to the journeys of Abraham. In the literal meaning of walking or going, הָלַךְ traces Abraham on the way between two geographical places, and thus concentrates on the path between the termini. In the metaphorical aspect of הִתְהַלֵּךְ, Abraham is viewed as living a life of obedience and blamelessness before God.

2.16 Conclusion

At this point some initial conclusions may be drawn from the use of the verbs of movement in the Abrahamic narratives. A continuum of connotations may be noted, from the exclusively literal designations of geographical movement to the metaphorical

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87 Cf. 2 Chr 20:8; Is 41:8; Jam 2:23 and further discussion in chapter 3.

descriptions of walking with God.

On the literal end of the spectrum, יָרַד, עָלָה, עָבַר, עָתַק and יָצָא speak exclusively of physical journeys and carry no necessary connotation beyond that of mere spatial movement. The verbs derived from tent dwelling, אָהַל, נָטָה אֹהֶל, and נָסַע, in themselves do not imply anything beyond the literal referent of living in a non-permanent dwelling, but they are easily exploitable for subsequent metaphorical development in the direction of life on the earth as a transitory condition. In like manner, יָשַׁב בְּ in the Abrahamic narratives denotes simply the location of existence, but the derived noun תּוֹשָׁב came to be used in hendiadys with גֵּר to speak of alien status.

In the גור word group the focus turns from the fact of existence to the nature of existence. What is of significance is the temporary and unassimilated nature of the patriarchs' lives within their society. Though they are residing within Canaan they are not truly at home in Canaan, but are treated (and consider themselves) as resident aliens.[88]

The הלך family must be considered according to the stems in which it is found. The Qal הָלַךְ denotes the path between the two endpoints of a journey. Though this was later transferred to a metaphorical concept, as for example in Mic 6:8, in Genesis it is a literal term. However, the Hithpael הִתְהַלֵּךְ throughout Genesis is a Leitwort for life in fellowship with God. Abraham's walking before God, when viewed in the light of Gen 3:8; 5:22,24; and 6:9, is a theological expression of his earthly life in the divine presence.

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88 Compare the LXX rendering of Abram the Hebrew in Gen 14:13 as Ἀβραμ ὁ περάτης ("the migrant").

2.2 Analysis of Specific Texts

Though philological evidence is crucial for determining the semantic range of a term or a conceptual cluster of terms, the precise usage of the word must be determined by studying it in its context.[89] By analyzing how the term is used in a particular setting its potential meaning can be narrowed to the probable meaning of the text.

Therefore, this section of the study will analyze the specific portions of the Abrahamic narratives in which the vocabulary of movement is used. A determination will be made, within the confines of the corpus available to the early Jewish and Christian writers, as to the extent of discernible metaphorical content in the journey motif. Inherent in this procedure is a comparison of the readings in the MT and the early versions and paraphrases which may have affected the understanding of the Abrahamic stories in the early Christian era.[90]

It must be noted at the outset that the desideratum of precise reconstruction of the pre-history of the extant text, as attempted by source criticism, is confronted with inherent limitations.[91] Although the traditional designations of the

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89 This is stressed particularly by Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language 217-219.

90 Greenberg, "The Use of the Ancient Versions for Interpreting the Hebrew Text" 147-148 argues judiciously: "But for illuminating the MT, no external help comes near the ancient versions, correctly used. Every divergence from the MT in a translation made from Hebrew (like G, S, or T) calls for explanation, whether or not it is adjudged a reflection of a differing Vorlage. Where MT is degenerate, the value of Vorlage variants of the versions is undisputed. But even where MT is sound - indeed especially there - the versions are cardinal help ... Here the versions offer a powerful stimulus: a substitution, a small omission or addition may point up a carrier of meaning that would otherwise go unobserved."

91 Smith, Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament 7 argues reasonably: "The attempt to produce

sources of Genesis as J, E and P are customarily used in the scholarly literature, the validity of speaking in terms of these documents has been questioned at several points. The stylistic criteria used by source criticism in the study of a variety of literary genres has led inevitably to disagreement. Recent statistical analysis by Radday and Shore has claimed that "Wellhausen's tripartition of Genesis into J, E and P is of high improbability."[92] Objections have also been directed against the apparent subjectivity of source criticism, which produced increasingly complex theories of composition,[93] at times seemed insensitive to the literary nature of the text,[94] and tended to evaluate the ancient biblical texts by modern canons of composition.[95] Thus, Segal charges that the documentary theory "is based on unproved assumptions. It uses unreliable criteria for the separation of the text

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exact analyses of the present books, to indicate precisely the content of the original sources and the contribution of each glossator or redactor, has resulted in a cats' concert of conflicting accounts which discredit each other and may therefore be neglected. This is not to say that all of them are necessarily false, but that even if one of them should happen to be correct, its correctness could not be demonstrated."

92 Genesis: An Authorship Study in Computer-Assisted Statistical Linguistics 216. Their conclusions, however, are dismissed by Weitzman as "a massive non-sequitur" (SOTS Book List 1986, p.79).

93 Cf. Segal, "The Composition of the Pentateuch" 71.

94 Petersen, Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics 9-23 discusses literary problems in the historical-critical paradigm. Cf. Larsson, "The Documentary Hypothesis and the Chronological Structure of the Old Testament" 322 and Silberman, "Listening to the Text" 24.

95 Greenberg, "The Vision of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8-11" 145 makes the following cogent observation: "Standard critical procedure yields an analysis of the text that points up its tensions - according to history-oriented canons. The tension is resolved by separating the material into kernels and accretions whose combination allegedly produced the tension. But it is never demonstrated (it cannot be) that the tension was not there from the start, so that the tension-less reconstruction may be an answer to a modern critical, but no proven ancient, canon of composition."

into component documents."[96] Though these limitations do not necessarily warrant a wholesale jettisoning of source criticism,[97] they do lend support to a conception of the exegetical task which encompasses more than the reconstruction of the composition of the extant text.[98] Equally relevant is the examination of the features of the literary whole which was constructed out of the source materials.[99]

The synthetic study of the biblical texts has been promoted by several groups of scholars.[100] From the perspective of the study of literature,[101] Alter[102] examines the literary phenomena of the extant text. However, his approach has been justly criticized for its apparent neglect of historical critical questions.[103]

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96 The Pentateuch 22. Cf. Van Seters, Abraham in History and Tradition 125: "It is true to say that the problem of the literary sources of the Pentateuch, and that of Genesis in particular, has never been satisfactorily solved, and that a consensus seems even further away today than it was fifty years ago." Whybray, The Making of the Pentateuch 15 manifests similar skepticism about the usefulness of source criticism.

97 A thorough discussion of the possibilities and limitations of historical criticism is found in Stuhlmacher, Schriftauslegung auf dem Wege zur biblischen Theologie 59-127.

98 Kessler, "A Methodological Setting for Rhetorical Criticism" 12-13 argues reasonably: "What is clearly needed is a fuller appreciation of all dimensions of the methodological spectrum, with the realization that biblical studies have inordinately emphasized diachronics at the expense of synchronics, and a willingness to do justice to all useful approaches."

99 Wadsworth, "Making and Interpreting Scripture" 7.

100 Anderson, "From Analysis to Synthesis" 24-28 draws attention to the impulses towards synthetic study from the rhetorical criticism of Muilenburg and Fokkelmann, the field studies in oral tradition by Culley and Long, and structuralism.

101 A balanced analysis of the potential benefits and inherent limitations of studying the biblical text as a literary document is presented by Longman, "The Literary Approach to the Study of the Old Testament: Promise and Pitfalls" 385-398.

102 Cf. esp. The Art of Biblical Narrative and The Art of Biblical Poetry.

103 Cf. e.g. Whybray, "On Robert Alter's The Art of Biblical Narrative" 85-86; Edelman, "An Appraisal of Robert Alter's Approach" 22-23. A more balanced statement by a literary critic is that by Berlin, Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative

Similarly, rhetorical criticism,[104] working from within the theological discipline, focuses on literary analysis of the biblical text, but it tends to give more weight to other critical methods.

In recent years the canonical approach[105] has been championed especially by Childs[106] and Sanders.[107] This focus of study centers on "the crucial move ... when occasional oracles were rendered into the form of Scripture to be used authoritatively by another generation."[108] Though the pre-history of the extant text is not denigrated,[109] primary attention is directed toward "ascertaining the intended meaning of the text within its most

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112: "But even if we assume, or better yet, are able to demonstrate, that the text is a unity, it does not prove that the text always existed in the form in which we now find it. Even a unified text may have a history; and it is the history of the text that is the main interest of historical criticism, while literary critics limit their interest to the final stage in that history - the present text." Similarly, Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative 13 concludes that "the excesses and fruitlessness of traditional source criticism no more legitimate the waving aside of its available data than they illegitimate its goals."

104 Cf. Kessler, op. cit.

105 In some respects structuralism parallels the canonical approach, especially in its concern with the final form of the text. However, structuralism builds upon the antihistorical foundation of French structuralism, whereas the canonical approach claims to build upon historical criticism, as noted by Armerding, "Structural Analysis" 103 and Thiselton, "Structuralism and Biblical Studies: Method or Ideology?" 329-331.

106 E.g. Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture; Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context; and exemplified in Exodus. A Commentary.

107 Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism.

108 Childs, "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament" 67. Cf. Clements, Old Testament Theology: A Fresh Approach 15: "This canonical form of the literature represents the 'norm', if only in the sense that it represents the way in which the Old Testament is read and interpreted in the Jewish and Christian communities."

109 Keck, "Will the Historical-Critical Method Survive? Some Observations" 123 reasons well: "Methods are inherently complementary because a text is both an event in time (thus eliciting inquiry into genetic relationship - diachronic or historical-critical study) and an internally coherent work with a life of its own (thus eliciting inquiry into internal relationships - synchronic, structuralist or literary study)."

durative context."[110] Thus, the canonical approach chooses to place priority of interest on the relation of the fixed text to subsequent reinterpretations.

There has been no shortage of critics of this new emphasis. The timeless quality of the text as implied by the canonical approach,[111] the supplanting of the traditional critical procedures,[112] and the different canons accepted by Protestants, Catholics and Jews[113] have called into question the appropriateness of the canonical approach as a valid hermeneutical model.

Nevertheless, granted that the canonical approach has inherent limitations, and should therefore not be elevated to the exclusion of analytical study, its general emphases do have relevance for this study. Though it is difficult to establish certain dates for the underlying sources of the references to Abraham's sojourning,[114] what is evident is that the extant text of Genesis is substantially that normative text from which Jewish literature from at least the exilic times onwards drew its inspiration, and which was adopted as part of the canon of the Christian

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110 Dunn, "Levels of Canonical Authority" 38.
111 Perdue, "Review of Childs" 247.
112 Barton, <u>Reading the Old Testament</u> 97-98.
113 <u>Ibid</u>. 91-92.
114 Even if dates for the Genesis sources could be established with certainty the distribution of the verbs of movement in Genesis 12-25 does not support extensive early metaphorical development in the concept, as the following figure demonstrates:

Increasing Metaphorical Referent →

	Verbs of Geographical Movement	Verbs of Tent Dwelling	הָלַךְ	ישב	גור	התהלך
J	4	3	3	3	3	3
E	0	1	0	3	1	0
P	2	0	0	3	3	2

Several observations may be noted. First, each of the sources covers the entire spectrum of referent, from highly literal to metaphorical. Second, each source manifests a relatively even distribution across the spectrum, rather than being predominantly literal or metaphorical. Third, with the exception of the Qal הָלַךְ, all the verbs are used in relatively uniform occurrence in each of the three sources.

Church. It then serves as an appropriate point of departure in the description of the figure of Abraham as a sojourner/pilgrim in early Jewish and Christian thought.

2.21 Genesis 12:1-9

This pericope is a veritable treasury of vocabulary denoting the travels of Abraham. Though Abraham has been introduced in the genealogy of the previous chapter, it is with chapter 12 that a new section in the divine program of salvation begins.

If Abraham were to be located in the late third millennium or early second millennium B.C.E.,[115] as the biblical record purports, his migration would to all outward appearances have been indistinguishable from that of many people who were migrating at that time.[116] The biblical story, however, begins with the divine word,[117] which differentiates the journey of Abraham from that of his contemporaries.[118] The selection of details included in the

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115 Segal, *The Pentateuch* 128 notes: "Life in Mesopotamia in the second millennium must have been intolerable to a believer in the One God. The whole life of society and of the individual was strictly regulated on the principles of a crass polytheism and demonology, governed by a multitude of priests, diviners and magicians under the rule of the great temples and their hierarchies. There was no room in that Mesopotamia for an individual who could not join in the worship and in the magical practices of his fellows. Abraham must have felt early the pressing need to remove himself from such a stifling environment."

116 Wansbrough, "Abraham Our Father" 661; cf. also Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis* 137, who argues that the patriarchal legends were originally composed by 1200 B.C.E. This provenance, however, is challenged by Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* and Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*.

117 Kidner, *Genesis* 113.

118 Eliade, *Histoire des Croyances et des idées religieuses* 1:184 notes: "Mais la conception religieuse implicite dans l' ‹élection› d'Abraham prolonge des croyances et des coutumes familière, dans le Proche-Orient du deuxième millénaire. Ce qui distingue le récit biblique est le message personnel de Dieu et ses conséquences. Sans être préalablement invoqué, Dieu se révèle à un être humain, et lui fait une série de demandes suivies de promesses prodigieuses."

narratives of Abraham manifests a clear theological interest. Thus, to seek to limit his travels to that which can be geographically traced and sociologically explained fails to give full weight to the specific call by Yahweh which introduces the biblical portrayal of Abraham's trip to Canaan and his subsequent life there. As Speiser remarks, in the biblical presentation "Abraham's journey to the Promised Land was thus no routine expedition of several hundred miles. Instead, it was the start of an epic voyage in search of spiritual truths, a quest that was to constitute the central theme of all biblical history."[119] The continuing narrative manifests the unusual character of Abraham's movement to Canaan.

The story of Abraham begins with a promise which propels the patriarchal age, and indeed the later national epoch, toward historical fulfillment. Abraham's journey begins as a response to the bare word of God. In fact, the original command in verse 1 makes no mention as to the identity of the land, nor even that the land was to be given to him.[120] The promise of verses 2-3, reiterated and enlarged to the patriarchs throughout the Genesis narratives, becomes the theological nexus for much of the Old Testament literature.[121]

The divine word of command, לֶךְ־לְךָ, calls Abram to an abrupt and cataclysmic change in location and pattern of life. The call was to go from (מִן) his most fundamental loyalties to (אֶל) a destination which is indicated in the vaguest of terms. In essence, Yahweh was requiring Abram to obey knowing the full price involved,

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119 Genesis 88; cf. Kalisch, Genesis 330.

120 Sarna, Understanding Genesis 101-102. This uncertainty is reflected by the LXX rendering ἣν ἄν σοι δείξω.

121 Clements, Abraham and David 57.

but with only a hint as to the compensation. The divine demand was that Abram should forsake the familiar for the foreign.[122]

It is evident from Genesis 11 that Abram was a member of an intimate family structure. His homeland of Ur was a highly developed culture, far superior to that of Canaan.[123] Thus, Abram did not migrate to Canaan in search of a settled home, but he was called to leave his "secure home and to exchange it for a very unsettled existence in the far-away and strange land of Canaan."[124]

The form of the divine command did little to mitigate the personal anguish involved in such a dislocation. In three parallel prepositional phrases introduced by מן Abram's departure moves from the general (מארצך) to the specific (ומבית אביך) with ever-increasing personal identification.[125] As Leibowitz points out, this depiction of leaving is contrary to what would be expected, for the logical sequence is that one first leaves his home, then his birthplace and after that his country. She concurs with early Jewish commentary that what is being suggested by the passage is "a spiritual rather than physical withdrawal, beginning with the periphery and ending with the inner core."[126]

But not only was the divine call to go from Mesopotamia, but it also enjoined Abram to go "to the land which I will show you." Brueggemann maintains that "Land is a central, if not <u>the</u>

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122 Cf. Muilenburg, "Abraham and the Nations" 391; Mays, "God Has Spoken" 419.

123 Vawter, <u>On Genesis</u> 171 succinctly traces the history and describes the culture of Ur-III.

124 Souček, "Pilgrims and Sojourners" 5.

125 A similar progression in intensity may be noted in the divine call for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac in Gen 22:2: את־בנך את־יחידך אשר־אהבת את־יצחק. It may well be significant that the command for the Aqedah is also phrased לך־לך אל־ארץ. As in 12:4 the command is followed by explicit, unquestioning obedience.

126 Studies in <u>Bereshit (Genesis)</u> 113.

central theme of biblical faith. Biblical faith is a pursuit of historical belonging that includes a sense of destiny derived from such belonging."[127] Abram's response to Yahweh's call and the divine promise of land, name and blessing (verses 2-3) set the tone both for the patriarchal history and for the rest of the biblical literature.[128]

The command of verse 1 is matched by the record in verse 4 of Abram's obedience. No mention is made of any objection, question or delay.[129] As the narrative stands Abram is portrayed as explicitly obeying the bare word of God.[130] Three items are noted in verse 4, all of which prove crucial in the larger narrative. The action is defined as being in accordance with (כַּאֲשֶׁר) the word of Yahweh.[131] The associate, Lot, is mentioned, antici-

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127 The Land 3. The magisterial study by Davies, The Gospel and the Land traces the theme of the land throughout the biblical corpus. Other useful studies include Davies, The Territorial Dimension of Judaism; Strecker (ed.), Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit; von Rad, "Verheißenes Land und Jahwes Land im Hexateuch" 87-100; and Amaru, "Land Theology in Josephus' Jewish Antiquities" 201-229.

128 The eschatological portions of both Testaments resonate with these themes introduced in Genesis 12, as noted by Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament 1:476.

129 von Rad, Genesis 161 comments: "Abraham obeys blindly and without objection. The one word wayyēlek ('and he set out') is more effective than any psychological description could be, and in its majestic simplicity does greater justice to the importance of this event." This point is stressed by Origen, Commentary on the Song of Songs Prologue 3.

130 This point must not be pressed, however, for Hebrew narrative is characteristically laconic. The very lack of detail is a chief provocation for midrash, such as detailed by Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews 1:205. Nevertheless, as Gunkel, The Legends of Genesis 61 notes, the details which are presented are of special significance: "He does not share the modern point of view, that the most interesting and worthy theme for art is the soul-life of man; his childlike taste is fondest of the outward, objective facts. And in this line his achievements are excellent. He has an extraordinary faculty for selecting just the action which is most characteristic for the state of feeling of his hero."

131 Miscall, The Workings of Old Testament Narrative 12 discusses the force of כַּאֲשֶׁר in this passage. He seems to understate the significance of the comparison when he states: "The syn-

pating the theme of the problem of an heir, which is prevalent throughout the Abrahamic narratives.[132] Abram's advanced age, along with the statement of Sarai's barrenness in 11:30, serves to accentuate the magnitude of his obedience in the face of sparse human prospects.

Verse 5 is a particularization of the general description in the previous verse. The destination of the trip is stated proleptically by the narrator as Canaan, though in the account it is not disclosed as such to Abram until verse 7. The enumeration of those whom Abram took with him, from Sarai his wife to the purchased slaves,[133] serves to highlight the radical dislocation involved in the decision of obedience. Nothing was left behind should the venture fail, but Abram followed the word of Yahweh without reserve into the unknown.

Verses 6 through 9 trace the initial travels of Abram within the land of Canaan which Yahweh then gave to him and his offspring (verse 7). Abram is portrayed as moving through the land from Shechem (verse 6) to Bethel (verse 8) and eventually toward the Negeb (verse 9). This progression can be viewed from several perspectives. Yeivin relates it to the political and economic necessities of semi-nomadism in the patriarchal times.[134]

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tax and the context prevent the definitive conclusion that Abraham went solely in response to the Lord's command; at the same time, the syntax and the context prevent the definitive conclusion that Abraham went for his own reasons and not in response to the Lord's command." Cf. GKC 161b and the LXX καθάπερ.

132 Cf. Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot: Its Significance in the Patriarchal Narratives" 85, who demonstrates well that "the overall concern of the cycle is, Who will be Abraham's heir?"

133 Jewish midrash viewed these individuals as proselytes whom Abraham and Sarah had converted in Haran; Cf. Midrash Rabbah Lech Lecha 39.14.

134 "The Patriarchs in the Land of Canaan" 2:201. Cf. Vawter, On Genesis 178.

Cassuto views the journeys throughout Canaan in light of the land gift in verse 7. Comparing Abram's movements to the inaugural tour of Joseph later in Genesis, he says, "In the same way, Abram's passage across the land of Canaan from north to south represents the ideal transfer of the country to his possession for the purpose of the Lord's service. He was like a man who has acquired a field and inspects it from end to end."[135]

It is evident that the narrator is setting the action within a theological context. The site at which the land promise is given is specified in three ways in verse 6. The name of the place was Shechem, a city in the very heart of the land,[136] which later became a place of assembly for Israel.[137] At this location was also the oak of Moreh, a center of pagan worship. Moreover, the Canaanites were in the very land which Yahweh was giving to Abram's seed (not to Abram himself), thus shifting actual possession of the land into the future dimension. This juxtaposition of divine utterance and incomplete human awareness or appropriation parallels the call of Abram in verse 1, and demands the same quality of unquestioning obedience and trusting anticipation. Von Rad notes that "Abraham is therefore brought by God into a completely unexplained relationship with the Canaanites, and Yahweh does not hurry about solving and explaining this opaque status of ownership as one expects the director of history to do."[138]

Throughout the pericope the narrator has been careful

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135 _Op. cit_. 2:323.

136 _Fishbane_, "The Sacred Center: The Symbolic Structure of the Bible" 14 cites Gen 28:18 and Judg 9:37 to support his contention that the sites of Shechem and Bethel, and Canaan in general, are viewed as a sacred center in Israel's traditions.

137 Cf. Josh 24:1.

138 Genesis 166.

to focus only on the activities of Abram, and has not discussed the motivation which prompted them. However, the response of Abram both to the call and to the promise is a clear indicator that his reason for migrating to Canaan is his dedication to Yahweh and His service.[139] This observation is supported by the structure of verses 7 and 8, in which Abram is described as building altars for Yahweh. In verse 7 the divine promise, "To your descendants I will give this land," is followed by the response, "so he built there an altar to Yahweh, who had appeared to him." In verse 8 the physical activities in the first half of the verse are preparatory to the spiritual activities of the second half. Thus, Abram manifests a spiritual motivation in settling at Bethel by building an altar to Yahweh and by calling on the name of Yahweh.[140]

It may then be concluded that Gen 12:1-9 in the form available from the exilic times onwards contains substantial theological potential which could be developed into a pilgrim ideology.[141] Abram's unquestioning obedience to Yahweh's call and his response to the divine land grant to his offspring manifest a significant

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139 Cassuto, op. cit. 2:303 points out that "what the Bible does not say expressly it indicates by inference. It is a characteristic of these narratives ... not to describe the thoughts and feelings of the *dramatis personae*, but only to record their deeds, and to inform the reader through the narration of events of the ideas and sentiments that prompted their actions."

140 This is reflected in Jewish tradition, as summarized by Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* 1:219: "Each altar raised by him was a centre for his activities as a missionary. As soon as he came to a place in which he desired to sojourn, he would stretch a tent first for Sarah, and next for himself, and then he would proceed at once to make proselytes and bring them under the wings of the Shekinah. Thus he accomplished his purpose of inducing all men to proclaim the Name of God."

141 Interpretative development in a metaphorical direction is evident in Philo, *De Migr. Abr*. Cf. chapter 4.

prospective dimension in the narrative. Though presented as sober history, transcending the literal level of the action is the presentation of a man who heeds the word of Yahweh to leave all that is familiar to venture out to an unspecified location, which later is given not to him but to his descendants. To this command Abram responds in obedience and worship.

2.22 Genesis 12:10 and 13:1,3

Gen 12:10 and 13:1 function as an inclusio which brackets the pericope detailing Abram's sojourn in Egypt. The verbs יָרַד (12:10) and עָלָה (13:1) serve to define the geographical migration as down country (south) to Egypt, and then up country (north) back to Canaan.

The narrator is careful to note the motivation for the journey (12:10). The promised land had failed to provide for Abram's basic needs. Indeed, the author gives double emphasis to the perilous situation, first through a simple statement (וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ) and then by an emphatic description (כָּבֵד הָרָעָב בָּאָרֶץ). Abram's intention was not to transfer permanently his residence, but simply to sojourn (לָגוּר) in Egypt until conditions improved.[142] The return to the Negeb in 13:1 brings the covenant family back to the situation of 12:9.

Though the narrator is characteristically terse, several points of significance emerge when the pericope is carefully analyzed within its literary context. It has been seen that Abram's original entrance into Canaan was prompted by obedient response to the divine call לֶךְ־לְךָ (12:1). Similarly, his return to Canaan is

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142 Cf. the parallel language in Ru 1:1.

occasioned by the command of Pharaoh לֵךְ (12:19). In contrast with these explicit commands, Abram's departure for Egypt in 12:10 is set as a response to circumstances. Though it is not stated clearly in the text, Kidner may be right when he suggests that "Abram did not stop to enquire, but went on his own initiative, taking everything into account but God."[143] This inference is strengthened by parallels between 12:5 and 13:1, which serve to highlight the similarity between the two entrances into Canaan.

Gen 13:3-4 shows that Abram's return to Canaan entailed both geographical and spiritual restoration. Abram returned to Bethel where his tent had been in the beginning, and, most significantly, to the place of the altar.[144] It is manifest, then, that what is presented in 13:3-4 is a reversal of Abram's lapsed obedience in 12:10-20.[145]

The theological significance of this passage is enhanced even more when its language is compared with accounts of the later history of the chosen people. As Abram went to Egypt in the time of famine and came out with great wealth after divine intervention which rescued his family from a perilous situation, so Jacob and his family at a time of famine went to sojourn (לָגוּר - Gen 47:4) in Egypt, and were eventually delivered by Yahweh in the exodus.[146] What appears evident is that the details chosen and

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143 Genesis 116.

144 Cassuto, op. cit. 2:364-365.

145 Kidner, Genesis 117-118.

146 Fishbane, Text and Texture 76. Cf. also the structuralist analysis by Miscall, The Workings of Old Testament Narrative 42-45, who concludes: "Gen 12:10-20 is a powerful example of the effects of the paradigmatic possibilities of biblical narrative, of how it overloads a text and frustrates any attempt at clear, univocal reading. The main text under consideration does not give enough to support a final, definitive reading, and at the same time, it provides too much. The parallels, analogies,

the vocabulary employed are far from arbitrary. Rather, this pericope "exhibits intentional selectivity and shaping with highly theological purposes."[147] When observed in its juxtaposition with the obedient response of Abram in 12:1-9 and with the exodus language of later history, this passage contains theological overtones which transcend the designation of geographical movement.

2.23 Genesis 13:12,17,18

Genesis 13 details the separation of Abram and Lot. Because of the numerous flocks which had been obtained in Egypt, the land was incapable of adequately supporting them at one location. Therefore, Abram offered to partition the promised land of Canaan with Lot.[148] Lot, however, chose to step outside of the land of promise and to dwell in the cities of the plain.[149] Verse 12 contrasts the men and their localities in strict parallelism:

אַבְרָם יָשַׁב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן
וְלוֹט יָשַׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכִּכָּר

It is apparent from this example that יָשַׁב בְּ must be considered morally neutral. What determines the ethical content of the expression is not the verbal root, but rather the implications involved in the location of one's residence or the motivations which determine the choice.

From the human perspective it would have appeared that

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contrasts, and such, also provide too little or too much. Under the impact of paradigmatic interference, the text explodes in all directions."

147 Pratt, "Pictures, Windows, and Mirrors in Old Testament Exegesis" 165.

148 Jewish tradition states that Abraham had adopted Lot as his heir; cf. Chronicles of Jerahmeel 35.1; Josephus, Jew. Ant. 1.154; Pesikta Rabbati 3.3.

149 This interpretation of the separation is developed plausibly by Helyer, "The Separation of Abraham and Lot" 79-80.

Lot got the better of the choice. However, in verses 14-17 Yahweh reaffirms to Abram the gift of the land.[150] In conjunction with this reaffirmation, He commands Abram to arise and walk through the full dimensions of the land (verse 17).[151] Afterwards Abram makes the center of his residence in Hebron, and he once again builds an altar to Yahweh.

2.24 Genesis 15:13

This verse does not refer directly to Abram, but rather predicts that his descendants will be sojourners (גֵּר), and they will suffer slavery and oppression for four hundred years. The phrase "in a land that is not theirs" moves the meaning into the socio-political domain. Abram's family will be resident aliens in a foreign land. There does not appear to be any hint of a transferred sense of sojourning in this passage.

2.25 Genesis 16:3

The expression מִקֵּץ עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים לְשֶׁבֶת אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן serves merely as a locative and temporal indicator in preparation for the narrative of the birth of Ishmael. Nothing is connoted of the quality of Abram's life. The verse simply indicates how long

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150 Daube, Studies in Biblical Law 34-35 notes that "in Oriental law, the promise of an estate is already a kind of transfer; yet, as it is not a real, physical transfer, it may well be followed by a second ceremony giving actual effect to it ... Legally and morally, the land belonged to Abraham as soon as the promise was made and the ceremony of looking round performed - none the less, it was only a promise that he received, he was not made actual owner of the land."

151 Speiser, Genesis 97 points to a close Akkadian parallel in Gilgamesh XI.203 which involves a tour of inspection. Midrash Rabbah Lech Lecha 41.10 views this walk as Abram's acquisition of the promised land. Cf. BTal Baba Bathra 100a; JTal Qiddoushin 1.3. This tour is portrayed in ideal dimensions in Genesis Apocryphon 21.13-19; see further at 4.4.

Abram had lived in Canaan between the previously narrated events and the ones to be presented in chapter 16.

2.26 Genesis 17:1

The divine command, "Walk before me, and be blameless" (הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים), as has been discussed, bears unmistakable theological overtones. Von Rad notes that what is being commanded is Abram's complete, unqualified surrender of his life to God.[152] It may thus be said that וֶהְיֵה תָמִים is the reality of which הִתְהַלֵּךְ is the figure. On the other hand, much Jewish translation and exegesis renders תָמִים in terms of the subsequent circumcision of Abraham.[153]

In the highly covenantal language of the passage,[154] God promises Abraham (his name is changed in 17:5), "And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings (אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ), all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (17:8). As in 12:7 the land would not be possessed by Abraham, but only by his descendants. For Abraham Canaan would be only a land of sojournings, not a possessed home. Thus, as Klein points out, it is "recognized

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152 Genesis 198-199, and supported by Aquila's τέλειος for תָמִים. Thus, Jubilees 23.10 reads: "For Abraham was perfect in all his actions with the LORD and was pleasing through righteousness all the days of his life." Cf. Zadokite Fragments 7.5 and Philo, Quaest. et Sol. in Gen. III 40, who states that "a character which pleases God does not incur blame, while one who is blameless and faultless in all things is altogether pleasing [to God]." This reading is also followed by Jerome, Against the Pelagians 3.12.

153 Cf. Midrash Rabbah Lech Lecha 46.4; Targum Jonathan; Targum Neophyti; BTal Nedarim 31b-32a; JTal Nedarim 3.11; Tosefta Nedarim 2.5.

154 Cf. Clements, TDOT 1:58.

that the patriarchs never really occupied the land as owners."[155]

Moreover, the evident allusion to Enoch and Noah must be accounted for. As Enoch had walked with God and had been translated from his society into the divine presence, and as Noah had walked with God and been delivered from divine judgment upon his sinful culture, so Abraham was commanded to walk before God. It is recognizable, then, that Abraham is being called to a relationship with God which by its very orientation will cause him to be differentiated from his society.

2.27 Genesis 20:1,15; 21:23,34; 22:19

Genesis 20 narrates Abraham's sojourn and deception in Gerar in a manner reminiscent of 12:10-20. In this passage the verbs נָסַע, יָשַׁב and גּוּר appear to be used without metaphorical overtones, and simply describe the fact, location and unassimilated quality of his stay in Gerar.

The two uses of גּוּר in Gen 21:23,34 detailing the covenant made between Abraham and Abimelech serve to clarify the sociopolitical content of the term. The legal setting of the pericope (note שׁבע, vv. 23,24,31, and בְּרִית, v.32) tends to indicate that Abimelech, when speaking of the land in which Abraham sojourned, is making reference to Abraham's status as a resident alien. It is in this legal position that Abraham lived in the land of the Philostines.[156]

The reference in Gen 22:19, "and Abraham dwelt (וַיֵּשֶׁב) at Beer-sheba" is a programmatic conclusion to the pericope in 22:1-1

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155 Israel in Exile 137.
156 Muntingh, "The City Which Has Foundations" 112-113 notes with reason that the long duration of Abraham's sojourns militates against his identification as a nomad.

describing the sacrifice of Isaac. There appears to be no significance to the expression beyond the mere depiction of existence.

2.28 Genesis 23:4

Genesis 23[157] is a crucial text[158] for the understanding both of the socio-political concept of גֵּר, and of the background of the later metaphorical concept of spiritual pilgrimage. The occasion for the transaction here recorded is the death of Sarah. Though Abraham had been promised the entire land of Canaan by God, he had not yet come into possession of even enough ground for a burial site.

The legal setting of the pericope in which "preoccupation with the problem of ownership determines every stage, every detail of the negotiation,"[159] is determinative for Abraham's self-description, "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you." The issue involved more than mere title to a plot of land. At stake also is "whether Abraham was to gain a permanent foothold or not"[160] in Canaanite society.

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157 Hahn, Wallfahrt und Auferstehung zur messianischen Zeit 156-170 gives a useful discussion of the interpretation of Genesis 23 in the later rabbinic literature.

158 Thus, Vink, "The Date and Origin of the Priestly Code in the Old Testament" 91 says of Genesis 23: "The text is important for P because it tells about the primitiae of the possession of the land and the beginning of the fulfilment of the divine promise."

159 Licht, Storytelling in the Bible 22. Cf. Lehmann, "Abraham's Purchase of Machpelah and Hittite Law" 15-18 who relates the incident to Hittite laws regarding feudal obligation, and Tucker, "The Legal Background of Genesis 23" 77-84, who details the parallels between the transaction in Genesis 23 and a wide range of Near Eastern legal forms, in particular, the Neo-Babylonian dialogue documents. Van Seters, Abraham in History and Tradition 99-100 argues that the suggested parallels with Old Babylonian contracts point only to the continuity of legal procedures over a long time. He agrees with Tucker that Genesis 23 follows completely the model of the sale contracts of the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods.

160 Kidner, Genesis 145.

When read in isolation, Genesis 23 fits comfortably in the legal or commercial domain. However, in its literary context in the Abrahamic narratives and in the biblical corpus, theological implications emerge. As Coats remarks, "the unit itself draws no theological consequence from the acquisition,"[161] but when seen in the light of the reiterated land promise to Abraham, the purchase of even a burial site becomes the earnest of the ultimate fulfillment.[162] The positioning of this transaction between the crisis of the sacrifice of the heir in chapter 22 and the securing of a wife for Isaac (thus providing for the perpetuation of the covenant family) in chapter 24 hints at the prospective nature of Abraham's purchase. Nevertheless, to posit an explicit metaphorical meaning to גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב exceeds the dimensions of this context.

2.29 Genesis 24:3,37,40

Gen 24:3 and its parallel, verse 37, employ יָשַׁב בְּ to denote Abraham's existence in Canaan in a local sense. Verse 40, however, includes a confession by Abraham, "The LORD, before whom I walk (הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי)," which is clearly metaphorical. The use of the Leitwort הִתְהַלֵּךְ connects Abraham with Enoch (5:22,24) and Noah (6:9) as one whose relationship with God caused him to be distinct from his society. This is reinforced by the instruction to "take a wife for my son from my kindred (מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתִּי) and from my father's house (וּמִבֵּית אָבִי)," clear allusions to the divine call in 12:1.

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161 Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature 1

162 von Rad, Genesis 250. Cf. Davidson, Genesis 12-50 101 and Childs, Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context 219. Hauge, "The Struggles of the Blessed in Estrangement" 140 seems to take the theological implication a step too far when he asserts that "corresponding to Canaʿan developed as the Land of Estrangement, the Promised Land as the Land of the Grave expresses a definite reinterpretation of the traditional Land motif."

Abraham has determined that his obedient response in leaving the familiar to venture in faith in God must be duplicated by his son's family. Isaac must not renounce the call to Canaan, and his wife must accept that call as her own.

2.3 Relationship of the Abrahamic Narratives to Genesis 1-11

This section of the study will examine the relationship of Genesis 12-25, and in particular 12:1-3, to the primeval narratives in Genesis 1-11. The literary arrangement will be analyzed to determine to what extent later Jewish and Christian writers may have derived the metaphorical concept of pilgrimage from the ordering of the narratives in Genesis. Though the composition of the extant text merits study,[163] the progressive use of the commonly accepted text from its time of final redaction onwards is the specific focus of study in this section.[164]

Several factors justify the examination of the traditional text as a prime focus in biblical study: 1. It is the only objectively available text, in contrast with the speculative reconstructions of source criticism.[165] 2. The accepted text is

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163 Robertson, The Old Testament and the Literary Critic 6 contends: "To dissect Genesis into J, E, and P and study these separately defies no sacred tenet of literary criticism; it is just less challenging and less exciting. Whatever the text, once it is chosen it is considered as if it were written by one author. If the entire book of Genesis is the text, then the fact that it was put together out of originally separate strands, if indeed it was, or that it went through several recensions, is of ancillary importance." The desirability of eclectic biblical study is argued cogently by Crossan, "Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Biblical Criticism" 39-49.

164 Knierim, "The Composition of the Pentateuch" 393-394 notes: "Traditional historical exegesis has for good reasons been preoccupied with the layers and developments before the latest composition. At the same time, however, it has behaved as if the final composition was not worth discussing. The reason for this neglect is probably because this layer is presumed to be self-explanatory, a matter for lay people."

165 Barr, The Bible in the Modern World 163-164. Smend, "Questions about the Importance of the Canon in an Old Testament

the corpus which shaped later tradition in both Judaism and Christianity.[166] 3. The juxtaposition of sources can produce "unexpected narrative connections and theological insights" so that the literary whole is a sum greater than its parts.[167] Indeed, these collocations bear evidence of logical[168] or theological[169] intention. 4. The relevance of the synthetic approach is confirmed by Jewish midrashic exegesis, which seeks to explain the juxtaposition of texts.[170] Thus, the conclusion by Sawyer is apposite:

> ... the original meaning of the final form of the text is a concept which not only permits fruitful study of a clearly defined corpus of lexical data, but also provides an obvious

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Introduction" 45-46, in assessing the work of Childs states: "Generations of scholars have seen their primary task as the reconstruction of the oldest written texts and, as far as possible, the oral forms that preceded them. The further such work continues, the greater the danger of its becoming speculation. So it is not only understandable, but also appropriate, if the focus of analysis is now, by way of reaction, the end of the process of tradition, i.e. the final written form of the material. This is not only a neglected and hence a fertile field, but also a more certain one, since the finalised texts are not imaginary entities. Here we are less under the influence of speculations, but can make observations on material that clearly lies before us, and are often also in a position to prove and disprove."

166 Childs, <u>Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture</u> 76-77.

167 Noth, <u>Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch</u> 269-270; cf. Anderson, "The New Frontier of Rhetorical Criticism" xvii.

168 Segal, "The Composition of the Pentateuch" 95. However, Whybray, <u>The Making of the Pentateuch</u> 14 issues a salutary caution: "While there is undoubtedly a continuous narrative thread, this is often extremely thin, and the various incidents described are frequently joined together only very loosely." One then must be cautious in interpreting the juxtapositions of the extant text as deliberate collocations intended to teach explicit principles.

169 Landes, "The Canonical Approach to Introducing the Old Testament: Prodigy and Problems" 33; Rendtorff, <u>The Old Testament: An Introduction</u> 290.

170 Wadsworth, "Making and Interpreting Scripture" 10. He goes on to state concerning Genesis (p.11): There are narrative connections in the story from chapter 10 through to 12 which an inordinate reliance on the J or P writers as self-contained, autonomous chroniclers has tended to obscure..." Cf. Rendtorff, "Rabbinic Exegesis and the Modern Christian Bible Scholar" 35-36.

starting-point for theological discussion, since it was the final form of the text, not its separate component parts, that was canonized in all the religious communities for which it is an authoritative religious text.[171]

2.31 Literary Integration in Genesis 11-12

Though a convenient division between the primeval history (Genesis 1-11) and the patriarchal history (Genesis 12-50) has often been made, a careful reading of Genesis 11-12 reveals a significant degree of continuity between the two sections as well. To be sure, Abram is called to a new phase of life in 12:1, but he and his family are introduced in chapter 11. The elaborate transitional passage in 11:10-32 compels the reader of the canonical text[172] to view the patriarchal history in some relationship with the primeval history.[173] Von Rad explains this conjunction in terms of aetiology, in that the meaning of the call of Abram is expounded in the primeval history. He concludes: "eigentlich ist durch diese Verklammerung von Urgeschichte und Heilsgeschichte die ganze Heilsgeschichte Israels von dem ungelösten Problem des Verhältnisses Jahwes zu den Volkern her zu

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171 "The Meaning of בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים ('In the Image of God') in Genesis I-XI" 419. Though Sawyer's argument from canonical status is open to question (cf. Perdue, "Review of Childs" 243-249 and Barton, Reading the Old Testament 91,96), his emphasis on the usefulness of studying the traditionally accepted text is salutary.

172 The juxtaposition of Genesis 11 and 12 finds unanimous attestation in all the ancient sources, including the MT, SP, Targums and LXX, and it can justifiably be maintained that the early Jewish and Christian writers would have had before them this arrangement of texts. Thus, at least in this specific case, a canonical approach is warranted. Cf. Sasson, "The 'Tower of Babel as a Clue to the Redactional Structuring of the Primeval History" 213, who argues well for the validity of both analytic and synthetic study of the biblical texts.

173 Clines, The Theme of the Pentateuch 77-78.

verstehen."[174]

In the interpretative process the combination of Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12 have a sum greater than the constitutive parts.[175] Certain motifs which are present in both literary blocks are thus brought to the fore as key themes in the extant form.[176] By this juxtaposition, potential for interpretative correlations is created which would not have occurred so readily to the reader had the individual passages remained as discrete units.

2.32 Genesis 12:1-3 as a Response to Genesis 1-11

It is evident from the divine call to the individual Abram in Gen 12:1 that the focus has narrowed from the more universal scope of Genesis 1-11. The primeval narratives trace the spiritual degeneration of the human race as a whole by means of the recurrent pattern of human sin and divine punishment.[177] But the story of Abraham also has a universal dimension, for the ultimate result of the blessing upon Abram is that all families of the earth will be blessed (12:3),[178] in essence a reformation

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174 Theologie des Alten Testaments 1:168.

175 The interpretative potential latent in the literary arrangement of Pentateuchal texts is frequently exploited by the Targums, as le Déaut, Targum du Pentateuque 54-55 notes with numerous examples.

176 Childs, "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament" 69.

177 Cohn, "Narrative Structure and Canonical Perspective in Genesis" 4.

178 Martin-Achard, A Light to the Nations 36 states well: "Gen. XII.3 has universalistic implications. The Patriarch is the instrument by which Yahweh is seeking to save all mankind. His promise to Abraham is the answer to the curse of the dispersion of the human race (Gen. XI.7ff.) and determines the whole destiny of Israel and the world; henceforth history is going to unfold under the sign of that blessing which is offered to all peoples through Abraham and his descendants."

of creation.[179] The positioning of Genesis 12 immediately after the primeval narratives suggests that "the election of Israel in some way must be the answer to the plight of man."[180]

The land promise in 12:7 is a reversal of the pattern of expulsion which dominates Genesis 3-11.[181] Dispersion or homelessness is manifested in Adam and Eve's removal from Eden (3:23-24), the curse on Cain (4:16) and the scattering of Babel (11:8), but is strikingly arrested in the divine call of Abram. As Fishbane suggests, Abram is in a sense a new Adam, in whom is hope for the renewal of human life in history.[182] Though Eden could not be regained by human means, divine grace to Abram gives the prospect of the restoration of the land, fertility and blessing lost by the human parents.[183]

The primeval narratives relate the tragic story of nearly

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179 Brueggemann, Genesis 105-106; cf. Steck, "Die Paradieszählung. Eine Auslegung von Genesis 2,4b-3,24" 112-114, which sees Gen 12:1-3 as a renewal of God's blessing to mankind as in Gen 2:18-24. Albrektson, History and the Gods 80-81 argues unconvincingly against the universal dimension of the blessing: "In fact to render Gen.12.3b by 'in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed' is to read too much into it - behind such an interpretation lies ultimately the New Testament use of this passage in Acts 3.25 and Gal.3.8, where Luke and Paul, following LXX, have rendered נברכו by ἐνευλογηθήσονται. We must take Gen.12.3 as a statement about the abundance of the blessing which had been allotted to Abraham, not as an intimation of the final goal of a divine plan for the salvation of the world. Thus interpreted the passage admittedly becomes less charged with theological profundity, but this seems in fact more justified in view of the context: so advanced a universalism as the rendering by a passive form implies would be rather surprising in this connexion, lacking as it does real parallels in the work of the Yahwist."

180 Wright, The Old Testament Against Its Environment 53.

181 Brueggemann, The Land 15-16.

182 Text and Texture 39.

183 Ibid. 112. The biblical solution to the problem in Genesis 1-11 is in sharp contrast with that given in the Old Babylonian Atrahasis epic, which finds an urban solution to the threat of extinction. Despite formal similarities between the two accounts the ideologies are different from one another; cf. Kikawada, "Literary Convention of the Primaeval History" 7-13.

unmitigated human disobedience and failure. Though there are indeed exceptions like Abel, Enoch and Noah, more characteristic is the observation in 6:5 that man's thoughts were only evil continually. Instead of submitting to God, man in his hubris[184] refused to obey the divine standards, and consequently brought upon himself repeated judgment.

Throughout the first eleven chapters of Genesis the motif of cursing, or crime and punishment,[185] is dominant. From the fall in Eden onwards sinful man is justly under the curse of God. Five times[186] in the primeval history the divine curse is pronounced upon the sin-tainted creation. This repeated theme sets the stage for the call of Abram to be the mediator of God's blessing to the world.[187] Thus, in the canonical arrangement, Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12:1-3 are structured as problem and solution.[188] Wolff notes: "Die sogenannte Urgeschichte erklärt vorweg, warum alle Sippen der Erde Segen brauchen. Das ist von 12,3b rückläufig als ihre geheime Leitfrage enthüllt."[189] But in the patriarchal narratives blessing becomes the recurrent chord[190] as the divine answer to the human dilemma caused by sin. The motive for this

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184 Cf. Coats, "The God of Death" 234.

185 Westermann, Die Verheißungen an die Väter 47.

186 Gen 3:14,17; 4:11; 5:29; 9:25. Cf. Vesco, "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures" 43-44.

187 Zimmerli, Man and His Hope in the Old Testament 50 reasons: "The Yahwist wants to make clear by the shape of his narrative that here a turning point is reached. The persistence with which the key-word 'blessing - to bless' occurs no less than five times in both of the quoted verses [Gen 12:2-3] is intended to ensure that we realize that here the shift from the curse upon the world to blessing upon it is taking place."

188 Cf. Steck, "Genesis 12,1-3 und die Urgeschichte des Jahwisten" 117-148; Rendtorff, The Old Testament: An Introduction 134.

189 "Das Kerygma des Jahwisten" 86.

190 Kaiser, Toward an Old Testament Theology 57 notes that blessing appears 82 times in the patriarchal narratives. Cf. Zimmerli. "Abraham" 52-53.

blessing is the grace of God. In the primeval narratives after each occasion of judgment there is a gracious opportunity.[191] The grace extended after the dispersion of the nations (11:1-9) is the blessing mediated through Abram and his seed.[192]

2.33 Recurrent Motifs in Genesis 11 and 12

It has been shown that the call of Abram stands in organic connection with the primeval narratives. This significant canonical arrangement is even more apparent when Genesis 12 is viewed in relationship with the preceding chapter. Several factors emerge which bear upon the use of Abraham as a pilgrim figure, in particular as he is depicted in Heb 11:8-16.

The call of Abram is set firmly in conjunction with the תּוֹלְדֹת in 11:10-32. The narrator in tracing the line of Shem arrives at Abram and his wife Sarai, and then adds cryptically in 11:30, "Now Sarai was barren; she had no child." Sarna points out that this detail along with several other notices in the passage serves to introduce information in the subsequent Abrahamic narratives.[193] If chapters 11 and 12ff. were not intended to be read together, the details in the תּוֹלְדֹת would be superfluous. Their inclusion, however, is intended to inform the reader of a crucial theme. Though the point must not be pressed too far, the fact stands that the biblical texts often present barrenness as preparatory to divine intervention in blessing.[194] In the nar-

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191 Clines, The Theme of the Pentateuch 65.

192 von Rad, Theologie des Alten Testaments 1:167-168.

193 "The Anticipatory Use of Information as a Literary Feature of the Genesis Narratives: 78-79. Cf. Hauge, "The Struggles of the Blessed in Estrangement" 7 and Kilian, Die vorpriesterlichen Abrahamsuberlieferungen 279-280.

194 Cf. the examples of Rebekah (Gen 25:21), Rachel (Gen 30:1), Samson's mother (Judg 13:2), Hannah (1 Sam 1:2), and in th New Testament, Elisabeth (Lu 1:7).

rative of Genesis, if Abram and Sarai are to have any future, the problem of barrenness will have to be overcome. This, then, sets the stage for the divine promise of a seed.[195]

Because the תולדת introducing the genealogy culminating in Abram follows immediately upon the incident of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11:1-9, it is not surprising that common strands may be detected between the call of Abram and the corporate building and consequent dispersion.[196] The stated motivation for the construction of Babel was the desire for social unity and greatness (11:4),[197] but its frustration led to social fragmentation.[198] The divine plan was that in Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed (12:3).

This general correspondence between Abram and Babel is specified in the motifs of name and city.[199] As Kaiser notes, the driving ambition of the builders was the quest for a name,

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195 Gen 12:2; 13:15-16; 15:4-5; 17:4-8,19; fulfilled in 21:1-3. Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative 248 points out that the dual references to Sarai's barrenness (11:30) and the divine promise of a seed (12:2) at the beginning of the Abrahamic narratives set the stage for the subsequent stories. Thus, "each new development ... sharpens the non sequitur between God's promise and Abraham's plight."

196 Lundbom, "Abraham and David in the Theology of the Yahwist" 204 relates Gen 11:1-9 and 12:1-3 to 2 Samuel 7. He speculates: "2 Samuel 7 - with its message about what kind of house Yahweh really wants - provides the Yahwist with just the inspiration he needs to complete the transition from primeval to patriarchal history. It leads him to juxtapose the Tower of Babel story and the Call of Abraham, and in doing so he is able to render a theological judgment about 'hoar antiquity' that comes very close to being the same as one already contained in the Court History."

197 Josephus, Jew. Ant. 1.113-115 forges a connection between Nimrod, the flood and Babel.

198 Cf. Laurin, "The Tower of Babel Revisited" 144-145. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine 2.4 comments: "And that celebrated tower which was built to reach to heaven was an indication of this arrogance of spirit; and the ungodly men concerned in it justly earned the punishment of having not their minds only, but their tongues besides, thrown into confusion and discordance."

199 Cf. Zimmerli, Man and His Hope in the Old Testament 5

or renown.[200] But to Abram (12:2), "God now grants that which men had tried to gain by their own resources, but to the man of His choice and on His terms."[201] Yahweh's gracious blessing upon Abram answers the self-seeking ambitions of Babel.[202]

The exposition of Abraham's pilgrimage of faith in Heb 11:8-16 highlights the notion that he was seeking "the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (11:10). The narratives of Abraham in Genesis give no hint to such a concept. However, the juxtaposition of the call of Abram with the building of a city in Gen 11:1-9 provides a plausible biblical matrix for the assertion in Hebrews. The builders of Babel seek to build for themselves a city[203] and a tower whose top would reach into heaven.[204] Their aspirations are dashed, however, when Yahweh confuses their language, so that "they left off building the city" (Gen 11:8). But from that very geographical area,[205] from Ur of the Chaldeans,[206] Yahweh calls Abram to begin the quest

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200 Toward an Old Testament Theology 86.

201 Navone, "The Patriarchs of Faith, Hope and Love" 340. Cf. Lundbom, op. cit. 205: "'Making a name' means one thing in 11:4 but quite another in 12:2. In the Babel story men seek a name by erecting a city within which there is a religious temple ... Abraham, however, will achieve his name by having a myriad of descendants. These will become a great nation which no doubt is what the men of Babel are also striving for as they set out to build their city."

202 Vesco, op. cit. 42-43.

203 In both the primeval and the patriarchal narratives, city building and city dwelling are viewed in a somewhat ominous light, as for example in Gen 4:17; 18-19; 34. Cf. Wallis, "Die Stadt in den Überlieferungen der Genesis" 133-148 and Starobinski-Safrai, "Aspects de Jérusalem dans les Écrits Rabbiniques" 153.

204 שָׁמַיִם can be used both for the visible sky and for the abode of God (BDB 1029-1030). Cf. the audacious assertion by the king of Babylon: "I will ascend to Heaven" (הַשָּׁמַיִם) in Is 14:13.

205 Guillet, Thèmes Bibliques 104.

206 The debated question of the location of Abram when he received the call in Gen 12:1-3 (cf. Ac 7:2-4) is of little consequence on this point. What is of paramount significance is that his original domicile was regarded as Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen 11:28,31; 15:7; Neh 9:7). Fishbane, "The Sacred Center: The Symbolic

for a different kind of city, not a city to reach up to God, but a city which has been constructed by God.[207]

2.4 Relationship of the Abrahamic Narratives to the Succeeding Biblical Corpus

Just as the journeyings of Abraham manifest increased significance when viewed in conjunction with the prior canonical context, so they also anticipate events in the subsequent narratives.[208] The pattern of Abraham's journeyings may be traced in the life of Jacob, in the exodus and in the conquest of Canaan.[209]

The activities of Jacob in Genesis 31ff. bear more than casual resemblance to the travels of Abraham detailed in Genesis 12-13. Each of the key details in Abraham's experience is repeated in nearly identical order in Jacob's life.

	Abraham	Jacob
Divine word to leave Mesopotamia	12:1	31:3,13
Departure from Mesopotamia	12:4	31:17-18
Took family and possessions	12:5	31:17-18
Arrival at Shechem	12:6	33:18

Structure of the Bible" 13 notes with reference to 11:1-9: "This final episode of the Primeval Cycle is thus a bathetic re-expression of the alienation of man from order and harmony when his orientation is not God-centered... But the ironic mask of tragedy also smiles: the episode is double-edged, and unfolds its own reversal. For it is from this Babylon, from Ur, that Abraham separates for a new land."

207 Knight, Theology in Pictures 122-123.

208 Rosenberg, "Biblical Tradition: Literature and Spirit in Ancient Israel" 102 concludes: "Most of Israel's later history, as well as most of its socioeconomic patterns (servitude and independence, seminomadism, sheepherding, cattle raising, farming, village life and city life), is prefigured in the patriarchal cycles of Genesis."

209 Cf. Midrash Rabbah Lech Lecha 40.6, which draws comparisons between Abram's trip to Egypt (Gen 12-13) and Israel's history.

Divine promise of land	12:7	35:12
Altar at Shechem	12:7	33:20
Arrival at Bethel	12:8	35:6
Altar at Bethel	12:8	35:7
Journey toward the Negeb	12:9	35:21ff.
Arrival and altar at Hebron	13:18	35:27

Thus, Abraham's activities appear to function in some fashion as a literary pattern to structure the narrative of Jacob's return to Canaan.

A second parallel is seen when the language of the Abrahamic narratives is compared with that of the exodus.[210] In contrast with the mythical national origins represented in Babylonian, Egyptian and Greek literature, Israel finds its roots in the call of Yahweh which propelled Abraham and subsequently the nation towards fulfillment of the divine promise.[211] Specific correlation between the story of Abraham and the exodus is intimated by the use of עלה to refer to Abram's return from Egypt to Canaan (Gen 13:1). The Hiphil of עלה is often employed to speak of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian slavery.[212] Wijngaards notes that this formula includes either explicitly or implicitly the concept of coming to the land.[213] In addition, the divine statement to Abram, "I am the LORD who brought you (הוֹצֵאתִיךָ) from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess" (Gen 15:7) corresponds to uses of יָצָא with reference to the exodus.[214]

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210 Cf. Fishbane, "The Sacred Center: The Symbolic Structure of the Bible" 16.

211 Zimmerli, <u>Old Testament Theology in Outline</u> 29-30.

212 E.g. Ex 3:17; Lev 11:45; Deut 20:1; Josh 24:17.

213 "הוציא and העלה A Twofold Approach to the Exodus" 99.

214 E.g. Ex 18:1; 20:2; Numb 20:16; Deut 1:27; Josh 24:6. Cf. Weingreen, "הוצאתיך in Genesis 15:7" 211-215.

Reminiscences of the journeyings of Abraham are equally recognizable in the conquest narrative in Joshua. After noting the literary similarities, Cassuto reasons that the patriarch's actions serve as a symbolic conquest of the land of Canaan, foreshadowing the literal conquest under Joshua.[215]

2.5 Conclusion

Several observations may be made from the analysis of Abraham and his journeyings in Genesis 12-25. First, the vocabulary used to express Abraham's movements represents a range of connotations from the description of physical movement to the metaphorical concept of הִתְהַלֵּךְ as fellowship with God. Second, the specific texts which speak of Abraham's movements are presented as historical narratives,[216] but emerging from the stories are frequent theological overtones. Third, the ordering of the Abrahamic narratives in the biblical corpus serves the theological function of providing the divine solution to the problem of sin in Genesis 1-11, and it anticipates the later events of Jacob, the exodus and the conquest. Fourth, the motif of the heavenly city expressed in Heb 11:10 can plausibly be taken to have a possible derivation from the collocation of the narratives of the Tower of Babel and the call of Abram in Genesis 11 and 12.

It would be claiming more than the evidence will sustain to insist that the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage is derived solely from the Genesis narratives of Abraham. Neverthe-

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215 Op. cit.2:305-306.

216 The controversial question as to the historicity of the patriarchal narratives is not the issue here. The presentation of Abraham is effected by means of the genre of historical narrative. The veracity of the narrative presentation is a question separate from the description of the literary phenomena.

less, the presence of metaphorical implications in the language and ordering of the narratives is at times already confirmed by the early Jewish writings and by the ancient versions. Therefore, the early Christian concept of spiritual pilgrimage can be explained reasonably in part as an extrapolation from the metaphorical intimations evidenced in the Genesis texts.

CHAPTER 3

ABRAHAM AS AN EXAMPLE OF SOJOURNING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

3.0 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the direct references and allusions to Abraham in the Old Testament which bear upon the sojourner motif. Particular attention is given to Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15, in which the concept of metaphorical sojourning is most clearly presented. A determination as to the extent of figurative development of the image of Abraham as a pilgrim within the Old Testament literature is articulated.

3.01 References to Abraham in the Old Testament

When considered in the light of the ample New Testament use of the figure of Abraham,[1] the Old Testament references to the patriarch are scanty in comparison. When he is mentioned, the allusion is in most cases to the patriarchs as a group, rather than to Abraham as an individual.[2] Abraham does play a crucial role in the parenetic sections of Deuteronomy, primarily because of the significance of the Abrahamic Covenant in the Deuteronomistic historiography.[3] The exilic and post-exilic periods reawakened a new interest in the patriarchal history as Israel wrestled with the question of its national identity.[4] Of par-

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1 Cf. e.g., Romans 4; Galatians 3,4; Hebrews 7.

2 Martin-Achard, Actualité d'Abraham 94-95. However, Bruce, The Time is Fulfilled 58 remarks soundly that "when he is mentioned, no doubt is left of his pre-eminence in salvation history or in popular memory."

3 Clements, TDOT 1:57.

4 Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel 375-376 argues that

ticular significance was the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant[5] as the basis of hope for the sinful nation which had been judged by Yahweh.[6]

3.02 Abraham as an Example in the Old Testament

Though it is evident that Abraham is not presented as an impeccable pattern for imitation in the Genesis narratives, the Old Testament references to the patriarch do treat him as an example of substantial virtue. Without denying the cruciality of determining the objective facts pertaining to Abraham and his life,[7] the equally significant issue of the use of the figure of Abraham in later literature is also pertinent for examination.[8] The realistic presentation of the patriarchs in Genesis is indeed different from the characteristic idealizations of subsequent popular Jewish literature,[9] but that does not necessitate rejection of exemplary intent in the patriarchal narratives themselves. Nevertheless, regardless of the purport of the Abrahamic

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this renewed prophetic interest in the patriarchs can be attributed in great measure to "the need to find as many guarantees as possible for the future salvation of Israel ..."

5 Jacob, <u>Théologie de l'Ancien Testament</u> 167 notes that the prophetic allusions to the promises made to Abraham support a legitimate historical kernal to Israel's faith rather than "une simple projection dans le passé de formes et de croyances qui n'ont eu cours que cinq siècles plus tard."

6 Whybray, <u>The Making of the Pentateuch</u> 103-104 argues reasonably: "God, according to these prophets, had not forgotten his promises to Abraham and his descendants, but would again bless, lead, guide and prosper them, make them a strong and powerful people and above all give them (once more) the land which he had promised to give them (Isa.41.8-10; 51.1-3; Ezek.33.24). At this period, then, we find for the first time what appears to be a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the Abraham traditions, not merely as isolated stories but in a theologically developed form."

7 Cf. Pfeiffer, "Facts and Faith in Biblical History" 10

8 Cragg, <u>The Privilege of Man</u> 54.

9 von Rad, <u>Genesis</u> 36-37.

narratives, what is undeniable is that later Jewish and Christian literature uses aspects of the biblical portrayal of the patriarch as patterns worthy of emulation.

As can be seen from the use of exodus imagery in the prophetic oracles of Isaish 40-66,[10] the Old Testament writers are not hesitant to shape the motifs of antecedent biblical literature in innovative ways.[11] Thus, Barr concludes that "the function of the Old Testament tradition is not mainly to point back to a series of events from which the tradition has originated, but also to form the framework within which an event can be meaningful."[12] In the developing thought of Judaism and Christianity there is a symbiosis between the contemporary religious conceptions and the heritage from which the community derived its faith.[13] The narrative texts, then, were viewed both as past history and as present instruction.[14]

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10 Cf. discussions of the new exodus in Isaiah 40-66 by Klein, Israel in Exile 111-114; Daube, The Exodus Pattern in the Bible; and Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah" 181-195.

11 Van Seters, In Search of History 3 points out the wide scope of such ideational redaction: "The functions of tradition - the uses of the past - are so varied and numerous that no simple formula can cover them all. The tendency of many biblical scholars to confine the role of tradition in ancient Israelite society to the religious realm and to see all narrative texts about the past as cult functional is far too restrictive. Tradition is used to fortify belief, explain or give meaning to the way things are, invest persons and institutions with authority, legitimate practices, regulate behavior, give a sense of personal and corporate identity, and communicate skills and knowledge."

12 Old and New in Interpretation 20. Cf. Fishbane, Text and Texture 140: "... the events of history are prismatic openings to the transhistorical. Indeed, the very capacity of a historical event to generate future expectation is dependent on the transfiguration of that event by the theological intuition that in it and through it the once and future power of the Lord of history is revealed. Without such a symbolic transformation, the exodus would never have given birth to hope."

13 Steele, "The Patriarchal Narratives" 523 details the same development in Chinese literature from early historical record through expansion to historical novel.

14 Cf. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der Antiken Religionen 19; Davidson, Genesis 12-50 18. Rendtorff, Men of the

The relation between Abraham and the nation of Israel is indeed presented as a genealogical link, but transcending the connection of physical descent is Abraham's role as prototype. Zimmerli notes that "Israel sees in the figure of his 'Father Abraham' some kind of prefiguration of herself. So by handing down the traditions of Abraham and transforming them, Israel performs at the same time some kind of self-interpretation and reflection of her own faith."[15] The portrayal of Abraham, however, is not a one-dimensional figure of untarnished saintliness. Abraham is presented[16] as a complex figure who, like the nation of Israel, evidences at times enormous faith but also egregious faults. He is not a mold into which Israel is to be poured, but a realistic character with both virtues and vices from whom Israel can derive instruction and hope.[17]

3.03 The Godly Individual in the World in the Old Testament

Abraham the sojourner is one example of the larger set of godly individuals living in a world corrupted by sin. In contrast with pagan religions which sought to integrate humanity into the rhythm of the cosmos, the Old Testament depicts both man and the world as tainted by sin.[18] Because society has been cor-

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Old Testament 13 states: "But Abraham was not only father in the genealogical sense, the one with whom it all began. He is father in a much wider sense: he was the model and example who showed how Israel was to live before God and with God."

15 "Abraham" 50. Cf. Vesco, "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures" 79-80.

16 As Sasson, "The Biographic Mode in Hebrew Historiography" 308 notes, the episodic nature of the patriarchal narratives draws the reader into the action and encourages him to "interpret this past as but adumbrative of the present, if not the future."

17 Jacob, "Abraham et sa signification pour la foi chrétienne" 149-150.

18 Wright, The Biblical Doctrine of Man in Society 35.

rupted, God calls the individual to an ambivalent status _vis-à-vis_ his environment. The person who is obedient to God lives in his human society, but is at the same time alienated from it. As Wright contends: "He is placed in a society, but the mission of this society provides the context of his own mission. He is to live in and for society's Lord, and in this covenanted service he discovers his true freedom and a summons to his highest capacities."[19] This distinction does not, however, imply pietistic withdrawal from the world, but instead the sense of incomplete assimilation to the patterns of the world. Thus, the figure of sojourning becomes an apt metaphor for defining the status of the godly believer.[20]

Abraham in the Old Testament is an example of a man who, despite human frailties, obeys the divine call to life in distinction from the values of his sinful human society.[21] His commitment to spiritual aspirations does not militate against his active involvement with the people around him (cf. Genesis 14), but his independent relationship with respect to his culture is recognizable.

3.1 Explicit References to Abrahamic Sojourning

3.11 Genesis 35:27

This notice embedded in the passage forming a transition from the Jacob narratives to the Joseph narratives recapitulates the patriarchal history. Jacob comes to the ancestral home of

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19 _Ibid_. 161.

20 Souček, "Pilgrims and Sojourners" 9.

21 Robertson, "Old Testament Stories: Their Purpose and Their Art" 457 notes that the biblical narratives characteristically elevate theological and instructive concerns above the interest of historical recollection.

Abraham and Isaac, and he himself dwells in the land of Isaac's sojournings (מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו - 37:1). What is particularly noteworthy in this verse is that גור is used to speak of a residence of approximately 150 years in the biblical reckoning (cf. 22:19; 23:2; 35:28). What seems apparent is that גור is not being employed to speak primarily of a temporary duration of life, but rather denotes some other referent. This verse in isolation does not define the intended implication, but within the larger context of the Abrahamic narratives it is plausible to see the reference to the unassimilated status of Abraham and Isaac in relation to the society of Canaan.

3.12 Genesis 48:15

In his blessing upon Joseph and his sons, Jacob invokes "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked (הִתְהַלְּכוּ)." The second line of the invocation, "the God who has led me all my life long to this day," forms a reciprocal relationship with the first line. The dynamic of fellowship between the patriarchs and God involves the individual walking before God, and God watching over the individual. The characteristic perfect הִתְהַלְּכוּ is paralleled by the continuous action denoted by the participle הָרֹעֶה. This retrospect of the faithful life blessed by God serves as the foundation for the prospect of future blessing upon Jacob's descendants. As Helfmeyer remarks: "The fact that the fathers can look back upon a life before God's gracious countenance guarantees the future described in blessing and promise."[22]

As is typical in the Genesis narratives, הִתְהַלֵּךְ is used in a metaphorical sense to speak of one's pattern of life (cf. 5:22,

22 TDOT 3:392.

24; 6:9; 17:1; 24:40). This transferred sense is given the specified sense of "worshiped" in both Targum Onkelos (דפלחו)[23] and Targum Jonathan (דיפלחו). The LXX reads εὐηρέστησεν, a rendering which bears striking similarity to the expression in 1 Th 4:1: δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀρέσκειν θεῷ, καθὼς καὶ περιπατεῖτε.

3.13 Joshua 24:2-3

The record of Joshua's challenge to the tribes of Israel[24] to continued allegiance to Yahweh commences with a recollection of the historical roots of the people. Rather than quoting any particular Pentateuchal reference,[25] Joshua focuses on the renunciation of idolatry which was involved in Abraham's reponse to God's call.[26] There is no attempt to deny the checkered heritage of the Israelites, for it is explicitly stated that Terah worshiped idols,[27] and the implication is that even Abraham may have done

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23 Aberbach and Grossfeld, Targum Onkelos to Genesis 276-277. Targum Neophyti paraphrases the term to speak of walking in the truth; cf. le Déaut, Targum du Pentateuque 426.

24 The date and authorship of Joshua 24 have been discussed at length by Nicholson, God and His People 151-163, who concludes (p.163): "It may be regarded as a Deuteronomistic composition of the exilic period rather than a pre-exilic Deuteronomic 'kerygmatic' text." Van Seters, "Joshua 24 and the Problem of Tradition in the Old Testament" 149 also considers the passage a late addition, but from the hand of the Yahwist as an addition to the Deuteronomistic history. On the other hand, Mayes, The Story of Israel between Settlement and Exile 56-57 argues that though the final redaction is late, Joshua 24 includes ancient levitical tradition associated with Shechem.

25 Miller and Tucker, The Book of Joshua 181.

26 Van Seters, "Joshua 24 and the Problem of Tradition in the Old Testament" 153 reasons that the references to the foreign gods of Mesopotamia and of Egypt may be explained best against the background of the exile, in which the Jewish diaspora "were sorely tempted to worship the gods of these regions." To be sure, the exilic and post-exilic period, with its religious exclusivism, would be receptive to such a warning against apostasy. However, throughout its history Israel was confronted with the allurements of idolatry in its diverse forms. Thus, the date of the passage cannot be established so facilely.

27 Cf. Midrash Rabbah Chukkath 19.1: "It bears on the

so.[28] From that background,[29] which was spiritually precarious at best, Yahweh called Abraham to a radical obedience which precluded syncretism.

The divine word in Josh 24:2-3 has dimensions wider than the mere call of Abraham. Yahweh states: "Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led (וָאוֹלֵךְ) him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac ..." The history to which the passage directs Israel encompasses Abraham's life within Canaan as well as his call, and it extends to Abraham's progeny. The significance of this is apparent in the subsequent challenge to Israel. The Israelites, too, are at a crucial juncture which demands a decision to follow Yahweh in radical obedience. As Abraham had solemnly chosen to renounce idolatry (his own or that of his family) in order to obey Yahweh and to live in Canaan, so the Israelites must choose which god they will serve. As Woudstra notes, "Abraham's seed must walk in the footsteps of Abraham... As did their ancestor

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text, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? is it not One?' (Job XIV,4). For example, Abraham out of Terah; Hezekiah out of Ahaz; Josiah out of Amon; Mordecai out of Shimei; Israel out of idolaters; the future world out of this world?" Cf. also Segal, *The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Its Authorship* 126-129; Jubilees 11:14-17; and Apostolic Constitutions 8.12.

28 However, the weight of Jewish tradition portrays Abraham countering the idolatry of his society; cf. Josephus, *Jew. Ant*. 1.154-157; Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* 1:193-198; and in particular BTal ʿAbodah Zarah 3a, "Let Nimrod come and testify that Abraham did not [consent to] worship idols...", and Apocalypse of Abraham 8.1-6, which represents the patriarch as one who sought God. Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica* 1.2 implies Abraham's righteousness before his call, and Augustine, *First Catechetical Instruction* 19.33 states that "Abraham, a devout and faithful servant of God, was chosen that to him might be made the revelation concerning the Son of God, so that by imitating his faith all the faithful of all nations in time to come might be called his children."

29 Cf. the discussion of the religious state of Ur-III by Schneider, "Die Religiose Umwelt Abrahams in Mesopotamien."

in the time of the promise, so may the Israelites now do in the time of the fulfilment (cf. v.13)."[30]

3.14 Nehemiah 9:7

This reference to the call of Abraham is set in the context of the response of the post-exilic community to the reading of the law and their renewal of the covenant. In a manner reminiscent of the historical psalms[31] and other historical recitals such as Joshua 24, the confession in Nehemiah 9 focuses on the contrast between Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel and Israel's unfaithfulness to Him.[32] The purpose of this recital is not just descriptive but confessional. The community is not exulting in its history, nor presuming upon the divine interventions which had so often extricated Israel from trouble. Rather, the post-exilic Jews are acknowledging that their subjection under Persia (verse 36) is because of the historic apostasy of the nation.[33] Thus, the prayer becomes an exercise in communal self-understanding.[34]

The community begins its historical retrospection by rehearsing Yahweh's gracious call of Abraham. In contrast with the succeeding scenes of Israel's history, Abraham is faithful to Yahweh (verse 8). This initial picture of faithfulness and covenant becomes the backdrop against which the ensuing apostasy of Israel is portrayed. It is evident that it was Yahweh who

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30 The Book of Joshua 345.

31 Myers, Ezra-Nehemiah 166 comments: "The prayer is a composition drawn from many areas and, like Pss lxxviii, cv-cvi, reflects a deep feeling for the nation's historical experiences..."

32 Fensham, The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah 228.

33 Martin-Achard, Actualité d'Abraham 99.

34 Clines, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther 199.

took the initiative in prompting Abraham's journey to Canaan, for He chose (בָּחַרְתָּ) Abram and He brought him out (וְהוֹצֵאתוֹ) from Ur.[35] The migration of Abram is thus set in a theological frame of reference, rather than being attributed to social or economic causes.

3.15 Isaiah 41:8

This verse is of only marginal value in analyzing the nature of Abraham's movements in the Old Testament. Though some have endeavored to connect verse 9, "You whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners," with the reference to Abraham in verse 8, the more appropriate referent would be Israel, the one addressed.[36] The nation is described by a threefold epithet as "Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend." As Boadt points out, the use of the third member instead of the regular formula of two elements may place special force upon the Abrahamic designation.[37] There appears to be an ascending order of intimacy in the epithets. Transcending the nation, which is a servant, and Jacob, who is chosen, is Abraham, the friend (אֹהֲבִי) of God.[38]

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35 Weingreen, "הוצאתיך in Genesis 15:7" 214-215 relates the language of Neh 9:7 to the biblical presentation of the exodus and the midrashic exposition relating to the divine extrication of Abraham from Ur. He concludes: "The persistent tradition of God's 'bringing Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans' which we find preserved in Nehemiah and the adoption of the Genesis form of this statement in public recital suggests that reference is made to some positive divine action, rather than to the issuing of a command to Abraham that he should proceed to the land of Canaan. I find myself drawn to the conclusion that there is an allusion, both in the Genesis and Nehemiah texts, to Abraham's fortitude in his faith and to his deliverance by divine grace."

36 Whybray, Isaiah 40-66 63-64; Herbert, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah Chapters 40-66 32.

37 "Isaiah 41:8-13: Notes on Poetic Structure and Style" 26-27.

38 אהב is also often used with reference to loyalty in

3.16 Isaiah 51:2

Within the context of an oracle of encouragement for the decimated exiles in Babylon is found this reference to Abraham. Instead of drawing hope from a recollection of the exodus, the prophet turns their attention to the very inception of the nation in the divine call to Abraham and the miraculous conception by Sarah. Fishbane states that "the entire people are now called upon to remember their origins and the blessings of the past and to return to the land of their forefathers, thus reversing the despair and slackened spirits of years in exile."[39] The nation of Israel was brought into being by the creative power of God,[40] who made fruitful the aged patriarch and his barren wife. In language reminiscent of Yahweh's covenant with Abraham, the prophet reassures the exiles that the divine intention of blessing has

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covenantal contexts; cf. Judg 5:31; 1 Sam 18:3; Deut 6:5; the similar expressions by Jesus in Jn 14:15; 15:14; and BTal Soṭah 31a. The theme of Abraham the friend of God is common both in Jewish and Christian literature. Cf. e.g. Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews 1:281,320; 3:467; 4:306; 5:207-208. Discussions of the designation of Abraham as the friend of God in Jewish, Christian and Muslim literature are found in Moubarac, "Abraham <Ami de Dieu> dans la Bible et dans le Coran" 169-174 and Martin-Achard, Actualité d'Abraham 175-178. An analogous reference in Wisdom of Solomon 7:27 speaking of wisdom states: "And from generation to generation passing into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets."

39 Text and Texture 117.

40 Westermann, Isaiah 40-66 236 states that the images in verse 1 are "allusions to very ancient mythological ideas about the birth of mankind from a rock or a quarry. The reason why the poet uses the metaphors is not simply 'because he wishes to mention something very ancient'. He also wishes to give Israel's descent from Abraham and Sarah the status of an act of creation, on a par with Deutero-Isaish's description of the nation's election at the Exodus as creation." Cf. Ps-Philo 23:4-5 which portrays Joshua representing Abraham as the rock from which Israel was quarried. Bruce, The Time is Fulfilled 60 quotes a similar midrash from the medieval collection Yalquṭ Shimeʿoni 1.766. Justin Martyr, Dialogue 135.39 relates the hollow of the rock with the hollow in the side of the crucified Christ, cf. Daniélou, The Origins of Latin Christianity 50-51.

not been abandoned or exhausted.[41] As Whybray comments, "What Yahweh once did for the solitary Abraham, he will now do once more for the handful of exiles in Babylon: their small number will not matter, since he himself will build them into a prosperous nation in Palestine with flourishing cities and a fertile countryside."[42]

The prophet's exhortation, "Look to Abraham your father," implies that the patriarch is being used to some degree as an exemplary model. As Abraham had obeyed the divine call despite the overwhelming objections which could have been advanced, so the exiles are now challenged to follow in his footsteps of faith in Yahweh.[43] This trusting response acts in the confidence that the election of Abraham bears continuing significance for his descendants.[44]

3.17 Psalm 105

In keeping with the pattern of historical recollections in the Psalms, Psalm 105 rehearses aspects of Israel's past history in order to communicate a message relevant to the worshiping community. In many respects Psalms 105 and 106 form a pair of complementary perspectives, with Psalm 105 focusing on the positive aspect of Yahweh's mighty deeds on behalf of His people, and Psalm 106 stressing Israel's ungrateful and disobedient response.[45] Rogerson and McKay comment: "Taken together, Pss. 105 and 106 reveal the gulf between God's call and Israel's response which makes the Old Testament incomplete in itself, and needing to be

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41 Young, The Book of Isaiah 3:308.
42 Isaiah 40-66 155.
43 Cf. Fishbane, Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel 375.
44 Cf. Torrey, The Second Isaiah 396.
45 Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms 733.

completed by a New Covenant."[46] As Is 51:2 challenges the exiles to "Look to Abraham," so Psalm 105 exhorts the nation to look at Yahweh's dealings with their ancestors, beginning with Abraham and continuing through the conquest, so that it might be encouraged in Him.[47]

The theme of the psalm is introduced in verses 8-11 and recapitulated in verses 42-45: Israel should rejoice because Yahweh has fulfilled the promise of the land which He gave to Abraham.[48] Between the two statements of the theme, the psalmist presents a selection of several positive features of Israel's history,[49] tracing Yahweh's providential and gracious dealings on behalf of Isaael, encompassing the slavery and exaltation of Joseph, the Egyptian sojourn, the exodus and the wilderness experience. Clifford remarks that Psalm 105 "retells those traditions which underscore the fidelity of God to the people at times when they did not in fact possess the land... The psalm invites Israel to praise and seek the God who promised the land to them, regardless of whether they possess the land in fact."[50]

In contrast with Psalm 78, which uses a historical rehearsal in order to provide admonition, and Psalm 106, which has

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46 Psalms 101-150 40.

47 Cobb, The Book of Psalms 298-299 argues that Psalm 105 is a midrash on Is 51:1-2. This, however, appears to be overstating the case, for whereas the Isaiah passage is directed to those who are discouraged and the perspective is eschatological (verse 3 speaks of a new Eden), Psalm 105 is a call to praise in the present based upon the promise of the land and its fulfillment in the conquest.

48 Cf. Holm-Nielsen, "The Exodus Traditions in Psalm 105" 23.

49 By choosing only those details which support his thesis, and passing over other data, such as the murmuring in the wilderness, the psalmist keeps the attention on his rehearsal of God's gracious provision of the land and His continuous protection of the nation for the land.

50 "Style and Purpose in Psalm 105" 427.

a confessional intention,[51] Psalm 105 seeks to evoke praise from the community for Yahweh's faithfulness to His promise concerning the land.[52] Thus, the review of history is not a sentimental longing for days of by-gone splendor, nor a mythical identification with the past. Instead, the facts of Israel's history serve as the foundation upon which praise and faith are constructed.[53]

Though the entire psalm is structured around the theme of the fulfilled land promise to Abraham, several verses are of particular interest with reference to the patriarch. In the call to praise in verses 1-7, the community is addressed in verse 6: "O offspring of Abraham his servant, sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!" The parallel in 1 Chr 16:13 replaces Abraham with Israel, as the original content of the psalm is transposed to fit the specific liturgical setting.[54] In similar fashion the LXX reads the plural δοῦλοι [55] which stresses the identification of the worshipers with the patriarch. The MT זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ, on the other hand, places the relationship within the concept of seed. This initial reference to Abraham and Jacob provides a transition to the main section of the psalm, which deals with the patriarchal promises.[56] Israel is to view itself in terms of its relationship with Abraham and Jacob.[57]

Verses 8-15 deal with the patriarchal experience prior to Jacob's migration to Egypt. Two items are brought to the fore:

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51 Perowne, The Book of Psalms 2:248.

52 Allen, Psalms 101-150 42.

53 Fensham, "Neh.9 and Pss.105,106,135 and 136" 47.

54 Butler, "A Forgotten Passage from a Forgotten Era (1 Chr XVI 8-36)" 144.

55 Note, however, that A,Σ read δούλου αὐτοῦ. DSS also substitutes עם for אברהם in verse 9.

56 Clifford, "Style and Purpose in Psalm 105" 422-423. In particular, the terms עֶבֶד and בָּחִיר are key terms throughout the psalm (cf. verses 6,9,10,15,17,25,26,42,43).

57 Cf. Hirsch, The Psalms 2:234.

the divine covenant with Abraham, which was repeated to Isaac and Jacob (verses 8-12), and the divine protection of the patriarchs during the movements related in the Genesis narratives (verses 13-15). Verses 8-9a declare that Yahweh made and remembers[58] the covenant which He established with Abraham (cf. Gen 13:15; 15:18). This covenant was later reiterated to Isaac (Gen 26:3) and to Jacob (Gen 28:13-15), as is detailed in verses 9b-10. The climax is that Yahweh has made this covenant with Israel of everlasting duration.[59] The content of the covenant is given in verse 11: "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

This lofty promise had been uttered in the context of patriarchal instability. Though Abraham had been promised descendants as numerous as the stars and the sand, during the times of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the covenant family were "few in number,[60] of little account, and sojourners (וְגָרִים) in it [the land of Canaan]" (verse 12). God's promise had been given to a most unpromising family.[61]

The reference to sojourners in verse 12 leads directly

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58 זָכַר likely bears the pregnant sense of "to remember so as to do something." Cf. Gen 8:1.

59 The synthetic parallelism of verse 10 clearly elucidates this climax:
C B A וַיַּעֲמִידֶהָ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֹק 10a
(עוֹלָם) D C B לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם 10b

60 Cf. Hirsch, The Psalms 2:236: "כמעט may also mean in this instance: 'they were as something small and utterly insignificant.' It is possible too that it refers to מתי מספר, and is intended to mean 'scarcely;' in other words, 'they were still מתי מספר, and they were scarcely even that.' When the land was first promised to Israel, it could not even have been said of the Jewish people that they were מתי מספר. In fact in the very beginning there was no people at all as yet; there was only one man, Abraham."

61 In place of the MT בִּהְיוֹתָם, the Syriac and the Targum reflect the reading of 1 Chr 16:19, בִּהְיוֹתְכֶם, an apparent adaptation to a new liturgical setting.

into the description of the patriarchal wanderings in verses 13-15.[62] Though as socio-political sojourners the patriarchs had no secure status, as indicated by their peregrinations from one nation to another (verse 13), Yahweh protected them, even to the point of rebuking kings (verses 14-15).[63] Within the context of the psalm, this section is a reassurance to the worshipers that "God carries out his plan of salvation in spite of all the dangers that imperil his promise."[64] Consequently, the patriarchal stories are used to signify the character of Israel's existence.[65] This link between Abraham and people is confirmed by verse 42, in which Yahweh's remembrance of His promise to Abraham is the foundation for His fulfillment of the land grant.

3.2 References to Patriarchal Sojourning

Throughout the Old Testament the term אָבוֹת is used to refer generally to Israel's forefathers, and in a number of these cases the specific individuals in view are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.[66] The patriarchal figures are often employed with exem-

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62 Even the poetic form of verse 12 propels the thought of sojourning into the next verse:

B A	מְתֵי מִסְפָּר	בִּהְיוֹתָם	12a
C B	וְגָרִים בָּהּ	כִּמְעַט	12b

Cf. Ceresko, "A Poetic Analysis of Psalm 105, with Attention to Its Use of Irony" 31.

63 The allusion to kings is likely to refer to Pharaoh (Gen 12:17) and to Abimelech (Gen 20:3-7), when Yahweh extricated Sarah from positions of peril. "My anointed ones" is used in a metaphorical sense to speak of those who are called and consecrated by God. Cf. Anderson, The Book of Psalms 2:729-730.

64 Weiser, The Psalms 675.

65 Souček, "Pilgrims and Sojourners" 6.

66 This identification became relatively fixed in Jewish literature, with אָבוֹת becoming a quasi-technical term for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Cf. Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology 171-172; Ginzberg, An Unknown Jewish Sect 205-207; TestLevi 15:4; Ezekiel the Tragedian 104-105; BTal Berakoth 16b, Semaḥoth 44a, ʾAboth de Rabbi Nathan 32a.

plary force to serve as patterns for Israel's conduct.[67] Of the references to the patriarchs, four deal with the sojourning character of their lives. Two of these references will be dealt with briefly at this point. The remaining two references will be discussed more extensively in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

3.21 Genesis 47:9

When Jacob is presented to Pharaoh by Joseph, he answers the monarch's query as to his age in these words: "The days of the years of my sojourning (מְגוּרַי) are a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning (מְגוּרֵיהֶם)." Clearly, Jacob is referring to his ancestors, most likely to Abraham and Isaac.

The response by Jacob comprises three members which define his life in different ways. The first line describes his life quantitatively, as spanning 130 years. The second statement is a qualitative assertion, depicting his days as few and unpleasant. The third element presents his life in a comparison with the lengthier ages of his fathers.

It is also noteworthy that twice within the verse מְגוּרִים is used in parallel construction with יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיִּים.[68] The question thus is raised as to the relationship between the two designations. Are they to be considered synonymous, with מְגוּרִים

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67 Driver, The Book of Genesis lxxi. Cf. Lauha, "Die Geschichtsmotive in den Alttestamentlichen Psalmen" 34-35.

68 The first instance is found in the chiasmus between lines a and b of the response:

9a יְמֵי שְׁנֵי מְגוּרַי שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמְאַת שָׁנָה
9b מְעַט וְרָעִים הָיוּ יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיַּי

The second case, in line c, is appositional:

וְלֹא הִשִּׂיגוּ אֶת־יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי אֲבֹתַי בִּימֵי מְגוּרֵיהֶם

to be regarded simply as a statement of existence, or is מְגוּרִים intended to connote some qualitative aspect of life?

The evidence of the early versions is inconclusive. The LXX translates מְגוּרִים by παροικέω, which in the LXX and the NT was extended to include metaphorical implications.[69] Aquila is more explicitly theological in his rendering of מְגוּרַי by προσηλυτεύσεώς μου. Both Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan read תותבותהון, a broad term encompassing both literal and metaphorical meanings.[70]

Commentators are also mixed in their analyses. Albright considers Jacob's representation of himself as a sojourner as "a typical example of the self depreciation which we find in letters of the second millennium B.C. written by inferiors to superiors."[71] Ryle argues that the reference is to Jacob's frequent change of abode, because the biblical metaphor of pilgrimage points back to the literal experience of the patriarchs.[72] However, against this point it could be replied that if the patriarchs are regarded as models or examples in the Bible, then the very point would be their pilgrim attitude during their lives.

Speiser contends that a literal understanding of "the

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69 Spicq, Vie Chrétienne et Pérégrination selon le Nouveau Testament 67. More explicitly metaphorical is Philo's comment on Gen 47:4 in De Agric. 65: "... in reality a wise man's soul ever finds heaven to be his fatherland and earth a foreign country, and regards as his own the dwelling-place of wisdom, and that of the body as outlandish, and looks on himself as a stranger and sojourner (παρεπιδημεῖν) in it."

70 Cf. Jastrow 602; Levy 2:276-277. Targum Jonathan introduces a gloss which defines the reference to sojourning in socio-political terms. Harl, La Bible d'Alexandre: La Genèse 298 notes that "en correspondence avec le substantif du MT, qui se trouve ici, megûray, ‹migration›, Aquila crée de substantif prosēlúteusis, ‹une vie d'immigré›, formé sur prosélutos, mot crée par le traducteur de l'Exode pour désigner l'éstranger venu vivre à côté des autochtones."

71 "From Abraham to Joseph" 12.

72 The Book of Genesis 414-415. Cf. also Driver, The Book of Genesis 371.

days of the years of my sojourning" would be inaccurate, so he opts for a more latitudinal rendering which will accommodate both literal and metaphorical content. He states that "the attested range of the stem g-r includes 'to live on suffrance' (see especially xix 9), and this suits the present context admirably: any time that man is allowed to stay on earth is but borrowed time."[73] It may be noted that the threefold answer of Jacob to Pharaoh's question went beyond the information requested. By speaking of the quality of his life as well as the quantity of his years, Jacob turned attention from the duration to the character of his life.[74]

It would be importing into the Genesis text excessive pilgrim ideology to claim that this is an express statement of spiritual pilgrimage.[75] However, the form of Jacob's response does appear to support a qualitative nuance to מְגוּרִים which could be exploited readily for metaphorical development.[76]

3.22 Exodus 6:4

This verse, which focuses on the covenant containing the land promise, also contains a passing reference to the sojourning (גָּרוּ/מְגֻרֵיהֶם) of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan. As in Gen 47:9, the LXX renders the words by παρῳκήκασιν/παρῴκησαν, and the Targum reads אתותבן/תותבותהון. No substantial conclusions can be drawn from this indirect notation, but the covenantal context of the citation must be recognized.

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73 Genesis 351.

74 Cf. von Rad, Genesis 407.

75 Contra. Keil, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament 1:376.

76 Leupold, Exposition of Genesis 2:1129.

3.3 Psalm 39:12(13)

Psalm 39 wrestles with the problem of human transience from the perspective of faith in Yahweh. Within the formal parameters of the lament,[77] the psalmist articulates his expression of confidence in Yahweh during personal crisis, recognizing both the brevity of human life and his hope in Yahweh. Thus, the prayer is motivated by supplication, by which the psalmist moves toward God.[78] His faith is expressed not in passive denial of pain and frustration, but by his bold cleaving to Yahweh in full cognizance of human mortality.[79] This lament strips bare the soul of the worshiper to disclose the fears of one who is nevertheless committed in faith. Its profound musings cannot be confined to the stylized prescriptions of even so flexible a model as that of the lament form. Though exhibiting the characteristic internal transition from predicament to petition, Psalm 39 closes with a final reference to the psalmist's plight.

By artful structure[80] and evocative imagery the psalmist presents the sapiential theme of the brevity and vanity of human life. The frequent similarities to Job[81] and Ecclesiastes suggest that the original setting of the psalm is most likely to have been

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77 Weiser, The Psalms 328 notes well that Psalm 39 is not a stereotypical lament, but that its distinctively individual character has cast the psalm into a unique shape. However, it must also be noted that the psalmist does use much standard vocabulary (cf. e.g., Pss 49, 73) in expressing his individual lament. There is, thus, an intermingling of personal piety with the general psalmic tradition of Israel.

78 Westermann, "The Role of the Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament" 31-32 illustrates this aspect of the lament from Psalm 102.

79 Brueggemann, The Message of the Psalms 52.

80 Ewald, Commentary on the Psalms 1:204-205 supports his description of Psalm 39 as "incontestably the finest of all the elegies in the Psalter" by tracing the structural and thematic progression of the three strophes.

81 Buttenweiser, The Psalms 549-550 details the verbal congruence between Psalm 39 and Job.

in the wisdom tradition, or that at least the psalm was composed with sapiential motifs, though its superscription indicates that it was appropriated for public worship.[82] More precisely, in contrast with the divine retribution dogma expounded in Proverbs and Psalm 37, this psalm struggles with the unpredictable nature of life, a theme developed in the speculative wisdom literature.

Though the superscription purports that the psalm comes from the time of David, the internal evidence of the lament is inconclusive. The absence of reference to the cultic institutions is not surprising in a psalm composed in the individual lament form. The wisdom motifs might suggest a late, possibly post-exilic date,[83] but sapiential language can be traced back to the time of Hezekiah,[84] and perhaps even earlier to the reign of Solomon.[85] It would be attractive to locate this psalm with its assertion of sojourning in verse 12(13) in the exilic or post-exilic times. However, the psalm resists temporal specification, so one must be cautious in using it to substantiate a developmental hypothesis of Old Testament thought.[86]

Though the specific occasion of the psalm is debatable,[87]

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82 The superscription לִידִיתוּן (cf. Pss 62, 77) is most often regarded as an indicator of the guild of musicians designated to perform the work (cf. 1 Chr 9:16; 25:1-7; 2 Chr 5:12; 29:14; 35:15). Less likely are the suggestions by Hirsch, The Psalms 1:288, who argues from the midrashic interpretation that לִידִיתוּן is part of the description of the content of the psalm, and may be rendered "To Him Who grants strength to master the Providences of God's hand," and by the Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs 4.4.1 and the Midrash on Psalms 1.431 and 2.471 which derive יְדִיתוּן from דת, "judgment, decree."

83 Wanke, "Prophecy and Psalms in the Persian Period" 183.

84 Scott, "Solomon and the Beginnings of Wisdom in Israel" 279; Crenshaw, Old Testament Wisdom 29.

85 As Alt, "Die Weisheit Salomos" 139-144 argues from a comparison of the biblical nature wisdom utterances with the Egyptian Onomasticon of Amenope (c. 1100 B.C.E.).

86 Wanke, op. cit. 162-163.

87 נִגְעָה in verse 10(11) could refer to either physical distress or psychological discomfort.

it is apparent that its purport is to deal with the implications of human transience. Leupold suggests reasonably that verses 1, 10 (2,11) make it plausible that the psalmist's motivation is the prosperity of wicked individuals around him.[88] Therefore, he is contrasting his own plight with the apparently unimpeded success of the רְשָׁעִים. It must be recognized, however, that this psalm is not designed to solve the problem which it raises, but rather to express the undiluted pathos which the human condition provokes. Whereas the book of Job articulates the human predicament, but also endeavors to perceive the divine perspective (cf. esp. Job 38-41), Psalm 39, in concert with Ecclesiastes, focuses realistically[89] on the individual's plight, and introduces theological perspectives only indirectly.

By oscillating between radical contrasts such as speech and silence, and existence and extinction,[90] the psalmist stylistically imitates his spiritual turmoil. However, shining through the storm of fear is the faint ray of hope in Yahweh in verse 7 (8). To be sure, the stage is set with images of futility, impermanence, pain and despair. But the scene is played out against the backdrop of dependence upon Yahweh.[91] It could be argued that it is his secure confidence in Yahweh which liberates the psalmist to fully articulate this aspect of his humanness.

Rather than circumventing the problem of human transience

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88 Exposition of the Psalms 315.

89 Brueggemann, The Message of the Psalms 51 contrasts the rugged realism of the lament psalms with the illusory nature of worship that "focuses on equilibrium, coherence, and symmetry ... that it may deceive and cover over." He continues, "Life is not like that. Life is also savagely marked by disequilibium, incoherence, and unrelieved assymetry."

90 Alter, The Art of Biblical Poetry 69-70.

91 This is evidenced most in the three apostrophes in verses 4,7,12 (5,8,13), and by the fact that from verse 4 onwards the psalm is addressed to Yahweh, rather than being a soliloquy.

by rushing to the comfort of an eschatological hope,[92] the psalmist endeavors to clear the way for a faithful perspective within the bounds of the recognition of his mortality. In contrast with Psalm 73, which answers a similar complaint with a ringing affirmation of confidence in Yahweh (verses 23-28),[93] Psalm 39 concludes with the desperate cry of verses 12-13 (13-14):

Hear my prayer, O LORD,
  and give ear to my cry;
  hold not thy peace at my tears!
For I am Thy passing guest
  a sojourner, like all my fathers.
Look away from me, that I may know gladness,
  before I depart and be no more!

Verse 12(13) is constructed as a threefold request substantiated by a reason. The direct appeal to Yahweh consists of two positive entreaties, שִׁמְעָה and הַאֲזִינָה, followed by the negative אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ. The psalmist's plea for Yahweh's attention, and pregnantly, His intervention, manifests an ascending order of intensity.[94] The causal particle כִּי[95] introduces the ground both of his need and of his plea to Yahweh. As one who is unassimilated (גֵּר...תּוֹשָׁב) he is in need of help. He appeals for divine

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92 Cf. Rogerson and McKay, Psalms 1-50 186.

93 North, The Old Testament Interpretation of History 197 points out that the psalmist "starts from the present communion of the soul with God, a communion so real that, for him who truly experiences it, it is unthinkable that even the dissolution of the body can terminate it. Such was the hope of the writer of Psalm 73, once he had got the better of his embittered feelings and won through to peace of soul."

94 From תְּפִלָּתִי, my plea or right to be heard (cf. Speiser, "The Stem PLL in Hebrew" 306), to שַׁוְעָתִי, my cry for help, to דִּמְעָתִי, my tears. The cumulative effect of the progression is to enunciate the psalmist's plea with the maximum emotive force.

95 Schoors, "The Particle כי" 242 notes that in the Semitic languages כִּי has a wide range of uses. In this context the causal nuance is most appropriate (pp.264-267).

assistance as one standing in relation with (עִם) Yahweh and corresponding to the people of the covenant (כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי).

The salient assertion of the verse, and indeed of the psalm is expressed in the second half: גֵר אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ תּוֹשָׁב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי. Several crucial exegetical questions arise from this statement. First, to whom does כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי refer? Comparison with the parallel in 1 Chr 29:15 (cf. v.18) and customary usage in later Jewish literature would support identification with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-Israel. Further substantiation for a patriarchal referent is found in Abraham's self-description as גֵר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Gen 23:4. However, it may well be that a wider latitude of reference is intended. The psalmist does not say כַּאֲבוֹתָי but כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי, corresponding with the designation of the entire nation as גֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים in Lev 25:23. In either case the comparison serves to set the psalmist's plea within the larger covenantal framework, and in particular, highlights the relation of Israel to the land of Canaan. However, in contrast to the literal land in view both in Gen 23:4 and Lev 25:23[96] the psalmist views his sojourning in terms of human transience upon earth.

The second question focuses on the function of עִמָּךְ. The preposition עִם characteristically denotes association or companionship (BDB 767-768). Thus, it could refer to close personal relationship (cf. Gen 29:14) and to spiritual fellowship with Yahweh (cf. 1 Sam 2:21; Ps 73:23).

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96 van Waldow, "Israel and Her Land" 495 points out that the Old Testament idea of divine ownership of the land is an advance on the similar concept in Canaanite religion. Thus, for Israel, "where they are living now, they are strangers or sojourners and can lay no legal claim on protection from their host communities or on their <u>naḥ</u>^{a}<u>lah</u>. So once the idea - the land where Israel lives is the <u>naḥ</u>^{a}<u>lat</u> Yahweh - was introduced (Lev 25:23; Ps 79:1; Jer 2:7), the complementary idea could be developed: Israel is the <u>gēr</u> permitted to live on Yahweh's property."

It is evident that the stress of Psalm 39 suggests that a negative sense of עִם is more expected in this context than the more frequent notion of association or fellowship. Though the psalmist does affirm his hope in the Lord in verse 7(8), he views God as his antagonist in verses 5,9-11,13 (6,10-12,14). Thus, the prima facie evidence of עִם argues for a positive rendering, whereas the contextual evidence is preponderant in favor of a negative connotation.

If עִם is given its usual significance, the speaker is not lamenting that he is a sojourner with respect to Yahweh, but he pleads for divine intervention on the grounds that he is a sojourner associated with Yahweh. The psalmist, then, is typifying himself not as estranged from Yahweh, but as estranged with Yahweh. In form this expression precisely coincides with Gen 23:4 and Lev 25:23. In the Genesis passage, Abraham is unassimilated into the Hittite society, yet he desires to purchase land for a burial plot. The fact of sojourning is conveyed by גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב, and עִמָּכֶם denotes that Abraham's life stands in relationship with those of his Hittite neighbors.[97] In the Leviticus passage, Israel is instructed that the promised land of Canaan belongs permanently to Yahweh, and they are tenants and sojourners living in association with Him.[98] In these references עִם is the vehicle for expressing association, and גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב speaks of the unassimi-

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97 This significance of עִם is supported by Abraham's request: תְּנוּ לִי אֲחֻזַּת־קֶבֶר עִמָּכֶם. The verse could be paraphrased, "Because I, though a sojourner, am living among you, please give to me a burial site among you so that I may bury my dead away from my sight."

98 Levine, "Late Language in the Priestly Source" 81 argues reasonably that the use of the language of Lev 25:23 is deliberately reminiscent of the patriarchal reference in Gen 23:4 so as to affirm the legitimacy of the reapportionment of the land in the post-exilic community.

lated or tenant status.

It may be argued reasonably that the psalmist is using deliberate ambiguity in order to present his positive message of hope and faith in a most compelling manner. Though the psalm as a whole is darkened by the references to transience, fear and pain, the three addresses to God in verses 4,7,12 (5,8,13) are piercing rays of trust. In the stark setting of human mortality before divine justice which dominates verses 8-13 (9-14) it would be expected that the psalmist would express estrangement from God. However, this would be communicated more appropriately by מִן, rather than by עִם. If this assertion is conceived as an ironic twist, both the predominantly negative context of Psalm 39 and the usual positive sense of עִם can be retained. In addition the כִּי clause then functions more suitably as the substantiation of the psalmist's plea, "Hear my prayer, O LORD."

The third area for investigation concerns the expression גֵּר...תּוֹשָׁב. Extensive discussion of these terms can be found in chapter 2, and some aspects of their significance in Ps 39:12(13) have been presented already. However, several additional features are worthy of note. Whereas in Gen 23:4 and Lev 25:23 the fixed expression גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב is employed as a hendiadys, here the two constituent parts are separated and used as parallel terms, thus accentuating the phenomenon of sojourning by defamiliarizing the fixed idiom.[99] In addition, in contrast with the socio-political context of Gen 23:4, the sphere of reference in Psalm 39 is metaphorical. As in the societal realm the גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב depends upon the protective care of the ruler in whose domain he settles, so the psalmist recognizes that during his transient earthly existence

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99 Alter, The Art of Biblical Poetry 71-72.

he is dependent upon the beneficence of Yahweh. Thus, the literal concept of גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב as a socio-political term is transformed and its meaning extended so as to include the metaphorical referent.[100] As Ricoeur notes, "by means of a 'category mistake,' new semantic fields are born from novel rapprochments. In short, metaphor says something new about reality."[101] Moreover, the individual language of Ps 39:12(13), in contrast with the communal statements of Lev 25:23 and 1 Chr 29:15, indicates that spiritual sojourning could be conceived in terms of personal piety as well as corporate relationship.[102] In this respect Psalm 39 is in alignment with the expressions of individual spirituality denoted by הִתְהַלֵּךְ in Gen 5:22,24; 6:9; 17:1; 24:40.

Taken as a whole, the verse grounds the plea of the psalmist for divine intervention on his dual recognition of his human transience and his relation with Yahweh. The writer maintains that "in this life our permanence is not to be found in the world as such, but in God who grants us life in the world."[103] The subsequent statement in verse 13(14) בְּטֶרֶם אֵלֵךְ וְאֵינֶנִּי sets the concept of sojourning with Yahweh within the context of human existence

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100 Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics" 77-78. In similar fashion, Chrysostom, Homily 24.6 on Hebrews understands the reference here to sojourning in metaphorical terms.

101 Ricoeur, op. cit. 80. He expands upon this insight in Interpretation Theory 50: "The metaphorical interpretation presupposes a literal interpretation which self-destructs in a significant contradiction. It is this process of self-destruction or transformation which imposes a sort of twist on the words, an extension of meaning thanks to which we can make sense where a literal interpretation would be literally nonsensical. Hence a metaphor appears as a kind of riposte to a certain inconsistency in the metaphorical utterance literally interpreted."

102 However, Wanke, "Prophecy and Psalms in the Persian Period" 184 notes well that in ancient Israel "the life of the individual was so intimately bound up with public worship and the Temple, with the life and actions of the community as a whole, that a completely 'private' use of the Psalm remained the exception."

103 Craigie, Psalms 1-50 311.

on earth (cf. Gen 5:24).[104] Rather than focusing on land theology, as does Psalm 37, the psalmist builds his petition upon his relationship with Yahweh, which sustains him in the face of human transience, but which is not circumscribed by temporal dimensions. Thus, the psalmist characterizes his present earthly existence as a sojourning with Yahweh, and identifies himself with all his spiritual predecessors who have endured the same experience of alienation during their earthly lives.

3.4 1 Chronicles 29:15

The reference to sojourning in 1 Chr 29:15 is set in the context of the prayer by David to Yahweh on the occasion of the public presentation of the building materials for the temple. The Chronicler details David's extravagant gifts ranging from gold to wood (29:1-5) and the king's challenge to the people to contribute as well (29:5b). The willing response of the people matches that of the monarch (29:6-8). Consequently, the wholehearted offering to Yahweh causes great rejoicing by both David and the nation (29:9). This artfully crafted prayer[105] is David's public response to the gifts.

It is evident, then, that 1 Chr 29:10-19 has a liturgical setting. The biblical allusions in such a cultic context are drawn from the common stock of Israel's religious heritage.[106]

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104 Cf. Muir, "The Significance of אין in Genesis v.24 and Psalm xxxix.13" 477. Tromp, <u>Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament</u> 167-168 compares Job 10:21 and Eccl 5:15, and concludes that "in Hebrew as well as in other languages, the verb 'to go, to depart, to pass away' has become an 'euphemistic substitute for dying.'" He also notes, however, that as in Job 7:8; 23:8 the term may bear the connotation of cessation of meaningful life (p.195).

105 Braun, <u>1 Chronicles</u> 283.

106 Williamson, <u>1 and 2 Chronicles</u> 185.

Therefore, the concepts articulated may be considered more likely to be what was considered the norm or the ideal[107] in Israelite thought rather than being regarded as the distinctive of any specific literary source.[108] The liturgical setting of the passage is confirmed by the subsequent worship and sacred festival noted in verses 20-22a.

In addition to the cultic dimension there is the intertwined political aspect. Though David has already made Solomon king over Israel (23:1), chapter 29 records the public transfer of sovereignty (29:22b-25). The chapter concludes with a recapitulation of David's reign (29:26-28) and with an editorial notice referring to additional chronicles pertaining to the acts of his regime (29:29-30).

This chapter, then, functions in its literary context as the Chronicler's climax in the history of David. As David's psalm in 1 Chronicles 16 celebrates his provisions for the temple personnel, so his prayer in chapter 29 marks his provisions for the temple building.[109] The theme of the preparations for building the temple, which dominates chapters 17-28, here is brought to an appropriate conclusion. The rapid summation of the David narrative after his prayer marks this passage with special significance in the Chronicler's purpose. Implicit in the Chronicler's message is that what brought David and Israel such splendor was the attitude verbalized in David's prayer and represented in the willing con-

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107 Elmslie, The First and Second Books of Chronicles 3: 343. Cf. Michaeli, Les Livres des Chroniques, d'Esdras et de Néhémie 140.

108 Coggins, The First and Second Books of the Chronicles 142.

109 Braun, 1 Chronicles 285 notes that the two prayers of David which frame the section detailing the temple preparations express ideas which are "of primary importance for the writer's understanding of Israel's existence before God."

tributions both by the king and by his people.[110]

Several textual problems emerge from the study of 1 Chr 29:15. Though the LXX manuscripts for the most part read πάροικοι for גֵּרִים, there is also a variant reading προσήλυτοι. This may be explained by the development of גֵּר from a socio-political term to a cultic term in Judaism, as has been traced in chapter 2. In a haggadic-type interpretation, the Peshitta reads, "And we are comparable to the smoke of a pot, and we sojourn with thee and are of small account in the world; and Thou didst rule over our fathers aforetime."[111] The final word of the verse, מִקְוֶה, is infrequent in the Old Testament compared with the related term תִּקְוָה. However, both terms are used for hope, with מִקְוֶה in Ezr 10:2; Jer 14:8; 17:13; 50:7 referring to confidence built upon fellowship with Yahweh. Thus, the RSV, NEB, KJV reading "abiding"[112] seems to be less likely than the JB, NASB "hope."[113] This is supported by the LXX rendering ὑπομονή (an alternate reading is ἐλπίς) and the Targum סִיבּוּר.[114]

Verse 15 states the reason which lies behind David's question in the preceding verse, "But who am I, and what is my

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110 The theological character of the Chronicler's historiography is delineated well by Japhet, "Conquest and Settlement in Chronicles" 205-218 and Rudolph, "Problems of the Books of Chronicles" 404-409.

111 Barnes, <u>The Books of Chronicles</u> xxxiv-xxxv notes similar interpretative statements in 1 Chr 5:12; 12:1; 2 Chr 21:11; 35:23. This Syriac rendering seems to lie behind an unusual allusion in 1 Clement 17; cf. Harris, "On an Obscure Quotation in the First Epistle of Clement" 190-195.

112 Wallenstein, <u>Hymns from the Judean Scrolls</u> 16 relates מקוה to תקוה in Job 19:10 with the sense "dwelling place;" cf. Driver, "Chronicles: Old Testament" 310. This parallel, given without substantiation, is insufficient evidence to demand a sense of "abiding" in the present verse.

113 However, as van der Ploeg, "L'Espérance dans l'Ancien Testament" 494 notes, no Old Testament term is precisely equivalent to the concept of hope (<u>espoir</u>).

114 de Boer, "Étude Sur le Sens de la Racine QWH" 235. Cf. the Targum of Jer 14:8; 17:13.

people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly?" David recognizes that Israel's privilege to worship Yahweh is not based on right, but on grace, for they are sojourners (גֵּרִים) and tenants (תוֹשָׁבִים) before Him.

This designation could be understood in several ways. On the one hand, the prescription of Lev 25:23 states that Israel even when possessing the land of Canaan are tenants on Yahweh's property.[115] Therefore, "Israel must never take its possession of the promised land for granted,... it has always to be prepared to lose it and to live like its forefathers on the strength of God's gracious promise pointing to the future."[116] If the Chronicler is intending to represent his own post-exilic milieu rather than the situation of Israel in the time of David, as the passage purports, then the dependent status of Israel under its Persian overlords would be in view.

On the other hand, the examples of גור referring to human life on the earth (cf. Ps 119:19,54)[117] or in contexts in which both geographical and cultic dimensions are in view (cf. Ps 15:1; 120:5)[118] raise the possibility of a metaphorical referent. This is supported when the two assertions, "we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners" and "our days on the earth are like a shadow" are considered parallel figurative expressions. If the Chronicler is representing the perspective of David, then the fact that the reigning monarch includes himself in the assertion גֵּרִים אֲנַחְנוּ

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115 Cf. Noth, Leviticus. A Commentary 188-189.

116 Souček, "Pilgrims and Sojourners" 6.

117 Cf. Cohen, The Psalms 396. However, this is rejected in favor of a socio-political rendering by Elliott, A Home for the Homeless 28-29, who argues vigorously but unconvincingly.

118 The metaphorical potential of Ps 120:5 is exploited for homiletical purposes by Jerome, "Letter 108: To Eustochium," Early Latin Theology, ed. Greenslade 348.

suggests that this instance of גֵּר is most suitably located in a metaphorical sphere of meaning. As in other ancient states foreigners were sometimes granted royal protection to reside in the capital,[119] so David acknowledges that he and his people are living in Israel by gracious dispensation of Yahweh. The issue is not one of socio-political distinction, but David is making a metaphorical statement as to the unassimilated and transient relationship of the worshipers of Yahweh in relation to the world. Though they are firmly in possession of the land of Canaan, which has been promised to them as an inheritance, the quality of their lives is still that of sojourners. The fact that David states that "we are strangers before Thee (לְפָנֶיךָ)" strengthens the case for a metaphorical referent, especially when the expression is compared with the divine command to Abraham in Gen 17:1: הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי.

This description is elucidated by two similes. First, as sojourners and tenants they are like their ancestors (כְּכָל־אֲבֹתֵינוּ). There are two possible groups referred to by אֲבֹתֵינוּ. Within the context of the prayer, אֲבוֹתֵינוּ is used with specific reference to Abraham, Isaac and Israel in verse 18.[120] As such, the comparison is between the spiritual sojourning of the nation before Yahweh and the socio-political and/or spiritual sojourning of the patriarchs. On the other hand, the inclusion of כָּל with אֲבוֹתֵינוּ makes it likely that the reference is to the entire sweep of Israel's history, including the patriarchs and their descendants. In this case, the assertion is that Israel throughout its history from the time of its calling in Abraham has had a sojourner status before Yahweh. In either case לְפָנֶיךָ implies significant metaphorical

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119 Barnes, The Books of Chronicles 139.
120 Note also "Israel our father" in verse 10.

content.

After the first comparison from the historical realm, David turns to the natural world for his second illustration. He says, "Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no מִקְוֶה." The term צֵל is used eight times in the Old Testament as a comparison referring to the brevity of life.[121] The emphasis of the figure is on the transient and insubstantial character of human life.[122] Thus, גֵרִים...וְתוֹשָׁבִים are likened to the brevity of life[123] upon the earth.[124] Within this earthly life there is no hope. Hope must lie beyond this terrestrial existence.

Though the references in the patriarchal narratives only leave open the door to legitimate metaphorical reinterpretation of the sojourner motif, this verse is an advance in the development toward the pilgrim idea expounded in Heb 11:8-16. To be sure, some have considered this a retreat from the bold identification of the old national religions with their localized gods to a more universal perspective,[125] while others consider it a late dualistic

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121 Similar uses of the image of the shadow to speak of mortality are evidenced in Wisdom of Solomon 2:4-5 and Midrash Rabbah Vayechi 96.2; cf. The Midrash on Psalms 2:259.

122 The complete figure may be that of the lengthened shadow which is about to be overcome by the inexorable advance of night. Thus, man is always on the verge of death. He cannot escape the grasp of his mortality. Cf. Ps 102:11(12); 109:23. The same figure is represented in the early Greek literature by σκιά; cf. Hurst, "How 'Platonic' are Heb.viii.5 and ix.23f?" 164.

123 Cf. Rothstein and Hänel, Kommentar zum ersten Buch der Chronik 2:523.

124 This is taking עַל־הָאָרֶץ to refer to the earth. Even more poignant would be the less likely rendering "upon the land." In that case David would be recognizing that even the promised land of Canaan was not a permanent home for the worshiper. Here, as in Josephus' use of γῆ (Jew. Ant. 1.282; 4.115), ambiguity is introduced by the use of a single term to refer to land, Canaan or the earth in general. Cf. Amaru, "Land Theology in Josephus' Jewish Antiquities" 212-213.

125 Cf. Smith, Lectures on the Religions of the Semites

borrowing.[126] No doubt the points of verbal similarity between the developing concept of spiritual sojourning and Platonic idealism encouraged the use and embellishment of the sojourner theme in Philo and in the early Christian writers.[127] However, the metaphorical concept of sojourning observable in 1 Chr 29:15 is more appropriately linked with the social status of foreigners in the ancient world.[128] The fact of socio-political sojourning is to the pious mind analogous to the unassimilated character of the righteous individual living in a world estranged from God. As the concept of walking has already been transferred into the metaphorical image of הִתְהַלֵּךְ in the patriarchal narratives to speak of life in fellowship with God, so the sojourning of the previous generations of Israel comes to be viewed as a paradigm for the life of the believer on earth.

3.5 Conclusion

What conclusions may be justifiably drawn from the references to Abraham in the Old Testament? Gen 35:27; 47:9 and Exod 6:4 define the patriarchal existence in Canaan as sojourning (גור). As has been shown, גור in the Abrahamic narratives reflects the temporary and unassimilated nature of the patriarchs' lives. In Gen 35:27 temporary duration is not in the picture, so the force of the reference falls upon their unassimilated status. This qualitative nuance can also be demonstrated in Gen 47:9.

Gen 48:15 employs the Leitwort הִתְהַלֵּךְ, which is repeatedly used in the Genesis narratives for life in fellowship with God.

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126 Sasse, TDNT 1:680.
127 Wildberger, "Israel und sein Land" 418-419.
128 Cf. Clements, The Prayers of the Bible 88.

When viewed with the complementary element of God's shepherding of Jacob, a clear metaphorical referent emerges.

The call of Abraham prompts the references in Josh 24:2-3 and Neh 9:7. God chose (בָּחַר) the patriarch, brought him out (הוֹצִיא) from Ur, and led (הוֹלִיךְ) him through Canaan. Yahweh is represented as taking the initiative in both the initial migration and in the subsequent life in Canaan. Thus, Abraham's journeys are placed in a theological framework.

The references in Is 41:8 and 51:2 forge a link between the patriarch and the community of Israel. The nation is descended from Abraham the friend of God, and their origin was occasioned by the gracious intervention of Yahweh to make Abraham and Sarah fruitful. As the patriarch had responded in faith to Yahweh's call, so the people are challenged to do the same.

In Psalm 105 the nation is exhorted to praise Yahweh by remembering His fulfillment of the promise of the land to Abraham. The recollection of the patriarchal movements in Canaan (verses 13-15) is a reassurance to the worshipers that Yahweh protects the covenant nation during the vicissitudes of their experience. Although the reference to the patriarchs as sojourners (גֵּרִים) is likely indicative of their unassimilated socio-political status in Canaan, it is nonetheless part of the wider context from which Heb 11:9,13-16 drew.

The references in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 do not speak specifically of Abraham, but the patriarch is in view at least indirectly. In each of the verses sojourning is used as a figure to refer to human transience, and comparison is made to the similar nature of life of Israel's ancestors.

In none of the passages cited is there present a fully-developed pilgrim ideology comparable to that in Heb 11:8-16.

However, examples of metaphorical development drawn from the Abrahamic movements are recognizable. Therefore, within the bounds of the Old Testament corpus there is significant evidence that the journeys of Abraham were employed with exemplary force to speak of a spiritual quality of life. In this respect the Old Testament references to Abraham make use of the potential for theological development observed already in the narratives of Genesis 12-25.

CHAPTER 4

ABRAHAM AS AN EXAMPLE OF SOJOURNING IN THE EARLY JEWISH LITERATURE

4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapters of this study have analyzed the references and allusions to Abraham in the Old Testament literature to determine the extent of figurative development of the sojourner motif. In this chapter the figure of Abraham in the early Jewish literature is examined. Conclusions are drawn as to the use of the patriarch as a pilgrim image.

In contrast with Moses, Abraham is only seldom mentioned in the early Jewish writings.[1] Because this study is focusing upon the patriarch's function as a pilgrim image, rather than upon his total portrayal,[2] the quantity of relevant references is consequently small. Though the paradigmatic character of Abraham in early Judaism is apparent both in the biblical corpus[3]

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1 Davies, The Territorial Dimension of Judaism 71. The paucity of references to Abraham is consistent throughout the early Jewish literature, with the obvious exceptions of paraphrases of Genesis, such as Jubilees and Genesis Apocryphon. However, in medieval Jewish literature, such as Sefer ha-Yashar (c. eleventh century C.E.), the figure of Abraham is greatly embellished; cf. Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism 67-95. Davies notes well that the lack of frequent reference to Abraham does not imply lack of veneration for the patriarch, but rather Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant were assumed and unexpressed as foundational truths in Judaism; cf. The Gospel and the Land 107-108.

2 A comprehensive summary of references to Abraham in early Judaism and early Christianity is collected by Schmitz, "Abraham im Spätjudentum und im Urchristentum" 99-123. Cf. the discussions in RAC 1:18-19 and TRE 1:382-385.

3 E.g. Is 51:2, "Look to Abraham your father." Cf. Morgenstern, A Jewish Interpretation of the Book of Genesis 29. Chilton, The Glory of Israel 46-47 shows that this paradigmatic function is exploited in the Targum.

and in the non-biblical writings,[4] it must be determined whether the figure of Abraham as a sojourner or pilgrim is used with exemplary force as it is in Heb 11:8-16 and in some early Christian homily.[5]

4.1 Jewish Biblical Paraphrase

The representations of Abraham in Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo and Josephus are similar in that each follows the biblical record of the life of the patriarch, and adds or deletes details in accordance with its overall purpose.

4.11 Jubilees

Written most probably in the second century B.C.E.,[6] Jubilees presents what in appearance is a straightforward historical account of Israel's early history. However, comparison of Jubilees with the biblical record indicates that the author of Jubilees interweaves text and comment into an extended narrative midrash[7] which smoothes out difficulties and reinforces traditional Jewish orthodoxy.[8] The essential narrative framework of the biblical text

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4 Bonsirven, Le Judaïsme Palestinien au Temps de Jésus-Christ 1:74-77. Kohler, "Abraham," The Jewish Encyclopedia 1:85 reasons that "no sooner, however, did the Jewish people come into closer contact with nations of higher culture, expecially with the Greeks in Alexandria, than the figure of Abraham became the prototype of a nation sent forth to proclaim the monotheistic faith to the world while wandering from land to land." A useful summary of the texts in which Abraham is presented as a paradigm is found in Berger, TRE 1:373-376.

5 E.g. Chrysostom, Homily 24 on Hebrews.

6 Both Wintermute, OTP 2:44 and VanderKam, Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees 283 affirm a date between 161 and 140 B.C.E., with VanderKam favoring a date prior to 152.

7 Wintermute, OTP 2:40.

8 Brownlee, The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible 72. Thus, Milburn, Early Christian Interpretations of History 118 comments that "the author of the Book of Jubilees ... is concerned to rewrite Genesis in such a manner as to show

is maintained, but it is embellished by "the addition of interpretative features and speeches."[9]

The figure of Abraham is transposed into a spiritual and moral ideal for the Jewish community.[10] The general structure of Genesis is followed, but haggadic legends as to his piety as a child are added, and unflattering scenes such as the expulsion of Hagar are eliminated.

The only passage in Jubilees which bears directly[11] upon the sojourner motif in the life of Abraham is the insertion between biblical Gen 11:31 and 12:1 found in Jubilees 12:19-21. By representing Abraham as a godly man desirous of eschewing the error of his heart prior to the divine call in Gen 12:1-3, the author of Jubilees obviates the question left unanswered by Josh 24:2-3 as to the spiritual quality of Abraham before the call.[12] However, this reference contributes little to the development of the sojourner motif.

4.12 Pseudo-Philo

Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, written

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that much of the sacred Law was reverently observed by the patriarchs of old even before the days of Moses."

9 France, "Jewish Historiography, Midrash, and the Gospels" 104.

10 Martin-Achard, Actualité d'Abraham 119. France, op. cit. 111 notes: "In Jubilees 23:11-32 the author reflects on the progressive deterioration of human life since the time of Abraham, leading on to a prediction of the woes and conflicts which will precede the messianic age and the blessings of that age itself."

11 A less direct, but related, theme is that of the tower of Abraham, Thus, Abraham, in his blessing on Jacob, says: "This house have I built for myself that I might put my name upon it in the earth: it is given to thee and to thy seed for ever, and it will be named the house of Abraham ..." (22.24). Jacob is represented as living in the tower of Abraham in 29.16-19; 36.12, 20; 37.14; 38.4-8.

12 The biblical absence of motivation for Abraham's migration gave rise to many legends, which are succinctly summarized by Knox, "Abraham and the Quest for God" 55-60.

most likely in the early first century C.E.,[13] parallels Jubilees in combining biblical text and interpretation.[14] The biblical narrative is not reproduced with any exactness, but functions as the framework for his creative retelling of Israel's history.[15] In this, Pseudo-Philo does not hesitate to draw upon the "wealth of haggadic traditions which had already gathered around the Old Testament text ..."[16]

As Jubilees seeks to explain the background for the divine call to Abraham, so Pseudo-Philo gives as the motivation for his migration "the fact that his life was endangered because of his religious faith."[17] What is particularly noteworthy is that Pseudo-Philo 6:1-18 associates Abram with the incident at Babel. In terms evoking the language of Daniel 3,[18] Abram and eleven

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13 Harrington, "The Biblical Text of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*" 16-17; cf. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature* 31, who suggests a slightly later date, between 70 and 100 C.E., but also notes that its traditional material probably goes back much earlier.

14 Harrington, OTP 2:301 suggests that Pseudo-Philo may have taken as his formal model the books of Chronicles. However, Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash" 424 questions this parallel, and concludes instead: "... it seems better to see it primarily as a summary retelling of the biblical account for the purpose of inserting where desirable extra-biblical material for edification and for expansion's sake."

15 Bauckham, "The *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* of Pseudo-Philo and the Gospels" 34 argues reasonably that the work is "a kind of commentary on the biblical text" because "Pseudo-Philo constantly presupposes his readers' knowledge of biblical material which he does not himself reproduce. It is his habit to omit quite major events (such as the sacrifice of Isaac) from his own narrative, but then to refer allusively to these events in other contexts (e.g. LAB 40:2)."

16 Bauckham, *op. cit.* 65.

17 Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* 89.

18 Bauckham, *op. cit.* 41-43 argues persuasively that "although Dan 3 was an important influence on the tradition of Abraham in the fiery furnace, it was not the starting-point for the tradition, nor the sole factor in the development of the tradition" (p.43). Rather, the common midrashic link between אור of the Chaldees in Gen 11:28,31; 15:7 and fire, represented in Targum Neophyti, Targum Jonathan and the Vulgate of Neh 9:7, and suggested by Job 12:12-14 and Apocalypse of Abraham 8, shows that

others (including Nahor and Lot) state in 6:4: "We are not casting in bricks, nor are we joining in your scheme. We know the one LORD and him we worship. Even if you throw us into the fire with your bricks, we will not join you." Thus, in some sense the call of the patriarch is interpreted in juxtaposition[19] with the city building of Babel.[20]

4.13 Josephus

Josephus, writing in the late first century C.E., reshapes the Genesis narrative[21] to de-emphasize the concept of the land covenant with its potential for revolutionary implications,[22] thus stressing the ethical contribution of Judaism. As Attridge notes: "In the proem, he is not content with a statement to the effect that the biblical characters provide good exempla virtutis. He makes the claim that the virtue which Moses tried to inculcate is a quality of God, in which men could participate."[23]

"it is not the influence of Dan 3 but the pun itself which lies at the root of all these traditions" (p.41). Thus, "the pun was a stimulus to the midrashic imagination to produce a story which would explain Haran's death in and Abraham's escape from 'the fire of the Chaldeans'." (p.42)

19 Wadsworth, "Making and Interpreting Scripture" 13 argues: "Thus post-biblical interpreters employ more adventurously a rule of literary composition which is written into the structure of the biblical narratives themselves, and which testifies to the midrashic links seen to exist from the very start in the making and ordering of these narratives ..."

20 Contrast Josephus' Jewish Antiquities, in which "missing from the tower story ... is any mention of the concomitant building of a city;" cf. Franxman, Genesis and the "Jewish Antiquities" of Flavius Josephus 93.

21 Downing, "Redaction Criticism: Josephus' Antiquities and the Synoptic Gospels" 64 remarks: "Where his sources are straightforward he is happy just to paraphrase; where a single source seems illogical, he tidies it up; and if he has two sources that will not readily combine, he makes up a third account of his own, blithely ignoring large parts of both. But it remains a 'version', quite clearly. There is no major invention, no major allusiveness."

22 Amaru, "Land Theology in Josephus' Jewish Antiquities" 2

23 The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus 68-69.

Josephus does not hesitate to refer to the migration of Abraham to Canaan (Jew. Ant. 3.87; Jew. War 4.530-531), but he does feel compelled to provide a plausible rationale for the patriarch's relocation. Though he acknowledges that Abraham settled in Canaan "at the will and with the aid of God" (Jew. Ant. 1.157), the specific motivation was the hostility of the Mesopotamians against Abraham's deduction from the observation of nature, particularly the stars,[24] of the reality of a universal sovereign (Jew. Ant. 1.154ff.). Therefore, he emphasizes the human dimension of the migration[25] rather than the divine call.[26] Consequently, "Abraham appears in the Antiquitates Judaicae as a very rounded personality, very self-assured, and is prepared to be a good leader. The Abraham of the Bible, on the other hand, is an envoy of God, an idealist, who all of a sudden hears the voice of God - in medias res - and willingly accepts his commands."[27] Thus, in Josephus the images of sojourner and leader are merged in the figure of Abraham.

4.2 Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

During the Second Commonwealth period and in the early Christian era the misfortunes of the beleaguered people of Israel encouraged the development of haggadic literature.[28] Not surpri-

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24 Franxman, op. cit. 119.

25 A related theme is the notice in Jew. Ant. 1.239 that Abraham sent out his sons and grandsons by Katura to found colonies in Arabia and Africa.

26 Cf. Franxman, op. cit. 127: "It would be ... well to signal from the outset a general tendency manifested by our author to change the divine gift of the Promised Land into a divine prediction of future conquest, thus seeming to place the right of possession in the force of arms rather than in the divine will manifest in an eternal covenant."

27 Villalba, The Historical Methods of Flavius Josephus 77

28 Cf. Waxman, A History of Jewish Literature 1:76-77.

singly, the figure of Abraham was not immune from this embellishment, though it must be noted that the patriarch is not referred to with great frequency.

The reference to Abraham in the praise of the fathers in Sirach 44:19-21 presents him as a model of perfect obedience to the law of Moses.[29] Similarly, 4 Maccabees 18:1 uses Abraham as an example of a life directed by reason and religion.[30] Therefore, the patriarch serves as a suitable model for martyrs both in his actions and his attitude.[31]

The historical recollection in Judith 5:4-10 affirms both the human and the divine dimensions of Abraham's migration. On the human level, Abraham was expelled from the land of the Chaldeans because he rejected the polytheism of his ancestors and began worshiping the one God of heaven. However, his migration from Haran to Canaan was in response to the command of God. What is intriguing is that in Judith 5:9 the dwelling is designated τῆς παροικίας, and the settlement in Canaan κατῴκησαν. This may suggest that the author of Judith is shaping the story of Abraham to support Israel's claim to the land of Canaan.

The fragments of Pseudo-Eupolemus compiled by Alexander Polyhistor and incorporated in Eusebius' Preparatio Evangelica derive from the first half of the second century B.C.E.[32] In a manner similar to Artapanus, Pseudo-Eupolemus embellishes the basic structure of the biblical tradition[33] with parallels from

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29 Vesco, "Abraham: Actualisation et Relectures" 76. Lee, Studies in the Form of Sirach 44-50 243 argues reasonably that Sirach is using the rhetorical form of the Greek encomium to celebrate the traditions of Israel which he saw exemplified in Simon II

30 Martin-Achard, Actualité d'Abraham 130-131.

31 Swetnam, Jesus and Isaac 115-116.

32 Wacholder, "Pseudo-Eupolemus' Two Greek Fragments on the Life of Abraham" 86-87.

33 Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem 39.

pagan mythology, whereby he consciously strives to "integrate the traditions of Genesis with those of the Mediterranean culture."[34] Hence, a major thrust in his presentation of the patriarch is to disclose Abraham's prowess in astrology, which is his real objective in migrating to Canaan.[35] Thus, as Droge concludes, "the author's intention is not merely to confirm the truth of Genesis, which he treats very freely, but more importantly to glorify the figure of Abraham as the father of civilization."[36]

A passing reference to Abraham in TestLevi 6:9-10[37] speaks of the persecution which Abraham endured while a nomad. The allusion in Wisdom of Solomon 10:5 speaks of the patriarch's removal from Babel and his steadfastness when commanded to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. More to the point of this study is 2 Baruch 4:1-7, which distinguishes between the earthly temple of Jerusalem and the vision of God's city which was given first to Adam, and later to Abraham and to Moses.[38] Murphy contends that the author endeavors to turn the attention of the Jews away from the transitory corruptibility of this world, represented by the Jerusalem temple, and upon heaven as the real place of God's presence. Thus, "he was writing a kind of revisionist theology - one which reassessed the place of the city of Jerusalem and its Temple in Jerusalem. It was a world-view which saw the present world as inherently transitory and therefore inferior to the other, eter-

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34 Wacholder, op. cit. 112.

35 Ibid. 102-103.

36 "The Interpretation of the History of Culture in Hellenistic-Jewish Historiography" 146.

37 TestLevi, part of the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, dates from around 100 B.C.E.; cf. Kee, "The Ethical Dimensions of the Testaments of the XII as a Clue to Provenance" 269; or perhaps a bit earlier in the Maccabean times, OTP 1:777-778.

38 Davies, The Territorial Dimension of Judaism 87.

nal world now existing with God."[39] However, Horbury trenchantly argues against Murphy that "there seems to be more room than is here allowed for the view that the new age is understood in the apocalypse to crown, rather than to relativize, the hope connected with this present age."[40]

The first to second century C.E. Testament of Abraham[41] depicts an angel coming from the great city of God (2:3-6) to summon Abraham "to leave the earthly life and journey to God" (7:9). The Apocalypse of Abraham, written at nearly the same time,[42] portrays Abraham as having an inheritance on earth (29.21-30.1), but also as being given the portion in heaven which had been forfeited by the fallen Azazel (13.7-14).

4.3 Philo

4.31 Influences upon Philo

An assessment of Philo's depiction of Abraham must take into account the influences which shaped his exposition. The

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39 The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch 114.

40 "Review of F. J. Murphy, The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch" 254. Cf. Rowland, The Open Heaven 48: "There are certainly signs in some apocalypses of a belief that this world would be replaced by a new order of existence, but hardly ever do we find this belief replacing a hope for a period of bliss in this world. When an other-worldly eschatology does appear, as, for example, in 4 Ezra 7.31ff., it is juxtaposed with a this-worldly eschatology." This assessment is also made by Saylor, Have the Promises Failed? 157, who argues well: "Thus, while the final resolution of the present situation of alienation still is based on eschatological hope, we see in 2 Baruch an effort also to give hope to the community in its historical existence. By emphasizing the practical question of the reconstruction of the faithful community in the interim time before the consummation, the author of 2 Baruch moves away from apocalyptic speculation and toward the kind of response which will be characteristic of rabbinic Judaism."

41 Sanders, OTP 1:874-875. Turner, "The 'Testament of Abraham': Problems in Biblical Greek" 222 suggests a slightly later date, in the third century C.E.

42 Cf. Rubinkiewicz, OTP 1:683.

subjects of his treatises are clearly grounded in Jewish religious tradition.[43] Numerous parallels may be found between Philo and Josephus,[44] the Jewish haggadic literature,[45] Jewish mysticism[46] and the Old Testament.[47] Therefore, the judgment by Sandmel, that Philo reflects "a marginal, aberrative version of Judaism which existed at a time when there were many versions of Judaism, of which ultimately only Rabbinism and Christianity have survived to our day"[48] seems unduly restrictive. The paucity of Jewish literature near the time of Philo demands caution in tracing the literary forebears of the Philonic literature,[49] but it appears warranted to conclude that Philo, though maintaining a distinctive Hellenistic perspective, and using its forms and language, is at the same time an exegete working within the Jewish tradition.[50]

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43 Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria 134. Daniélou, Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme 121 notes well that though Philo draws most from Hellenistic Judaism, he also had significant contact with Palestinian Judaism, and frequently employs antecedent exegetical insights.

44 For example, in analyzing Josephus' handling of Gen 18-19, Franxman, op. cit. 142 notes that "almost every point Jos. mentions finds parallels elsewhere, not least in the writings of Philo." Cf. p.119, which parallels De Migr. Abr. 180-181 and Josephus.

45 Knox, Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity 53.

46 Motifs from Jewish mysticism have been detected by Goodenough and others in the writings of Philo; cf. Schoeps, Paulus: Die Theologie des Apostels im Lichte der Jüdischen Religionsgeschichte 21-22.

47 Useful detailed discussions may be found in Knox, "A Note on Philo's Use of the Old Testament" 30-34 and Colson, "Philo's Quotations from the Old Testament" 237-251.

48 "Philo's Place in Judaism" 332. Cf. van Groningen, First Century Gnosticism: Its Origin and Motifs 66.

49 Hanson, Allegory and Event 84.

50 Tobin, The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation 5; Knox, Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity 2. On the other hand, Hanson, Allegory and Event 63-64 argues that the typological tradition of Palestine is distinct from the Hellenistic allegory from which was derived Philonic exegesis.

Philo's most unique contribution is the synthesis[51] he forges between the Old Testament revelation and Greek philosophical argumentation.[52] His eclectic scholarship,[53] building upon "a long tradition of allegorizers who wrote as Jews for Gentile ears,"[54] employs a variety of literary devices and antecedent interpretations,[55] in order to articulate both in form and in substance Greek concepts in Jewish contexts.[56] Drawing from the

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51 Chadwick, "Philo" 139 states: "Philo presupposes that the Greek sages are indebted to the Pentateuch for their wisdom. In any event, he implies, it is one God who, directly or indirectly, is the source of the Mosaic law and of the truths of Greek philosophy; for the human mind is akin to God, being made in the image of the divine Logos or Reason, and therefore has some capacity for the reception and discovery of truth about realities beyond time and space." Cf. Norris, God and World in Early Christian Thought 6.

52 Hengel, Juden, Griechen und Barbaren 137; Guttmann, Die Philosophie des Judentums 33. A thorough recent study on the relation between Philo and Platonic thought is Runia, Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato.

53 Chadwick, "Philo" 141 summarizes well: "His Jewish monotheism made especially congenial to him both the Stoic conception of the immanent divine power pervading the world as a vital force and the transcendant, supra-cosmic God of Plato. So he takes for granted the broad Platonic picture of this sensible world as an uneven reflection of the intelligible order; and he also looks beyond Plato to Pythagoras, the mystique of whose name had been steadily growing during the previous century. Pythagoreanism was particularly liked by Philo for its cryptic symbolism, its allegorical interpretations of poetic myth, its gnomic morality, its advocacy of self-discipline as a preparation for immortality, and above all its speculations about the mysterious significance of numbers ..."

54 Hanson, Allegory and Event 41. Jaeger, Early Christianity and Greek Paideia 30-31 notes that Philo's expositions were also directed toward the Jews. He reasons: "For us Philo of Alexandria is, of course, the prototype of the Jewish philosopher who has absorbed the entire Greek tradition and makes use of its rich conceptual vocabulary and its literary means in order to prove his point, not to the Greeks but to his own fellow Jews. That is important, since it shows that all understanding, even among non-Greek people, needed the intellectual medium of Greek thought and its categories." However, it is not necessary to restrict Philo's audience to either the Jews or the Greeks, for his intermediate position can support a dual apologetic concern.

55 Cf. the excellent discussion and examples by Moule, The Birth of the New Testament 76-80.

56 Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria 122. Winston, "Philo and the Contemplative Life" 199 states: "Like the Stoics and Middle

complex intellectual milieu of Hellenistic Judaism,[57] Philo reinterprets the Jewish Scriptures,[58] in particular the Pentateuch, by using rabbinic techniques[59] while employing Greek philosophical vocabulary.[60] Sandmel concludes that Philo's main accomplishment is that "he has blended <u>physis</u> and Torah so thoroughly they are inextricably bound together."[61]

4.32 Philonic Exegesis

In his exegesis Philo shares with Palestinian Jewish midrash the desire to elucidate the contemporary significance of the biblical texts.[62] However, instead of exploiting the full range of rabbinical exegetical techniques, Philo focuses upon the literal[63] and the allegorical meanings.[64] Allegory had already been

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Platonists, Philo was employing an accepted exegetical mode in order to bolster a particular set of philosophical convictions by reading them back into an older authority. Such eisegesis was common practice in his day and would hardly have raised any eyebrows even among his most sophisticated readers."

57 Cf. de Lange, <u>Apocrypha: Jewish Literature of the Hellenistic Age</u> 19-20. Momigliano, <u>Alien Wisdom</u> discusses the intellectual interpenetration of Greek, Roman, Jewish, Celtic and Iranian thought in the Hellenistic period.

58 Hanson, "Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church" 435; Nikiprowetzky, <u>Le Commentaire de l'Écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie</u> 182.

59 Hamerton-Kelly, "Some Techniques of Composition in Philo's Allegorical Commentary" 53 notes well that "the Jewish and Hellenistic spheres of influence had interpenetrated one another in his world," noting especially his exegetical techniques.

60 Guttmann, <u>Die Philosophie des Judentums</u> 33-35. Analogously, <u>De Abr</u>. 121-123 makes use of language reminiscent of the Greek mystery religions. However, as Louth, <u>The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition</u> 23 points out, "although the language goes back to the Eleusinian mysteries, it probably does not indicate any direct influence of mystery cults, for Plato had used such language of the soul's ascent to contemplation and by Philo's time it had become a literary tradition."

61 <u>Philo of Alexandria</u> 124.

62 Bouyer, <u>La Spiritualité du Nouveau Testament et des Pères</u> 54-55; Loewe, "The 'Plain' Meaning of Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis" 146.

63 Tobin, <u>op. cit</u>. 158.

64 Amir, "Philo and the Bible" 5. Goppelt, <u>Typos</u> 56-59

used both by the Stoics[65] and the Neoplatonists[66] in the exposition of the Greek poets and also in pre-Christian Judaism[67] to circumvent references which appeared "unintelligible, inconsistent, and historically improbable"[68] and thus to penetrate to the true meaning of the author.[69] Philo's acceptance of divine creation and the possibility of miracles extended his scope of literal interpretation to include events which the Stoics would have been compelled to allegorize.[70] He does not reject the literal meaning except when he considers it unworthy of God or of questionable historicity,[71] but instead insists, with the mainstream of Jewish and Christian exegesis,[72] on the validity of both literal and allegorical meanings.[73] However, by using the allegorical method

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presents a succinct description of Philo's literal and allegorical interpretation.

65 Dillon, "The Formal Structure of Philo's Allegorical Exegesis" 86. Cf. a concise presentation of Greek allegory in Grant, The Letter and the Spirit 1-30.

66 Hamerton-Kelly, op. cit. 51 gives examples of allegory in Porphyry and Heracleitus.

67 Hanson, Allegory and Event 45 remarks: "Philo actually names two sources of allegorical interpretation besides himself. He tells us that the Essenes, that remarkable sect with which many scholars are inclined to connect the Dead Sea Scrolls, practice allegory, perhaps inheriting it from an older tradition. And he also mentions, and much more fully, the Egyptian Jewish sect of the Therapeutae, to whom he devotes his work De Vita Contemplativa, as indulging in allegory."

68 Alexander, "The Interpretation of Scripture in the Ante-Nicene Period" 277. Froehlich, Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church 7 states: "By carefully searching the inspired text for clues such as contradictions, peculiar expressions, etymologies, mysterious numbers, and so forth, the exegete could unravel the real teaching God intended to convey, a teaching that Philo thought coincided with the best of the philosophical tradition of his time."

69 Loewe, op. cit. 143-144.

70 Grant, The Letter and the Spirit 35.

71 Ibid. 35-36.

72 Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative 122.

73 Thus, in De Migr. Abr. 89: "There are some who, regarding laws in their literal sense in the light of symbols of matters belonging to the intellect. are overpunctilious about the latter, while treating the former with easy-going neglect. Such

Philo exploits the exemplary potential latent in the biblical texts[74] and fashions them into "the contemporary, personal experience of every man."[75] His exegetical technique grows out of his perception of "the Torah not merely as a code of law for living in the world, but as an allegorical expression of the truth about God and soul's relationship to him."[76]

4.33 The Effect of Philo upon Jewish and Christian Thought

The quantity of Philo's extant literary works would suggest the plausibility of extensive Philonic influence in the early Christian era, but little evidence of this is available in the ancient Jewish literature. Apart from the works of Josephus, there is a virtual absence of literature written by educated Jews near the time of Philo, so it is difficult to assess the degree

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men I for my part should blame for handling the matter in too easy and off-hand a manner: they ought to have given careful attention to both aims, to a more full and exact investigation of what is not seen and in what is seen to be stewards without reproach." Longenecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period 46 overstates the case when he asserts: "The prima facie meaning must normally be pushed aside - even counted as offensive - to make room for the intended spiritual meaning underlying the obvious; though, as noted above, at times he seems willing to consider literal and allegorical exegesis as having 'parallel legitimacy.' In the main, however, exegesis of Holy Writ was for him an esoteric enterprise which, while not without its governing principles, was to be disassociated from literal interpretation." However, as Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament 86 notes, Philo at several places argues that the literal meaning "is comparatively unimportant beside the deeper meaning - as shadow to substance." Cf. Quod Deus Imm. 95; Quis Her. 92; De Praem. et Poen. 61.

74 Cf. Nikiprowetzky, op. cit. 236. This differs from the Middle Platonic interpretations of the Odyssey, which "involved either a rejection of the literal interpretation or at least complete obliviousness to that level. Philo is the earliest example that we have of a writer who tries to maintain the validity of both the allegorical and the non-allegorical levels of interpretation," notes Tobin, op. cit. 155.

75 Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria 24.

76 Amir, "Philo and the Bible" 7.

to which Philo is representative or aberrative in early Judaism.[77] In addition, the philosophical nature of Philo's writings diverged from the legal interests of rabbinic exegesis, as represented by the Mishnah, in that he emphasized the study of the Torah as a symbolic representation of reality, rather than as the verbal reality itself.[78] The lack of explicit appropriation by Palestinian Jewry of Philo's esoteric philosophy[79] and the apparent hostility by the rabbis toward his use of the Torah[80] may have provoked the near absence of direct reference or allusion to Philo in the early Jewish literature.[81] On the other hand, the Jewish catastrophes of 70 and 135 C.E. left few literary monuments to Judaism in the early Christian period, apart from Pharisaic Judaism,[82] so lack of reference to Philo is not surprising. Nevertheless, reflections of Philonic thought can be recognized in some of the haggadic literature, and his influence may be detected in the medieval Jewish philosophical literature.[83]

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77 Cf. Hatch, The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church 10, who cautions that it is all too easy "to overrate the value of the evidence that has survived" and "to under-estimate the importance of the opinions that have disappeared from sight, or which we know only in the form and to the extent of their quotation by their opponents."

78 Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman World 12:10.

79 Gager, Kingdom and Community 139 notes: "It is often overlooked that Philo's work is characteristic, at best, of a small aristocratic minority even among diaspora Jews and that he may well have had no impact at all on the populous majority."

80 Goodenough, op. cit. 12:9.

81 Wolfson, Philo 1:91-92 comments: "Nowhere in the Talmudic literature, however, is there any evidence that the knowledge of Philo reflected in it, and for that matter the knowledge of any other Greek philosopher, is derived directly from literature; more likely they all came by hearsay. In the entire Greek vocabulary that is embodied in the Midrash, Mishnah and Talmud there is not a single technical philosophic term." However, Finkelstein, "Is Philo Mentioned in Rabbinic Literature?" 142 cites two passages in the rabbinic literature in which Philo may be mentioned.

82 Chadwick, "Philo" 156; Hanson, Allegory and Event 53.

83 Agus, The Vision and the Way 48-49. However, as Louth,

What is clear is that Philo's allegorical exegesis and philosophical vocabulary did have profound effect on the early Christian literature.[84] His pattern was emulated particularly by Clement of Alexandria and Origen,[85] and similarities even within the New Testament writings, especially Hebrews, have frequently been noted.[86]

4.34 Philonic References to the Sojourning of Abraham

Though Philo devotes a large portion of his expositions to the life of Abraham, this study focuses specifically on those references in which the migration and sojourning of the patriarch are in view. For Philo the Genesis narratives become "a strictly contemporary myth about the human condition and man's quest for salvation, a quarry not of remote history and geography but of highly relevant philosophical and moral truth."[87] Thus, the examples of the patriarchs function as patterns for religious life.[88] In particular, Abraham represents "the virtue-

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op. cit. 18 notes: "We know of no Jew who mentions him by name until the fifteenth century."

84 Chadwick, "Philo" 157 states: "The quantity of surviving manuscripts (including several papyrus fragments) shows how much he was read; in the fourth and early fifth centuries parts of his work were translated into Latin and Armenian, and the debt of Ambrose is particularly large."

85 Alexander, "The Interpretation of Scripture in the Ante-Nicene Period" 277-278; cf. Katz, Philo's Bible 119.

86 Cf. esp. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux; contra. Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews. Further discussion of the difficult question of the relationship between Philo and Hebrews is found in chapter 5.

87 Chadwick, "Philo" 138. However, the historical nature of the narratives is not entirely abandoned, for as Tobin, op. cit. 179 comments: "Figures such as Abraham and Moses are interpreted not only as elements in the allegory of the soul but also as real historical figures who serve as exemplars of various private and public virtues."

88 Grant, The Letter and the Spirit 36. Fishbane, "Jewish Biblical Exegesis: Presuppositions and Principles" 101 remarks:

loving soul in search of the true God who arrives at a more purified understanding of the divine ..."[89]

In the Philonic conception the call of Abraham involves a departure from the imprisonment of the body and the senses (De Migr. Abr. 2,9) in order to apprehend God (De Abr. 71; Quod Det. 159).[90] Though he had been reared in the astrology of the Chaldeans (De Abr. 68-70) and had gone with Terah to Haran, the place of the senses (De Somn. II 52-53), Abraham was quick to obey (De Abr. 62) the divine call because "the heavenly love overpowered his desire for mortal things" (De Abr. 66). The migration of Abraham, then, transcends the bounds of history, for he becomes the pattern for abandonment of erroneous opinion[91] and sense-perception[92] to pursue by reason (De Gig. 64; De Somn. I 160-161) the path of the true knowledge of God, which is to live agreably with nature (De Migr. Abr. 127-129).

It is significant that Philo regards Abraham's life within Canaan as a spiritual sojourning. His devotion to God results in dissociation from his society (De Abr. 22), but this is secon-

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"Philo's exegesis is altogether remarkable. Human personages such as Abraham and Sarah become figures of ethical/spiritual values; sacrificial rituals and legal prescriptions are read as a guide to inner piety; and narratives, such as those about the Garden of Eden and the sin of Adam, are transformed into spiritual patterns ..."

89 Winston, "Philo and the Contemplative Life" 213. Cf. Sandmel, "Abraham's knowledge of the Existence of God" 138-139. Franxman, op. cit. 119 states that as in Josephus, Abraham in Philo "was the ideal of the man who is taught, and taught, not just by commands and direct communications, but by manifest signs of nature."

90 Cf. McLelland, God the Anonymous 41 who remarks: "The geographic imagery of leaving Haran or Egypt or the camp recurs often enough to underline Philo's mystical path. One must go beyond attachment to the body, as the Fathers have departed their earthly places (Migr. 27, Det. 159). Prepared by ascetic exercises, knowledge of God is a flight into pure Being, achieved in the fervent silence of mystic vision."

91 Cf. Goodenough, By Light, Light 137.

92 Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria 85.

dary to the metaphysical reality of the soul's temporary sojourn in the world of appearance (*Conf. Ling*. 79ff.; *Rer. Div. Her*. 267).[93] The wise man's true fatherland is heaven (*Quaest. et Sol. Gen*. 45),[94] and while he inhabits the earth, which is the possession of God (*Quaest. et Sol.Gen*. 10), he dwells alongside the empty terrestrial things, though he is removed from them in thought. Thus, "the wise man is truly and properly said not to sail, or journey, or be a fellow-citizen, or live, with the foolish man, since the sovereign and ruling mind does not unite, or mix with anything else" (*Quaest. et Sol. Gen*. 74). Abraham, then, is not just a pattern for faith, but "he is also the exemplar of the pilgrim whose country is in heaven."[95]

4.4 Qumran Literature

Apart from the Genesis Apocryphon, which like Jubilees[96]

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93 Cf. Stählin, TDNT 5:31. Hanson, *Allegory and Event* 93 reasons: "In fact Philo's interpretation of the significance of Abraham's departure and sojourning is entirely different from that of the Epistle to the Hebrews. To Philo it means that the soul must free itself from passions and bodily encumbrances; to the author of Hebrews it means that the promises of God would be fulfilled with the Messiah and his dispensation."

94 More specifically, Philo states that the true home of the wise man is virtue (*Quaest. et Sol. Gen*. 178). Cf. Braun, "Das himmlische Vaterland bei Philo und im Hebräerbrief" 325: "Für Philo sind die Stadt Gottes, die himmlische Heimat und die Fremdlingschaft in der Sinnenwelt eng verknüpft mit der himmlischen Qualität der Seele des Weisen."

95 Thompson, *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy* 59. Cf. esp. *Quis Rer*. 26-27. In agreement with this, Richardson, "The Philonic Patriarchs as Νόμος Ἔμψυχος" 524 argues that the patriarchs are "perfect manifestations of the nature of God and of the true functioning of the Logos in the cosmos; they are also concrete archetypes and παραδείγματα which men can copy as they should copy the Ideal Archetype and Pattern, the Logos."

96 Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings from Qumran* 281 discusses the question of the relationship between Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees. He cautions wisely: "I think this problem can only be examined really usefully when the remainder of the text of the Apocryphon is known in its entirely."

is a haggadic rewriting of the Genesis text,[97] the Qumran literature contributes little to the study of Abraham as a sojourner.[98] The Genesis Apocryphon, evidently the earliest of the midrashim,[99] uses first person technique[100] and judicious interpolations of traditional material[101] to enhance the biblical text in keeping with its purpose of pious edification.[102] Though columns 19-22 deal with the events narrated in Genesis 12-15[103] and include an interesting expansion of Abraham's journey in Gen 13:17 claiming the promised land,[104] the Genesis Apocryphon does not develop the sojourner motif significantly. Nevertheless, the very fact that the emphasis upon Abraham as a landowner does not exclude references to Abraham's travels leaves open the possibility that Abraham's significance transcends his relation to the literal land.[105]

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97 Brownlee, "The Background of Biblical Interpretation at Qumran" 186.

98 This may be explained in part by the specific exegetical concerns of the Qumran community. Cf. Talmon, "The 'Desert Motif' in the Bible and in Qumran Literature" 59.

99 Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism 124. Avigad and Yadin, A Genesis Apocryphon 38-39 date the text to the first century C.E. and suggest that it may be derived from an even earlier Aramaic original.

100 Brownlee, The Meaning of the Qumrân Scrolls for the Bible 73.

101 Vermes, op. cit. 126.

102 Fitzmyer, The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1 10-11.

103 Bruce, "Biblical Exposition at Qumran" 96 notes: "Certainly there is nothing in its embellishment of the patriarchal narratives that can properly be called exegesis, or even exposition, and nothing to which the NT offers an analogy. This kind of embellishment has more in common with the type of sermon in which a biblical narrative is amplified so that its main features may be brought more vividly before the hearers' eyes."

104 Brownlee, "The Background of Biblical Interpretation at Qumran" 186 states that the promise of the land as depicted in Genesis Apocryphon is "as extensive as in some descriptions of the messianic kingdom. Gen. 13 is thereby reinterpreted in the light of Ps., 72:8; Zech., 9:10; and Sirach, 44:21." A useful discussion of the extent of the land promise in Gen 13:17 is found in De Langhe, "La Terre Promise et le Paradis d'après l'Apocryphe qumrânien de la Genèse" 126-132.

105 Similarly, in Origen, Contra Celsum 7.3 the oracles of Delphi are represented in the dual function of sending forth colonies and of populating the whole world.

4.5 Early Rabbinic Literature

4.51 Early Rabbinic Exegesis

The admittedly imprecise designation of early rabbinic literature is employed in this study with reference to the Mishnah, the Talmudim and the early midrashim. Though the codifications of the rabbinic texts were completed after the composition of the New Testament, the respect of the rabbis for their religious traditions caused them to preserve much that can be considered contemporaneous with[106] or antecedent to[107] the New Testament writings. Indeed, the rabbinic approach to the Old Testament, though differing from forms of biblical interpretation such as Qumranic pesher and Philonic allegory in its own day,[108] is a continuation of the reinterpretations of the biblical traditions observable already in the Old Testament.[109] Thus, Vermes concludes that similarities between the New Testament and the rabbinic literature are best attributed to derivation from the common source of Jewish traditional thinking, rooted primarily in the Old Testa-

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106 Longenecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period 24-25 points to rabbinic references which pre-date the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

107 Froehlich, Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church 3 notes: "Rabbinic hermeneutics, the dominant hermeneutics in later Judaism, had the purpose of making Scripture available as the record of God's revealed will for the guidance of Jewish life. It drew on the rich oral tradition of the earlier interpreters of the Law, that is, the scribes of the generations after Ezra and the teachers of the period after the Maccabean revolt (tannāʾîm), a tradition which eventually issued in the great written collections of Mishnah, Gemara, and Talmud in Christian times."

108 Alexander, "Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament" 245-246. Cf. Chilton, "Jesus and Judaism" 239, who states: "The diversity of Judaism in the first century is obvious from its sources. Although the rabbis referred to their predecessors as if their Judaism progressed in an unbroken line of succession from Moses, Jewish documents from the first century and earlier present a different picture."

109 Weingreen, From Bible to Mishna 2; Bloch, "Midrash"

ment texts.[110]

The overriding purpose of rabbinic exegesis was the explication and application of the biblical text to meet the ever-changing situations of life.[111] The rabbis continually supported their teachings by pointing to the scriptures for substantiation. The Torah was for them a paradigmatic framework within which the changing conditions in Israel could be addressed.[112]

Though specific citations will be considered in the following sections, two general observations drawn from the rabbinic literature may be noted at the outset. First, in the Tannaitic period a growing desire for redemption from exile and return to the land and institutions of the ancient nation of Israel is observable particularly in the early Jewish prayers.[113] Second, the figure of Abraham which is used sparingly in the Old Testament outside of Genesis 12-25 and fixed formulae,[114] becomes a pattern of virtue and obedience.[115] Consequently, Abraham is regarded as having acquired by his perfection a treasury of merit which is available for his descendants.[116]

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110 "Jewish Literature and New Testament Exegesis: Reflections on Methodology" 372-373; cf. Barr, The Bible in the Modern World 156. In addition, it must be noted that early Judaism, like early Christianity, was influenced to some degree by Hellenistic thought, particularly in its popular form, thus providing another common conceptual source. Cf. Fischel, Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy and Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric" 239-264.

111 Bowker, The Targums and Rabbinic Exegesis 43; cf. Weingreen, From Bible to Mishna 25.

112 Childs, Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context 8 notes that in Jewish exegesis "the Hebrew scriptures are not viewed as a closed entity in a dialectical relation to the later rabbinic tradition, but rather there is an unbroken continuity between scripture and tradition ..."

113 Meyers and Strange, Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity 158.

114 Most of the remaining references to Abraham are found in the post-exilic literature.

115 Cf. Seebass, NIDNTT 1:77.

116 Barrett, From First Adam to Last 31.

4.52 Mishnah and Talmud

The diversity of early Judaism intimated by extant literary remnants precludes the designation of any particular strand as normative.[117] However, Talmudic Judaism, which left the legacy of the great compilations of the Mishnah and the Talmudim, became dominant in late antiquity, and served as the foundation for medieval and modern Judaism.[118] Therefore, though the evidence of these works must not be taken to represent the total Jewish influence which may have affected early Christian teachings, it is suggestive of the intellectual conceptions which shaped the subsequent literature of Judaism.

It is remarkable that Abraham is referred to only infrequently in these compilations, though it must be kept in mind that legal discussions such as these would by their distinctive nature be less likely to draw upon narrative figures. The Mishnah and the Jerusalem Talmud offer no relevant references to the sojourning of the patriarch. A citation in BTal ʿAbodah Zarah 18b-19a identifies Abraham with the incident of Babel, contrasting Abraham's obedience to God with the building of the city, in a manner similar to Pseudo-Philo. One of the minor tractates of the BTal, Gerim 4.3, regards the references to גֵּר in Gen 23:4; Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 as referring to proselytes, and connects them with the concept of Abraham's circumcision. Though Aboth 4.16 does affirm that "this world is like a vestibule before the world to come: prepare thyself that thou mayest enter into the banquet hall,"[119] this metaphorical aspect is eschewed in favor of

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117 Neusner, Early Rabbinic Judaism 177.

118 Guttmann, Die Philosophie des Judentums 54.

119 Cf. Agus, "A Jewish View of the World Community" 357, who states that the Jewish sages "saw terrestrial history as an acting out of a scenario composed in the meta-historical realm ...

a cultic reference when Abraham's designation as a גֵּר is considered.

4.53 Midrashim

Although the term "midrash" has been extensively debated[120] and there is no consensus as to its precise description, some general characteristics may be noted in preparation for the observation of specific midrashim pertaining to Abraham the sojourner. Bloch states that midrash is homiletical in character, originating in the public exposition of the Torah on Sabbath and at festivals.[121] By probing the meaning of the text of Scripture the rabbis sought by imaginative explanation[122] to expound its relevance to their contemporary setting.[123] Though midrash was firmly rooted in what was considered the authoritative text of Torah,[124] the endeavor to explicate the fixed tradition as a continually active force in Israel[125] developed different literary genres[126] and interpretative

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120 Cf. Neusner, Comparative Midrash: The Plan and Program of Genesis Rabbah and Leviticus Rabbah for discussion of the various understandings of midrash in the writings of Bloch, Vermes and Fraade. Additional discussion and bibliography are presented by Chilton, "Varieties and Tendencies of Midrash: Rabbinic Interpretations of Isaiah 24.23" 9-32; Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash: 105-138; and le Déaut, "Apropos a Definition of Midrash" 259-282.

121 "Midrash" 1265.

122 Bauckham, op. cit. 36.

123 Bloch, "Midrash" 1266; Wright, op. cit. 132.

124 Porton, "Defining Midrash" 62; Longenecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period 37.

125 Vermes, "Bible and Midrash: Early Old Testament Exegesis" 220, speaking of midrash in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature, states: "In brief, the aim of primitive midrash was to render every word and verse of scripture intelligible, the whole of it coherent, and its message acceptable and meaningful to the interpreters' contemporaries ... So scripture as it were engendered midrash, and midrash in its turn ensured that scripture remained an active and living force in Israel."

126 Hamerton-Kelly, op. cit. 47 wisely cautions: "Midrash is a mode of thinking which may be described but not defined.

emphases.[127] What was central to midrash, however, was its effort to determine not only what the words[128] of Scripture actually said, but also the new insights to be acquired by employing techniques such as logical inference, combination of passages and allegorical exegesis.[129]

Genesis Rabbah, redacted probably around 400 C.E.,[130] contains several items of relevance to the theme of Abraham's sojourning. Abraham is commissioned by God to propagate His truth throughout the world, thus becoming the father of proselytes (39.14). The collection of parallels in 40.6 between Abraham's life and the later Israelite history, echoing the similarities noted in chapter 2 between Genesis 12-13 and the subsequent

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One should not be too impressed with the certainties of the form critical method, its confidently delineated genres and forms, in analyzing the midrash, since the authors in question were conscious of writing in a tradition rather than adhering to literary forms."

127 E.g. Goppelt, Typos 31 contrasts the two major Tannaitic schools by noting that whereas Ishmael interpreted the Scripture according to the plain or natural sense, Akiba exploited the potential of each datum of the text, often adding haggadic embellishment. Cf. Fishbane, "Jewish Biblical Exegesis: Presuppositions and Principles" 98.

128 Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament" 38 notes that in contrast with contemporary hermeneutical emphases, "the mentality of post-biblical Judaism was fixed first and foremost to the words of Scripture. With methods very different from our own, their approach was nonetheless linguistic. The development of midrash has its initial impulse in sensitivity toward the words of sacred text."

129 Schurer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ 2:339-355 gives a succinct discussion of midrashic exegesis. Vermes, Post-Biblical Jewish Studies 38 notes with reference to midrash: "Gaps in the biblical narrative were filled, difficulties and obscurities clarified, parallel passages, real or imaginary, brought together in order to emphasize and complete their common meaning ..."

130 Neusner, Genesis Rabbah 2:ix. However, as Weingreen, "הוצאתיך in Genesis 15:7" 215 points out: "... the Midrash has a long tradition, stretching back into biblical times and ... there was much Midrashic material in existence in, what we would call, the Oral Torah. Such extra-biblical folklore persisted and was ultimately given fixed literary form, with accretions and embellishments, in the Midrash."

narratives of the movements of Jacob and the conquest under Joshua, evidences that to some degree Abraham was viewed as an exemplary figure. The midrash on Gen 23:4 in Genesis Rabbah 58.6 cites Abraham as saying, "If I wish I am a <u>ger</u>; but if not, I am the owner, since the Holy One, blessed be He, spake thus to Me: Unto thy seed have I given the land."[131] The apparent socio-political reference of גֵּר is supported by Genesis Rabbah 53.14, which identifies the psalmist's cry in Ps 39:12(13) with the foreign status of Hagar.

In other early midrashim only scant evidence is found. The Midrash on Psalms relates Ps 119:19 to 1 Chr 29:15 with reference to proselytes and the study of Torah.[132] The call of Abraham is rendered by the Midrash on Song of Songs 1.3.3, "Abraham, many good deeds hast thou performed; many precepts hast thou kept. Become a wanderer on the earth and thy name will become great in My world." Here the divine call includes the status of sojourner, mingling theological and socio-political elements.

4.6 Lexical Development of the Sojourner Image in Early Jewish Literature

The LXX ordinarily renders גֵּר by προσήλυτος. The histori-

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131 Cf. the similar statement attributed to Rashi in <u>The Soncino Chumash</u> 118-119: "If you agree to my request, you can regard me as a stranger (who is entirely dependent upon your goodwill). But if not, I am a sojourner (settler and citizen) and can take what I desire as of right, since God has promised this land to my seed."

132 Cf. <u>The Midrash on Psalms</u> 2:258-259: "Scripture also says: 'For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as all our fathers were: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding' - as the shadow passes away, so does man. And when are our days like shadows? When men do not study or occupy themselves with Torah. So, too, our Masters taught: 'The day is short and the work is great, and the laborers are sluggish, and the reward is much, and the Master of the house is urgent.' Hence it is said 'I am a stranger in the earth: hide not Thy commandments from me.'"

cal phenomenon of the assimilation of many political sojourners into the Jewish faith inevitably led to the extension of προσήλυτος to mean a religious proselyte, thus changing the term from a socio-political reference to a cultic reference.[133] On the other hand, the LXX rendering of Ps 119:19, "I am a sojourner on earth" (גֵּר אָנֹכִי בָאָרֶץ) by ἐν τῇ γῇ could suggest a cosmological dualism between life on earth and life in the sphere of God.[134] At any rate, the midrashic tendencies which come to dominate the rabbinic literature are already evident in the limitation or extension of in its LXX renderings.

The Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha use πάροικος to refer to Lot's sojourn in Sodom (Sirach 16:8), Israel's period of slavery in Egypt (Wisdom of Solomon 19:10) and of Israel living in a foreign country (Susanna 28). This socio-political sense of πάροικος is also evidenced in the collocation of πάροικος and ἀλλογενής to speak of foreignness in Psalms of Solomon 17:28, cf.19.

The experience of the diaspora, which propelled apocalyptic Judaism toward an increased consciousness of land theology, to a certain degree prompted a different response in Hellenistic Judaism.[135] The cosmopolitan outlook of diaspora Jews continued the development noted in the LXX by employing προσήλυτος as a technical term "to denote the Gentile who becomes a full Jew by circumcision irrespective of his national or social position."[136] Thus, Philo uses Old Testament passages referring to גֵּרִים in

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133 Cf. Hort, <u>The First Epistle of St. Peter I.1-II.17</u> 154-155. However, it should be recognized that even in the Old Testament the cultic dimension of גור is beginning to emerge, e.g. in Ps 15:1; 61:4(5).

134 Sasse, TDNT 1:680.

135 Schmidt, TDNT 5:848.

136 Kuhn, TDNT 6:730. Cf. <u>De Spec. Leg</u>. I 51-52, 308-310.

conjunction with widows and orphans to speak of the religious class of full proselytes.[137] However, even in Philo the literal land promise is not rejected, but rather the national regathering of Israel is held forth as a future hope (De Praem. et Poen. 164-165, cf. Deut 30:3-5).

Moreover, Philo characteristically shifts the meaning of πάροικος and related terms, which in the LXX refer primarily to sojourning in a geographical location, to speak of life in the physical world itself, and thus he reflects a dualism between terrestrial life and celestial life.[138] In the Philonic conception, all humans have entered the physical world for a temporary sojourning until death (De Cher. 120-121). The virtuous individual, then, has an ambivalent relationship with respect to the physical world in which he lives (De Cong. Erud. 23). Though sojourning in the material body and living in the realm of sense perceptions (De Conf. Ling. 80-81), the πάροικος seeks to return to his spiritual πατρίς (De Somn. I 45; Quis Rer. 267).

In the rabbinic literature גֵּר is used to designate one who has settled in a Jewish community and who is obliged to keep the Noachic commands, thus renouncing idolatry.[139] Though originally political foreignness is the background for the concept of גֵּר, the primary stress is upon the religious status of the resident alien vis-à-vis the Jewish law.[140] This concept of גֵּר

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137 Ibid. 732.

138 Donfried, The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity 119 points out that the same phenomenon is observable in 2 Clement: "παροικία no longer refers to any one given geographical location as opposed to another; it now refers to 'the physical world' per se. There is a clear dualism between this world and the next. Thus, the sojourner who dwells on this earth should really be thinking of and striving for his heavenly home."

139 Meyer, TDNT 5:850; Wolfson, Philo 2:366.

140 Agus, "A Jewish View of the World Community" 3-4.

as proselyte is applied in Mekilta de-Rabbi Nathan Nezikin 18: 16-17, 32-36 to Abraham and David on the grounds of their self-descriptions cited in Gen 23:4; 1 Chr 29:15 and Ps 39:12(13) cf. 119:19.[141]

4.7 Conclusion

It is manifest that the early Jewish literature yields meagre evidence for Abraham as a pilgrim figure. The paraphrases of the Genesis narratives in Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo and Josephus, and the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical references, do present Abraham as an exemplary figure and provide theological rationales for Abraham's migration. In each restatement of the biblical account Abraham is viewed as a virtuous figure who forsakes the idolatry of Mesopotamia.

Similarly, the early rabbinic literature in its rare references to Abraham treats the patriarch as a figure worthy of emulation. The socio-political nature of Abraham's migration and life in Canaan is not denied, but mingled with it is the theological notion of the proselyte, which is conveyed particularly by the rabbinic use of גֵּר. This dual emphasis is paralleled by the translation of גֵּר by πάροικος for the socio-political nuance

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141 Schultz, "Two Views of the Patriarchs" 55-56 remarks insightfully: "We suggest that, in addition to its purely exegetical base in the plain sense of the Biblical narrative, the image of the Patriarchs as Noahides is best understood against the background of a major historical development in the Second Temple and Talmudic periods - proselytism. In addressing themselves to potential converts as well as to converts already within the Jewish fold, the rabbis pointed to the pre-Sinai generations as the models for proselytes. Like the pre-Sinai Noahides, the proselytes could slowly progress toward the observance of the entire law, oral and written. Like Abraham, the proselytes come to the belief in God and the observance of His commandments through the promptings of their own reason aided by God. Like Abraham, the proselyte undergoes the rite of circumcision as an adult."

and by προσήλυτος for the cultic concept in the LXX, Philo and the other intertestamental literature.

There are, however, some intimations of metaphorical development of the sojourner motif in early Judaism. TestAbr 7:9 speaks of Abraham leaving the earthly life and journeying to the city of God (cf. 2:3-6). In addition, the vision of the city of God given to Abraham, as recorded in 2 Baruch 4:1-7, could possibly signal a departure from the more characteristic Jewish focus on life in this world,[142] but this reference may be understood better as pertaining to a future earthly hope.

Philo employs the concept of sojourning to speak of metaphorical realities. Abraham is set forth as an ethical example, but what is paramount is the metaphorical description of his migration out of the realm of appearance, or of the senses. The dualism propounded by Philo is between the material and the spiritual, reflecting his appropriation of the language of Platonic idealism. By contrast, Heb 11:8-16 develops the dualism between life in the temporal world tainted by sin, and life in the presence of God. What is for Philo a metaphysical distinction becomes for the writer of Hebrews a theological disjunction.

Though there are recognizable broad similarities in Philo and elsewhere, the early Jewish literature when viewed as a whole appears to have exerted little direct influence upon the articulation of the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage in Hebrews and in subsequent Christian literature. A few elements, such as the association of the call of Abraham with the building of Babel (Pseudo-Philo 6:1-18) and the divine summons of Abraham to the heavenly

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142 Cf. Simmons. The Path of Life 166-167.

city (TestAbr 7:9) may have been integrated into later Christian depictions, but the evidence for direct literary dependence is not compelling. However, it is accurate to say that the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, when speaking of Abraham as a pilgrim, is reflecting an interpretative tradition which had been used and developed, though infrequently, by some early Jewish writers.

CHAPTER 5

ABRAHAM AS AN EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE IN HEBREWS 11:8-16

5.0 Introduction

Though the Old Testament and the early Jewish literature offer some metaphorical adaptations[1] in the portrayal of the migration and sojourning of Abraham, it is not until Hebrews that the patriarch is viewed specifically as a pattern for spiritual pilgrimage. The presentation of Abraham in Heb 11:8-16 contributes substantially to the Christian pilgrim imagery which reaches its classic expression in Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress. The major purpose of this chapter, then, is to study Heb 11:8-16 to determine the precise nature of the pilgrimage theme as it pertains to Abraham. First, however, it is helpful to consider two other New Testament references which are important in the consideration of Abraham and the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage.

5.01 The Portrayal of Abraham in Acts 7

Although the reference to Abraham in Acts 7 lies outside the major current of this study, a brief notice of its content is contributory to a comprehensive understanding of the New Testament depiction of the patriarch. The speech of Stephen, which has received detailed attention in several monographs,[2] and which

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1 In particular, Philo uses the patriarch as a symbol of virtue. Cf. the discussion in 4.34.

2 Cf. esp. Richard, Acts 6:1-8:4: The Author's Method of

bears some similarities to Hebrews,[3] includes in the rehearsal of Israel's history a summary of the migration and sojourning of Abraham. When given opportunity to publicly defend the cause for which he stood accused,[4] Stephen uses the history of the nation's repeated rejection of divine revelation to support his claim that not he, but the nation through its leaders, has abandoned the law of God.[5]

By selecting scenes from the lives of some of the great Old Testament personalities[6] Stephen indirectly argues[7] the legitimacy of the Christian faith in the historically developing plan of God[8] by using the familiar homiletical pattern of historical recital.[9] Rather than conforming to a static conception of divine

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Composition; Scharlemann, Stephen: A Singular Saint; and Bihler, Die Stephanusgeschichte im Zusammenhang der Apostelgeschichte. Additional discussion and bibliography may be found in Simon, St. Stephen and the Hellenists in the Early Church, esp. p.117.

3 Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews 36 draws a list of parallels between Hebrews and the speech of Stephen, evidence which compels Bruce, Commentary on the Book of the Acts 143, to claim: "Stephen is, in fact, the spiritual father of that unknown writer; a comparative study of Stephen's speech and the Epistle to the Hebrews reveals an impressive series of parallels, suggesting a basic identity of outlook and approach in the two documents;" cf. Moule, The Birth of the New Testament 97. de Waard, A Comparative Study of the Old Testament Text in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament 82 suggests that the affinity of both Acts and Hebrews to the DSS supports a strong connection between the two works. This correlation, however, is rejected by Simon, op. cit. 102-104, who rightly explains the similarities by reference to the common stock of theological conceptions in Diaspora Judaism; cf. Scharlemann, op. cit. 166-175.

4 Munck, The Acts of the Apostles 63 comments: "In apostolic times the speech of the accused on trial did not defend himself so much as the cause that he supported and represented."

5 Marshall, The Acts of the Apostles 132.

6 Richard, op. cit. 143. See further discussion of the historical recital at 5.2.

7 Moule, The Birth of the New Testament 96.

8 Neil, The Acts of the Apostles 116 argues well: "... although the name of Christ is never mentioned, Stephen is all the while 'preaching Jesus'. He is demonstrating that everything in Israel's past history and experience pointed forward to God's culminating act in his plan for the redemption of the world in sending the Christ."

9 Cf. Barnard, Studies in the Apostolic Fathers and Their

worship dictated by rigid cultic forms,[10] Stephen insists that "a movable tent such as they had in the wilderness and in the earlier years of their settlement in Canaan was a more fitting shrine for the Divine Presence in their midst than the fixed structure of stone which King Solomon built."[11]

Therefore, Stephen's speech, which at first appears a somewhat irrelevant expatiation upon Israel's history, performs an important literary function in the book of Acts.[12] In a manner similar to Herodotus and Thucydides,[13] Luke uses the speech of Stephen[14] to mark the transition in the narrative away from Jerusalem as the center of the mission of the early church.[15] Here, then, is the verbal anticipation of the break between Judaism and Christ-

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Background 58, who points to similar examples in Ps 105:12-43; 106:6-42; Josh 24:2-13; Neh 9:7-31; and Judith 5:6-18. As Simon, op. cit. 40 notes, this historical recital genre may have been "originally intended for catechetical and liturgical purposes." However, in Stephen's hands, the pattern is altered to view the history of the nation pessimistically: "... not only will God abandon His people in the future, but He has already done it in the past" (p.41). Bowker, "Speeches in Acts: A Study in Proem and Yelammedenu Form" 107 suggests that the discourse is drawn from the pattern of the synagogue homily, with the proem text of Gen 12:1, the seder Exod 33:12-34:9 and the haftarah Is 65:22-66:5.

10 Munck, op. cit. 65. Cf. Moule, op. cit. 96.

11 Bruce, Commentary on the Book of the Acts 141. Eberhard, The Alienated Christian: A Theology of Alienation 74 concludes: "In substituting a temple for a tent, therefore, Israel manifested her idolatrous character and her betrayal of the spirit of Abraham. It seems as though Stephen is saying that the pilgrim status is essential to the covenant, and in the spirit of the prophets he accused the Jewish hierarchy of having lost a sense of its own alienation."

12 Hooker, Continuity and Discontinuity 33.

13 Praeder, "Luke-Acts and the Ancient Novel" 283-288 argues that the book is best paralleled to the ancient novel because of its accumulation of literary techniques.

14 Koester, Introduction to the New Testament 2:318 notes: "... in his speeches the author of Acts followed a widely used practice in the writing of history, which was to clarify the significance of the events in question by composing speeches; these are presented as if they had been delivered by one of the main actors. This does not exclude the possibility of the preservation of valuable information embedded in the narratives of Acts."

15 Richard, op. cit. 266.

ianity,[16] addressing the Jews by means of a familiar literary form but containing a distinctively Christian message.[17]

The portrayal of Abraham in Acts 7 presents the patriarch as he is depicted in the Old Testament texts, rather than as a paradigm for Christian believers, as in the Pauline epistles and in Hebrews.[18] Dahl notes that in his historiography Luke "keeps rather close to his sources and wants to respect what he assumes to have been the historical facts. Yet by means of redaction, rearrangement, and some minor changes, he is able to write history in such a way that he simultaneously sets forth his theology, whether he was conscious of this or not."[19]

The recital of Abraham in Acts 7:2-8 uses the sequence of the Genesis narratives as a framework, but supplements the biblical record with additional traditions.[20] Throughout the section God is presented as the initiator of Abraham's actions.[21] Therefore, the patriarch's life, though not presented explicitly as an example to be followed,[22] is set within a recognizably theological context. Consequently, "while both an overall view and an analysis of 7:2-8 give the impression of being straightforward or

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16 Neil, <u>The Acts of the Apostles</u> 107-108.

17 Gabel and Wheeler, <u>The Bible as Literature</u> 7-8.

18 Dahl, "The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts" 140. Contrast also the allegorical use of Abraham by Philo and the ethical observations based on Abraham's life in the Qumran literature. Cf. Scharlemann, <u>op. cit</u>. 57.

19 <u>Op. cit</u>. 154.

20 Richard, <u>op. cit</u>. 145-150; Neil, <u>op. cit</u>. 108.

21 Scharlemann, <u>op. cit</u>. 63 notes: "In his own handling of the story of Abraham there is not the slightest suggestion that somehow the father of Israel worked his way out of idolatry into a recognition of the one true God. The thought of any merit attaching to the patriarch's behavior is not even hinted at ... Stephen saw the significance of Abraham in the light of God's redemptive intent and work."

22 Dahl, <u>op. cit</u>. 143 contrasts Acts 7 with the explicit lesson drawn from Abraham's landlessness in Hebrews 11.

neutral history, the opposite is true. The author ... has so chosen and edited the episodes of the history of Abraham that the reader does not hesitate to accept his version of the narrative as normative."[23]

Stephen represents the call by God to Abraham as having come to him at Ur, whereas Gen 11:31-12:1 implies a call in Haran. By reasoning from references to Ur in Gen 15:7 and Neh 9:7, Stephen apparently deduces that similar calls came to Abraham both in Ur and in Haran, a conclusion reached also by Philo.[24] The chronological notice in 7:4 stating that the migration to Canaan occurred after the death of Abraham's father, though following a continuous reading of Genesis 11 and 12, may also be indicative of an appropriation of the chronology represented by the Samaritan Pentateuch.[25] The implausibility of Philo's having directly appropriated a reading distinctive to the Samaritan Pentateuch suggests that Stephen, Philo and the SP may all be dependent upon a common textual tradition.[26]

The paramount concern of Stephen's portrayal of Abraham, however, is the alien status of the patriarch in Canaan and of his descendants in Egypt in 7:5-7. Bruce maintains that "Stephen's point is that, even in the promised land, Abraham lived a pilgrim life ..."[27] This, however, is probably stressing the ethical

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23 Richard, op. cit. 58.

24 Marshall, The Acts of the Apostles 135.

25 Barr, Biblical Words for Time 29-30. de Waard, op. cit. 80 points to similar affinity of the DSS for the SP. Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews 5:219 notes that the common rabbinic view stated that Terah's idolatry constituted his spiritual death, so that though he physically remained in Haran after Abraham had migrated to Canaan, he was spiritually dead.

26 Richard, "Acts 7: An Investigation of the Samaritan Evidence" 197; Schneider, "Stephanus, die Hellenisten und Samaria" 226.

27 Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 295.

category more than Luke or Stephen would have intended. Rather, the reiterated use of sojourning language in Acts 7 (cf. vv.6,19) and the allusion to Deut 2:5 in verse 5[28] place the reference in the national dimension. The figure of Abraham, then, is used to support Stephen's thesis that God's dealings with the nation Israel and its patriarch predated the temple, and thus the worship of God cannot be confined solely within the Jerusalem cult system.[29]

5.02 Spiritual Pilgrimage in 1 Peter

The figure of Abraham is not employed in 1 Peter, but the language of sojourning in the epistle's first two chapters is reminiscent of the description of Abraham in Heb 11:8-16. As in Hebrews the patriarchs are designated ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί (Heb 11:13), and Abraham is said to have lived as an alien (παρῴκησεν - Heb 11:9) in the land of promise, so 1 Peter is addressed to παρεπιδήμους διασπορᾶς (1:1) and the recipients are designated as παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους (2:11). Though the precise date of both books is debated, there is a reasonable possibility that the letters may have been written within the same decade.[30] Each epistle appears to have been written against the backdrop of social and religious alienation which threatened to undermine "the distinctiveness and exclusiveness to which the sect owed its existence."[31] Therefore, the pilgrimage motifs in Hebrews and 1 Peter may well be similar but independent

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28 Scroggs, "The Earliest Hellenistic Christianity" 192.

29 Scharlemann, op. cit. 167.

30 Cf. Robinson, Redating the New Testament 169,220,352, who dates 1 Peter at 65 and Hebrews at 67. On the other hand, Schutter, The Use of the Old Testament in the Composition of First Peter 16 argues for a later date for 1 Peter, during the reign of Hadrian. Lack of certain evidence, however, compels caution in drawing definite conclusions from the parallels between the two letters.

31 Elliott, A Home for the Homeless 84.

adaptations of the language of sojourning used in the Old Testament[32] specifically of Abraham (see chapter 2 of this study) and more generally in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 (see chapter 3).

Elliott has argued vigorously that 1 Peter contrasts the early church's παροικία in the societal context of hostile paganism with the οἶκος of the church fellowship. Rejecting the notion of hope centered in a future heavenly homeland, Elliott maintains that "here and now, the Christian community constitutes a home for the alienated and the estranged."[33] The exhortations of the epistle function to develop the church's "communal identity" and "social cohesion."[34]

Elliott's stress upon the socio-political background of 1 Peter is salutary. However, this need not demand rejection of a metaphorical use of the language of alienation as in the imagery of spiritual pilgrimage.[35] Just as the language of poverty

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32 Best, "I Peter II 4-10 - A Reconsideration" 273 notes: "By using O.T. words and phrases in place of his own he is obviously giving to his own arguments that authority which he allowed the O.T. to possess."

33 Elliott, op. cit. 233. Elsewhere, Elliott in commenting on 2:11 (pp.42-43) summarizes his reasons for rejecting the concept of spiritual pilgrimage in 1 Peter. He says that such a teaching is faulty because it (1) ignores or minimizes the terms' vital political and social currency in both the secular and religious literature; (2) it is a dubious assumption that these terms are used in an exclusively figurative or "spiritual" sense; (3) the details of social alienation, confrontation and conflict in 1 Peter are fully consonant with the recipients' position as actual resident aliens within their society; (4) the fundamental contrast in 1 Peter is not a cosmological but a sociological one: the Christian community set apart from and in tension with its social neighbors; and (5) the immediate context indicates not their figurative but their concrete sociological dimensions.

34 Ibid. 225.

35 Edwards, "Sociology as a Tool for Interpreting the New Testament" 444 agrees with Elliott's sociological emphasis, but argues plausibly for a wider range of meaning in 1 Peter: "What seems to me most likely, though, is that anyone who became a Christian, whatever his or her social status, was identifying with a socially marginal group and thus could not feel at home in the

and oppression is used with great frequency in the Psalter to speak of spiritual realities, and Jesus pronounces blessing upon the poor in spirit in Mt 5:3, so in 1 Peter the language of social alienation must not be restricted to refer solely to socio-political phenomena. By common usage παροικία may well have lost some of its prior specificity. In addition, the genius of metaphor involves the employment of this very sort of category mistake.[36]

A more reasonable view of the epistle regards the socio-political aspect of strangeness from the pagan society as intertwined with the eschatological aspect of life on earth progressing toward the heavenly homeland. The Christian community is alienated from its society precisely because its destination is its home in heaven.[37] Therefore, the basis for behavior that is excellent among the Gentiles (2:12) is the awareness that "as aliens and strangers" the Christians must "abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul."[38]

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society at large. Since the church understood itself as the true Israel and the Jewish Diaspora in that area had already employed the vocabulary of paroikoi to interpret its status, Christians took over that vocabulary to describe and interpret their status in the society of Asia Minor."

36 Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics" 80.

37 Cf. Bénétreau, La Première Épître de Pierre 68; Wolff, "Christ und Welt im 1. Petrusbrief" 340-341. Though the New Testament does at times contrast the earthly and heavenly in terms which echo Platonic language (e.g., 2 Cor 5:1-10; Col 3:1-4), it must be recognized that in the New Testament focus upon the things of heaven is used as the basis for exhortations to Christian living and service.

38 Senior, "The Conduct of Christians in the World" 428-429 notes: "The hope which animates Christians leads to a different style of life - and it is this which puts them into alien status." In the series of exhortations in 2:13-3:12, "the basic viewpoint of the author is maintained: as 'aliens' the Christians must walk the tightrope between inner integrity and active involvement in a non-Christian world."

Rather than abandoning hope because of the hostility of their society, the Christians have the living hope of "an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away" (1:4). Though to claim that "Christians are new Israelites following a path which Christ has made available by being Israel himself"[39] spiritualizes the issue excessively, the Old Testament language of sojourning and inheritance is indeed resignified[40] to focus on the Christian hope of heaven which is the impetus for Christian life and service on earth.[41]

The address in 1 Pt 1:1 designates the recipients ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς located in five provinces of Asia Minor. The terms παρεπίδημος and διάσπορα are of particular significance in determining the meaning of Peter's language of sojourning. παρεπίδημος emphasizes "the transitoriness of the sojourner's stay in a place"[42] and hints at its precarious nature.[43] The recipients, thus, are characterized as a people in transit.[44]

The expression διασπορά draws upon rich LXX usage[45] speaking of the geographical scattering of Israel. In Deut 28:64-65 this scattering is regarded as occasioned by divine judgment upon the sinful nation. In the LXX the punitive implications are made explicit by the insertion of διασπορά as part of the covenant curses (cf. Deut 30:4).[46]

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39 Tinsley, *The Imitation of God in Christ* 166.

40 Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* 71; cf. Moffatt, *The General Epistles* 89-90.

41 Souček, "Pilgrims and Sojourners" 17.

42 Selwyn, *op. cit*. 118.

43 Bénétreau, *op. cit*. 76. Elliott, *op. cit*. 38 notes that "tenuous existence as resident aliens was fraught with profound and far-reaching political and socioeconomic as well as religious consequences."

44 Spicq, *Vie Chrétienne et Pérégrination* 69-70.

45 Cf. Rothenberg, NIDNTT 1:685.

46 So also Philo, *De Praem, et Poen*. 165 represents the

The use of διασπορά in 1 Pt 1:1, as well as in the parallel expression in Jm 1:1, makes precise identification of the recipients of the letter difficult.[47] The strong Old Testament overtones of the language could suggest an audience of Jewish Christians. However, the frequent use of Jewish imagery throughout 1 Peter (cf. e.g. 2:9-10) supports the more likely view that the epistle regards Christians in terms of their similarity to or relation with the spiritual legacy of Israel.[48] As the dispersed Jews continued to look to Jerusalem as their homeland, so the Christians who are scattered in the pagan society of Asia Minor must maintain allegiance to heaven, the place of their reserved inheritance (1:4) during the time of their sojourning (1:17).[49]

Though the geographical aspect of διασπορά should not be ruled out, particularly in view of the specific provinces cited in the address,[50] the expression is capable of functioning as an image of Christians in the world.[51] Hence, "die Diasporasituation ist Ausdruck des eschatologischen Schon und Noch-nicht, Ausdruck der Erwählung und des Fremdseins."[52] Whereas παρεπίδημος defines the recipients in terms of their relation to the land of their temporary residence, διασπορά expresses their absence from

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Jews as returning from the διασπορά caused by God's punitive judgment.

47 Cf. Selwyn, <u>op. cit</u>. 118-119.

48 Elliott, <u>op. cit</u>. 38, 48-49.

49 Cf. Cranfield, <u>The First Epistle of Peter</u> 14; Reicke, <u>The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude</u> 76.

50 Elliott, <u>op. cit</u>. 46 claims: "In its New Testament usage the term [διασπορά] can always be taken to connote geographical, social and religious distinction rather than cosmological separation from heaven." In granting that the sociologically-rooted expression can be used with religious implications, however, Elliott is hard-pressed to rule out continued metaphorical development of the motif to speak of the Christian's separation from his heavenly homeland.

51 Schröger, <u>Gemeinde im 1. Petrusbrief</u> 129-130.

52 Goppelt, <u>Der erste Petrusbrief</u> 79.

their true homeland, here at least in part used metaphorically for their πατρίς in heaven.[53]

The indirect reference to sojourning in 1:17, ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε, employs the legal term παροικία, which describes "the limited status and rights of foreigners in Greco-Roman society."[54] However, though Elliott correctly points out that "1 Peter does not state that the addressees became paroikoi by becoming Christians but that as Christians they should remain paroikoi,[55] the proximity of repeated uses of ἀναστροφή and ἀναστρέφω (1:15,17,18) strongly suggests that in 1:17 παροικία is used as a synonym for human life, rather than with strictly legal or sociological content.[56] To read this as a specifically cosmological contrast between earthly existence and heavenly existence is importing semantic content into the passage. Nevertheless, to argue that 1:17 distinguishes only between present holy living and past sinful living[57] is to recognize only one dimension of the multiform image.

In 2:11 the exhortation to excellent behavior among the

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53 Cf. Hiebert, "Designation of the Readers in 1 Peter 1:1-2" 67; Beare, The First Epistle of Peter 74-75.

54 Elliott, op. cit. 232.

55 Ibid., cf. also 132.

56 Hort, The First Epistle of St. Peter I.1-II.17 16 notes well the allusion to LXX Ps 118:19, πάροικος ἐγώ εἰμι ἐν τῇ γῇ. However, his effort to tie the reference in 1 Pt 1:17 to the narrative of Abraham lacks compelling support. Better is his observation (p.75) that "two aspects of this sojourning are together included here. The Asiatic Christians were sojourners scattered among a population of other beliefs and other standards of life from their own. In this sense the word was specially chosen here with reference to ἀναστράφητε, because the conditions of their sojourning compelled them to enter into all sorts of relations with the heathen around them. But they were also sojourners on earth: as Christians, they belonged to a present living commonwealth in the heavens, and hoped to become visibly and completely its citizens hereafter."

57 Elliott, op. cit. 44. But note his more balanced statement in 35-36.

Gentiles is built upon the fact of the recipients' identity as παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους. In this designation Peter brings together the terms used in 1:1 and 1:17 as he draws to a close the initial section of the epistle and prepares to launch the major section of exhortation commencing in 2:13. The demands of Christian living, then, are founded upon the spiritually unassimilated character of Christian existence.[58] Socio-political expressions are employed to connote the Christian quality of life, which is different from, though in routine contact with, unregenerate society.

The collocation of πάροικος and παρεπίδημος in the LXX is found only in Gen 23:4 and Ps 39:13 (MT 39:13).[59] As has been argued in chapter 3, Ps 39:12(13) is likely a metaphorical statement derived from the socio-political self-description of Abraham in Gen 23:4. In 1 Peter the patriarch is not in view, so the transferred sense of Ps 39:12(13) is the more probable biblical source for the allusion. However, as the disparate use of similar language in Eph 2:12,19 indicates, these socio-political terms were well-established in the language of the early church for a range of metaphorical uses.[60]

In the present context the descriptions "aliens and

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58 Goppelt, Der erste Petrusbrief 155.

59 Schutter, op. cit. 56 argues unconvincingly: "The reference in 2.11 to παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους may recall comparable combinations in the OT (though singular), but these are standard legal terms and would have been immediately intelligible as such had they never been used in the OT." This, however, leaves out of consideration the heavy concentration of OT quotations and allusions in 1 Peter, which constitutes prima facie evidence for a primary OT referent, as noted by Best, op. cit. 273.

60 Eph 2:12,19 speaks of the Gentiles, who were ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, but now in Christ they are no longer ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, but have become "fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household." Cf. Montefiore, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 196.

strangers" emphasize the imperative for the Christians addressed to recognize and maintain their unassimilated relationship with their sinful society. Instead of becoming acclimated to their surroundings and thereby losing their distinctive identity,[61] the Christians should continually view themselves as sojourners, and not citizens of this world.[62] The early Christians should not withdraw from society as did, for example, the Essene community, but instead the apostolic charge is to maintain an eschatological existence[63] within the bounds of everyday social life. Therefore, though the disjunction in 2:11 between σαρκικῶν and ψυχῆς might suggest Platonic dualistic conceptions,[64] it is more appropriate to view the fact of the heavenly inheritance (1:4) of the Christians as the impetus for their ethical detachment from the society in which they live.[65]

Consequently, in 1 Peter the sojourning of the Christians is ethical in character, though cosmologically grounded and sociologically conditioned.

5.1 The Literary Background of the Epistle to the Hebrews

A key area of debate in the study of the Epistle to the Hebrews concerns the literary background which influenced its de-

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61 Cranfield, op. cit. 53-54.

62 Cf. Hort, op. cit. 132. Thus, Leo the Great, Sermon 74.5 exhorts on the basis of 2:11: "... they that have entered on the way of Truth must not be entangled in treacherous snares, and the faithful must so take their course through these temporal things as to remember that they are sojourning in the rule of this world, in which, even though they meet with some attractions, they must not sinfully embrace them, but bravely pass through them." John Cassian, The Institutes of the Coenobia 4.14 uses this verse as a basis for monasticism.

63 Goppelt, Theologie des Neuen Testaments 495.

64 Cf. Böttger, "Die eschatologische Existenz der Christen" 262.

65 Cf. Beare, op. cit. 135; Selwyn, op. cit. 169.

velopment. The variety of literary motifs and forms evidenced in the book have prompted numerous theses which posit diverse theories of literary dependence.[66] This section will discuss the concept of literary dependence in general terms, and then survey the major suggested literary backgrounds for the epistle. The purpose of this investigation is to discern which background or backgrounds helps most to illuminate the argument of Hebrews.

5.11 Literary Dependence

Much of the contradiction in claims concerning the literary background of Hebrews can be attributed to imprecision in the concept of literary dependence. Nash draws a useful distinction between what he terms "weak dependence" and "strong dependence." In his analysis, weak dependence constitutes parallelism by which "anyone can absorb from his culture a terminology and background of ideas that may consciously or unconsciously form only the backdrop for significantly new theories."[67] On the other hand, strong dependence implies a necessary and/or sufficient dependence of a literary work upon another work or definable philosophical position.[68] For the purpose of this study, "weak dependence" will be referred to as parallelism, and "strong dependence" designated as dependence.

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66 Thus MacRae, "Heavenly Temple and Eschatology in the Letter to the Hebrews" 186 remarks wisely: "The fact that such completely different interpretations are perpetuated must give us grounds for reflection. For one thing, they are symptomatic of the fundamental cleavage in the interpretation of Hebrews, namely, whether the predominant background is Alexandrian/Philonic or Palestinian/apocalyptic. All too few interpreters have been able to recognize both strains in the Letter." Cf. Childs, The New Testament as Canon 412-413; Wikgren, "Some Greek Idioms in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 152.

67 Christianity and the Hellenistic World 17.

68 Ibid. 16-17.

The mere existence of parallels does not demand or prove dependence. Similar literary constructions may be unrelated analogous parallels drawn from reactions to similar conditions. Therefore, influence from one religious or philosophical tradition to another "needs to be demonstrated, not assumed."[69] The overly zealous citations of parallels to biblical texts has prompted cautions from Orlinsky[70] and Sandmel[71] which admonish scholars to the necessity of reasoning carefully from the totalities[72] of the traditions before claiming literary dependence. Genuine dependence is not merely the presence of similarities, but requires "a direct, straight-line influence from one element of the parallel to the other; one religious tradition has been directly influenced by, or has clearly appropriated something from, the other ..."[73] Thus, the original contexts of the alleged verbal parallels must be examined, for "we may be dazzled only by the similarities and may be oblivious to the real and usually enormous differences which the larger contexts betray."[74]

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69 Donaldson, "Parallels: Use, Misuse and Limitations" 195.

70 "Whither Biblical Research?" 7-8.

71 "Parallelomania" 1-13.

72 Birkeland, "The Belief in the Resurrection of the Dead in the Old Testament" 62 reasons: "Some traits are always common to all peoples in the same cultural area, and their mutual relations are very complex. But at the same time every detail belongs to a distinct totality, and is determined by the rest of this totality. Entering a new totality always means changing an idea. Through innumerable borrowings and lendings the history of culture goes on, and it is very often impossible to state the origin of the different elements."

73 Donaldson, _op. cit._ 200.

74 Yamauchi, _Pre-Christian Gnosticism_ 178. Neusner, _Understanding Seeking Faith_ 2:208-212 draws a helpful distinction between a taxonomical relationship, in which two or more texts are connected by shared traits, and a genealogical relationship, in which the connection is based upon origin. In analyzing the early Jewish writings, Neusner concludes (pp.211-212): "... the premise of the metaphor of connection as genealogy within families demands data we do not have... For the literature as a whole

To prove dependence, convincing evidence must be marshalled showing that the writer of a given document at least knew of the other document, and if dependence of thought is claimed, then clear imitation or deliberate opposition must be demonstrated.[75] However, it must also be acknowledged that both documents may have drawn from a literary tradition common to the two.[76]

In addition, a definitive history of the development of Israel's religious tradition and of the early Christian thought is frustrated by the fragmentary nature of the extant ancient literature.[77] Therefore, rather than converting "parallels into influences and influences into sources,"[78] the more appropriate procedure is to recognize the apparent parallels between literary documents and religious traditions, but also to give adequate weight to the significant gaps in the evidence. All the while, it must be acknowledged that similarities within the entire ancient Near Eastern religious literature do not necessarily require literary dependence. Rather, "it is only when the texts are parallel in some peculiar, accidental detail, something that

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we cannot show continuous unfolding out of a single linear connection. The opposite is the case. Many of the documents stand quite independent of the generality of writings and intersect with the rest only casually and episodically."

75 Ellingworth, "Hebrews and 1 Clement: Literary Dependence or Common Tradition?" 262. It must also be recognized that even if literary dependence is established, the later writer may be consciously transforming the source from which he is drawing, rather than simply adopting the former range of meaning; cf. Balás, "The Encounter Between Christianity and Contemporary Philosophy in the Second Century" 141-142.

76 Ellingworth, op. cit. 263-264. Analogously, Shotwell, The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr 115, after analyzing the parallels between Justin and Philo concludes: "... any influence of Philo on Justin was an indirect influence. It could have come through Justin's Christian predecessors. Furthermore, much of what has been classed as evidence of Philonic influence may be attributed to the diffusion of Jewish-Alexandrian thought in Hellenistic Judaism."

77 Birkeland, op. cit. 65-66.

78 Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament 82.

cannot be explained as a probable product of natural development, that the parallelism can be taken as proving literary connection."[79]

5.12 Greek Literature

The earliest Christian literature, including the Epistle to the Hebrews, bears little explicit animosity toward Greek thought.[80] Instead of rejecting all semblance of Greek expression, the early Christians built upon similarity of thought and language, and employed Greek rhetorical techniques in pressing their arguments. Thus, "they attempted to prove that the Christian doctrines ... are in agreement with the best pagan thought or superior to it."[81]

The figure of Odysseus on his voyage through life to his home corresponds at several points to the New Testament portrayal of the Christian's anticipation of his home in heaven,[82] though at no place is the analogy drawn by the biblical writers. The Stoic conception of turning away from the world bears some similarity to the Christian's ambivalent status in the world estranged by sin from God, but Stoicism remains anthropologically oriented, whereas Christianity views man's place in the world in terms of the theological perspective.[83]

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79 Smith, "The Common Theology of the Ancient Near East" 146. Cf. Nash, op. cit. 15-16.

80 Barr, Old and New in Interpretation 55-60. Cf. De Vogel, "Platonism and Christianity" 27.

81 Robbins, "The Influence of Greek Philosophy on the Early Commentaries on Genesis" 219.

82 Cf. Rahner, Greek Myths and Christian Mystery 328-386.

83 Bultmann, Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der Antiken Religionen 161 states that whereas Stoicism finds personal peace in turning away from the world, Christianity calls men out of the world in order to realize their responsibility towards God. Cf. Bietenhard, NIDNTT 1:687; Stählin, TDNT 5:25-26.

Though some similar strands of thought may be found between Hebrews and the traditional Greek and Stoic literature, more extensive parallels may be noted in the conceptions of Middle Platonism,[84] which formed "a coherent intellectual and metaphysical framework"[85] in late antiquity. The use of allegorical interpretation and the language of shadow and reality in the epistle reflect similarity to Platonic conceptions. However, as Hurst has contended, careful analysis of purported Platonic terms in Hebrews, specifically ὑπόδειγμα, σκιά and ἀντίτυπος, undermines the alleged dependence of Hebrews upon Platonic thought.[86] Moreover, Barrett argues that though the language of Greek philosophy is used in Hebrews to communicate Christian truth, the same terminology can be found in the Jewish apocalyptic literature.[87] Consequently, the issue of dependence cannot be decided merely on linguistic parallels.

Without contesting the evident common ground shared by Christianity and Platonism,[88] several points of fundamental dif-

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84 Daniélou, Message Évangélique et Culture Hellénistique 117 notes: "Remarquons qu'ici encore nos auteurs dépendent moins de Platon que d'une imagerie que le Moyen-Platonisme avait rendue commune." Cf. Norris, God and World in Early Christian Theology 27-30.

85 Thompson, The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 15-16.

86 "How 'Platonic' are Heb.viii.5 and ix.23f?" 156-168; cf. Fritsch, "TO 'ANTITYΠON'" 102-103.

87 "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews" 393; Luz, "Der alte und der neue Bund bei Paulus und im Hebräerbrief" 330-331. In addition, as Hurst, "Eschatology and 'Platonism' in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 42-43 points out, such concepts can be found already in the OT. Thus, Caird, "Just Men Made Perfect" 100 concludes: "... the two worlds of this epistle are not those of Platonic idealism; they are the two worlds of Jewish eschatology, the one following upon the other in historic sequence. The realm of shadow and transience is not here the whole phenomenal world, it is the world of the Old Testament, declared by its own prophetic writers to be obsolescent and near to disappearing. And the real world of which it was a shadowy anticipation is the new age introduced by Christ."

88 Cf. the concise summary by De Vogel, "Platonism and

ference must be noted. In contrast to the timeless perspective of Platonism, Christianity in general, and Hebrews in particular, constructs its view of the world "ultimately upon the eschatological action of God in history."[89] In addition, Platonic dualism cannot easily account for the unique fact of Christ's incarnation.[90] Furthermore, the Jewish and Christian hopes of the resurrection of the body differ from the Platonic dogmas of the immortality of the soul,[91] although they are sometimes expressed in terms similar to them (cf. 2 Cor 5:1ff.). It may well be that the language of Platonic thought, which by the early Christian era had come into common parlance, was used as a floating metaphysical vocabulary to which Christian concepts were attached.[92]

How, then, can the corresponding language be reconciled with the contradictory points of view? Suggestions have been of-

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Christianity" 54-55, and his conclusion that "Platonic philosophy gave to these facts a rational form of expression, which by Christians could be recognized as being in accordance with what they had learned from Scripture, but at the same time as deepening and confirming their Christian belief."

89 Smith, A Priest For Ever 138; cf. Williamson, "Platonism and Hebrews" 423-424. Moule, "The Borderlands of Ontology in the New Testament" 6 asserts: "Of course, we know that such time-metaphors as contrast the temporary with the permanent are as much at home with Plato as with Paul. But it remains true that, broadly speaking, biblical writers are more prone to attribute reality and importance to a history which is conceived of as moving along the line of time towards a goal than to a static model of absolute reality or to a purely cyclic notion of history; and it is in its acceptance of this serious teleology and in its refusal to work consistently with static space-metaphors that the Epistle to the Hebrews breaks away from what at first might seem to be an identifiable metaphysic."

90 Bruce, "The Kerygma of Hebrews" 10 reasons: "... it is not Platonism or Philoism that he teaches; his emphasis on the historical and unrepeatable 'once-for-all-ness' of the incarnation and passion of Christ is sufficient to make this plain."

91 Héring, "Eschatologie Biblique et Idéalisme Platonicien" 458-459.

92 Thus, Moule, "The Borderlands of Ontology in the New Testament" 6 suggests that "this writer's Platonism is a Platonism of convenience, not a consistently held philosophy."

fered that the writer of Hebrews had been converted to Christianity out of Platonic philosophy,[93] or that he had been trained in Alexandria in a Philonic type of exegesis.[94] On the other hand, the example of Paul's speech in Athens (Ac 17:22-31) supports the view that the writer of Hebrews chose, perhaps consciously for apologetic purposes,[95] or more likely unconsciously,[96] to use the language of Platonic thought, which had by his time come over into popular parlance,[97] as an instrument[98] to communicate the Christian message.

In conclusion, one must be cautious in claiming literary dependence of Hebrews upon Greek thought. Though numerous parallels may be cited, particularly with the literature of Middle Platonism, significant deviations betray the lack of systematic adherence to Platonic or, more generally, Greek conceptions. The biblical writer does indeed manifest familiarity with Platonic idioms, but this may well be explained by the pervasive effect of Platonic language in the first century rather than by direct literary dependence. Therefore, the judgment by Thompson is judicious: "The thought world of Hebrews is therefore as difficult to disentangle as the literature of antiquity in general. The author

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93 Coppens, "Les affinités qumrâniennes de l'Épître aux Hébreux" 281-282.

94 Boman, "Hebraic and Greek Thought Forms in the New Testament" 17.

95 Nash, op. cit. 101; Cambier, "Eschatologie ou Hellenisme dans l'Épître aux Hébreux" 95-96.

96 Wallace-Hadrill, Christian Antioch 98; Norris, op. cit. 33.

97 Neil, The Epistle to the Hebrews 22; Purdy, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 585.

98 Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology 77: "... the author uses the Platonic doctrine as an instrument. If it dominates his mind, it does not master his religion." Cf. Bristol, "Primitive Christian Preaching and the Epistle to the Hebrews" 92-93; Browne, We Have a Great High Priest 285.

of Hebrews has inherited various traditions which he has interpreted within his own world view."[99]

5.13 Philonic Literature

Although general parallels may be noted between Hebrews and Platonic thought, more specific literary similarities have been traced between the epistle and the writings of Philo. Because Philo was nearly contemporaneous with the writer of Hebrews, antedating him by only a few decades at most, and because both authors deal with comparable biblical themes, Williamson is justified in stating that "if philosophical ideas of a Platonic kind exerted any kind of influence upon the Author of Hebrews it is probable that they did so through the mediation of Philo...[100] However, the precise nature of the literary relationship between Hebrews and Philo is a matter of widespread disagreement. A portion of this debate is summarized by Buchanan:

> As a result of his massive collection of parallels, Spicq concluded that the author of Hebrews had been a Philonic student before he became a Christian. In his analysis of Spicq's work, Schröger acknowledged that there were many close similarities between Hebrews and Philo's works. He listed these, but he also listed the differences between the two and concluded that the two developed through different branches of Judaism, Philo through an allegorical direction and Hebrews through a heilsgeschichtliche direction that was associated with an apologetic branch, which, in turn, was related to the

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99 The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 154. Cf. Norris, op. cit. 33.

100 "Platonism and Hebrews" 418.

people of Qumran. Sowers, observing that there were readings attested only in Philo and Hebrews, concluded that "this plus the fact that Heb. follows Codex Alexandrinus seems to indicate a geographical proximity of both writers." ... Barrett contrasted the ethical-allegorical interpretation of Philo to the eschatological outlook of Hebrews.[101]

More recently, Williamson[102] has combed the book of Hebrews for non-Philonic material in endeavoring to overturn Spicq's thesis, but his procedure has been dismissed as an oversimplification by Thompson.[103] Subsequently, Nash offered another hypothesis, suggesting that Hebrews was written in Alexandrian language, thus paralleling Philo, with the polemical intent of exposing "the inadequacy of the Alexandrian beliefs about mediators."[104]

Because of the complex nature of the issue, this study will only touch upon the conflicting evidence in general terms.

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101 "The Present State of Scholarship on Hebrews" 310. A succinct discussion of the views of Spicq, Sowers and Williamson is found in Childs, The New Testament as Canon 410-411, who concludes: "In sum, the Hellenistic filtering which is reflected in Hebrews, especially by its use of the Septuagint, is far too complex to be explained simply by a comparison with Philo."

102 Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

103 The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 10. Thompson charges: "Williamson's treatment of themes discussed by the two writers is so filled with oversimplifications as to exaggerate totally the differences between the two writers. The fact that the author of Hebrews depends on traditions not found in Philo does not diminish the importance of Philo as a possible background to Hebrews. The author of Hebrews, as a Christian, would obviously depend on traditions not found in Philo. Nevertheless, Williamson oversimplifies the matter greatly when he argues that Hebrews is eschatological, while Philo is metaphysical and philosophical." Though Thompson's rhetoric is a bit harsh, his points provide a useful corrective to Williamson's thesis.

104 Christianity and the Hellenistic World 98. Furthermore, Bristol, op. cit. 97 points out the homiletical value of appropriating Hellenistic concepts: "Throughout the whole writing we see the primitive preaching poured into the mold of Alexandrian philosophical conceptions in order that it may be more understandable to the readers and that it may give them confidence and courage to be faithful even unto the end."

It would appear wise to affirm with Thompson, "The question of the relationship between Philo and Hebrews remains open, as neither Spicq nor Williamson has given a convincing solution... The relationship between Philo and Hebrews is probably too complex to be reduced to a matter of literary dependence."[105]

As has been mentioned in chapter 4, Philo focuses upon both the literal truth of the Old Testament texts and their deeper allegorical significance. By means of this process of exegesis, "Biblical characters became representative of abstract virtues or else of the soul in its journey of life."[106] In essence, Philo endeavors to translate the Old Testament into the language of Greek philosophy.[107] But, in the process, as for example in his intellectualized concept of πίστις as the renunciation of earthly things, he develops meanings which diverge from the Old Testament.[108] Similarly, Philo's view of pilgrimage transforms the biblical references of גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב by presupposing "the Platonic view of the intelligible world as one's place of origin."[109]

The parallels between Hebrews and Philo have been traced most exhaustively by Spicq.[110] Building from the literary simi-

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105 The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 11.

106 Kugel, Early Biblical Interpretation 82.

107 Koester, Introduction to the New Testament 1:280 remarks: "It was Philo's intention through his extensive literary activity to transform the sacred book of the Jewish worshiping community, the Pentateuch, into a Hellenic book. By means of his apologetic and allegorical interpretation, he was able to associate the mystical meaning of this book, translated into Greek philosophical language, with the ultimate goal of Greek education; but he also translated the moral and legal content of the Pentateuch into Greek categories. He thus perfected what Jewish wisdom theology had intended to accomplish."

108 Thompson, op. cit. 57-61; Hatch, The Pauline Idea of Faith in Its Relation to Jewish and Hellenistic Religion 80.

109 Thompson, op. cit. 61. Cf. Moffatt, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 174-175.

110 Cf. e.g., "Alexandrinismes dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," "Le Philonisme de l'Épître aux Hébreux," and esp. L'Épître aux Hébreux.

larities, Milligan contends that both writings share the same interpretative approach to the Old Testament by which persons and institutions are considered indicative of spiritual truths.[111] Specific areas of convergence have been detected in the conceptions of the high-priesthood and the Logos.[112] More relevant to this study, both Hebrews and Philo develop the motif of life as a pilgrimage,[113] though it must be recognized that Hebrews does not follow the lead of Philo in connecting the concept with the Platonic dualism of body and soul.[114]

Whereas attention to such parallels could understandably lead to the conclusion that "the analogies are so near as to make a relationship of direct dependence much the simplest and most probable hypothesis,"[115] significant objections must be weighed. Thompson points to the difference in texts cited and in the degree of interest in philosophical matters, and reasons that "differences between the two writers are probably great enough to exclude a literary dependence of Hebrews upon Philo."[116]

When Heb 11:8-16 is examined in comparison with its Philonic parallels, several differences emerge. Williamson is probably demanding too much when he points to Philo's lack of a list

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111 The Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews 207.

112 Eccles, "The Purpose of the Hellenistic Patterns in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 211-212. In contrast, Burns, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 186 claims reasonably that "Philo's conception of priesthood and his treatment of the Melchizedek figure are poles apart from that depicted in the Epistle ... Indeed, we need not go outside of Christian literature to discover the most probable source of our author's ideas and language."

113 Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux 1:83.

114 Thompson, op. cit. 77; Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews 490.

115 Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria" 290.

116 The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 156. This assessment is supported by Combrink, "Some Thoughts on the Old Testament Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 25, who notes the conspicuous absence of Philonic allegory in Hebrews.

of exemplars of a particular virtue similar to the roll found in Hebrews 11.[117] Such a requirement implies that literary dependence demands stylistic imitation. More compelling is his contrast between the heavenly city for which Abraham sought in Hebrews and Philo's depiction of the patriarch turning away from the things of mortality to explore the nature of God by his mind.[118]

A comprehensive examination of the evidence would seem to justify a mediating position. Though the numerous parallels between Hebrews and Philo cannot be discounted, at the same time disparities in emphasis, style and argumentation must not be ignored.[119] It must also be considered that the entire Philonic corpus has undoubtedly not been preserved, and present knowledge of Jewish literature in the late pre-Christian and early Christian era suffers many lacunae.[120]

Though dogmatic conclusions would be injudicious because of the nature of the evidence, several general principles may be supported. Both Hebrews and Philo employ aspects of the vocabulary and interpretative stance of Hellenistic Judaism,[121] though with differing emphases and applications. Thus, Thompson is on firm

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117 _Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews_ 318.

118 _Ibid_. 491. Cf. Braun, "Das himmlische Vaterland bei Philo und im Hebräerbrief" 324-325.

119 For example, Carlston, "The Vocabulary of Perfection in Philo and Hebrews" 148 concludes from a study of the τελ- word group in Philo and in Hebrews that in Hebrews "the heavenly sacrifice, the heavenly tabernacle, the heavenly priesthood are all understood in Christianized Platonic terms as Christ, in his death, is seen as having offered a once-for-all sacrifice in the heavenly temple. It would be hard to imagine anything more foreign to Philo's mode of thought." In addition, "crucial Philonic emphases are missing: the interest in philosophy, the notion of progress in virtue, the strong stress on the ethical, and a sense of 'training' or pedagogy."

120 Consider, for example, the profound reassessments occasioned by the discovery of the Qumran literature.

121 Nash, _op. cit_. 92.

ground when he concludes that "even if Spicq has claimed too much, the extensive parallels which he has demonstrated for Philo and Hebrews suggest the importance of Philo for understanding the presuppositions of Hebrews."[122] What is more difficult to establish is direct linkage between the writer of Hebrews and the intellectual discussion of Hellenistic Judaism, centered in Alexandria and presumably including Philo. The imprecise use of Platonic terms such as ὑπόδειγμα, σκιά and ἀντίτυπος in the book of Hebrews prompts the suspicion that the writer may have derived his Platonism, and analogously his Philonic elements, from popular parlance.[123]

The parallels between Hebrews and non-Philonic Jewish literature, such as Josephus, Qumran, the pseudepigrapha and the rabbinic works, suggest that both Hebrews and Philo are viewed most appropriately within the totality of the Jewish literary tradition.[124] Therefore, Hebrews and Philo should be considered literary siblings emerging from a common tradition.[125] Though Hebrews undoubtedly bears resemblances to Hellenistic language and techniques, the epistle finds its most distinctive roots in the Old Testament.[126]

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122 The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 8.

123 Cf. Perry, "Method and Model in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 69.

124 Sandmel, The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity 126 reasons: "There are some patterns of thought similar to Philo in the Wisdom of Solomon, IV Maccabees, and also the Epistles of Paul. This encourages me to envisage a blend of Judaism and Hellenism antecedent to Philo, a blend much broader than Philo himself."

125 Cf. Schröger, Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger 306-307; Hanson, Allegory and Event 94.

126 Dodd, According to the Scriptures 136 argues the same point from the wider perspective of the confrontation between the early Church and Gnosticism in the second and third centuries: "What is certain is that while the theology of the New Testament

5.14 Gnostic Literature

The connection between Hebrews and Gnosticism has been argued most strenuously by Käsemann.[127] Building upon the deep sense of the foreignness of the human soul prominent in Gnostic thought,[128] Käsemann interprets the book of Hebrews according to Gnostic categories. Hence, the human soul is a stranger in an alien world, and it must be redeemed by the Redeemer from heaven in order to return to its heavenly home.[129] Indispensable to this heavenly journey of the soul is the forsaking of the body, which is too closely identified with the material world.[130]

Though Käsemann's thesis has been influential for several decades, it has been rightly criticized in more recent studies.[131] Increased understanding of the intricacies of Gnosticism has produced skepticism about the close connection between Hebrews and Gnostic thought.[132] The eschatological goal of the believer's place in the heavenly city as propounded by Hebrews bears little

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contains a substantial Hellenistic element, its fundamental structure, on the other, is not Hellenistic, but biblical; and this biblical substructure is so firmly bonded into the whole edifice that no amount of Hellenizing ever destroyed, or ever could destroy, its basic character."

127 Das wandernde Gottesvolk; cf. Koester, Introduction to the New Testament 2:274 and Grässer, "Das wandernde Gottesvolk: Zum Basismotiv des Hebräerbriefes" 160-179.

128 Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism 156 notes: "The dualism of apocalyptic literature was eschatologically conditioned, whereas the dualism of the Gnostics was cosmologically conditioned."

129 Stählin, TDNT 5:33-34.

130 Käsemann, op. cit. 54.

131 Cf. e.g. Hofius, Katapausis; Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism; Wilson, Gnosis and the New Testament.

132 Wilson, op. cit. 145 states: "Gnosticism is another response to the problems of the age, at some points in close agreement with Christianity, but at others completely at variance. A balanced assessment of their mutual relationship must give to each its due."

genuine correspndence to the Gnostic ascent of the spirit.[133] In addition, whereas Gnosticism views man's foreignness in terms of his relation to the material world, the Bible speaks of man estranged from God in the sinful world.[134] This world, however, is the creation of God,[135] who has purposed to redeem it to Himself. In view of this sort of evidence, "the elaborate interpretation of the pilgrimage in Hebrews as a gnostic ascension of the soul has not been followed by many recent scholars."[136]

5.15 Qumran Literature

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls prompted immediate speculation concerning the relationship between Hebrews and Qumran.[137] Not only in its themes, but also in its exegetical techniques,[138] parallels were drawn between Hebrews and the literature of Qumran.

Notwithstanding the evident similarities, points of contrast must also be noted in the two groups of literary texts.

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133 Cf. Eccles, "The Purpose of the Hellenistic Patterns in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 222.

134 Cf. Böttger, "Die eschatologische Existenz der Christen" 262.

135 Grant, Gnosticism and Early Christianity 150.

136 Buchanan, "The Present State of Scholarship on Hebrews" 306. Nevertheless, the assessment by Quispel, "Gnosticism and the New Testament" 271 must be kept in mind: "... we must conclude that Gnosticism and Christianity have much in common because they have in part a common background and a certain historic affinity for one another."

137 Buchanan, op. cit. 308-309 presents a useful summary of the scholarship linking Hebrews and Qumran.

138 Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament" 330-331 notes that both Hebrews and Qumran build upon a generally literal exegesis, but enhance the Old Testament texts by means of analogy to associate them with contemporary events. Cf. Combrink, "Some Thoughts on the Old Testament Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 32; Spicq, "L'Epître aux Hébreux, Apollos, Jean-Baptiste, les Hellénistes et Qumran" 371-377.

Though Hebrews and Qumran appear to be more similar to each other than they are to Philo in their use of the Old Testament, the Qumran literature tends to interpret the Old Testament as a mystery to be unravelled and explicated by specific fulfillments, whereas Hebrews views it as "parable, witness or promise."[139] The Qumran idealization of the desert and its emphasis on pilgrimage and exile do not find substantial correspondence in Hebrews.[140]

In view of the patent parallels and the undeniable differences it may reasonably be concluded that Hebrews and Qumran, while sharing a similar cultural background, do not require direct dependence of one upon the other.[141] Moreover, the reappraisal of the Jerusalem cult evidenced in both literatures can be traced to their common antecedent of the Old Testament prophets who "endeavored to make their contemporaries see the sacrificial cult in its proper perspective, as something which was not essential to true religion, and which could easily militate against it."[142] As in the question of Philonic influence on Hebrews, the parallels are best explained by reference to the common tradition of the Old Testament from which both Hebrews and Qumran drew, rather than direct literary dependence.[143]

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139 Batdorf, "Hebrews and Qumran: Old Methods and New Directions" 23; cf. Ellison, "Typology" 159.

140 Batdorf, op. cit. 21-22 claims: "The desert in Hebrews is not the ideal place it appears to be at Qumran. Pilgrimage and exile are mentioned but not given central importance. The major thrust of Christian faith in Hebrews is to discover its true and permanent home in 'Sabbath Rest.' Although both Hebrews and Qumran refer to a forty year period of testing the Christian community as a church in the wilderness is a Christian commonplace not peculiar to Hebrews."

141 Coppens, "Les affinités qumrâniennes de l'Épître aux Hébreux" 271.

142 Bruce, "The Kerygma of Hebrews" 12-13.

143 Sandmel. "Parallelomania" 5-6 comments: "Where the

5.16 The Old Testament

Previous sections have suggested that the parallels between Hebrews and both the Philonic and the Qumran literature can be explained best by their common heritage of Judaism. The major source of this religious tradition was the Old Testament,[144] though it must be remembered that in the first century C.E. the Jewish body of Scriptures may have not yet reached its final accepted form.[145] Though the New Testament message was in many ways radically new, its roots were self-consciously drawn from the Hebrew Bible,[146] as is evident from the quantity of quotations and allusions, as well as the employment of Old Testament vocabulary and thought forms.[147] Therefore, Dodd's judgment is valid when he concludes that the Old Testament texts reinterpreted in the light of the gospel facts are "the substructure of all Christian theology and contains already its chief regulative ideas."[148]

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literatures present us with acknowledged parallels, I am often more inclined to ascribe these to the common Jewish content of all these Jewish movements than to believe in advance that some item common to the scrolls and the gospels or to Paul implies that the gospels or Paul got that item specifically from the scrolls."

144 Childs, Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context 7 notes: "The decisive point is that the Christian church recognized the integrity of the Old Testament for its own faith within its canon of authoritative scripture. It neither incorporated the Old Testament within the framework of the New nor altered its shape significantly. In sum, the Christian church accepted the scriptures of the synagogue, as previously shaped, as part of its own canon, and sought to interpret them according to various Christian construals."

145 Davies, "Reflections about the Use of the Old Testament in the New in Its Historical Context" 134-136; Sundberg, "The Old Testament of the Early Church" 216-218. However, Leiman, The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture 135 argues strenuously for a date of closing in the second century B.C.E.

146 Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament" 64-78 contains an extensive bibliography of works on the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

147 Aune, "Early Christian Biblical Interpretation" 89,96.

148 According to the Scriptures 127. It should be noted, however, that the specific form of the Old Testament most influential in the first century C.E. was the Septuagint; cf. Sundberg, op. cit. 213.

Although allegorical interpretation has on occasion left its mark on the New Testament (e.g. 1 Cor 10:1-4; Gal 4:22-31)[149] the New Testament writers usually seem to regard the Old Testament narratives as referring to historical events and appropriate them as the heritage of the Church.[150] In the New Testament it is evident that the early Christian writers regard the gospel as a legitimate development from the thought of the Old Testament literature.[151] Without rejecting the historical uniqueness of the biblical characters, the New Testament writers, using a range of interpretative procedures[152] which include prominently the concepts of prototype and antitype,[153] seek to explicate the Christian message in terms of its perceived Old Testament antecedents. Inevitably, some interpretations which had become traditional in the Jewish milieu were appropriated by the early Christians,[154] but innovative expansions of reference are also discernible in the New Testament.[155]

When attention is focused specifically upon Hebrews and its relation to the Old Testament, two significant facts emerge.

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149 Cf. Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament 90-91. It should be noted that within the NT there is little explicit exegesis of the OT, but the frequent quotations of and allusions to the OT texts manifest the writers' awareness of exegetical techniques and insights.

150 Vawter, On Genesis 32; Lindars, New Testament Apologetic 272-273.

151 Aune, op. cit. 92-93; Dodd, According to the Scriptures 133.

152 Dunn, op. cit. 87-100 presents examples of a range of types of Jewish exegesis found in the New Testament, including targum, midrash, pesher, typology and allegory.

153 Baker, "Typology and the Christian Use of the Old Testament" 147-148.

154 le Déaut, "Apropos a Definition of Midrash" 277; Ellis, "Midrash, Targum and New Testament Quotations" 69; Davies, The Gospel and the Land 381; Beckwith, The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church 403.

155 Dodd, op. cit. 130 points especially to Messianic interpretations of Old Testament texts.

First, the Old Testament citations in Hebrews are for the most part derived from a form of the LXX which antedates the texts Alexandrinus and Vaticanus.[156] Second, the use by Hebrews of the Old Testament does not fit precisely into any single prior interpretative technique.[157] As "one of the earliest and most successful attempts to define the relation between the Old and New Testaments,"[158] Hebrews reflects the Christological and homiletical concerns of early Christianity,[159] in that it sees in the Old Testament both out-dated vestiges of Judaism and adumbrations of the Christian faith.[160] The epistle, then, builds upon the historical records of Israel a decidedly Christian message,[161] which at the same time abrogates the liturgical institutions of the old covenant and derives inspiration from its chief characters. In this the writer is not limited by previous interpretations, but his exposition moves into new hermeneutical frontiers.[162]

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156 Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews" 325. It is difficult to establish certainly, but it may be that the Hebrew text to which Hebrews is indirectly related is a recension more ancient than that of the textual tradition which eventuated in the MT. The citations which do not conform to any extant witnesses could possibly have been known variants chosen to fit the author's theological purpose. Cf. Howard, "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations" 208,215; Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews xlix.

157 Cf. the discussion of the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews by Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics 47-66.

158 Caird, "The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews" 45.

159 Barth, "The Old Testament in Hebrews" 77.

160 Cf. van der Ploeg, "L'Exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux" 227.

161 Caird, op. cit. 51 comments: "... the Old Testament enables him to make his experience articulate, coherent and reasonable. Above all, it enables him to present Christ as the climax of the ongoing, historic purpose of God, the culmination of Israel's long pilgrimage, in the hope that his readers will return with new zeal to their own pilgrimage and find that it leads them also to him who is the perfecter of their faith."

162 Cf. Bristol, "Primitive Christian Preaching and the Epistle to the Hebrews" 91-92. Barr, Holy Scripture notes: "The task of the New Testament was not primarily to interpret the Old,

5.2 The Literary Context of Hebrews 11:8-16

The book of Hebrews, whose literary form resists precise categorization,[163] appears to be an authoritative message of exhortation born out of "deep pastoral concern for their total Christian life."[164] The general need addressed is that of spiritual lethargy,[165] with the attendant peril of failure to attain the ethical τέλειος[166] which Christ had made possible for the believers. Consequently, the writer endeavors to expound the significance of the work of Christ in order to spur the readers on to renewed vitality in their faith.[167]

Intertwined with evidence as to the incomplete nature of Judaism[168] is the recurrent motif of the people of God progressing toward a goal, or on the way.[169] The culmination of this journey is fellowship with God, pictured under the figures of sabbath rest[170] or dwelling in the city of God, the heavenly Je-

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but to interpret that new substance. It is more correct to say that the Old Testament was used to interpret the situations and events of the New. In spite of the massive use of the Old Testament and its networks of meaning, the New Testament is more like creative literature than like exegesis."

163 Koester, Introduction to the New Testament 2:273-274 argues that Hebrews is classified best as an interpretation of Scripture, similar in form though not necessarily in content to the writings of Philo. However, Lindars, "The Place of the Old Testament in the Formation of New Testament Theology" 63-64 soundly highlights the hortatory focus of the book.

164 Filson, 'Yesterday': A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13 21.

165 Caird, op. cit. 47. The more specific occasion may be the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., as many commentators have noted.

166 Wikgren, "Patterns of Perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 160.

167 Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 4:237; Eccles, "The Purpose of the Hellenistic Patterns in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 226.

168 Caird, op. cit. 49.

169 The image of God's people on the way, as Käsemann so felicitously phrases it, has been viewed as the major motif in Hebrews by many commentators.

170 Wikgren, op. cit. 163.

rusalem (cf. 11:10,16; 12:22; 13:14).[171] In this spiritual journey, the people of God must follow the pattern of Christ.[172] Though figures from the Old Testament are employed as examples in the exhortation, the Christians are urged not to retreat into the entrenched position of institutional Judaism.[173] Rather, they, like Christ, are to go outside the camp of the Jewish community (cf. Heb 13:13) and advance with renewed vigor and hope the cause of their Lord.

In keeping with the overall theme of the epistle, Hebrews 11 challenges the readers by pointing to a series of individuals in the Old Testament record who manifested faith in God in their lives. The variety of disparate parallels posited as literary patterns for the list of figures in Hebrews 11[174] supports the conclusion that the author of Hebrews is probably not consciously employing a rigid form, but is shaping his presentation according to more general literary convention.[175]

In the present context, the theme of faith[176] is intro-

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171 Further discussion of this theme will be found in the analysis of Heb 11:10.

172 Käsemann, Das wandernde Gottesvolk 110; Johnsson, "The Pilgrimage Motif in the Book of Hebrews" 247.

173 Moule, The Birth of the New Testament 97.

174 Alleged parallels to the list of examples in Hebrews 11 include 1 Macc 2:51-60; 4 Macc 16:20-23; Sirach 44-50; Wisdom of Solomon 10; 1 Clement 17-19; Psalm 78; Acts 7; Plutarch, De Fortuna 1; Apostolic Constitutions 37:1-3; Clement of Rome 4-9; and Philo, De Praem. et Poen. and De Virt. Cf. discussions in D'Angelo, Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews; Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer 370-371; Almqvist, Plutarch und das Neue Testament 129; Eccles, "The Purpose of the Hellenistic Patterns in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 220-222; Bovon, "Le Christ, la foi et la sagesse dans l'Épître aux Hébreux" 135-139.

175 For example, Perlman, "The Historical Example, Its Use and Importance as Political Propaganda in the Attic Orators" 154 demonstrates that the Greek oratory of the fourth century B.C.E. used historical examples to elucidate contemporary politics.

176 Cf. the comprehensive study of πίστις in Grässer, Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief.

duced in 11:1-3, exemplified by seventeen biblical figures (11:4-31), and concluded in a general summary (11:32-40).[177] Thus, the examples presented serve the parenetic function[178] of exhorting the readers to πίστις and ὑπομονή.[179] But it must be recognized that πίστις here is not the soteriological term familiar in the Pauline theology.[180] Instead, the πίστις evidenced by the examples in Hebrews 11 involves an eschatological orientation toward heavenly realities "seen only dimly and from afar."[181] Because the people of God in the Old Testament looked in πίστις beyond their present world to the divine promise to which they did not attain in their earthly lives,[182] they are set forth as models of persevering hope for the readers.[183] The cited witnesses give evidence by the eschatological perspective of their lives to the reality of their hope in God's promise.[184] Their worship was not contingent upon favorable circumstances or dependent upon the actual possession of promised blessings. By contrast, "all these, having gained approval through their πίστις, did not receive what was promised" (11:39). It is within this context that the peri-

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177 Swetnam, Jesus and Isaac 86 points out that the list of examples entails progressively more explicit suffering and martyrdom, directing the reader to the contemporary crisis facing the original recipients.

178 Barton, Oracles of God 165 points out that this passage is "a fine instance of the tendency to read Old Testament history as a catalogue of moral exempla ..." Chapter 11 is linked with the overall parenetic purpose of Hebrews by Thompson, The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 61-62.

179 Thompson, op. cit. 70 notes that δέ in 11:1 refers back to 10:39, "where πίστις was the equivalent of ὑπομονή."

180 Goppelt, Theologie des Neuen Testaments 596; Guthrie, New Testament Theology 926.

181 Purdy, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 584.

182 Johnsson, op. cit. 240-241.

183 Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology 79 notes that Hebrews 11 continually equates hope and faith.

184 Thus, Browne, We Have a Great High Priest 92 comments that "faith is the means by which realities which are invisible are made realities in human experience."

cope of Heb 11:8-16 relating to Abraham the spiritual pilgrim is located.

5.3 Analysis of Hebrews 11:8-16

In concert with the other Old Testament figures cited in Hebrews 11, Abraham is presented as one who steps forth boldly to obey the word of God without any visible guarantee. His response to the divine call, therefore, serves as a pattern for those whose hope is fixed upon that which God has promised. Four illustrations of faith drawn from the narratives of Abraham recorded in Genesis are cited in verses 8-19. This study will focus on the first three examples in verses 8-12 and the recapitulation in verses 13-16. The reference to the Aqedah in Heb 11:17-19, a crucial study in itself,[185] does not figure as directly into the discussion of Abraham as a pilgrim figure.

5.31 Hebrews 11:8

In similar fashion to the speech of Stephen in Acts 7, the writer of Hebrews commences with the call of Abraham when expounding the patriarch's faith in God.[186] The motivation for Abraham's migration to Canaan is expressed by πίστει, which as the *Leitwort* of Hebrews 11 also introduces verses 9 and 11. πίστις, which was not a religious term in classical Greek,[187] became a concept with theological dimensions when used to translate the Old Testament term הֶאֱמִין. The Hebrew word encompasses a wide

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185 Cf. the excellent monograph by Swetnam, *Jesus and Isaac*.

186 On the other hand, Paul chooses to illustrate Abraham's faith by referring to Gen 15:6. Cf. Manson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* 77-78.

187 Bultmann, TDNT 6:179.

semantic range, including both fear and trust, and denotes "man's reaction to God's primary action."[188] In Hebrews 11, the eschatological aspect of πίστις which "is convinced of future good because it knows that the good for which it hopes already exists invisibly in God"[189] is the dynamic which enables Abraham to obey the bare word of God[190] which charged him to leave his home for an unspecified location.

The present participle καλούμενος [191] suggests that Abraham's determination to act in obedience to God's call was contemporaneous with the divine instruction. This does not demand, however, a hasty and impulsive departure,[192] but simply an immediate commitment to obedience which in due time resulted in ἐξελθεῖν. What is of paramount significance to the writer of Hebrews is the motivating perspective of πίστις which caused Abraham to obey the call of God. Thus, Abraham did not wait for additional information to make a decision independent from the word of God. Instead, by πίστις he exchanged the known world of Mesopotamia for the unknown inheritance promised by the Lord.[193]

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188 Weiser, TDNT 6:182. Cf. Torrance, "One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith" 111.

189 Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews" 381.

190 Spicq, <u>L'Épître aux Hébreux</u> 2:247 remarks that "La ‹garantie› de sa parole (v.1) est suffisante." The writer of Hebrews is capable of pathetic reference (cf. 4:15), but here he presents only the bare statement of obedience, thus emphasizing by verbal economy the commitment to God's word.

191 Bruce, <u>Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 292-293 discusses and wisely rejects the variant ὁ καλούμενος. He argues that "the reference is certainly not to God's renaming him, but to His first calling him to leave his home and seek the promised land."

192 Thus, Philo's focus on Abraham's pain in being wrenched from his home (<u>De Abr</u>. 66-67) evidences his disparate literary concern. The different selection of details from the traditional sources reflects the diverse purposes of Philo and the writer of Hebrews. Cf. Weingreen, "הוצאתיך in Genesis 15:7."

193 Guthrie, <u>The Letter to the Hebrews</u> 231.

The immediate obedience by Abraham contrasts with the future character of the inheritance. To human eyes, it made little sense to leave the certainties of Mesopotamia for what appeared a quixotic quest to an unspecified location which at some future time was to become his inheritance. Abraham was compelled to endure substantial immediate loss with little prospect, apart from the word of God, of achieving appreciable gain. In the biblical record in Genesis, even the promise of the inheritance is subsequent to the original call to leave Mesopotamia (cf. Gen 13:14ff.). Thus, it "was not in the first instance an incentive to obedience; it was the reward of his obedience."[194]

The writer of Hebrews employs the future dimension of Abraham's faith and the divine promise of an inheritance to fashion the patriarch as an example of Christian hope.[195] The paradigmatic character of Abraham seen already in the Old Testament and the extrabiblical Jewish literature functions in Heb 11:8-16 as the prototype for Christian living in anticipation of the promised spiritual inheritance.[196] Thus, without denying the original referent of the land promise, the writer of Hebrews continues the metaphorical transposition intimated already in the Old Testament texts, exploiting in particular the ambiguity inherent in the notice that Abraham "went out not knowing where he was going."[197]

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194 Bruce, <u>op. cit</u>. 296. Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 4:355 comments: "The terms of the call (Gen. xii.1) were ἔξελθε... καὶ δεῦρο εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἄν σοι δείξω. It was, therefore, no attractive account of Canaan which induced him to forsake Mesopotamia, no ordinary emigrant's motive which moved him, but mere faith in God's promise."

195 Smart, <u>The Old Testament in Dialogue with Modern Man</u> 63.

196 Héring, "Eschatologie Biblique et Idéalisme Platonicien" 452-453.

197 Cf. van der Ploeg, "L'Exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux" 224.

5.32 Hebrews 11:9-10

If verse 8 can be taken as a description of Abraham's action of faith, verses 9 and 10 serve to disclose his attitude of faith while living in Canaan. This second illustration drawn from the Genesis record of the patriarch reveals that Abraham lived as a sojourner because he anticipated God's permanent city. Thus, his πίστις encompassed both the initial act of obedience and the continuing state of sojourning in Canaan.[198] Faith, then, was the characteristic pattern of Abraham's life.

Abraham's life in Canaan is portrayed as a sojourning (παρῴκησεν).[199] The derivative sense of transitory dwelling was easily extended to refer to "the pilgrim nature of the Christian Church in relation to the locality in which it is situated."[200] However, it must also be noted that in Heb 11:9 the patriarchs are also said to dwell permenantly (κατοικήσας) in tents, perhaps emphasizing the long duration of their sojourning, rather than their legal status.

The place of Abraham's residence was the land of promise (γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας). His faith is evidenced in that he settled in Canaan which had been promised to him de jure, thus claiming that

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198 Brown, An Exposition of Hebrews 510 notes: "Nothing but continued faith could have enabled Abraham to continue a pilgrim and a sojourner in Canaan, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise. Continued faith did enable Abraham to do so." Cf. Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 468.

199 A good survey of the use of πάροικος and related terms in Greek literature is found in Fascher, "Zum Begriff des Fremden" 161-168. Se further discussion in 2.14 and 4.6. The writer of Hebrews may be reflecting here the language of Ps 105:12-13.

200 MM 495. Cf. the use of πάροικος in 1 Pt 2:11 and in the Patristic literature. Spicq, L'Epître aux Hébreux 2:347 endeavors to support a metaphorical concept of sojourning from the use of εἰς, which he asserts "accentue l'idée de mouvement et d'instabilité." However, as Moffatt, op. cit. 169 points out, εἰς is sometimes used in place of ἐν, as in Mk 13:16; Ac 8:40.

which he was not to possess de facto.[201] The manner of the sojourning in Canaan is expressed in three phrases, ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν (sc. γῆν), ἐν σκηναῖς κατοικήσας, and μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ... The expression ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν may reflect Abraham's self-designation as a גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Gen 23:4.[202] The effect of this awareness of his unassimilated status was that he lived in σκηναῖς,[203] non-permanent dwellings, rather than in an established πόλις of Canaan. Likewise, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob followed his example of patient waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of the inheritance which was reiterated to them.[204] Delitzsch remarks well that "Abraham himself (and Isaac and Jacob after his example) made no self-willed efforts to bring about the accomplishment of the divine promises; they gave up all claims for the present possession of the land, and were content to wait God's time and God's disposal."[205]

The reason for Abraham's attitude while sojourning in the land promised to him is specified in verse 10. He was content to live as a πάροικος not simply because of his future anticipation of de facto possession of Canaan, but because he looked forward to God's permanent πόλις, the city designed and construct-

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201 Cf. Wiseman, "Abraham Reassessed" 142.

202 Contra. H. Bietenhard, NIDNTT 1:684, who overly spiritualizes the reference by stating, "But for Abraham even the promised land was a foreign country (Heb. 11:9), because it was not his true, heavenly home. Therefore, he dwelt in tents, and by it testified that he was a stranger in this world."

203 Origen, Commentary on Song of Songs, Prologue 3, interprets the reference in allegorical terms: "Further, they lived in tents to show thereby that he who applies himself to divine philosophy must have nothing of his own on earth and must be always moving on, not so much from place to place as from knowledge of inferior matters to that of perfect ones." Cf. also his Homilies on Exodus 9.4.

204 Contrast the impetuous and disastrous choice of Lot to establish permanent roots in Sodom.

205 Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 2:236-237.

ed by God and built upon foundations. Davidson notes:

> ... this possession, a life of tents, now here and now there, is contrasted with another kind of possession, and with possession of another country, and abode in a fixed city. This other kind of abode in this other country and city, was the object of Abraham's expectation. And this faith directed to the invisible city made his abode in Canaan a "sojourn" in a land not his own.[206]

In this, Abraham exhibited the perspective of πίστις which is ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων (11:1).[207]

In contrast with the tents in which he lived in Canaan, Abraham looked for a city built by God, and therefore possessing stability and permanence.[208] To be sure, the Old Testament descriptions of Jerusalem (e.g. Ps 87:1-3) parallel this aspect of fixity, but Heb 11:16 makes it clear that the reference here is to a celestial city.[209] In fact, ἐξεδέχετο implies that the writer of Hebrews regards Abraham as cognizant of the spiritual implications of his sojourning in Canaan. In seeking the city founded by God, Abraham is represented as looking beyond possession of Canaan to a heavenly inheritance.[210]

However, it must be recognized that the statement in Heb 11:10 may not necessarily reflect the conscious anticipation of Abraham, but may instead be intended as a commentary upon Abraham's life from the perspective of the early Christian age. It

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206 The Epistle to the Hebrews 223.

207 Cf. Stuart, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 486.

208 Contra. Philo, De Praem. et Poen. 150, in which he depicts the instability of human cities.

209 Vaughan, The Epistle to the Hebrews 221-222. Further discussion of the biblical theme of the city is found in Ellul, The Meaning of the City.

210 Cf. Bruce, The Time is Fulfilled 71-72.

is probably assuming too much to claim that "this expectation must have been founded on a revelation made to him, and believed by him" and that "the patriarchs may have had clearer revelations of a future state made to them than any that are recorded in Scripture."[211] The explicit recorded promise of Gen 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:7,18; 17:8 relates to the land of Canaan. Nevertheless, the protracted period of sojourning while waiting for the fulfillment of this promise could have prompted an unconscious desire[212] for a permanent place in the spiritual sphere. In this light, Delitzsch remarks: "Throughout the Old Testament the desire of believers is for a rest and a possession which is more and more clearly seen to lie beyond the realm of nature and the present world."[213] However, the reiterated use of κόσμος in a negative sense in Heb 11:7, 38[214] suggests that much of the dualistic character of Heb 11:9-10 is located more appropriately in the theological perspective of the epistle than in the conscious thought of the patriarch.

The πόλις for which Abraham looked is characterized as having foundations and as being designed and constructed by God. Muntingh argues from parallels with the Mari texts that Abraham may have seen in the role of Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem (Gen 14) "a prototype of the eventual establishment of Yahweh's authority there [at Jerusalem], which indeed happened under the Davidic dynasty."[215] However, as has already been noted, the Genesis texts do not disclose the thoughts of the patriarchs, and the

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211 Brown, <u>An Exposition of Hebrews</u> 512; cf. Moffatt, <u>op. cit</u>. 170, who supports this point on the basis of Heb 6:13-15.

212 Cf. Davidson, <u>The Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 224.

213 <u>Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 2:237; cf. Westcott, <u>The Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 362.

214 Thompson, <u>The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy</u> 75-76 also compares 9:1,11.

215 "The City Which Has Foundations" 118.

immediate context in Hebrews 11 supports better a heavenly referent for the city. Even if Jerusalem were in view as the city of God, as it is in Ps 76:2(3), the earthly locus of the worship of Yahweh could be viewed appropriately as a terrestrial representation of the spiritual reality.[216] The description of the city as that of which God is τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργός[217] supports the celestial reference rather than a literal reference to Canaan or Jerusalem.[218]

The metaphor of the πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ[219] is a biblical symbol for "the ultimate religious and spiritual relationship which is established between God and his redeemed people."[220] By using a

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216 Davidson, The Epistle to the Hebrews 223-224 suggests a plausible development of the motif: "This idea of a settled, social, well-ordered human life, according to the thought and will of God, and in the fellowship of God, which Abraham's faith conceived from the promises, and which his hope looked for had received a definite shape from history ere this Epistle was written. The idea had been faintly realized in Jerusalem, the city of God's habitation, compactly built together, whither the tribes went up; yet very inadequately, and the perfect realizing of it was transferred to the future and to another condition of the world. It became the new or heavenly Jerusalem, or the Jerusalem that is above."

217 Though these rare terms can be distinguished philologically as referring to the architect and the builder of the city, here they appear to be used in rhetorical conjunction to refer to the total process of establishment, rather than with explicit differentiation.

218 Morris, "Hebrews" 119. In addition, 2 Baruch 4:4 reflects an early Jewish view that the scene of Gen 15:9-21 involved a vision of the celestial Jerusalem shown to Abraham. Cf. also Midrash Rabbah Vayetze 69.7 on Gen 28:17, where a similar vision is shown to Jacob.

219 A thorough study of the concept of the city in biblical, classical and Jewish literature is found in Schmidt, Die Polis in Kirche und Welt.

220 De Young, Jerusalem in the New Testament 162. In a wider context, McKelvey, The New Temple 153 reasons: "The chief feature of the new order of salvation, in contrast to the old, is nearness to God. So while the images of the heavenly Zion or city and the true or archetypal tent represent thought-forms that are basically different, they symbolize one and the same idea; access to God and nearness to him through Jesus Christ, and all the blessings which this means."

human socio-political expression the reality of permanent social relationship between God and the believing community is communicated. For the believer the πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ is the representation of the place nearest to the deity, and thus it approximates the Muslim concept of "the center of the cosmos, the navel of the earth, the place which orientates all other space."[221]

Throughout the ancient world the city was regarded as a microcosm of the universe,[222] the concentration of the values and prosperity of a social organism.[223] In the Greek world the city-state was often accorded religious status[224] and individual significance was linked with political responsibility.[225] However, among the Stoics, the concept of πόλις was extended to be coterminous with the universe. Thus, the individual πόλις is merely an approximation of the μεγαλόπολις.[226]

Philo, who parallels Stoic imagery in many particulars, employs the term μεγαλόπολις to speak of the earth as a unity which "has a single polity and a single law, and this is the word or reason of nature, commanding what should be done and forbidding what should not be done" (*De Jos*. 29). However, the wise man "finds heaven to be his fatherland (πατρίδα) and earth a foreign country" (*De Agric*. 65). Consequently, Philo has moved beyond the anthropocentric categories of Stoicism to affirm a celestial gov-

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221 Johnsson, "The Pilgrimage Motif in the Book of Hebrews" 245, citing Partin. Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* 7-9 cites parallels from Babylonia and India in which cities are viewed as "mythical models of the celestial city."

222 MacKenzie, "The City and Israelite Religion" 60.

223 Cf. McIntyre, "The Faith of Abraham" 70; Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* 73-74.

224 Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der Antiken Religionen* 121. However, Telfer, *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Emesa* 243 points out that Epicureanism reacted against the Platonic veneration of the city.

225 Bultmann, *op. cit*. 118.

226 Westcott, *op. cit*. 389.

ernment in which humans may enjoy citizenship. His presentation of Abraham's search for the πόλις τοῦ Θεοῦ manifests a complex combination of philosophical speculations and metaphysical relationships,[227] which stands in marked contrast to the presentation of the patriarch in Hebrews 11 as a historical figure whose experiences are employed with exemplary force in the author's parenesis.[228]

The concept of God's πόλις can also be traced in the Jewish apocalyptic literature. The idealized future earthly Jerusalem pictured in Ezekiel 40-48 is transposed into the concept of an eternal heavenly Jerusalem in 2 Baruch 4:22ff.; 4 Ezra 7:26; TestDan 5:12 and 1 Enoch 90:28.[229] Nevertheless, as Cambier argues, the ideology of Hebrews 11 cannot be explained exclusively by comparison with the Jewish apocalyptic writings. Whereas the apocalyptists stress the terrestrial aspects of a future Jerusalem, this is modified in Hebrews to focus on the celestial character of the πόλις τοῦ Θεοῦ. Thus, the qualitative aspect has attained precedence over the temporal factor.[230]

In the New Testament both the Jewish and the Greek conceptions of the city are employed and extended in the presentation of the πόλις τοῦ Θεοῦ.[231] However, the focus is placed on the celestial character of the city in contrast with either the community of humanity or the literal site of Jerusalem. In this a distinctively Christian concept is developed which is used and embellished in later Christian exegetical and homiletical literature.

The reference to God's πόλις for which Abraham looked in

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227 Cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. 2:239.
228 Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews 298-299.
229 Guthrie, New Testament Theology 883,
230 "Eschatologie ou Hellenisme dans l'Epître aux Hébreux" 94.
231 Cf. Westcott, op. cit. 386-391.

Heb 11:10,16 fits along with the concept of the μέλλουσα πόλις of 13:14 and the πόλις θεοῦ ζῶντος of 12:22 into the general theme of the heavenly or new Jerusalem in Jewish and Christian literature.[232] Though De Young has drawn the salutary distinction between the new Jerusalem as the future culmination of God's program of redemption and the heavenly Jerusalem as the present continuing realization of fellowship with God,[233] both of these two motifs are subsets of the general metaphor of Jerusalem as the symbol for the ideal of a community in fellowship with God. The ideal Jerusalem emphasizes the transcendence of God[234] in a manner which surpasses the celestial archetypes in Babylonian and Assyrian ideology.[235]

The Old Testament prophets, particularly in the exilic period,[236] envisioned a glorified earthly Jerusalem as the center of Israel's national hope.[237] But, even in the Old Testament corpus Jerusalem is becoming used as a symbol for Israel,[238] rather

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232 Extensive discussions of the heavenly Jerusalem are found in Gunkel, *Zum Religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments* 48-51; Schmidt, "Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild" 206-248; Volz, *Die Eschatologie der Jüdischen Gemeinde* 372-375; and Georgi, "Die Visionen vom himmlischen Jerusalem in Apk 21 und 22."

233 *Jerusalem in the New Testament* 163-164.

234 Porteous, "Jerusalem-Zion: The Growth of a Symbol" 235-236.

235 Fritsch, "TO 'ANTITYΠON'" 104. Gunkel, *op. cit*. argues that Hebrews draws from a rich extra-biblical mythology which pictures heaven as the city of the gods, rather than upon Jewish literature exclusively. It is apparent that Hebrews moves beyond the emphases of the Old Testament, Jewish apocalyptic (contra. Windisch, *Der Hebräerbrief* 103) and Philo. However, the distinctive features of the portrayal of the heavenly Jerusalem in the epistle are explained better as expansions of intimations already present in the Old Testament than as wholesale importations from pagan ideology. Contra. Eccles, "The Purpose of the Hellenistic Patterns in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 219.

236 Neville, *City of Our God* 36.

237 Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet* 18; Michel, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* 394-395.

238 Porteous, *op. cit*. 239.

than as an explicitly literal conception. In fact, in Isaiah 65 Jerusalem is depicted as part of the new creation. Hence, the literal reality is beginning to be transformed into an eschatological symbol.[239]

Notwithstanding the Qumran reinterpretation of the Old Testament Jerusalem imagery to refer to their sectarian community,[240] the general development of the motif in the Jewish pseudepigraphical literature is in a metaphorical direction. The prior literal conception of the divine presence in an earthly Jerusalem is increasingly blended with the eschatological perspective that "only in heaven would the ancient promises be fulfilled."[241] To be sure, literal Jerusalem remains a profound unifying factor in Judaism,[242] but the anticipation of a restored and glorified city, as in Tobit 13:15-18; 14:5-7, begins to merge[243] with the eschatological vision of Jerusalem as a new Eden, as in TestDan 5:12-13. Thus, in 2 Baruch 4:1-7 the city of God is represented as a heavenly reality shown to Adam and Abraham and presently preserved by God.[244] Similarly, the New Testament depicts the Jerusalem above (Gal 4:25) as a city which comes down from heav-

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239 Ibid. 249.

240 Jeremias, Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit 248.

241 Clements, God and Temple 134. Browne, We Have a Great High Priest 66 comments that "in apocalyptic writings the temporal expectations of a restored Jerusalem is fused with the spatial conception of an eternal heavenly Jerusalem ..."

242 Cf. Causse, "Le mythe de la nouvelle Jerusalem" 389-390.

243 As Hurst, "Eschatology and 'Platonism' in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 57-58 notes, the Jewish apocalyptic literature manifests both vertical and horizontal eschatology. Thus, it is difficult to sustain a direct progression of development in the metaphorical direction for the concept of the new Jerusalem.

244 However, in 2 Baruch, as in 4 Ezra, the heavenly city does not necessitate renunciation of hope for the restoration of earthly Jerusalem; cf. Gowan, Eschatology in the Old Testament 17.

en (Rev 21:2).[245]

Though the early rabbinic literature affirms the existence of a heavenly Jerusalem, ירושלם של מעלה, it also speaks of a restored material Jerusalem under earthly conditions, ירושלם של עולם הבא.[246] The apocalyptic image of the heavenly city which will descend to earth is transposed into the Jerusalem which will rise up by human activity to a place of prominence in the earth.[247] To this city only those invited will go (BTal BB 75b). Thus, for the most part, "Judaism did not follow the tendency, which appeared prominently in Christianity, of replacing their hope for a restored and glorified earthly Jerusalem with a hope for a heavenly home."[248]

In the New Testament, Jerusalem is viewed more in terms of its symbolic representation of a spiritual quality of fellowship than in terms of a future restoration of earthly Jerusalem. Thus, the Jerusalem above is the mother-city of Christians (Gal 4:26; cf. Phil 3:20).[249] Although De Young may be too bold in

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245 Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 470-471. Neville, City of Our God 87 suggests that Rev 21 may hint at a heavenly city which is now descending to earth, thus presenting realized eschatology. However, the overall context of Revelation seems to support better a future application.

246 BTal Taᶜanith 5a. Cf. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews" 374; Hurst, op. cit. 58.

247 Starobinski-Safran, "Aspects de Jérusalem dans les Écrits Rabbiniques" 157.

248 Gowan, op. cit. 18. Cf. Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs 1.5.3, which is discussed by Wilken, "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism, and the Idea of the Holy Land" 304.

249 De Young, Jerusalem in the New Testament 119 asserts in his discussion of Gal 4:26: "... it is precisely at this point that Paul's polemic strikes at the traditional Jewish faith in a most distinctive way. Paul's teaching goes beyond those O.T. passages that predict the restoration of an earthly city. Paul's thought here is an extension and a development of the O.T. passages that contain the motif of the eternal significance of Jerusalem, the passages that transcend the earthly city and imply or point to the heavenly city."

claiming that "Christ's sorrowful rejection of the unrepentant earthly Jerusalem is prerequisite to the revelation concerning the heavenly and new Jerusalem,"[250] it is evident that the New Testament does indeed focus upon the heavenly reality.[251] The references to the new Jerusalem in Revelation 11, 21 and 22 place the city in disjunction with Babylon, the city of man,[252] as a symbol of the "new apocalyptic reality which would follow the end of history."[253] Though the Old Testament language of restored and glorified Jerusalem is employed, the symbol has been transformed to speak of the universal reality of fellowship with God after His ultimate victory over all His opponents.

In the book of Hebrews the heavenly Jerusalem is mentioned or alluded to in 12:22 and 13:14. In Heb 12:22 the spiritual character of the symbol is apparent, for Ἰερουσαλὴμ ἐπουρανίῳ is equated with Σιών to which the believing community has come (προσεληλύθατε). Though this city is in one sense still future (13:14 - τὴν μέλλουσαν [πόλιν] ἐπιζητοῦμεν) in that it is not yet manifest in its ultimate dimensions, the believers are able to enjoy the benefits of its citizenship in the present time by faith.[254] Thus, the readers are told, "You have come to Mount Sion and the city of the living God" (12:22). The reference to "outside the camp" in 13:13 is far from clear,[255] but the accompanying exhortation

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250 Ibid. 117.

251 Bietenhard, Die himmlisches Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum 203-204.

252 Georgi, "Die Visionen vom himmlischen Jerusalem in Apk. 21 und 22" 362.

253 Deutsch, "Transformation of Symbols: The New Jerusalem in Rv 21:1-22:5" 122.

254 Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 375. Cf. Browne, We Have a Great High Priest 59-60.

255 Cf. Thompson, "Outside the Camp: A Study of Hebrews 13:9-14" 53-54 for a summary of major interpretative positions.

is built upon the concept of a celestial Jerusalem which even now functions in the spiritual realm. Therefore, as Caird remarks, in Hebrews "the city of God had ceased to be wholly a vision of the future and had become, in part at least, a fact of the present."[256]

5.33 Hebrews 11:11-12

The third illustration of Abraham's faith introduced by πίστει details the accomplishments wrought by the patriarch's commitment to God. The exegesis of verse 11 is dominated by the vexing textual problem regarding καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα. Ample discussion of the options is available in all major commentaries on Hebrews, as well as in several specialized studies.[257] The lack of consensus as to the solution of the problem is apparent in its highly doubtful rating by the UBS text.[258]

Without rehearsing the extensive debate concerning the suggested renderings of the verse, several major items may be no-

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Koester, "Outside the Camp" 302-303 states: "For Hebrews, 'outside the camp' is identical with the worldliness of the world itself and the place where men are exposed to the experience of this world rather than secluded and protected from it ... Inasmuch as there is no abiding sacred refuge for Christians in the present, the 'city' of the Christians is in the future and still to come. It is not in the first place the certainty but rather the futurity of the heavenly city which is emphasized here ... The eschatological expectation of the Christian here is identified with the radical openness to the challenges and sufferings that necessarily result from the existence 'outside the camp.'" Though the distinction between worldliness and godliness is indeed a component of the author's message (cf. Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology 82-83), the narrower referent to the sphere of unbelieving Judaism seems to fit better both the immediate context and the overall message of the epistle. Cf. Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 403-404.

256 "Just Men Made Perfect" 101.

257 Cf. e.g. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts 83-89; Hauck, TDNT 3:621; Swetnam, Jesus and Isaac 98-101

258 Cf. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament 672-673.

ted. First, the phrase καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα, regarded by some as a gloss, has overwhelming manuscript evidence, although the variety of combinations with στεῖρα does raise suspicions as to whether it was inserted into later manuscripts or deleted from the original textual reading.[259] Second, the prima facie evidence strongly suggests that δύναμιν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος is more suitable to refer to the sexual function of the male.[260] However, it must be recognized that καταβολή can be used in the general sense of establishment,[261] and σπέρμα can be taken plausibly to refer to spiritual posterity.[262] Third, the consistent use of Abraham as subject in verses 8-10, the allusion to God's word of promise to Abraham[263] and the masculine participle νενεκρωμένου in verse 12[264] cause one to expect that Abraham will be the subject in verse 11. Fourth, to portray Sarah as a paradigm of faith is curious in light of the divine rebuke to her laughter in Gen 18:9-15.[265] Fifth, legitimate grammatical constructions can explain the extant text in terms of Abraham as subject, either by construing καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα as in the dative case[266] or as a concessive circumstantial clause.[267]

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259 Moffatt, op. cit. 171.

260 Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 301; Hauck, TDNT 3:621; Black, op. cit. 85-86.

261 Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 473.

262 Cf. the excellent discussion by Swetnam, Jesus and Isaac 100-101, 128-129.

263 The allusion is drawn from Gen 22:17 as influenced by Dan 3:36. Cf. McCullough, "The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews" 374.

264 The similar expression referring to Abraham in Rom 4:19 supports a reference to Abraham rather than to Sarah. Cf. Bruce, op. cit. 302.

265 Pietistic explanations such as that offered by Guthrie, The Letter to the Hebrews 232-233 are unconvincing. Cf. also Morris, "Hebrews" 119-120 and Chrysostom, Homily 23.5 on Hebrews.

266 Bruce, op. cit. 301-302.

267 Black, op. cit. 87.

On the whole it seems appropriate to regard Abraham as the subject of both verses 11 and 12 and to render verse 11, "by faith even with barren Sarah he {Abraham} received power for the establishment of a seed ..." Sarah is definitely in view, but in a subordinate role. The focus remains upon Abraham, whose faith was exercised in the protracted waiting for the promised son.[268] However, because the evidence is capable of being construed differently, dogmatic conclusions cannot be justified.

What is clear is that the unpromising circumstances were more than matched by faith in God, for πιστὸν ἡγήσατο τὸν ἐπαγγειλάμενον. Faith did not fall before human inadequacy, but stood in divine reliability. Consequently, the accomplishment of πίστις is introduced in verse 12 by διό. From one individual issues forth an incalculable progeny, depicted under the figures of stars and sand. Abraham's faith casts a long shadow in human history.

5.34 Hebrews 11:13-14

A subtle change occurs between verses 12 and 13. Whereas verses 8-12 have been in the singular, depicting three illustrations of πίστις in the record of Abraham, verses 13-16 are in the plural. Most likely the three patriarchs, with the probable inclusion of Sarah, are in view.[269] In addition, in contrast with the historical recollection which is the focus of attention

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268 Cf. the succinct argument by Wilson, Hebrews 207, who comes to a similar conclusion.

269 Hewitt, The Epistle to the Hebrews 175-176 reasons: "The express mention of the promises not given to the antediluvians, and the statement that Enoch should not experience death are strongly in favour of 'these all' being confined to Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob (verses 8-12)." Grammatically, οὗτοι πάντες could refer to the descendants of Abraham mentioned in verse 12, but the reference to ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί is more appropriately restricted to the patriarchs.

in verses 8-12, in verses 13-16 the theological explanation seen before in verse 10 becomes the prominent feature. Consequently, the scene of πίστις shifts from the predominantly earthly sphere in verses 8-12 to the heavenly perspective which permeates verses 13-16. Though in terms of form this segment appears as a digression, the interpretation which it offers of the historical notices in verses 8-12 is a well-integrated extension of the concept of Abraham searching for a city (verse 10).[270]

The specialized character of verses 13-16 is introduced by the expression κατὰ πίστιν, which is unique in Hebrews 11. Instead of simply using literary variety to relieve the monotony of πίστει in illustrating faith,[271] the writer chooses a phrase which is more suited to the attitude which motivated the patriarchs at the time of their death.[272] Though from the human perspective their deaths seemed a denial of their faith, for they did not live to see the promise of God fulfilled, they died κατὰ πίστιν, "with their hearts set upon the goal that God promised them."[273]

Three participial clauses modify κατὰ πίστιν ἀπέθανον οὗτοι

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270 Cf. Robinson, The Epistle to the Hebrews 161: "Such temporary departures from the thread of his discourse appear elsewhere in the Epistle, but this has features which differentiate it from the others. Elsewhere the thought has usually been interrupted purely for homiletic purposes, in order to point a moral or to give a warning. Here the intrusive paragraph really forms a part of the argument ..."

271 Cf. Moffatt, op. cit. 173.

272 Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 477 comments judiciously: "Though κατὰ πίστιν might appropriately have been used throughout, the simple dative πίστει effectively marks the decisiveness of the faith by which these patriarchs lived and acted; whereas κατὰ πίστιν indicates that it was in accordance with the principle of faith that they faced the moment of death, that is, the end of their living and acting on earth. A man's death is not his act or his decision, and therefore the simple dative would have been less suitable here. These believers of the past did not allow the crisis of death to invalidate the principle of faith."

273 Hagner, Hebrews 176. Cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. 2:244.

πάντες. It is stated first that the patriarchs died in faith, even though, or inasmuch as,[274] they had not received (μὴ κομισάμενοι) the promises. The parallel expression in verse 39 indicates that this attitude of confidence in God despite the lack of opportunity for personal acquisition of the promise is inherent in the author's concept of πίστις. The patriarchs can be said to have died κατὰ πίστιν because "their lives were regulated by the firm conviction that God would fulfil the promises He had given them, and in death they continued to look forward to the fulfilment of these promises ..."[275]

In the second clause it is affirmed that the patriarchs saw and greeted from afar God's promises. Though some have interpreted ἰδόντες in a temporal sense,[276] the language fits more appropriately a concept of spatial distance. In a manner similar to Moses, who endured in faith as seeing (ὁρῶν) the invisible One (verse 27) and who viewed the promised land from afar (cf. Deut 34:1-4),[277] the patriarchs hailed the promises of God from a distance,[278] and embraced them in sincere attachment.[279] Therefore, De Young suggests that the patriarchs "understood something of the promises and by faith had these realities within their

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274 Westcott, op. cit. 364.

275 Bruce, op. cit. 303.

276 Although Thompson, The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy 79 imports excessive Platonic ideology into the passage, he is correct in faulting Williamson in rendering ἰδόντες as "foreseeing." Thompson argues: "While 11:7 implies that there is an element of 'foreseeing' in Hebrews, the language cannot be reduced to that level of experience, for the terminology is rooted also in the Platonic dualism which is implied throughout chapter 11. Thus the idea of 'seeing the invisible' is rooted in Platonic epistemology, where a special gift of sight allows one to gaze beyond the phenomenal world."

277 Cf. Ellingworth and Nida, A Translator's Handbook on the Letter to the Hebrews 263.

278 Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" 4:357.

279 Windisch. TDNT 1:496.

grasp as promises of God, although not in their final possession ... Thus the patriarchs did not focus their faith on the present and the earthly, but on the future and the heavenly."[280]

The third clause states that the patriarchs understood and candidly declared (ὁμολογήσαντες)[281] that they were strangers (ξένοι) and exiles (παρεπίδημοι) upon the earth. The closest LXX allusions are found in Gen 23:4 and Ps 38:13 (39:12[13]), in which גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב is rendered by πάροικος ... παρεπίδημος. In no LXX text is ξένος found in collocation with παρεπίδημος. This may be explained plausibly as a conscious avoidance of the cultic connotations which πάροικος, following גֵּר, had taken over from Jewish usage, though this is by no means beyond question.

As has been argued in previous chapters, Abraham's self-designation as גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Gen 23:4 is a socio-political statement which bears potential for metaphorical adaptation, as is discernible in 1 Chr 29:15 and Ps 39:12(13). Heb 11:13 makes explicit the metaphorical referent by linking ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοι with the searching of the patriarchs, in particular Abraham (verse 10), for the city of God. Though Philo, too, develops a mystical interpretation of sojourning, the New Testament use of such language here and in 1 Pt 1,2 is better traced as extensions of the development already observable in the Old Testament.[282] Two in-

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280 Jerusalem in the New Testament 137.

281 Michel, TDNT 5:201.

282 Contra. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews" 377, who asserts unconvincingly: "The words used in Hebrews are certainly drawn from a number of O.T. passages, among which the following may be noted: Gen.xxiii.4; Gen xlvii.9; Ps. xxxix.13. These passages, however, and others like them, do not afford a source from which the author of Hebrews can have drawn the substance of his thought. The passages in Genesis describe a real wandering (though xlvii.9 tends in the direction of metaphor); and Px.xxxix.13 is quite differently conceived, since in

terrelated factors seem to be involved. From the temporal viewpoint, the patriarchs were sojourners because of the transience of mortality. But on the metaphysical level, they were citizens of the fellowship of God, ἡ πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ, rather than yielding primary allegiance to their earthly domicile,[283] which is estranged from God by sin.

The description ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς is problematic. Buchanan is simplistic when he insists that the context of the allusions in Genesis demands a Canaanite referent for γῆς in Heb 11:13.[284] However, verses 14-16 support a rendering of ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς as "upon the earth" rather than "upon the land {of Canaan}" because the expectation of the patriarchs is for their heavenly city.[285] The discussion of the transformation and fulfillment of the land promise to Abraham far exceeds the scope of this study,[286] but it may well be unduly restrictive to claim that in the New Testament "the promised land has lost its geographical character and the people of God are pilgrims and strangers on earth"[287] or "Christianity turns its back upon a geographically and politically localized promise."[288] What is evident, however, is that transcending the Old Testament focus upon the literal land pro-

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it the time of sojourning is the time of man's life (as in Gen. xlvii.9) and the end of it is not arrived at the city of God but death. Where the O.T. language is not literal, it is symbolic in a sense quite different from that of Hebrews."

283 Cf. the exposition by Maclaren, <u>The Epistle to the Hebrews Chapters VII to XIII</u> 129-138.

284 <u>To the Hebrews</u> 193 contra. Moffatt. This argument would deny any legitimate reinterpretation within the Bible, but that is precisely what is done repeatedly both within the Old Testament and the New Testament.

285 Swetnam, <u>Jesus and Isaac</u> 90-91.

286 Cf. e.g., Davies, <u>The Gospel and the Land</u>.

287 Miller, "The Gift of God: The Deuteronomistic Theology of the Land" 462.

288 Allen, <u>Psalms 101-150</u> 44.

mise is the development of a metaphorical complex encompassing a heavenly fatherland (πατρίδα - verse 14) and spiritual sojourning during life upon earth. Though it is doubtful that the patriarchs had substantial conscious awareness of such spiritual conceptions when, as for example, Abraham designated himself as גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Gen 23:4,[289] the metaphorical implications of Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 are clearly enunciated in Hebrews.[290] Both in chapter 11 and elsewhere in the epistle the author compares "the security of heaven's everlasting commonwealth ... with the transitory nature of earthly existence ..."[291]

The postpositive γάρ in verse 14 links the statement of verse 13 with its substantiation. The reiterated present verbal constructions (λέγοντες, ἐμφανίζουσιν, ἐπιζητοῦσι) indicate that the author is moving from historical recollection to exemplary principles,[292] a conclusion supported by οἱ τοιαῦτα with reference to

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289 Cf. the discussion at Heb 11:10 regarding the degree of the conscious awareness of the patriarchs as to the metaphorical concept of sojourning. Cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. 2:246-247, who argues for both conscious and extended meanings: "The promise given to the patriarchs was a divine assurance of a future rest: that rest was connected, in the first instance, with the future possession of an earthly home; but their desire for that home was, at the same time, a longing and a seeking after Him who had given the promise of it, whose presence and blessing alone made it for them an object of desire, and whose presence and blessing, whereever vouchsafed, makes the place of its manifestation to be indeed a heaven. The shell of their longing might thus be of earth, its kernal was heavenly and divine; and as such, God himself vouchsafed to honour and reward it."

290 Contra. van der Waal, "'The People of God' in the Epistle to the Hebrews" 90 who claims speciously: "The situation of Abraham as stranger and of Israel in the desert is not applicable in an 'exemplary' way to the church of today: God provided some better thing for us, 'with us in mind, God has made a better plan' (11:40 NEB). We are standing before Mount Zion and the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem (12:22). The church is not a collection of tired pilgrims."

291 Montefiore, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 195. Cf. esp. Hebrews 3; 13:14.

292 Hence the patriarchs are portrayed as exemplary figures, but not in the idealistic sense propounded by Philo. Cf.

ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς . By professing the unassimilated status as foreigner one is <u>ipso facto</u> claiming to belong to another jurisdiction. The πατρίς of the patriarchs was therefore not the γῆ of verse 13, for πατρίδα ἐπιζητοῦσι.

5.35 Hebrews 11:15-16a

The question as to the identification of the patriarchs' πατρίς which verse 14 leaves unanswered is now addressed in verses 15-16a. The writer asserts that their failure to return to Mesopotamia despite ample opportunity[293] evidences that the patriarchs were anticipating a heavenly country rather than envisaging a return to Mesopotamia. Their longing was for that which was qualitatively better, not simply geographically distant. These verses, then, function as the exegetical reason supporting the concept of spiritual sojourning in verses 13-14.

Verse 15 with its εἰ μὲν ... ἄν construction presents a contrary to fact condition. ἐκείνης refers most appropriately to πατρίδα in verse 14, but that this is not the land of Mesopotamia is confirmed by the apodosis, "they would have had a suitable time to return."[294] Instead,[295] the author maintains that they

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Riggenbach, <u>Der Brief an die Hebräer</u> 361: "Auch nach Philo ... haben die Patriarchen als Typen der Weisen ihre πατρίς im Himmel, während sie auf der Erde nur als Fremdlinge weilen, aber im Unterschied vom Hb ist bei ihm diese Anschauung nicht religiös motiviert, sondern ergibt sich ihm aus seiner Vorstellung von der Präexistenz der Seele in der Idealwelt."

293 Cf. Gen 24:5-8, in which Abraham emphatically refuses to consider the prospect of Isaac's return to Haran.

294 Guthrie, <u>The Letter to the Hebrews</u> 234 expounds the significance of this statement: "In spite of the ease with which he might have returned, neither he nor his immediate descendants desired to do so. This is all the more remarkable when it is recognized that the land they left behind had reached a much more advanced stage of civilization than the land of Canaan to which they went. It may well be that the writer is appealing to the patriarch's example in refusing to turn back to exert pressure on those readers who were tempted to turn back from Christianity."

295 νῦν here combines both logical and temporal nuances.

were yearning for (ὀρέγονται)[296] a πατρίς of a better sort, a heavenly country. Without addressing the issue of God's promise of Canaan to Abraham, Hebrews 11 looks beyond all terrestrial countries to heaven, and portrays the patriarchs in terms of their theological perspective. Though Buchanan argues tenuously that ἐπουρανίου is an apt description of Palestine which had been prepared by God as the homeland for Abraham's posterity,[297] Bruce is closer to the mark when he maintains, "The earthly Canaan and the earthly Jerusalem were but temporary object-lessons pointing to the saints' everlasting rest, the well-founded city of God. Those who put their trust in God receive a full reward, and that reward must belong not to this transient world-order but to the enduring order which participates in the life of God."[298]

5.36 Hebrews 11:16b

The perspective of verses 15-16a which has produced the profession of spiritual sojourning in verses 13-14 is acknowledged by God in verse 16b. As the inferential particle διό brings the previous paragraph to a conclusion in verse 12, so here διό draws the logical response to verses 13-16a.

Because of the commitment inherent in the profession of spiritual pilgrimage by the patriarchs (verse 13) and by all such (οἱ ... τοιαῦτα - verse 14) who take similar stands, God is not ashamed

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Nairne, <u>The Epistle of Priesthood</u> 396 paraphrases felicitously: "And now we behold these ancient saints reaching out towards a more august and heavenly fatherland."

296 The emotional excitement of eager desire embracing the total individual implicit in ὀρέγονται is detailed by Vine, <u>The Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 134 and Heidland, TDNT 5:448.

297 "The Present State of Scholarship on Hebrews" 327-328.

298 <u>Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews</u> 305-306.

to be called their God.[299] Though this is stated in negative terms, it is probably intended as an example of litotes implying that God is positively willing and desirous to be so identified with them.[300]

The proof of God's approval of those committed to Him as spiritual sojourners is found in that "he has prepared for them a city." The conjunction γάρ is best rendered as indicating an indirect causal relation. Thus, the sense is that "God is not ashamed to acknowledge them as his people ... and this is shown by the fact that he has prepared a city for them to live in."[301] The hope for God's πόλις which had sustained Abraham (verse 10) is found to be not in vain, but is vindicated by God's activity.

5.4 Conclusion

The pericope of Heb 11:8-16 which portrays Abraham as an example of πίστις is the acme of the biblical development of the motif of spiritual pilgrimage. Building upon the Genesis narratives of the migration and sojourning of Abraham in Canaan, the passage develops the metaphorical intimations discernible in the Old Testament into an explicit statement of a spiritual reality.

Although similarities may be traced between Hebrews and Platonic, Philonic and Gnostic thought, the verbal parallels are not matched by shared philosophical or theological perspectives.

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299 Specifically, God called Himself "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod 3:6 passim.). More generally, He is not ashamed for believers to identify themselves with Him verbally.

300 Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews 480. Cf. the similar figure in 2:11.

301 Cf. Ellingworth and Nida, op. cit. 265, who reason that "the basic idea of the last sentence of this section is that one may know that God is not ashamed to be called their God, since he has shown that fact by preparing a city for them."

Whether the biblical writer was consciously adopting the concepts of his culture for persuasive or polemical purposes, or was unconsciously employing conventional parlance, the depiction of Abraham is distinct even from the near-approximation of Philo. As the language of metaphorical sojourning in 1 Peter 1,2 and Ephesians 2 manifests, there was within the early Jewish literary tradition an incipient sojourning ideology from which both the New Testament and the extra-biblical literature drew. Though Hebrews advances metaphorically beyond the Old Testament texts, it is firmly founded upon them, and its teachings are examined most appropriately in their light.

In keeping with the overall purpose of Hebrews 11 to illustrate πίστις by its emphasis upon the eschatological orientation toward heavenly realities which are anticipated dimly, Heb 11:8-16 views Abraham as stepping out in obedience to the word of God to proceed to the inheritance which God had promised to him. The literal promise, however, is transcended by the reference to Abraham's searching for the city founded by God. Thus, the life of Abraham as a sojourner in Canaan is viewed not only in the sociopolitical setting of Genesis 23, but from a cosmological perspective.

It is true that Hebrews employs the language of the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. 12:22) which was a familiar theme in the Old Testament literature. Nevertheless, the stress has been transmuted from a restored earthly city into an anticipation of the city of God, a symbol of fellowship between God and man. Hence, the ambiguity of the Genesis texts, which allow for but do not demand metaphorical concepts, is exploited in order to communicate the distinctly metaphorical idea of a spiritual pilgrimage toward

the heavenly inheritance.

The reference to spiritual sojourning is extended beyond Abraham to Isaac and Jacob in verse 13, and then into a gnomic principle in verse 14. The writer is careful to argue that the πατρίς envisioned is not the patriarchs' original homeland in Mesopotamia, but that they were yearning for a πατρίς of a metaphysically superior sort, that is, a heavenly one. It is this celestial orientation which is rewarded by God's preparation of a πόλις, in which those who love Him may live with Him.

The Old Testament references to Abraham in Genesis bear little necessary metaphorical content concerning pilgrimage, although הִתְהַלֵּךְ (cf. Gen 17:1) is oriented in that direction. The references and allusions to the patriarch in the Old Testament texts portray him as an exemplary figure, and pilgrim ideology is plausibly construed in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15. These ambiguous, but suggestive, intimations, though for the most part unexplored in the early Jewish literature, are then taken up and exploited in Heb 11:8-16, as in 1 Peter 1,2, into the ideology of spiritual pilgrimage which was to become a recurrent motif in subsequent Christian literature.

CHAPTER 6

ABRAHAM AND SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapters of this study have traced the development of the figure of Abraham as a sojourner from the patriarchal narratives through the Old Testament, the early Jewish literature and the New Testament. The intimations of metaphorical adaptation of the sojourner image evident in the Leitwort הִתְהַלֵּךְ in Genesis and the depiction of life on earth as a sojourning in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 have been seen to be developed into an explicit pilgrim image in Heb 11:8-16. Though the early Jewish literature does not often exploit the figure of Abraham for such metaphorical uses, the patristic writings do echo the theme of spiritual pilgrimage to some extent. In several writers this idea is specifically linked with the figure of Abraham.

This chapter will examine the explicit references and allusions to Abraham as a pilgrim figure in the early Christian literature up to 450 C.E.[1] As preface to the examination of the rele-

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1 The attempt has been made to be as thorough as possible in locating the relevant references in the patristic texts. However, the vast corpus of early Christian literature and the paucity of exhaustive concordances makes it impossible to affirm that all pertinent passages have been cited. Nevertheless, the discussion in this chapter is at least representative of the general use of the figure of Abraham as it relates to the image of spiritual pilgrimage. General discussions of the figure of Abraham in the patristic literature are found in Berger, TRE 1:380-382 and Klauser, RAC 1:21-27, whose references to the frequent use of Abraham in early Christian liturgy (pp.22-25) point to the fact that the patriarch was at the forefront of early Christian thought.

vant texts some general observations will be made concerning early Christian biblical interpretation. The references will be discussed under four general headings: the first and second centuries, catechesis and apology, homily and commentary, and the writings of Augustine.[2] The concluding section will summarize the evidence from the patristic literature to determine the degree to which the figure of Abraham coincides with or diverges from the pilgrim imagery of Heb 11:8-16.

6.1 Early Christian Biblical Interpretation

The early Christian literature was shaped by its literary and cultural context. Though the distinctiveness of the Christian κήρυγμα must not be underestimated, at the same time it must be recognized that in its vocabulary, argumentation, emphases and images the patristic literature drew both consciously and unconsciously from the Jewish and Hellenistic matrices in which early Christianity developed.[3]

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2 Not all of the writings fit precisely into these general categories. However, for the purposes of this survey explicit genre distinctions are not essential. What is intended is an overall understanding of the relevant references to Abraham and spiritual pilgrimage in the patristic literature.

3 Balás, "The Encounter Between Christianity and Contemporary Philosophy in the Second Century" 134-135 highlights four especially significant factors which influenced the early development of Christianity: "1. The encounter of the divine revelation of the Old Testament with Hebrew thought - partly within the very process of revelation, partly subsequent to it. 2. The encounter of the Old Testament revelation with Hellenistic thought-forms already within the Old Testament literature (book of Wisdom) and also outside of it. 3. The encounter of New Testament revelation with Jewish and to some extent also with Hellenistic thought forms within the New Testament itself. 4. The encounter of early Christianity with the thought-forms of later Judaism, which seem to have dominated the earliest phase of Christian theology up to the Apologists, but also remained influential far beyond the middle of the second century."

6.11 Relation to Greek Thought

The intellectual world of late antiquity was influenced by a variety of philosophical schools loosely defined as Hellenistic thought.[4] The increasing popularity of Christianity engendered hostile opposition, including both slanderous accusations and philosophical objections.[5] The Christian responses to these challenges varied. Some Christians, such as Tertullian, expressed revulsion for paganism, but others endeavored to present Christianity as "the perfection of what the pagan world had never fully comprehended."[6]

It must be recognized that more subtle factors were also at work. Because the lingua franca of the early Christian era in the Roman Empire was Greek, the early Christians were versed in "a language whose religious idiom was partly shaped in the context of philosophical speculation and belief."[7] Though this phenomenon led in some cases to an accommodation of Christian thought to Hellenistic concepts, Norris is justified in claiming that in time there was also "a Christianization of Greek thought, the result of which was a transformation of Western philosophy."[8]

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4 Chadwick, Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition 5 states: "In the first and second centuries the philosophy with which the Christians had to come to terms, the philosophy taken for granted by ordinary educated folk, was in effect a blend of Stoicism and Platonism... On the ethical side it was profoundly moulded by Stoicism with its ideal of the 'wise man' untouched and unmoved by all outward calamities, knowing that, provided he is captain of his soul, none can harm him against his will. On the metaphysical side it looked more to Platonism with its picture of man as belonging in his inner being to a higher world but during this life imprisoned in a physical body."

5 Balás, op. cit. 137-138.

6 Gager, Kingdom and Community 86. These contrasting responses are reflected already in the New Testament, as, for example, in 1 Tim 6:20-21 and in Ac 17:22-31.

7 Norris, God and World in Early Christian Theology 131.

8 Ibid. 133.

6.12 Relation to Jewish Thought

Although Christianity soon penetrated the Gentile community, its earliest adherents were drawn from Judaism, and in many respects it remained influenced by its Jewish heritage. It is for the most part true that in the early Christian era the exegetical paths of Judaism and Christianity diverged,[9] with Jewish thought focusing on the ethical value of the Old Testament texts and Christian thought more characteristically viewing the same Scriptures through a Christological lens.[10] Nevertheless, the practices of Christian hermeneutical techniques such as allegory and Messianic interpretation are paralleled in the early Jewish literature of Qumran.[11] Substantial direct contact between the early rabbis and the early Christian writers was undoubtedly limited by the mutual hostility of the groups,[12] but their frequent coincidental interests can be traced plausibly to their common heritage.[13] Thus, the progressive disjunction between Jewish and Christian exegetical interests and emphases is the result of disparate developments rooted in a shared tradition.[14] In addition, it should also be recognized that both Judaism and Christ-

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9 Sandmel, "The Haggada Within Scripture" 122.

10 Cf. Levene, The Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis 333; France, "Jewish Historiography, Midrash, and the Gospels" 123.

11 Hanson, Allegory and Event 125.

12 Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom 336. An excellent annotated bibliography of studies of the interpenetration of rabbinic and patristic thought has been compiled by Baskin, "Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity" 53-80.

13 Kraft, "The Multiform Jewish Heritage of Early Christianity" 180. However, as de Lange, Origen and the Jews 103 notes, the polemical nature of much of the early Christian and Jewish literature resulted in works which are primarily apologetic, and which therefore are loath to openly acknowledge the contributions of each other.

14 Cf. Alexander, "The Interpretation of Scripture in the Ante-Nicene Period" 274-280 isolates three major movements in earl Christian exegesis: 1. the authority development in the Western church, 2. the theoria movement in Antioch, and 3. the allegoria movement in Alexandria.

ianity were affected by Hellenistic thought,[15] which could have provoked analogous exegetical or homiletical insights.

6.13 Early Christian Use of the Old Testament

Even a cursory reading of the patristic texts creates the impression that the early Christians regarded the Old Testament as divinely authoritative revelation.[16] Consequently, the Scriptures were viewed as the foundation for Christian theology and as the hermeneutical structure for the exegetical task.[17] This, however, did not stultify early Christian interpretation, but influences such as apologetic demands and liturgical considerations unleashed a range of creative exegetical efforts.[18]

Among the prominent exegetical emphases in early Christianity are those employed most clearly in the schools of Antioch and Alexandria. In general terms the two positions can be contrasted as follows: "Antioch, with its tendency to stress the literal and the historical, and with them the humanity of Jesus; Alexandria, with its tradition of allegory and symbol and its greater stress on the transcendent."[19] However, in spite of the observable differences between the exegetical concerns and ap-

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15 Cf. Fischel, Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy 34, who demonstrates that Epicurean thought influenced both the Jewish and the Christian worlds in the early Christian era.

16 Moule, The Birth of the New Testament 75.

17 Greer, The Captain of Our Salvation 357.

18 Daniélou, Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme 103. A key Christian concern had to do with the place of the Old Testament law. Following the lead of Paul (e.g. Gal 3-4), Irenaeus, Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching 89-96 argues the following proposition: "That He would not send back the redeemed to the legislation of Moses - for the law was fulfilled in Christ - but would have them live in newness by the Word, through faith in the Son of God and love...", citing Is 43:18ff. as support. Cf. the succinct discussion of the question of the relationship of the Christian to the Old Testament law in the patristic literature by Hanson, "Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church" 423-426.

19 Moule. The Birth of the New Testament 214.

proaches of Antioch and Alexandria,[20] the two schools shared much common ground in mutual distinction from non-Christian thought.[21] Their crucial difference was more a matter of degree than of kind: in Antioch the rhetorical analysis of the biblical texts was emphasized, thus promoting literal interpretation, whereas in Alexandria priority was given to the philosophical analysis of the spiritual realities to which the text witnessed,[22] thus accentuating allegorical insights.[23] Though the Latin Fathers for the most part remained apart from the hermeneutical controversy between Antioch and Alexandria,[24] they manifested a moralizing tendency which impelled them to highlight exemplary models from the biblical literature[25] in a manner similar to the typological interpretation of Antioch[26] and the allegorical exegesis of Alexandria.[27]

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20 Cf. Jacob, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* 13: "L'école d'Antioche possède sur sa rivale l'incontestable supériorité d'un sens historique capable de mieux saisir la révélation vétéro-testamentaire. Les théologiens d'Antioche opposent à l'ἀλληγορία la θεωρία ou l'ἐπιθεωρία, c'est-à-dire la considération, terme qu' Origène n'emploie pas dans un sens mystique."

21 Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch* 29-30.

22 Froehlich, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* 20-21.

23 Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament* 214-215 wisely cautions: "It is all too easy to contrast these two emphases in a mechanical manner without allowing for subtle interchanges and variations. For instance, one of the elementary qualifications that would need to be made, were we attempting to describe this period, would be the recognition that even the Antiochene thinkers did not rest content with the plain, historical sense of Scripture. If they differed from the Alexandrines, it was not so much in rejecting other senses as in preferring 'typology', which recognizes the importance of historical events as such, to allegory, which would reduce everything to timeless truths."

24 Froehlich, *op. cit.* 23.

25 Daniélou, *The Origins of Latin Christianity* 321.

26 Though the Antiochean exegetes disclaimed the allegory of the Alexandrians and termed their own exegesis as typology which retained the literal sense of the text, in practice their typology easily shaded into allegory. Cf. Smith, *A Priest For Ever* 25-26; Gundry, "Typology as a Means of Interpretation: Past and Present" 235; den Boer, "Hermeneutic Problems in Early Christian Literature" 150-151.

27 Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* 1:24

6.2 The First and Second Centuries

The earliest Christian writings from the first and second centuries yield several references to spiritual sojourning, and in some of these instances the figure of Abraham is in view. The opening salutation of 1 Clement states: "The church of God which sojourns (παροικοῦσα) at Rome, to the church of God sojourning (παροικούσῃ) at Corinth." This figure invites comparison with the similar designation of Christians in 1 Pt 2:11, but the use of παροικία in the LXX manifests that the term most probably has a wider background of usage, and it ought not be regarded as a technical expression for spiritual pilgrimage at this time.[28] When Abraham is noted in 1 Clement 10 in the midst of the historical recollection in chapters 9-12,[29] he is presented as the friend of God (cf. Is 41:8) because of his obedience to the words of God. Three specific instances of obedience are cited: Abraham's migration to Canaan, his belief in the divine promise of land and seed, and his offering of Isaac. Clement notes the patriarch's obedi-

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points out that the roots of early Christian allegory lie deep in both Jewish and Greek literature: "The method by which the Fathers sought to discover in Scripture hidden philosophic meanings has its source directly in the non-literal method of interpreting Scripture as employed by both Paul and Philo. Indirectly, however, it goes back through Paul to the non-literal method of interpreting Scripture as employed by the rabbis of Palestinian Judaism and through Philo to the non-literal method of interpreting Homer as employed by Greek philosophers."

28 Lightfoot, _The Apostolic Fathers_ 2:5-6 summarizes the use of παροικία in the LXX to refer to the Egyptian sojourn, the Babylonian captivity, and the Jewish dispersion. He suggests that in early Christian times παροικία was used in the sense of a "body of aliens" to refer to "the Christian brotherhood in a town or district."

29 This recital may have been patterned after Hebrews 11, as demonstrated by Hagner, _The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome_ 184-185. Grant, _First and Second Clement_ 31 in arguing for the patterning of 1 Clement 9:1-4 after Heb 11:5-7 points to three factors: the names of Enoch and Noah occur in the same order, in both epistles Abraham and Rahab are set forth as examples, and 1 Clement 36 demonstrates that Clement was familiar with Hebrews.

ence in leaving his homeland, and then adds the homiletical observation that his motivation was that "leaving a scanty land and a feeble kindred and a mean house he might inherit the promises of God."

In 2 Clement 5 παροικία is used to speak of the life of the believer on earth, for the author challenges: "Leaving [willingly] our sojourn (παροικίαν) in this present world, let us do the will of Him that called us, and not fear to depart out of this world..." Though some have taken this to refer to martyrdom,[30] it is more likely that the author is echoing the disjunction in Hebrews between the present life on earth and the future life in heaven.

This image is developed more fully in the Epistle to Diognetus 5, which expatiates upon the idea of Christians as sojourners on earth. In terms which parallel a number of classical references,[31] in particular Lucian, Hermotimus 22-24,[32] Christians are said to "dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners (πάροικοι)... They are in the flesh, but they do not live

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30 Cf. Donfried, The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity 118-119, who argues against Knopf's suggestion of martyrdom by pointing to the more likely use of ἐξελθεῖν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου to refer to "the dualism between this world and the next."

31 Blakeney, The Epistle to Diognetus 48-50 presents an extensive list of parallels in Greek literature.

32 Meecham, The Epistle to Diognetus 108 distinguishes usefully: "Lucian depicts a blissful life for men in the enjoyment of legality, equality, and all good things. But in at least three features it is widely different from the picture of the Christian πολιτεία in Diognetus: (a) Lucian's city-state is set in the future. One day men will reach it, be naturalized, and gain their franchise; for Diognetus the Christian lives here and now in the heavenly city. (b) For Lucian earthly duties and domestic ties must alike be sacrificed to gain the ideal state; the Christians, says Diognetus, 'share all things as citizens', conform in matters of clothing, food and customs, and obey the appointed laws. Moreover, they enjoy and honour the privileges of family life. (c) Lucian's city is secular; for Diognetus the Christian's ideal is, though not expressly so named, the city of God. It is 'in

after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven." The following chapter is even more explicit in equating Christian sojourning with metaphysical distinctions, using Platonic and Stoic concepts[33] in an expression reminiscent of 2 Cor 5:1-4: "The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle; and Christians dwell as sojourners (παροικοῦσιν) in corruptible [bodies], looking for an incorruptible dwelling in the heavens."

The figure of sojourning in a strange city is employed in an exhortation to simple, godly living in Shepherd of Hermas, Sim. 1.1-3,6.[34] The author adapts the concept of returning to one's proper city, an allusion to the patriarchs in Heb 11:14-15, to his specific purpose of challenging his readers to resist the enticement to prepare for themselves "fields and costly arrays and buildings and vain habitations," for "he who prepareth these things for this city thinketh not of returning to his city." Though the figure of Hebrews 11 is inverted, its use with reference to spiritual pilgrimage manifests the metaphorical dimensions of its semantic range in early Christian thought.

Near the end of the second century Irenaeus made several explicit references to Abraham in the context of spiritual pilgrimage. In his catechetical work, The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching 24, Abraham is set forth as a model for Christians because he sought for God. Irenaeus may be reflecting the

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33 Ibid. 44-45 notes especially the Stoic concepts of the living whole, the urge towards perfection denoted by φύσις, and man's kinship with the whole of humanity.

34 Pernveden, The Concept of the Church in the Shepherd of Hermas 180 comments: "With the believer's state of servantship there follows his duty to adopt a special mode of life. The servants of God do not live in the same way as those who serve the master of this age. The difference becomes very evident in Sim. I where the servants of God are said to be strangers in the city where they live, far from their own city."

frequent Jewish representations of Abraham seeking God[35] or the more general rabbinic conception of proselytes investigating heathen religions before finding their satisfaction in the true God.[36] Whether or not Irenaeus is consciously adopting this literary commonplace of the individual who seeks the truth, he portrays Abraham as searching throughout the world for God, but failing to find Him. Nevertheless, God takes pity upon Abraham, calls him to leave his homeland, and brings him to Canaan, where he dwells in the midst of the tribes descended from Ham. Thus, the migration of Abraham is set within the context of his spiritual quest, rather than in a socio-political setting.

Three references in Against Heresies support this spiritual perspective on Abraham's sojourning. In speaking of the patriarch, Irenaeus states in 4.5.3: "Justly therefore, leaving his earthly kindred, did he follow the Word: leading here the life of a stranger, that he might have his citizenship with the Word." Later in the same book, Irenaeus alludes to Heb 12:1-2 and to Rom 4 in expounding at 4.25.1 the implications of the Abrahamic example.[37] The third reference, in 5.32.2, reasons from Genesis 23 that "If then to him God promised the inheritance of the Land, and he did not receive it in all his own time of habitation there; it must be received by him and his seed, i.e., by them that fear God, and believe in Him in the resurrection of the just." Irenaeus'

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35 Cf. Bonwetsch, Die Apokalypse Abrahams 42-48.

36 Nock, Conversion 109. He compares this with similar Greek conceptions in 107-112.

37 "For this it had behooved the sons of Abraham [to be], whom God has raised up to him from the stones, and caused to take a place beside him who was made the chief and the forerunner of our faith (who did also receive the covenant of circumcision after that justification by faith which had pertained to him, when he was yet in uncircumcision, so that in him both covenants might be prefigured, that he might be the father of all who follow the Word of God, and who sustain a life of pilgrimage in this world...)."

understanding of the land promise is affected by his chiliastic bent.[38] The land for which Abraham looked is a concrete, future reality to be enjoyed by his spiritual posterity, and it has not been fulfilled already in the history of the Jews.

Although Tertullian characteristically reaffirms the ancient traditions found in the biblical texts[39] he does not link closely the concept of spiritual pilgrimage with the figure of Abraham. His references to the Church as "a sojourner on the earth" (Apologeticus 1), "travellers in this world" (De Exhortatione Castitatis 12) and "a foreigner in this world, a citizen of Jerusalem, the city above" (De Corona 13) do make use of the New Testament language of spiritual pilgrimage as expressed in Phil 3; Heb 11,12; and 1 Pt 1,2. To be sure, Adversus Marcionem 3.8-11, 36-40 presents Abraham as the father of believing Gentiles who "like him, have all things left, life's pilgrimage to enter." However, his exposition on Gen 23 in De Resurrectione Carnis 18[40]

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38 Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines 469. Wilken, "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism and the Idea of the Holy Land" 298-307 highlights the interrelatedness of these three concepts in the patristic literature. He states (p.301): "Irenaeus ... grounds the hope of a millennial kingdom on earth centered in Jerusalem on the basis of the promise to Abraham concerning the land." Cf. the similar teaching in Tertullian, Contra Marcion 3.24: "But we do confess that a kingdom is promised to us upon the earth, although before heaven, only in another state of existence; inasmuch as it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem, 'let down from heaven,' which the apostle also calls 'our mother from above,' and, while declaring that our πολίτευμα, or citizenship, is in heaven, he predicates of it that it is really a city in heaven." On the other hand, as Osborn, The Beginning of Christian Philosphy 193-194 notes, Irenaeus seems to temper his chiliastic interpretation in Demonstration 67, perhaps because of the danger of extreme ideas which could jeopardize the stability of young believers.

39 Evans, One and Holy 8 notes this trait specifically in connection with the themes of eschatological hope, martyrdom and a critique of the state, which Tertullian holds in common with the book of Revelation.

40 "We learn this from the case of Abraham, the father of the faithful, a man who enjoyed close intercourse with God. For

does not use the metaphorical references to גֵר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Ps 39: 12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15, although they would have supported his point. In light of the fact that Tertullian does speak explicitly of spiritual pilgrimage in other references, it seems best to conclude that for him the figure of Abraham was only loosely linked with the idea.

5 Ezra does not directly speak to the issue of spiritual pilgrimage, but it does depict Abraham as associated with the church to which will be transferred the privileges of Israel.[41] Thus, in 1.35-40 God gives the dwellings of Israel to "a people which shall come, who, though they have not heard of me, yet believe; to whom I have shown no wonderful signs." These Gentile believers will share the dominion with the outstanding figures of Israel's history, including Abraham.

The Christian literature of the first and second centuries does indeed employ the image of sojourning or pilgrimage to speak of the present situation of Christians. Though the salutation to 1 Clement probably uses παροικία in the more general sense of people living in a certain locale, 2 Clement, the Epistle to Diognetus 5-6, the Shepherd of Hermas Sim. 1, and Tertullian use the pilgrim image to refer to the earthly life of Christians in contrast to their future heavenly home.

The figure of Abraham is linked with the pilgrim image

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when he requested of the sons of Heth a spot to bury Sarah, he said to them, 'Give me the possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead,' - meaning, of course, her flesh; for he could not have desired a place to bury her soul in, even if the soul is to be deemed mortal, and even if it could bear to be described by the word 'dead.' Since, then, this word indicates the body, it follows that when 'the resurrection of the dead' is spoken of, it is the rising again of {men's} bodies that is meant."

41 Stanton, "5 Ezra and Matthean Christianity in the Second Century" 77.

by several writers. 1 Clement 10 states that Abraham's motivation in leaving his homeland was that "he might inherit the promises of God." Irenaeus sets the migration of Abraham in the context of his quest for God, and argues from Gen 23 that the land promise to Abraham must be eschatologically fulfilled. However, Tertullian, who speaks clearly of spiritual pilgrimage in other writings, does not draw the correlation with Abraham even when expounding Gen 23.

On the whole, the Christian literature up to 200 C.E. supports some measure of linkage between the figure of Abraham and the image of spiritual pilgrimage. However, as in 1 Pt spiritual pilgrimage is also frequently introduced without direct reference to the patriarch.

6.3 Catechesis and Apology to 450 C.E.

During the third century the expression of Christian thought continued its divergence from Judaism, impelled especially by the fact that Christianity had become a predominantly Gentile religion.[42] The language of Hellenistic theoria was employed to communicate the Christian calling to godliness,[43] though conscious appropriation of Greek philosophical ideology was less likely to have been the case than adoption of language which had become established as common parlance. Two prominent forms of literature were catechesis, for the indoctrination of young believers, and apology, for answering the objections by critics of

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42 Norris, God and World in Early Christian Theology 4.

43 Chadwick, John Cassian 82 notes: "Greek thinkers, Stoic or Platonist, conceived the moral life in terms of progress. The progress was made towards a purity of mind, until at last the mind became so pure that it might apprehend the being of God. The Platonist word for this vision of God was theoria, contemplation. Religion became the true philosophy. The highest calling of earthly life was the contemplation of God by pure mind. The ultimate aim of religion was the vision of God."

Christianity. By this time the New Testament texts were sufficiently recognized as authoritative so that both Testaments were frequently quoted and expounded.[44]

The Acts of Thomas 61, dating from the early third century,[45] uses language reminiscent both of the call of Abraham and of Jesus' summons to discipleship.[46] This is broadened into the godly ideal of the wandering mendicant in 100 and 107. The dependence on the record of Abraham is not direct, and the confession in the Acts of Thomas may well be rooted most appropriately in the challenges to discipleship found in the Gospels. Nevertheless, the correlation between leaving family and becoming strangers on earth for the sake of the Lord does coincide with a similar combination of themes in Heb 11:8-16.

Three passages in the Recognitions of Clement, dating from 200-250, bear upon the themes of Abraham and spiritual pilgrimage. In 1.32 Abraham is portrayed as an astrologer who deduces from his observations the existence of the Creator. Consequently, he is instructed by an angel concerning God's gracious plan for his posterity. The images of a journey, the city of God, and rest, reminiscent of Hebrews, are linked together in 2.21-22. In 9.7 clear allusions to Heb 11:8-16 are used to speak of the spiritual attitude in distinction from seeking the plea-

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44 Hanson, "Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church" 416.

45 Klijn, The Acts of Thomas 26 argues for this date based on the apparent dependence of the Acts of Thomas upon the Acts of Peter.

46 "Behold, Lord, that Thee alone we love; and behold Lord that we have left our homes and the homes of these our kindred, and for Thy sake are become strangers without compulsion. Behold, Lord that we have left our possessions for Thy sake, that we might gain Thee, the possession of life, that cannot be taken away. Behold, our Lord, that we have left all our kindred for Thy sake, that we might be united in the kinship to Thee."

sures of the world.[47] Though the author is familiar with the figure of Abraham, he does not link the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage with explicit reference to the patriarch.

The philosophical system of Clement of Alexandria reflects the influence of Jewish-Alexandrian philosophy, the Platonic tradition and Gnosticism,[48] so that he tends "to clothe his Christian ethic in the outward form of Stoic or Platonic teaching."[49] Because he found much common ground with the Stoic teaching concerning man's transcience in the world, it is not surprising that two passages from <u>Stromateis</u> employ the sojourner motif. At 4.26 Clement alludes to Gen 23:4 and Ps 39:12(13) in expounding both the sojourning of the soul in the body and the sojourning of the body on earth away from the heavenly home. This depiction of the believer's life on earth as a sojourning is supported by a similar reference in 7.12.[50] In <u>Paedagogus</u> 3.2 Abraham is mentioned briefly as a pattern when Clement asserts that "he who follows God must despise country, and relations, and possessions, and all wealth, by making him a stranger (ἔπηλυν)," but here, as in <u>Stromateis</u> the focus is directed primarily toward the image of the

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47 "For our first birth descends through the fire of dust, and therefore, by the divine appointment, this second birth is introduced by water, which may extinguish the nature of fire; and that the soul, enlightened by the heavenly Spirit, may cast away the fear of the first birth: provided, however, it so live for the time to come, that it do not at all seek after any of the pleasures of this world, but be, as it were, a pilgrim and stranger, and a citizen of another city."

48 Lilla, <u>Clement of Alexandria</u> 227 remarks well: "No part of Clement's thought can actually be adequately understood without taking these three factors duly into account."

49 Chadwick, <u>Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition</u> 41.

50 "He, attracted by his own hope, tastes not the good things that are in the world, entertaining a noble contempt for all things here; ... having a clear conscience with reference to his departure, and being always ready, as 'a stranger and pilgrim' with regard to the inheritances here..."

stranger, rather than upon the figure of Abraham.

Although the greatest contribution by Origen to the subject at hand is found in his homiletical literature, two references in De Principiis 4.3.8 and Contra Celsum 7.29 are indirectly relevant. In these passages Origen argues that the curse on the earth has tainted the terrestrial promised land. Thus "both Judaea and Jerusalem were the shadow and figure of that pure land, goodly and large, in the pure region of heaven, in which is the heavenly Jerusalem."[51] The promises of Israel, which find their ultimate source in the Abrahamic Covenant, are therefore transmuted into a spiritualized notion of land. However, this connection with Abraham is not spelled out in his argument.

Cyprian in his Testimonies Against the Jews 1.21-23 cites Gen 12:1-3 and several other passages, including Mt 8:11, in endeavoring to prove that the Gentiles are included in the body of Christian believers.[52] His only clear reference to the Christian life on earth as a pilgrimage is found in On the Mortality 9.20, in which he writes: "We ought to consider, dearest brethren, we ought indeed to retain in our meditations, that we have renounced the world, and are continuing here, for this mean season, as

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51 Contra Celsum 7.29. Wilken, "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism, and the Idea of the Holy Land" 302 states with reference to De Principiis 4.3.8: "Origen is engaged in a general discussion of the interpretation of the Scriptures, and he argues that the term 'holy land' refers to a heavenly city and that biblical prophecies about Judaea and Jerusalem designate a spiritual kingdom, a 'race of spiritual beings.'"

52 Fahey, Cyprian and the Bible 567 comments concerning De Mortalitate 17, Epistula 2.2 and 58.10, and De Opere et Eleemosynis 24: "At least four times Cyprian describes heaven in terms suggested by Mt 8:11, as the conuiuium or banquet of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The reference to Mort 17 is particularly significant for its reference to Abraham and those other two patriarchs, because Cyprian is proving that even those who do not actually die during persecutions are no less pleasing to God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob suffered for God but did not actually die."

strangers and pilgrims." His language here draws much from Hebrews, but his only indirect reference to Abraham is a rhetorical flourish in which he states: "Paradise we are to reckon for our native land; Patriarchs are now our parents; wherefore not haste and run, to behold our Country, to salute our Parents?"

The Coptic work, <u>The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles</u>, from the early fourth century,[53] presents Jesus as a stranger who addresses Peter as a fellow-stranger. Sell argues convincingly that the tractate reflects the developing orthodoxy of the second century, so that the motif of the stranger is best derived from the New Testament rather than from Gnostic literature.[54] By using the term ϣⲃⲏⲣⲛ̄ϣⲙ̄ⲙⲟ, cognate to συμπάροικος, the author is establishing a <u>double entendre</u>, whereby Jesus describes Peter's spiritual alienation from his sinful culture in similar terms to that with which the apostle describes his socio-political condition of foreignness.

Eusebius speaks of the migration of Abraham in <u>Demon. Evang</u>. 1.2 and even uses the language of pilgrimage in a loose manner when he states with reference to the patriarch: "For even he, a foreigner and a stranger to the religion which he afterwards embraced, is said to have changed his life, to have cast away his ancestral superstition, to have left his home and kindred and fathers' customs, and the manner of life in which he was born and reared, and to have followed God ..."[55] In addition, he speaks of

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53 Sell, "Jesus the 'Fellow-Stranger'" 189 notes well that "although the Coptic Nag Hammadi texts are generally considered of (probably) fourth-century origin, their Greek <u>Vorlagen</u> are to be dated considerably earlier."

54 <u>Ibid</u>. 191. However, he does grant that "classical mythological tales of unrecognized deities on earthly visitations might possibly have been part of the tractate's <u>total</u> background."

55 <u>Demon. Evang</u>. 1.11.

the bosom of Abraham as the resting place of believers after leaving the sojourn of this body (Prep. Evang. 13.10.13). In Theophania 1.69 Eusebius uses the image of migration to refer to human life on earth in distinction from life in heaven.[56] No correlation is drawn between the migration of Abraham and the idea of the believer's life on earth as a pilgrimage to heaven even though Eusebius is familiar with both of the subjects.

Although Gregory Nazianzen makes only indirect reference to the significance of Abraham's migration,[57] Gregory of Nyssa views it as a departure from the world of sense perception and a journey to the true knowledge of God.[58] However, for Gregory of Nyssa the journey is mystical, reminiscent more of the thought of Philo than the spiritual pilgrimage concept developed in Heb 11: 8-16.[59]

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56 "For if this rational animal, - this, who has become partaker in all this superiority; this, which alone of those that are on the earth, is in the image of God; this Brother of the divine hosts, and of the Angels, which are in heaven, - had been duly led by his nature, and had from ancient time adhered to the divine law; he would indeed have been freed from this earthly and corruptible (mode of) life, and would have continued in his conversation on earth, as in a state of migration."

57 In Funeral Oration on His Sister Gorgonia 4 he compares Gregory and Nonna to Abraham and Sarah: "... he went out from kindred and home for the sake of the land of promise, she was the occasion of his exile; for on this head alone I venture to claim for her an honour higher than that of Sarah; he set forth on so noble a pilgrimage, she readily shared with him in its toils..." Dropping the parallel to Abraham, Gregory continues (6): "Gorgonia's native land was Jerusalem above, the object, not of sight but of contemplation, wherein is our commonwealth, and whereto we are pressing on: whose citizen Christ is, and whose fellow-citizens are the assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven..."

58 Canévet, Grégoire de Nysse et l'Herméneutique Biblique 224 illustrates this emphasis from Oration 5 on Canticles.

59 For example, he states in Answer to Eunomius' Second Book: "He [Abraham] indeed, if in the lofty spirit of the Apostle we may take the words allegorically, and so penetrate to the inner sense of the history, without losing sight of the truth of its facts - he, I say, went out by Divine command from his own country and kindred on a journey worthy of a prophet eager for the

Jerome does not seem to have discussed thoroughly the sojourning of Abraham in any of his extant writings, but on several occasions he alludes to the patriarch by way of illustration. For example, in his Commentary on Jonah 1.9, he links the designation of Abraham as a περάτης (cf. Gen 14:13) with the statement of sojourning in Ps 39:12(13). The same expression is developed in Letter 71.2 in a metaphorical direction, with accompanying exhortation:

> He is called "a Hebrew," in Greek περάτης, a passer-over, for not content with present excellence but forgetting those things which are behind he reaches forth to that which is before... Thus his name has a mystic meaning and he has opened for you a way to seek not your own things but those of another. You too must leave your home as he did, and must take for your parents, brothers, and relations only those who are linked to you in Christ.

The migration of Abraham is specifically in view in several of Jerome's letters. Thus, in Letter 22.1, the departure from

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knowledge of God. For no local migration seems to me to satisfy the idea of the blessings which it is signified that he found. For going out from himself and from his country, by which I understand his earthly and carnal mind, and raising his thoughts as far as possible above the common boundaries of nature, and forsaking the soul's kinship with the senses ... he was raised so high by the sublimity of his knowledge that he came to be regarded as the acme of human perfection, knowing as much of God as it was possible for finite human capacity at its full stretch to attain." Gregory uses Moses as a pattern for a spiritual journey with two dimensions. O'Connell, "The Double Journey in Saint Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses" 302 introduces his study: "For there are actually two distinct yet interrelated spiritual journeys being described in The Life of Moses. One, which we may call the vertical, is that of Moses himself, who represents the pattern of perfection as he ascends ever higher into union with God. The other, the horizontal, is the journey of the people of Israel toward the promised land. It is the complex, shifting interaction between these two journeys, rather than the spiritual experience of Moses alone, which forms the subject matter and provides the shape of The Life of Moses."

the Chaldeans is likened to leaving the demons to "dwell in the country of the living ..." Letter 39.4 uses the same event to illustrate complete renunciation of the delights of life in order to cultivate devotion to fasting, reading and prayer.[60] Letter 46.2 conflates several biblical references, including Genesis 11 and 12, in presenting Abraham as one who left the city of human confusion to dwell in the land of God's promise and blessing. Thus, Jerome recognizes the connection between the figure of Abraham and the idea of metaphorical sojourning. Though his various exhortations based upon this image focus upon present spiritual experience, he also reflects the eschatological perspective which is at the forefront in Heb 11:8-16.

In Ambrose the image of Abraham as a spiritual pilgrim is for the most part unused. Abraham is set forth as an exemplary figure who subjected passion to reason,[61] and obeyed the divine command because of the prospect of an eternal reward.[62] In this he served as an apt pattern for the Levites who withdraw from the normal duties of life to devote themselves to the service of God.[63] Rather than viewing the sojourning of the patriarchs as a pattern for spiritual pilgrimage on earth in anticipation of the heavenly home, Ambrose sees their action as the basis for the metaphorical

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60 Cf. the similar exhortation in Letter 125.20: "Or else, if you desire perfection, go out like Abraham from your native city and your kin, and travel whither you know not. If you have substance, sell it and give it to the poor. If you have none, you are free from a great burden. Naked yourself follow a naked Christ. The task is hard and great and difficult; but great also are the rewards."

61 Though he uses language reminiscent of Philo, Ambrose is not adopting Philonic metaphysics, but is describing the path to true religion by the heart prepared by humility; cf. Savon, Saint Ambroise devant l'Exégèse de Philon le Juif 1:176.

62 On the Duties of the Clergy 1.24.107.

63 De Fuga Saeculi 2.6.

idea of the renunciation of the flesh.[64]

Paulinus discusses Abraham's purchase of Machpelah for the burial of Sarah in Letter 13.4, when commending Pammachius concerning the Christian burial of his wife. He views the act as a literal transaction and makes little reference to any metaphorical significance in the incident. A similar brief notice of Abraham's obedience to the call of God is found in Salvian's summary of the life of the patriarch.[65]

John Cassian presents the threefold call of Abraham in Gen 12:1 in expounding his doctrine of renunciation. Thus, the believer is to renounce earthly riches, sinful habits and the visible things belonging to the temporal world.[66] He compares the ultimate goal of such renunciation to the land promised to Abraham, which is a paradise transcending the temporal sin-tainted world.[67] John Cassian uses the references in Ps 39:12(13) and 119:19 to speak of the mind fixed on celestial things,[68] but he links them with David only, and does not exploit the allusion to Abraham (כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי), even though it would have suited admirably his line of argument.

The early Christian catechetical and apologetic literature offers several examples of the use of the figure of Abraham as a pattern for a spiritual attitude which eschews worldly pleasures

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64 On the Death of His Brother Satyrus 2.95: "The patriarchs went forth from their own land: let us go forth in our resolve from the dictatorship of the body; let us go forth in resolve as they in exile. But they did not regard as exile what was undertaken out of devotion to God, or required by necessity. They changed their native land for another: let us change earth for heaven. Theirs was a change of dwelling: let ours be a change in spirit."

65 On the Government of God 1.8.35.

66 Conferences 3.6.

67 Ibid. 3.10.

68 Ibid. 3.7.

(Clement of Alexandria, Paedagogus 3.2), for the mystical journey out of the world of the senses to the true vision of God (Gregory of Nyssa, Oration 5 on Canticles), and for the present spiritual experience of renunciation (Jerome, Letter 39.4; Ambrose, De Fuga Saeculi 2.6; John Cassian, Conferences 3.6). The image of spiritual pilgrimage as a metaphor for the Christian life upon earth is employed by the Acts of Thomas 61; the Recognitions of Clement 9.7; Clement of Alexandria, Stromateis 4.26, 7.12; Cyprian, On the Mortality 9.20; The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles; Eusebius, The Theophania 1.69.

The two images of Abraham and of spiritual pilgrimage find significant connection in only a few authors. Eusebius, Demon. Evang. 1.2 describes Abraham as "a foreigner and a stranger to the religion which he afterwards embraced," but he does not link the sojourning of Abraham with the concept of the believer's life upon earth as a spiritual pilgrimage. Gregory of Nyssa, Answer to Eunomius' Second Book reinterprets the migration of Abraham in terms of his concept of the mystical journey, which has significant differences from the spiritual pilgrimage language of Heb 11:8-16. Jerome uses the language of metaphorical sojourning in speaking of Abraham when focusing upon the present experience of following Christ, but he also at least alludes to the connection between the patriarch and spiritual pilgrimage. Both Paulinus, Letter 13.4 and John Cassian, Conferences 3.10 fail to link the concepts of Abraham and spiritual pilgrimage, even though they expound Old Testament passages which would have supported the connection in thought.

This summary of the references to Abraham and to spiritual pilgrimage in the catechetical and apologetic literature up to 450 C.E. evidences less significant connection than has been observed in the literature of the first and second centuries. This

would suggest that in the early Christian Church the figure of Abraham may have been becoming a less prominent element in the exposition of the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage.

6.4 Homily and Commentary to 450 C.E.

The third century witnessed the flowering of homily and commentary which focused upon the elucidation and application of the biblical text. Though exegetical procedures similar to those employed in catechesis and apology were used, the scriptural passage became the structural unit around which the exposition was developed.

It is with Origen that the allegorical interpretation of the Bible reaches the dimensions which were to dominate biblical exegesis up to the time of the Reformers. Building upon Jewish symbolism, as represented by Philo and the rabbis,[69] and upon the typology of Paul[70] and the apologists,[71] Origen views the literal data of the scriptures as symbols pointing to the Bible's "implicit

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69 de Lange, Origen and the Jews 105 notes: "... despite his commonplace attacks on Jewish literalism, Origen had a keen appreciation of the richness and variety of Jewish exegesis, which in the third century was developing even beyond the peak it had reached in the middle of the second, and he was anxious to incorporate the best of the Jewish scholarship in his own exegetical work."

70 Daniélou, Message Évangélique et Culture Hellénistique 262-263.

71 Pagels, "Origen and the Prophets of Israel" 344 comments insightfully: "He agrees with the apologists (against the gnostics) that the historical actuality of events is not to be denied or transposed into allegory, but accepted and assumed as the basis for religious understanding. But he rejects their assumption that the correlation of such historical patterns in 'salvation-history' in itself conveys theological meaning ... Although the apologists fulfill the first task of exegesis, they fail to take up the second, which (in his view) constitutes the more essential exegetical task: to interpret the whole scriptural history 'spiritually' by explicating it as a paradigm for the believer's present experience."

higher truth."[72] The exegetical task, then, is "by investigation, under the guidance of God's Spirit, to come to a knowledge of this 'spiritual' wisdom."[73]

A salient teaching of Origen concerns the journey of the soul. By harmonizing Platonic language and Christian doctrine,[74] Origen endeavors to portray the Christian life as a multi-dimensional "progress of the soul from earthly to heavenly realities" encompassing the sacramental life mediated through the Church, intellectual education and moral progress.[75] Employing in particular the Old Testament exodus experience, Origen in Homily 27 on Numbers presents the journey of the soul in terms of spiritual stages corresponding to the wilderness itinerary of Israel.[76]

Undoubtedly, the total corpus of Origen's homiletical literature on Genesis is not preserved, and this fact makes it difficult to determine if he would have linked the figure of Abraham with his exposition on the journey of the soul. To be sure, Homily 3.3 on Genesis does juxtapose the call of Abram in Gen 12

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72 Norris, God and World in Early Christian Theology 114 compares Origen's exegetical procedure with Platonic idealism, which saw "in the harmonious motions of the invisible world an intimation and an image of the intelligible order which was their stable counterpart..."

73 Ibid. A succinct summary of Origen's exegetical method is found in Wiles, "Origen as a Biblical Scholar" 465-489.

74 Chadwick, John Cassian 83.

75 Greer, The Captain of Our Salvation 18-19.

76 Torjesen, Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis 76 summarizes well: "Drawing together the picture of the journey of the soul from De Principiis, from the prologue to the commentary on the Song of Songs and here from the 27th homily on Numbers, we have established basic features of that journey which remain essentially constant. There is the division of the journey into three stages. In the process of purification the soul struggles against sin and overcomes it, resisting and renouncing the world. The second stage is advancing knowledge of the Logos, of the intelligible and eternal. The concluding stage is that of perfection which is the return of the soul to its original form of existence, to participation in God as the goal of its journey."

with his progress of faith denoted by the change of his name to Abraham in Gen 17. However, Origen does not appear to evoke the figure of the patriarch in his sojournings to support the idea of the pilgrimage of the soul to "the fatherland in paradise" (Homily 27 on Numbers), but has expounded this concept in the context of the wilderness experience of Israel.

Among the fourth century Christian writers, Chrysostom most develops and uses the sojourner motif, and he explicitly links it with the figure of Abraham. Chrysostom regards the patriarch as an admirable example, the Old Testament counterpart to the Apostle Paul in his commitment to God.[77] It is true that on at least one occasion he does employ the sojourner image without reference to Abraham,[78] but the large majority of his references to the concept of pilgrimage emerge from expositions on passages dealing with the life of the patriarch.

In speaking of Abraham in Sermon 9 on Genesis, Chrysostom cites Heb 11:8-16 in the following comment:

> He did come into Palestine, but that was not the promise for which he looked; it was the other Palestine in heaven for which he yearned, and he considered himself a stranger to all things of this life. Paul testified to that when he added:

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77 Cf. <u>Panégyriques de S. Paul</u> 1.6 for a point by point comparison.

78 Cf. Homily 16 on 2 Corinthians: "... seeing we are by nature sojourners and dishonored and cast out. For if we are set upon being citizens here, we shall be so neither here nor there; but if we continue to be sojourners, and live in such wise as sojourners ought to live in, we shall enjoy the freedom of citizens both here and there. For the just, although having nothing, will both dwell here amidst all men's possessions as though they were his own, and also, when he hath departed to heaven, shall see those his eternal habitations. And he shall both here suffer no discomfort (for none will ever be able to make him a stranger that hath every land for his city;) and when he hath been restored to his own country, shall receive the true riches."

> "acknowledging that they were pilgrims and strangers." Tell me, is one who received a fatherland and so great a tract still a stranger? Yes, Paul says, for he did not look to this but to heaven.

In expounding Ac 7:4-5, Chrysostom argues in Homily 15 on Acts that Stephen is representing Abraham as leaving a literal land in order to migrate at God's word to a spiritual inheritance. Though he does not totally reject the concept of a literal land fulfillment, Chrysostom's main emphasis is upon Abraham's heavenly citizenship.[79] Therefore, in Homily 17.12 on the Statues he reasons from the example of Abraham in Genesis 14:

> Abraham, however, the citizen of the desert, they could not resist when he attacked them! And so it was likely to be. For he had true piety: a power much greater than numbers and the defence of walls. If thou art a Christian, no earthly city is thine. Of our City "the Builder and Maker is God." Though we may gain possession of the whole world, we are withal but strangers and sojourners in it all! We are enrolled in heaven: our citizenship is there!

Chrysostom's most extended discussions of the pilgrim image as it relates to Abraham are found in Homily 24 on Hebrews, which expounds Heb 11:13-16. Though Abraham lived on earth, even acquiring material wealth, he "lived in all respects as belonging to the City yonder." Thus, Abraham exemplified the true essence

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79 For example, in Baptismal Instructions 8.8 he says of Abraham: "His yearning for God gave him wings, and he did not stop his flight with visible things, nor did he devote himself only to the seed which was promised to him, but fixed his thoughts on what was to come. For when God promised him a land in exchange for a land and said: 'Go forth out of thy country and come into the land which I shall show you,' he abandoned the sensible things and let them go in exchange for the spiritual."

of virtue, which is "to be a stranger to this world, and a sojourner, and to have nothing in common with the things here, but to hang loose from them, as from things strange to us ..." The patriarchs were strangers not just from Canaan, but with respect to the whole earth, for "they indeed wished to practice virtue: but here there was much wickedness, and things were quite foreign to them." Therefore, David, reflecting a similar sense of alienation from the sinful world, also confessed that he was a stranger and a sojourner.

Chrysostom, then, maintains the link between the pilgrim image and the figure of Abraham which is articulated in the biblical literature, but which at his time was not often employed by the patristic writers.

Writing at nearly the same time as Chrysostom, Basil the Great also connects the idea of spiritual pilgrimage with the biblical record of Abraham. In commending Christians in Letter 223.2, Basil remarks that "always, as though living in a flesh that was not theirs, they shewed in very deed what it is to sojourn for a while in this life, and what to have one's citizenship and home in heaven." This concept of life in the flesh as a sojourning is explicitly linked with Abraham in the Homily on Psalm 14 [15].[80]

In his exposition <u>On Genesis</u> 210, when expounding Gen 12:1, Didymus transforms the call and migration of Abraham into a symbol of leaving the earthly world for the invisible world,

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80 "A sojourning is a transitory dwelling. It indicates a life not settled, but passing, in hope of our removal to the better things. It is the part of a saint to pass through this world, and to hasten to another life. In this sense David says of himself, 'I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.' Abraham was a sojourner, who did not possess even so much land as to set his foot on, and, when he needed a tomb, bought one for money. The word teaches us that so long as he lives in the flesh he is a sojourner, and, when he removes from this life, rests in his own home."

coupling with it the statement of Rom 8:24, "hope that is seen is not hope." Similarly, when commenting upon Ps 39:12(13) he remarks: "The fathers in virtue therefore were all sojourners in the earth and tenants, as the patriarchs and others who have begotten children according to godliness, such as prophets, teachers, law-givers." Nevertheless, though he uses the figure of Abraham in a metaphorical way and he also views the sojourning of Ps 39:12(13) in a cosmological sense, he does not explicitly cite Abraham as a pattern for spiritual pilgrimage as does Heb 11:8-16.

In the early Christian homily and commentary Origen expounds the journey of the soul in Homily 27 on Numbers, even using motifs reminiscent of Heb 11, but, in contrast with Gregory of Nyssa, he presents the journey of the soul in terms of Israel's wilderness itinerary rather than in terms of Abraham's migration. Didymus, <u>On Genesis</u> 210 and Commentary on Psalm 39; and Basil, Letter 223.2 and Homily on Psalm 14[15], explicitly link Abraham with the idea of spiritual pilgrimage. Both writers appeal to Ps 39:12(13) when elucidating spiritual pilgrimage, with Basil in particular drawing a clear connection with the patriarch. The most direct correlation between Abraham and the metaphor of the spiritual pilgrim is found in the expositions of Chrysostom. In Sermons on Genesis 9; Homily 17.12 on the Statues; and especially in Homily 24 on Hebrews, Chrysostom employs the language and the concepts of spiritual pilgrimage as they are presented in Heb 11: 8-16, and Abraham is portrayed as the paradigm for the Christian living on the earth.

However, two major considerations must be noted. First, even though the cited references, especially in Chrysostom, do explicitly link the figure of Abraham and the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage, the total number of instances is very small, and

cannot be said to represent a widespread correlation in early Christian thought. Second, one would expect to find in homily or commentary the closest parallels to biblical juxtapositions of thought, because in these genres of literature the biblical text is the structural framework for the exposition. Thus, what Didymus, Basil and Chrysostom are reflecting are most likely the correlations drawn by the biblical writers rather than necessarily those prevalent in the third through fifth centuries.

Though the Christian homily and commentary up to 450 C.E. does indeed link Abraham with the idea of the spiritual pilgrim in some cases, the infrequent references cannot support an extensive recognition of the correlation in the patristic period.

6.5 Augustine

By far the most extensive use of the sojourner motif in the patristic literature is found in Augustine. Augustine's theology of the two cities of God and man, which are at the present time co-mingled,[81] is developed to its full dimensions in The City of God, and more generally in his tractate On the Catechising of the Uninstructed. Building upon the biblical images of Jerusalem the city of God and its antagonist Babylon the city of man (cf. Rev 17-18,21),[82] Augustine introduces Abraham as a foreshad-

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81 Evans, One and Holy 122. Cf. Markus, Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine 62-63: "Augustine saw the whole course of history, past, present and future, as a dramatic conflict of the two cities, that is to say, in terms of a tension of forces which will only appear in their naked reality beyond temporal history. From this point of view the sphere in which human kingdoms, empires and all states have their being is radically infected with their ambiguity."

82 Patterson, God and History in Early Christian Thought 106-107.

owing of the Church's function in the midst of a sinful world.[83]

The magisterial argument of The City of God has prompted an enormous corpus of scholarly studies. Detailed interaction with the literature lies beyond the confines of this study, which focuses upon the specific issue of Augustine's use of the sojourner motif as it pertains to the figure of Abraham.

Augustine regards the Christian as a pilgrim in that he is involved in a dynamic process by which he moves towards God.[84] Though he employs the Platonic language of the vision of God in this life, Augustine focuses upon man as a *peregrinus* whose "ardent love for a distant country"[85] gives him the hope necessary to sustain him during his earthly sojourn. Because the Christian's homelessness is thus eschatologically defined, rather than socially rooted, Augustine is able to articulate the mediate position of the believer as citizen in both cities.[86] As citizen of God's

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83 In using the example of Abraham in On the Catechising of the Uninstructed 19.33, Augustine stresses the literal value of the biblical history more than does Origen. Milburn, Early Christian Interpretations of History 155 notes: "Whereas for Origen it is the underlying suggested truth, drawn out from its ignoble mantle of brute fact, that is to be revered, Augustine tended to regard symbolic interpretations as helpful additions which, in one form or another, will probably be suggested to the receptive mind of the thoughtful reader. He shrinks from any unrestrained symbolism which may serve to dissipate factual truth into a vain aura of imagination and from the risks of arbitrary pronouncements that God did not wish this, that or the other statement to be taken in a literal sense ..."

84 Hazelton in Battenhouse (ed.), A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine 401.

85 Markus, Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine 83. As Goldberg, Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction 84 notes, Augustine expands the familiar ancient image of the *peregrinus* into a larger ideational dimension. He writes: "For Augustine, to be a Christian is to be the *peregrinus par excellence*, and thus, the City of God 'is a book about being otherworldly in this world' in order to transform the world."

86 Markus, "The Sacred and the Secular" 85 states well: "In the end Augustine refused to discard ... the Roman past and its present embedded in the institutions and the culture of his

city the believer has the libertas to participate in the life of his earthly commonwealth without threat to his ultimate destiny.[87]

Augustine introduces the sojourner motif in the preface to The City of God when he states his purpose in writing. He says:

> I have undertaken its defence against those who prefer their own gods to the Founder of this city, - a city surpassingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal rest ...[88]

Though Christians are strangers in this world (1.9), they are intermingled on earth (1.35) with the city of man. Therefore, the temporal life is the discipline for eternal life (1.29), and Christians, "in confident expectation of a heavenly country, know that they are pilgrims even in their own homes" (1.15).

The Christian pilgrim is involved diligently in the temporal life (14.9), but he views the joys of his earthly city as a symbol of the transcendent glory of the celestial city (5.16, 15.2). He makes use of the advantages proferred by the city of man in order "to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible body which weigh upon the soul" (19.17).[89] However, all

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own society. Hence the central thrust of the last books is to define a place for an intermediate realm, one shared by 'sacred' and 'profane', the area in which the two are allowed to overlap. This is the area I have called 'the secular'. In Augustine's view this is the realm of what, in a religious perspective, is not so much neutral, but, rather, ambivalent: capable of being linked either with damnation or with salvation, depending on the ultimate purposes to which it is harnessed."

87 Evans, One and Holy 99.

88 Cf. Sermon 61 on Luke 13:21,23: "He is a Christian who, even in his own house and in his own country, acknowledges himself to be a stranger. For our country is above, there we shall not be strangers. For every one here below, even in his own house, is a stranger."

89 Here Augustine is alluding to Wisdom of Solomon 9:15.

the while he anticipates his eschatological initiation into "the city of the saints" which is in heaven, "although here below it begets citizens, in whom it sojourns till the time of its reign arrives, when it shall gather together all in the day of resurrection ..." (15.1).

In books 15-18 Augustine traces the growth and progress of the two cities by rehearsing key events and persons in the biblical texts. Within this recital the life of Abraham is presented in detail in 16.12-34, in which the Genesis record is for the most part followed, with interpretative comments interspersed.[90] Abraham, then, joins other figures such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Samuel, David, Solomon and the prophets as a member of the pilgrim city of God on earth. It is significant, however, that no mention is made of Abraham's self-designation as a גֵר־וְתוֹשָׁב in the account of the burial of Sarah in 16.32, even though this would have fit well Augustine's overall argument.

When Augustine expounds the sojourner language of Ps 39:12(13) he does not refer directly to the patriarchs, but he applies the metaphor as follows:

> What is meant by a sojourner? I am a sojourner in the place from which I am to remove; not in the place where I am to dwell for ever. The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home. In the place from which I am to remove I am a sojourner; but yet it is with my God that I am a sojourner, with Whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my home.[91]

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90 Augustine's presentation of Abraham in this historical recital may well have been influenced by similar collections in Ps 105 (cf. 3.17 in this study), Heb 11 (cf. 5.2), and perhaps by the juxtaposition of Gen 11 and 12 (cf. 2.3 and 2.4).

91 Expositions on the Book of Psalms 2:123-124.

In commenting upon the parallel expression in Ps 119:19, Augustine refers to Ps 39:12(13), stating that "all my fathers, beyond doubt intends the righteous to be understood, who preceded him in time, and in this pilgrimage sighed with pious groans for their country above."[92] He continues by linking with these verses Heb 11:13-16, Eph 2:19 and several other New Testament passages, but he does not explicitly cite Abraham as a specific example of the spiritual pilgrim. In addition, when Abraham is discussed in terms of sojourning in the commentary on Psalm 105:12-15, the reference is limited to his socio-political status in Canaan, and spiritual pilgrimage is not brought to the fore.

It must be recognized that Abraham is indeed important for Augustine, particularly in view of his prominence in Pauline theology. However, in Augustine's frequent use of the language of spiritual pilgrimage, the connection with the figure of Abraham is largely unexpressed. Abraham's inclusion in the record of biblical figures representative of the city of God in the biblical history indicates that he was undoubtedly included in Augustine's total framework of thought undergirding his frequent pilgrim language. The image of the spiritual pilgrim is applied to the total series of biblical antecedents, of which Abraham is a member, but the patriarch himself is not highlighted as in Heb 11:8-16.

6.6 Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that the early Christian literature up to 450 C.E. does not support substantial correlation in expression linking Abraham with the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage. With the partial exception of some of the homiletical

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92 Ibid. 5:339-340.

and commentary literature, which reflects the connections forged already by the biblical writers, the patriarch is for the most part absent from or only indirectly alluded in references to the Christian as pilgrim or sojourner on earth. It is true that some general connections can be cited, in particular, Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.5.4 and 5.32.2; Basil, Letter 223.2 and Homily on Psalm 14[15]; and Chrysostom, Homily 24 on Hebrews. However, more characteristic is the failure to draw the correlation between Abraham and pilgrimage even in contexts where it would have supported the contention of the writer, as for example in Tertullian, De Resurrectione Carnis 18; Paulinus, Letter 13.4; John Cassian, Conferences 3.10; and Augustine, Exposition on Psalm 39.

It may then be concluded that within the divergent interpretative schools of early Christianity the concept of spiritual pilgrimage is frequently articulated, but the metaphor has most often been disconnected from the figure of Abraham, and it has achieved independent status. With few exceptions, especially in homily and commentary, the image has become a frozen metaphor for the life of the believer on earth in anticipation of his heavenly homeland.

CHAPTER 7

ABRAHAM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN METAPHOR OF SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE

7.0 Introduction

The preceding chapters of this study have analyzed the development of the figure of Abraham from his depiction as a sojourner in Genesis to the metaphor of spiritual pilgrim in the early Christian literature. This final chapter will synthesize the data already investigated and suggest the process by which the development of the motif may have taken place. Lack of definitive evidence makes it tenuous to ascribe specific causality, but sociological, redactional and literary factors which may have contributed to the progressive articulation of the pilgrim motif will be discussed. To introduce these considerations raises a number of larger questions which cannot be explored within the confines of this thesis. One issue of particular importance is the effect of psychological and social influences upon the resignification of literary texts. Further investigation in this direction would undoubtedly be fruitful, but would inevitably demand facility in several additional disciplines. The present work is concerned with the more restricted question of how the figure of Abraham contributed to the development of the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage. Thus, the suggestions made in this chapter are presented as a hypothetical, but plausible, developmental model.

7.1 Summary of Textual Evidence

It has been seen that the narratives in Genesis 12-25 present Abraham primarily as a socio-political sojourner. Abraham leaves his homeland in response to the divine call and lives as a גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Canaan. As such his status among the inhabitants of Canaan is ambivalent, and he has to receive a special dispensation to purchase land for a burial site.

However, the presentation of the Abrahamic traditions betrays hints of possible theological implications. The use of הִתְהַלֵּךְ to describe Abraham's life before Yahweh, and the juxtaposition of the call of Abraham with the calamity of Babel at the culmination of the primeval narratives suggest that the patriarch's sojourner status could be viewed as having spiritual dimensions as well. Though these references are not explicitly developed in Genesis, later reinterpretations of the narratives found in them adumbrations of metaphorical concepts.

The Old Testament references and allusions to Abraham in some cases manifest metaphorical development in the sojourner concept. In particular, Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 use sojourning to speak of human transience, rather than specifically of socio-political status. Therefore, the metaphorical potential discernible in Genesis 12-25 is beginning to be used within the Old Testament corpus.

The extra-biblical Jewish literature up to 450 C.E. views Abraham as an exemplary figure, as well as the historical father of Israel. Sojourning is often presented in non-literal terms, notably in Philo, but for the most part Abraham's migration and life in Canaan are viewed in either metaphysical terms, of Abraham's life in the world of appearance, or cultically, as being a

proselyte. Therefore, the Jewish literature does not appear to have had substantial direct influence upon the development of the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage, though it was undoubtedly suggestive of the potential for reinterpretation of the Genesis texts in metaphorical directions.

The locus classicus for the Christian concept of spiritual pilgrimage is Heb 11:8-16. The writer of Hebrews builds upon the Genesis narratives, but reinterprets them in line with his theological perspective. By exploiting the juxtaposition of Genesis 11 and 12 and linking with the patriarch the longstanding theme of the city of God, the author diminishes the socio-political nature of Abraham's sojourning and presents him as a spiritual pilgrim. Thus, Abraham's place of sojourning is regarded as the earth, not Canaan, and his true inheritance is heaven, not a terrestrial homeland. Hebrews, then, has diverged from the primary extra-biblical Jewish concept of sojourning as a cultic or metaphysical phenomenon, and has developed the metaphorical suggestions of Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 into an explicit image of spiritual pilgrimage.

In the patristic literature, spiritual pilgrimage becomes a fixed image for Christian living on earth, but for the most part it is not directly related to the figure of Abraham. With infrequent exceptions, such as Chrysostom, who unavoidably cites Abraham when expounding Heb 11:8-16, the patristic writers usually allude to the patriarch only indirectly when using the pilgrim metaphor. In many cases, the imagery is used as a fixed symbol, with no notice given to the textual basis in the Abrahamic traditions from which it may have been ultimately derived.

Throughout the study it has also been noted that it is difficult to establish a clear line of direct literary dependence between the documents in which the image of spiritual pilgrimage

is developed. The dating of the Genesis narratives is problematic. The Old Testament references to Abraham for the most part appear to be exilic or later. Though it is tempting, then, to explain the metaphorical reinterpretations of the figure of the patriarch by a shift in thinking necessitated by the destruction of Jerusalem, the fact of the matter is that the paucity of pre-exilic references gives no control against which to measure such a transposition. In addition to difficult problems in dating documents, the early Jewish literature bears manifest parallels to Hellenistic thought as well as to the Old Testament, and employs a large variety of interpretative techniques. Similarly, the New Testament and the patristic literature are influenced by both Judaism and Hellenism.

When to these considerations is added the incomplete and perhaps unrepresentative, nature of the extant documentary evidence, the problems besetting any developmental theory based only on the direct literary dependence of the available texts seem insuperable.[1] Therefore, it appears prudent to look at some of the more general factors which may have influenced[2] the metaphorical

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1 Frye, Anatomy of Criticism 109-110 points out that chronological gaps in the documentary evidence of literary works make it difficult to trace convincingly the development of ideas on textual grounds alone.

2 Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature 73 wisely caution against simplistic explanations of literature drawn from related fields of study: "All history, all environmental factors, can be argued to shape a work of art. But the actual problems begin when we evaluate, compare, and isolate the individual factors which are supposed to determine the work of art. Most students try to isolate a specific series of human actions and creations and to ascribe to that alone a determining influence on th work of literature." They continue (p.74): "Many students who use these methods will make much more modest claims. They will seek to establish only some degree of relationship between the work of art and its settings and antecedents, and they will assume that some degree of illumination follows from such knowledge though the precise relevance of these relationships may escape

development of the figure of Abraham the sojourner into the Christian image of spiritual pilgrimage, rather than attempting to define a direct line of documentary development. It must be emphasized that the nature of the evidence demands that such factors must be considered possibilities, rather than as certain determinants.

7.2 Sociological Factors

The migration and sojourning of Abraham inevitably impinge upon sociological factors. The ambivalent status of Abraham as a גֵר who had received the divine promise of the land provoked a continuing crisis of faith for him and for his descendants. The protracted time of waiting and the incomplete conquest under Joshua are presented as anticipations of the possessed inheritance. Though the prominence of the united monarchy under David and Solomon undoubtedly lent apparent legitimacy to the doctrine of land theology, the decline and collapse of the monarchy meant that "the question of the ultimate fulfillment of the patriarchal land promise took on critical status."[3]

The exilic community was forced by its circumstances to re-evaluate the tenets upon which the national confidence had been built. With the demise of the Davidic monarchy renewed attention was given to the patriarchal traditions, and in particular to the unconditional promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.[4] It must be rec-

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them altogether. These more modest proponents seem wiser, for surely causal explanation is a very overrated method in the study of literature, and as surely it can never dispose of the critical problems of analysis and evaluation."

3 Youngblood, "The Abrahamic Covenant: Conditional or Unconditional?" 42.

4 Clements, Abraham and David 70. Van Seters, Abraham in History and Tradition 265 argues cogently: "The exile was proof that the covenantal relationship was broken, and with it

ognized, however, that this retrospection was not merely nostalgic, but crucial to Israel's identity and hope. In the setting of geographical separation from the land and spiritual estrangement from Yahweh, the exilic community endeavored to come to terms with its predicament.[5]

Two primary future hopes were articulated as responses to the exile. On the one hand, there was the affirmation of restoration eschatology, in which Israel could anticipate future earthly prominence, a teaching which may have encouraged eventually the development of apocalyptic eschatology.[6] Though this concept of a literal, albeit delayed, fulfillment of the land promise was most prevalent in post-exilic Judaism, there is also the development of a transcendentalized order, in which the land becomes symbolic of a future age.[7] This move away from a literal

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the legitimate claim to the land. This was not only a crisis of faith but also a crisis of corporate identity. Only by establishing a new basis for a claim to the land that would supercede the older covenantal basis could this crisis be overcome. Such a basis was found by associating the promise of land not with the 'fathers' of the exodus, but with the forefathers long before the exodus, a promise which was not conditional."

5 Brueggemann, The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions 117 reasons: "The issue of the exile was a profound alienation, alienation from city and temple, from land and accustom, but most of all from Yahweh and his promises - which now seemed false. It is perhaps a wonder that the exile was a time of such enormous literary activity; but we may understand it as a quest, perhaps a desperate quest, for ways of fidelity in a setting of estrangement."

6 Cf. Plöger, Theokratie und Eschatologie 131-132. However, it should be noted with Wilder, "Social Factors in Early Christian Eschatology" 70 that the development of Jewish apocalyptic is highly complex and should not be regarded in a linear development such as "disillusionment with the Davidic monarchy led to projection into the future of a Davidic restoration, or eschatological hope represented a projection upon the future of enthronement ideology, or the transcendental apocalyptic of Daniel and later writings is occasioned by new political constellations combined with a new cosmology."

7 Davies, The Territorial Dimension of Judaism 78 notes: "Such sources can be divided into two kinds: those in which The Land retains its geographical dimension and yet is given a moral

land fulfillment is in general accord with the concepts of spiritual pilgrimage and celestial inheritance expounded in Heb 11:8-16.

Whereas Christianity was amenable to a spiritualized concept of inheritance because from its inception it viewed itself in theologically-adapted language of nationhood and possession (e.g., 1 Pt 1:4; 2:9-10; Eph 2:19-22), Judaism in the early Christian era persisted in endeavoring to reconcile the conflict between its political domination by Rome and its ancient land promise. Inevitably, the hopes for a renewed Jewish state[8] clashed with Roman imperial control, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the crushing of the Jewish rebellion in 135 were the disastrous results.[9] Though many Jews abandoned the hope for a restored literal nation and viewed a future return in terms of redemption, a segment of the nation continued to anticipate a return in political terms.[10]

It is reasonable to expect that socio-political features such as those noted may well have influenced the developing reinterpretations of the patriarchal narratives.[11] Nevertheless, the fact must be recognized that although a plausible case may be made for the possibility that the exile was determinative for the state-

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and transcendental connotation (Philo's works and a section in the Mishnah) and those in which The Land is wholly transcendentalized (the Testament of Job)."

8 Note, for example the coins minted during 132-135 C.E., which bear the legend, "for the freedom of Jerusalem" or "year one of the liberation." Cf. Wilken, "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism, and the Idea of the Holy Land" 305.

9 Hengel, Juden, Griechen und Barbaren 115.

10 Davies, The Territorial Dimension of Judaism 119-120; Segal, Rebecca's Children 174. Even among religious Jews hopes for a national restoration are expressed in the 18 Benedictions; cf. Literature of the Synagogue 24.

11 For example, as Lee, Studies in the Form of Sirach 44-50 243 suggests, the praise of the fathers resignifies the biblical traditions in presenting Simon II as an example for Onias III to emulate.

ments of metaphorical sojourning in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15, the precise dates of the psalm and of the prayer attributed to David are by no means certain.[12] In addition, the exile of Judah, the destruction of Jerusalem and the disaster of the rebellion in 135 are significant,[13] but isolated, events in the history of the Jewish people. If socio-political factors are to be regarded as the primary determinants for the development of the sojourner motif, then a more comprehensive influence by the social features of Israel and the early church must be established. Unfortunately, the literature of the post-exilic Jewish and early Christian eras indicates such a diverse combination of social movements and influences that it is very difficult to establish a convincing scenario for the specific sociological shaping of the sojourner motif leading to the concept of spiritual pilgrimage.[14]

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12 Even if the chronology could be established with certainty, a causal relationship would still have to be proven. Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature 16 are skeptical that literary works can be explained convincingly simply by determining the economic, social and political conditions during which they were written.

13 Alexander, "Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament" 244 argues reasonably: "We know of at least two events which could have profoundly influenced the development of early Judaism, and diverted it into new channels. The first was the destruction of the Temple in AD 70. The loss of its central religious institution and its traditional religious leadership must surely have caused dislocation and upheavel within Judaism and led to important changes. The second event was the defeat of Bar Kokhba in AD 135. This could have been as profound a trauma as the destruction of the Temple: the reason we do not now see it as such may simply be due to the fact that we know so little about the second war against Rome."

14 Edwards, "Sociology as a Tool for Interpreting the New Testament" 444-446 concludes his useful review of seven sociological studies on various facets of New Testament study by applauding the potential value of such analyses and by cautioning as to the imprecision of sociology as a science. A similar tentativeness may be noted in Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel" 180-185.

7.3 Redactional Factors

Whereas sociology deals with events and conditions external to the text and endeavors to suggest factors which could have influenced the shaping of the literary documents, redaction begins with the data of the text and seeks to link them with plausible sociological determinants.[15] Fundamental to redaction criticism is the premise that the redactor passed on traditional material, "but in doing so he selected those portions which he felt spoke to the needs of his audience. He did not hesitate to rearrange or interpret the material or to place emphasis on a certain thought which he believed his readers needed ..."[16] As Sanders notes, redaction is at its root "contemporization of tradition,"[17] a process also at the heart of Jewish midrashic exegesis.

Within the Old Testament parallel books and passages manifest a clear pattern of redactional activity.[18] Jewish midrashic reinterpretation continued in the post-biblical period, so that from a hermeneutical point of view "there is no break and no complete separation between biblical and post-biblical stages of the religion in either the Old Testament or the New."[19] When the New Testament writers use the Old Testament texts, they

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15 Childs, "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament" 68 notes well: "The method of redactional criticism seeks to discern from the peculiar shape of the biblical literature signs of intentional reinterpretation of the material which can be related to an editor's particular historically conditioned perspective."

16 Willis, "Redaction Criticism and Historical Reconstruction" 86.

17 _Canon and Community_ 27.

18 Cf. Vermes, _Post-Biblical Jewish Studies_ 38: "In Old Testament times, all new expression of the Jewish faith, as well as changes in social, economic and religious circumstances, resulted either in new works, or in supplementations or reconstructions of existing writings. Thus, Deuteronomy re-interprets the Code of the Covenant in Exodus, and the Chronicler re-casts the history already recorded in Samuel and Kings."

19 Barr, The Bible _in the Modern World_ 117.

employ a variety of techniques[20] in reinterpreting the Jewish traditions in the light of the Christ event. At times, extensions of meaning already developed in Judaism may have been adopted by the Christian writers[21] because of their aptness to the Christian message. Thus, the assessment by Sanders seems valid: "The Bible is full of unrecorded hermeneutics from earliest Old Testament times to the last New Testament book ..."[22]

The frequent occurrence of redaction both within the Bible and in the extra-biblical literature provides a more objective standard by which the development of the sojourner motif with reference to Abraham may be evaluated. Notice has been given throughout the study of the use of prior materials. For example, the Old Testament texts use Abraham as an exemplary figure, a practice followed also in the post-biblical Jewish literature, the New Testament and the patristic literature. Hebrews 11 is a notable example of the reinterpretation of Old Testament narratives in terms of the author's theological and hortatory concerns. Thus, Abraham is presented in terms which support an eschatological orientation toward heavenly realities which at the present are anticipated only dimly.

Nevertheless, despite the apparent promise of redaction criticism for explaining the causes for the development of the pilgrim image, several important factors militate against its complete success. Though reinterpretations of biblical texts are

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20 Bock, "Evangelicals and the Use of the Old Testament in the New" 310 notes five major areas of reinterpretation: (1) referents of passages were made more specific, (2) motifs were reapplied, (3) language that was "earthly" in the Old Testament was expanded to include a "heavenly thrust", (4) language that was figurative became literal, (5) language that is literal becomes figurative.

21 Sanders, Canon and Community 32.

22 "The Gospels and the Canonical Process" 235.

easily demonstrated, the factors determinative for the adaptations are not so facilely construed. As has been argued with reference to sociological hermeneutics, the social influences of the biblical period are attested in incomplete and complex form. In addition, it is difficult to establish certainly whether a specific reinterpretation is indicative of a general social factor, or is a more individual and idiosyncratic adaptation. Moreover, similar reinterpretations may not necessarily demand similar social conditions or theological concerns. Instead, they can conceivably be motivated by apologetic reasons or by the adoption of an attractive rendering which may or may not have come into common parlance.

In the light of these formidable limitations, it would appear injudicious to link the objective reinterpretations of the sojourner motif with the hypothetically constructed social influences which may have contributed to their shaping. The nature of the available evidence is such that it cannot support a compelling reconstruction of the redactional history of the pilgrim metaphor. To be sure, the theological purpose of the writer of Hebrews, for example, does give significant insight into the crucial stage at which the pilgrim concept is introduced into the extant text of the Bible, but there remain major gaps in the development of the motif from the socio-political condition of sojourning to the metaphorical use of the image, with its ultimate reference to the spiritual pilgrim. The available evidence simply does not illuminate these vital junctures in redactional transition.

7.4 Literary Factors

In an effort to understand more clearly how the image of spiritual pilgrimage may have developed from the Genesis narra-

tives, some general insights from the field of literary criticism will be examined. A cluster of related investigations in overlapping areas of study are engaged in the analysis of the process by which ideational innovation may be explained.[23] Though these general models cannot legitimately be pressed to the point of establishing certain causality for the development of any specific motif, they are suggestive of common patterns which may have been followed in the case at hand.

7.41 Literary Symbols

The pilgrim image is an example of a literary symbol which has been used in diverse cultures[24] which have had no discernible direct relationship with one another. The frequent use of such symbols suggests that the motifs are fundamental to human thought and "participate, after one fashion or another, in a reality that transcends them."[25] Therefore, biblical images are examined appropriately not only at the level of explicit language, but at the deeper level of the "unconscious elements and structures operative in culture which are the foundation and framework for the creation and transmission of meaning."[26] These common universal

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23 For example, in addition to numerous studies in literary criticism, scholars in fields as diverse as philosophy, such as Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, and mathematics, such as Bronowski, "The Logic of the Mind," have addressed the issue of innovation in thought.

24 Frye, Anatomy of Criticism 118 lists several other universal symbols, such as food and drink, light and darkness, and sexual fulfillment.

25 Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return 4.

26 Worgul, "Anthropological Consciousness and Biblical Theology" 3 contends that this is a major contribution of contemporary structuralist literary critics. Thiselton, "Structuralism and Biblical Studies" 331 notes that Levi-Strauss "believes that his method uncovers cultural universals that belong to the very nature of man. Thus, behind particular myths or particular customs lie certain fundamental structures that characterize human

symbols are termed archetypal by Wheelwright in his taxonomy of literary images. He regards archetypal symbols as those "which carry the same or very similar meanings for a large portion, if not all, of mankind."[27]

It is evident, then, that the use and development of archetypal symbols such as pilgrimage, cannot legitimately be confined to documentary or sociological data. Since archetypal symbols may well be metaphysically rooted in the thought of humanity,[28] it must be allowed that more general ideational phenomena may be germane to the understanding of the development of the motif.

A difficult problem in tracing the development of common literary symbols such as pilgrimage is presented by the range of accrued implications which become attached to a familiar image over centuries of use. The intrinsic polysemous potential of

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thinking as such. A myth is in its individual telling located in time, yet there lies beneath it a pattern or structure which is timeless."

27 Metaphor and Reality 111. His discussion of archetypal symbols continues on 111-128. Similarly, Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory 65 reasons: "Everything indicates that symbol systems constitute a resevoir of meaning whose metaphoric potential is yet to be spoken. And, in fact, the history of words and culture would seem to indicate that if language never constitutes the most superficial layer of our symbolic experience, this deep layer only becomes accessible to us to the extent that it is formed and articulated at a linguistic and literary level since the most insistent metaphors hold fast to the intertwining of the symbolic infrastructure and metaphoric superstructure."

28 Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return 3 argues reasonably: "Obviously, the metaphysical concepts of the archaic world were not always formulated in theoretical language; but the symbol, the myth, the rite, express, on different planes and through the means proper to them, a complex system of coherent affirmations about the ultimate reality of things, a system that can be regarded as constituting a metaphysics ... If one goes to the trouble of penetrating the authentic meaning of an archaic myth or symbol, one cannot but observe that this meaning shows a recognition of a certain situation in the cosmos and that, consequently, it implies a metaphysical position."

literary symbols[29] is easily exploited for use in a variety of contexts. Thus, out of the generalized human experience represented by the symbol individualized applications are made in accord with diverse creative purposes.[30]

Lovejoy has popularized an approach of study that seeks to trace clusters of related concepts, which he calls unit-ideas.[31] He claims that genuine innovations in thought are rare, and that most apparent differences can be explained as "dissimilar conclusions from partially identical premises."[32] The intrinsic ambiguity of words or images provides the potential for new linguistic expressions which are congenial to the conscious or unconscious beliefs of a specific society.[33]

7.42 Literary Development

It is understandable that a literary symbol, like a lit-

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29 Ruland, Horizons of Criticism 58.

30 The creative adaptation of general symbols is discussed by Sapir, Language 239-241 and Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality 105-108.

31 Note especially his seminal work, The Great Chain of Being. His approach, which he terms the History of Ideas, is represented in the Journal of the History of Ideas. This pattern of study has been condemned as an abuse against philosophy by Taylor, "Further Reflections on the History of Ideas" 282, and Crane, "Literature, Philosophy and the History of Ideas" 78 warns: "To talk of them {unit-ideas} in separation from the particular activity of reasoning by which they are ordered and defined in philosophic discussion is to talk about them merely as floating commonplaces or themes ..." Though these cautions are salutary, the comparative study propounded by Lovejoy does seem to have significant value in culling from diverse disciplines the conscious and unconscious uses and adaptations of related general themes. Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature 112 applaud Lovejoy's method because "it recognizes that thought, or at least the choice between systems of thought, is frequently determined by assumptions, by more or less unconscious mental habits; that people are influenced in their adoption of ideas by their susceptibility to diverse kinds of metaphysical pathos; and that ideas are frequently key words, pious phrases, which must be studied semantically."

32 The Great Chain of Being 4.

33 Ibid. 7,14.

erary text, is susceptible to development.[34] Because the reinterpretation of a text is infinite, "a task for each new age, each new generation, each new reader, never to be considered complete," its component features are adapted in the light of the perspectives of succeeding readers.[35] There is, thus, an on-going dialectic between the text, with its literary phenomena, and a succession of audiences,[36] who utilize the possibilities latent in the language of the text in adapting it to their specific needs and conceptions.[37]

This literary development is more easily described than explained. In tracing similar patterns of innovation in the field of science, Bronowski admits the difficulty in articulating the causal factors which prompted Einstein, for example, to introduce fundamental shifts in scientific axioms. He reasons:

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34 Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature 42 argue: "The total meaning of a work of art cannot be defined merely in terms of its meaning for the author and his contemporaries. It is rather the result of a process of accretion, i.e. the history of its criticism by its many readers in many ages." Hirsch, Validity in Interpretation contends that original meaning and contemporary significance must be clearly distinguished. However, in both viewpoints the parallel to motif development is substantiated.

35 Fokkelman, Narrative Art in Genesis 3-4. Cf. Davies, "Subjectivity and Objectivity in Biblical Exegesis" 45, who reasons: "Once something has been written, it attains a certain fixity and at the same time it escapes from the control of its author i.e. every text in course of time becomes decontextualised. It assumes the character of an atemporal object which has broken free from its moorings in the period of history when it originated. It achieves a measure of autonomy; it can be read by anyone at any time. Released from the social and historical conditions of its production, it is no longer closed in and restricted. In the process of being read and reread it can be interpreted in relation to the historical situations of its readers."

36 Fishbane, Text and Texture xii states: "Thus an interpreter is dependent upon the text given to his inspection, even as the text is dependent upon him. For it is the reader who performs the text in his mind, lingers in its silences and suggestions, and so serves as its midwife and voice." Fishbane develops this idea in his study Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel.

37 Alonso Schökel, The Inspired Word 225.

> An obvious answer is that the great mind, like the small, experiments with different alternatives, works out their consequences for some distance, and thereupon guesses (much like a chessplayer) that one move will generate richer possibilities than the rest. But this answer only shifts the question from one foot to the other. It still remains to ask how the great mind comes to guess better than another, and to make leaps that turn out to lead further and deeper than yours or mine.[38]

He therefore concludes that innovation is "a free play of the mind, an invention outside the logical processes," a procedure true both in science and in literature.[39] This claim, however, is contested by Frye, who asserts: "Just as a new scientific discovery manifests something that was already latent in the order of nature, and at the same time is logically related to the total structure of the existing science, so the new poem manifests something that was already latent in the order of words."[40]

The apparent disparity between the viewpoints of Bronowski and Frye may be reconciled best by recognizing their different lines of inquiry. Bronowski begins with the axioms of mathematical logic, and shows that the ideal of deductive development of the phenomena of the world is unachievable.[41] By starting with logical axioms which are external to human literary activity, Bronowski contrasts with Frye, who endeavors to inductively explain the observable literary phenomena by tracing common patterns of deve-

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38 "The Logic of the Mind" 236.

39 Ibid.

40 Anatomy of Criticism 97. It should also be noted, however, that Bronowski, op. cit. 237 states that words have about them "a penumbra of uncertainty and ambivalence from which new relations may suddenly become apparent."

41 Bronowski, op. cit. 235.

lopment. Therefore, Frye's emphasis upon the development of the latent potential of literary texts is more relevant to the current study, although Bronowski's stress upon the unpredictability of literary change must also be maintained.[42] Whereas Frye justifiably encourages the search for logically-explained literary development, Bronowski is judicious in maintaining that some developments which are demonstrable may not be explained easily by normal processes of adaptation.[43]

Numerous studies of literary development in various genres and authors have evidenced the rich variety of possible transformations. From his extensive analysis of the related field of folk tales, Propp gives examples of several major types of literary development, including reduction, expansion, contamination, inversion, intensification, attenuation, substitution, assimilation, modification, specification, and generalization.[44] Common to each of these species of transformation is the underlying reality that literary devlopment raises previous language to a new order of significance so as to function in a different ideational context.

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42 Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory 29-30 explains the reinterpretative potential of literary texts as follows: "With written discourse, however, the author's intention and the meaning of the text cease to coincide. This dissociation of the verbal meaning of the text and the mental intention of the author gives to the concept of inscription its decisive significance, beyond the mere fixation of previous oral discourse. Inscription becomes synonymous with the semantic autonomy of the text, which results from the disconnection of the mental intention of the author from the verbal meaning of the text, of what the author meant and what the text means. The text's career escapes the finite horizon lived by its author. What the text means now matters more than what the author meant when he wrote it."

43 Talon, John Bunyan 212 offers a balanced assessment: "Certes, l'imagination d'un artiste ne compose jamais ex nihilo les tableux qu'elle nous offre, mais, chez les plus grands, elle pousse plus loin la dissociation des éléments qu'elle emprunte et les rassemble ensuite avec plus de fantasie. C'est l'essor libre et léger d'un passereau qui a nourri ses ailes de mille substances toutes assimilées.

44 Theory and History of Folklore 89-95.

Lynch's analysis of imagination as an examination of the finite which causally generates a plunge up into insight,[45] is probably too narrow to explain all literary development, for the transformation could also begin with the innovation and look back to the previous text for prooftexting.[46]

The development of the pilgrim image in the biblical literature appears to be a metaphorical reinterpretation of the language of sojourning in the Abrahamic narratives.[47] Wheelwright summarizes the classical concept of metaphor in the three following propositions:

> (1) that a word which is used metaphorically has some usual and familiar meaning to begin with; (2) that in a given instance the word is made to stand for some other meaning which is less usual or less familiar or more vague; and (3) that the justifying bond between the usual meaning of the word and the present 'metaphoric' meaning is some kind of similarity.[48]

By transforming a linguistic expression, such as socio-political sojourning, from being a tenor denoting specific literal content into being a vehicle which points to a non-literal reality, a metaphor is created.[49] With frequency of use, however, a meta-

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45 Christ and Apollo 12.

46 Sandmel, The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity 31 argues reasonably: "I am aware, of course, that those who pored over Scripture were prompted by Scripture to create their innovations. Yet prooftexting as such, the seeking of a scriptural sanction for an innovation, would imply to my mind that first came the conclusion and then only thereafter the prooftext."

47 An analogous development from a literal reality to a non-literal concept has been traced in the ideology of divine kingship growing out of the institution of human kingship by Daube The Exodus Pattern in the Bible 17.

48 "Semantics and Ontology" 5. A thorough discussion of major positions in the history of the study of metaphor is found in Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor. He offers a more succinct presentation of his own position in Interpretation Theory.

49 Funk, Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God 139 pre-

phor can become ossified, because the figure is "repeated without examination or critical integrity,"[50] a general process of habituation in perception.[51] When the metaphor becomes frozen in this manner its hermeneutical potential is confined within its conventional limits as a symbol.[52]

Thus, it may be reasonably argued that the pilgrim image which is most often used in the patristic literature without direct reference to Abraham has attained the status of a frozen metaphor. The rich background of meaning in the Abrahamic narratives as reinterpreted in the Old Testament and in Hebrews was apparently encapsulated in the image of the spiritual pilgrim, as expounded in Heb 11:8-16. However, the pilgrim motif was easily

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sents a helpful analysis of the literary change: "If A stands for the fresh insight that beckons the poet mutely, and B stands for the available language fund, a fund that has acquired conventions and is presided over by tradition, the poet must allow A to come to expression through and out of B. A is not 'there' except as it enters language, but it cannot, because it is a fresh insight, be merely accommodated in conventional language. A is raised to cognitive status in language only as the linguistic tradition undergoes some modification." Barfield, "The Meaning of the Word 'Literal'" 55 notes that further development can result in the metaphor acquiring a new literalness. For example, pilgrimage became used to speak of a literal journey to a religious shrine.

50 Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality 37.

51 Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" 11 notes: "If we start to examine the general laws of perception, we see that as perception becomes habitual, it becomes automatic. Thus, for example, all of our habits retreat into the area of the unconsciously automatic; if one remembers the sensations of holding a pen or of speaking in a foreign language for the first time and compares that with his feeling at performing the action for the ten thousandth time, he will agree with me. Such habituation explains the principles by which, in ordinary speech, we leave phrases unfinished and words half expressed."

52 Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality 94. Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory 52 calls the same phenomenon a dead metaphor. He states: "Live metaphors are metaphors of invention within which the response to the discordance in the sentence is a new extension of meaning, although it is certainly true that such inventive metaphors tend to become dead metaphors through repetition. In such cases, the extended meaning becomes part of our lexicon and contributes to the polysemy of the words in question whose everyday meanings are thereby augmented."

merged with the archetypal symbol of man on a journey or quest, so that the content distinctive to Abraham was left unarticulated. In this way, a major component in the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage was transcended by the fixed image of the pilgrim, which drew from a wider archetypal background.

7.5 Conclusion

In view of the sociological, redactional and literary factors discussed in this chapter, the thesis set forth in the introduction to this study may now be restated more precisely. An analysis of the relevant biblical, Jewish and Christian texts manifests that the figure of Abraham is a major component contributing to the development of the Christian image of spiritual pilgrimage. The potential for metaphorical adaptation of the Genesis language of the migration and sojourning of Abraham is intimated by several factors: the use of הִתְהַלֵּךְ for the concept of life in fellowship with God, the correlation of Abraham's journeys with activities such as altar-building, and the juxtaposition of the call of Abraham with the disastrous conclusion to the primeval narratives. Though it cannot be sustained that the Genesis narratives speak explicitly of a spiritualized pilgrim ideology, in retrospect it is possible to see the metaphorical potential which was later exploited.

Within the Old Testament, references to Abraham are most often found in exilic and post-exilic passages which bear covenantal significance. The indirect references to Abraham in Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 speak of a spiritual quality of life on earth which is spatially apart from God. The figure of sojourning is used as a literary vehicle to refer to the tenor of life away from the place of spiritual belongingness.

The early Jewish literature includes several examples of metaphorical adaptations of the sojourning of Abraham. Philo develops the image metaphysically to speak of the migration of the soul out of the realm of the senses. TestAbr and 2 Baruch mention Abraham in conjunction with the city of God, a motif also developed in Heb 11:8-16. The rabbinic literature, following the lead of the Old Testament legal literature, makes sojourning a new technical term for the proselyte to Judaism. Thus, the Jewish literature appears to have followed different paths of reinterpretation from that which can be traced in the early Christian writings, though it must be noted that it served as the general interpretative background against which the Christian image was shaped.

In Heb 11:8-16 Abraham is portrayed clearly as an example of spiritual pilgrimage. The Genesis narratives serve as the basis for the author's portrayal, and the implications of Abraham's leaving his homeland at the word of God and living in an inheritance promised but not actually acquired are given spiritual significance. The self-designation of Abraham as a גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב in Gen 23:4 is reinterpreted in terms of life on earth away from the heavenly inheritance. The collocation of Gen 11 and 12, a feature already noted in some Jewish writings, is exploited so that Abraham is represented as seeking the city of God, in implicit contrast with the city of man constructed at Babel. Thus, by combining several exegetical procedures and interpretative traditions, the author of Hebrews develops a complex depiction of Abraham which moves from a socio-political frame of reference into the metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage.

However, it must also be recognized that 1 Peter 1,2 and Ephesians 2, probably written at nearly the same time as Hebrews, use the pilgrim image without reference to Abraham. The patris-

tic literature, too, apart from Chrysostom's homily on Hebrews 11, does not frequently link the patriarch with the motif of pilgrimage referring to the Christian life on earth. Two explanations are possible: in the patristic period the figure of Abraham as an example of spiritual pilgrimage could have become ossified into a frozen metaphor, a common feature in metaphorical development; or, more likely, the writer of Hebrews blended the traditional depictions of Abraham, which had included metaphorical adaptations, with the archetypal symbol of man on the journey of life. His exposition in Hebrews 11, reflecting his purpose of exhorting the readers to an eschatological orientation of life in anticipation of the heavenly realities, found ample material congenial to the concept of spiritual pilgrimage in the Old Testament presentation of Abraham. Thus, the parallel uses of the pilgrim image in Hebrews and in 1 Peter, Ephesians and perhaps the majority of the patristic references, may well not be directly related to one another, but are more probably independent developments. Hebrews (and Chrysostom who follows the text of Hebrews 11) draws directly upon the Old Testament antecedents, perhaps as influenced to a small degree by extra-biblical Jewish reinterpretations, and develops the figure of Abraham into a metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage. The remaining Christian sources appear to have been influenced more directly by the archetypal image of man on a journey, or perhaps by the socio-political designation of the sojourner as one who is unassimilated.[53] But, it must also be noted that the allusion to Gen 23:4 in 1 Pt 2:11 (παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους) suggests that an

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53 This seems to be the case in Eph 2:12,19, and it may well have influenced 1 Pt 1,2, although Elliott, A Home for the Homeless appears to make the socio-political dimension too exclusive. Cf. the discussion in 5.02 of this study.

indirect reference to Abraham may also be maintained.

In either case, what is clear is that by 450 C.E. the Christian pilgrim image had for the most part become a frozen metaphor. The two predominant lines of development,[54] which had developed the idea of spiritual pilgrimage either through the figure of Abraham or directly from the socio-political language of the ancient world, coalesced with the archetypal symbol[55] of man on a journey to become a powerful image which has been used recurrently in Christian literature and hymnody.

Although the relevant evidence does not yield a complete understanding of the process by which the sojourning of Abraham became a component in the development of the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage, this study does make several distinct contributions in more specific areas. In contrast with most recent treatments of Abraham, which view him historically or theologically, this investigation has shown that Abraham can also be viewed with profit as a literary figure which prompted a number of metaphorical reinterpretations in early Jewish and Christian literature. The metaphorical potential in the references to Abraham's journeys in Genesis 12-25 has been demonstrated, and the indirect relationship of Ps 39:12(13) and 1 Chr 29:15 to the patriarch has been argued. Thus, data from the Old Testament, the New Testament, early Judaism and early Christianity which were previously unrelated, and in several cases incompletely studied, have been brought together to cast

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54 Other strands of thought from Judaism and Hellenistic thought may also have contributed in a minor way; cf. chapter 4.

55 Eliade, Images and Symbols 160, tracing the Christian use of archetypal symbols, states: "By its renewal of the great figures and symbolisations of natural religion, Christianity has also renewed their vitality and their power in the depths of the psyche. The mythic and archetypal dimension remains none the less real for being henceforth subordinate to another."

fresh light upon the relation of Abraham to the Christian metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage which is articulated most clearly in Heb 11:8-16. In addition, a plausible line of literary development from the socio-political sojourning of Abraham in the Genesis narratives through metaphorical reinterpretation to the fixed metaphor of spiritual pilgrimage without direct reference to the patriarch has been proposed.

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