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finds the exegesis of the bishop of Hippo here “strained” and his explanation “involved”, and it is he who raises the question of crypto-Nestorianism with relation to the passage.

I have concluded with this brief overview of scholarship over the past sixty years in order to demonstrate the difficulty of dealing with ancient texts when one brings one’s own agenda to the task, or, in this case, feels the need always to present either or both the mother of God and the bishop of Hippo in a positive light. Augustine’s emphasis in his tractates on John’s Gospel is on the lofty christology of the beloved disciple, a christology not only loftier but also more sublime than that of the other three evangelists, who, he says, walked the earth with Jesus and said little about his divinity.⁵⁶ It is thus counterproductive to expect to find Augustine developing a sustained mariological perspective in these tractates. Transporting data from one genre to another, as some earlier scholars have done, in order to bolster the case for an author’s mariology can be dangerous, and it does a disservice to a scholarly assessment of the development of the cult of Mary.

⁵⁶ *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 36.1; NBA 24/1, 742: ...altius multoque sublimius aliis tribus erexit praedicationem suam; et in eius erectione etiam corda nostra erigi voluit. Nam ceteri tres evangelistae, tamquam cum homni domino in terra ambulabant, de divinitate eius pauca dixerunt.

Jacob of Serugh’s Poem on the Sleepers of Ephesus

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At the end of Chapter 33 of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon singled out among “the insipid legends of ecclesiastical history” the “memorable fable story of the SEVEN SLEEPERS”. Instead of dismissing it out of hand as a worthless fabrication, as one might have expected, that great sceptic reflected:

This easy and universal belief, so expressive of the sense of mankind, may be ascribed to the genuine merit of the fable itself. We imperceptibly advance from youth to age without observing the gradual, but incessant, change of human affairs; and even in our larger experience of history, the imagination is accustomed, by a perpetual series of causes and effects, to unite the most distant revolutions. But if the interval between two memorable eras could be instantly annihilated; if it were possible, after a momentary slumber of two hundred years, to display the *new* world to the eyes of a spectator who still retained a lively and recent impression of the *old*, his surprise and his reflections would furnish the pleasing subject of a philosophical romance. The scene could not be more advantageously placed than in the two centuries which elapsed between the reigns of Decius and of Theodosius the Younger.¹

(Gibbon goes on to supply a whole set of contrasts, in keeping with the general theme of his great work.)

The story of the Seven (or Eight) Sleepers of Ephesus has indeed caught the imagination of both Christian and Muslim readers over the centuries.² Witness to the continued hold that it still has today is, for example, the existence of an annual interfaith pilgrimage held in Brittany,³ and the recent

¹ E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, with intro. by C. Dawson, Everyman’s Library 436, vol. 3 (London 1954 [repr.]) 340-341.

² M. Huber, *Die Wanderlegende von den Siebenschläfern. Eine literaturgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig 1910), remains fundamental: section I (pp. 1-127) gives an inventory of all the texts known at his time. I have not been able to see F. Jourdan, *La tradition des Sept Dormants. Une rencontre entre chrétiens et musulmans* (Paris 1983).

³ A. O’Mahony, “Louis Massignon, the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus and the Christian-Muslim pilgrimage at Vieux-Marché, Brittany”, in C. Bartholomew and F. Hughes (eds),

publication of an archaeological guide to the site of their cave on Panayir Dag, outside Ephesus.⁴

Although the narrative has often been considered to be totally legendary, Honigmann plausibly suggested that the starting point was a chance find of some well-preserved bodies in a cave, following which Stephen, bishop of Ephesus, exploited this "miracle" to defend the doctrine of the resurrection of the body against the teaching of a certain Theodore, bishop of Aegae, shortly before the second Council of Ephesus (449).⁵

While it is now generally agreed that the narrative must have started out in Greek, it so happens that most of the earliest literary texts are in Syriac, and belong to the sixth century, in a few cases actually surviving in sixth-century manuscripts, thus at least a century before the appearance of the story in the Qur'an (*Sura* 18). Indeed, in the case of one manuscript, a late fifth-century date is even quite possible. In this present volume in honour of Michael Lattke it is a pleasure to offer an annotated translation of one of these Syriac texts, the narrative *memra* by the great Syriac poet Jacob of Serugh, who died in 521.

Before turning to Jacob's poem it will be helpful to give a brief descriptive list of the various other early Syriac texts, all in prose, concerning the Seven Sleepers.

1. Narrative (with lacunae) in St Petersburg ms N.S.4., ff. 92^r-97^v. This is undoubtedly the oldest witness, certainly not later than the sixth century, and quite possibly belonging to the late fifth. Unfortunately it has not yet been published, although a few short excerpts can be found in a study of the text in this manuscript by van Esbroeck.⁶

Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage (Aldershot 2004) 126-147. L. Masignon, "Les Sept Dormants, apocalypse de l'Islam", *AnBoll* 68 (1950) 245-260, repr. in his *Opera Minora*, vol. 3, ed. Y. Moubarac (Beirut 1963) 104-118, together with "Le culte liturgique et populaire des VII dormants martyrs d'Ephèse (Ahl al-Kahf). Trait d'union orient-occident entre l'Islam et la Chrétienté", in idem, 109-180.

⁴ R. Pillinger, "Kleiner Führer durch das Sieben-Schläfer-Coemeterium in Ephesus", *Mitteilungen zur christlichen Archäologie* 7 (2001) 26-34.

⁵ E. Honigmann, "Stephen of Ephesus and the Seven Sleepers", in his *Patristic Studies*, *Studi e Testi* 173 (Rome 1953) 125-168.

⁶ M. van Esbroeck, "La légende des Sept Dormants d'Ephèse selon le codex syriaque N.S. 4 de Saint-Petersbourg", in R. Lavenant (ed.), *VI Symposium Syriacum 1992*, *OrChrAn* 247 (Rome 1994) 189-200.

2. Narrative (opening lost) in British Library, Add. 12160, ff. 147^r-152^v, of the sixth century. The text has been edited by Guidi.⁷

3. Narrative incorporated into ps-Zacharias Rhetor, *Ecclesiastical History*, as chapter 1 of Book 2. This is preserved in British Library, Add. 17202, of c. 600 CE. The text has been edited, with Latin translation, by Brooks.⁸

4. Narrative in Berlin, Sachau ms 321, dated 741 CE. This was considered to be the oldest form of the prose narrative by Allgeier, who edited it.⁹

5. Narrative incorporated into ps-Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, *Chronicle* (also known as the Zuqnin Chronicle), completed in 775/776 CE, preserved in Vatican Syr. 162, perhaps of the tenth century. The text has been edited, with Latin translation, by Chabot.¹⁰

Quite a number of later manuscripts are also known, ranging in date from the ninth to the nineteenth century. Of particular interest is the existence of some fragments of a Sogdian translation, from Turfan; these probably date from the ninth or tenth century,¹¹ thus constituting the earliest evidence for the East Syriac manuscript tradition¹² (all the early manuscripts are of West Syriac provenance).

⁷ I. Guidi, "Testi orientali inediti sopra i Sette Dormienti di Efeso", *Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei*, Anno CCLXXXI, 1883-1884, Serie III, Memorie della Classe di scienze morali, storiche et filologiche XII (Rome 1884) 35-44; repr. in his *Raccolta di Scritti* 1, *Oriente cristiano* (Rome 1945) 103-115. The lost opening has been supplied from Add. 14650, dated 875.

⁸ E.W. Brooks, *Historia Ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, CSCO 83-84, *Scriptores Syri* 38-39 (Louvain 1919, repr. 1953) 106-122 (text), 74-85 (trans.).

⁹ A. Allgeier, "Die älteste Gestalt der Siebenschläferlegende", *OrChr* NS 6 (1916) 1-42, text and facing German translation. Allgeier's theories, presented in a series of articles in *OrChr* NS 4-7/8, about a Syriac origin of the Greek and the development of the Syriac tradition have (for the most part, rightly) met with a great deal of criticism: see esp. P. Peeters, "Le texte original de la passion des sept dormants", *AnBoll* 41 (1923) 369-385, and Honigmann, "Stephen of Ephesus", 133 n. 6.

¹⁰ J.-B. Chabot, *Incerti auctoris Chronicon pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, 1, CSCO 91, 121, *Scriptores Syri* 43, 66 (Louvain 1927, 1949) 135-143, 195-206 (text), 101-117, 145-153 (trans.). The chronicler has separated the events under Theodosius from those under Decius.

¹¹ See N. Sims-Williams (ed.), *The Christian Sogdian Manuscript C2*, Berliner Turfan-texte XII (Berlin 1985) 154-157.

¹² This tradition dates from the late seventeenth century onwards: the story was, however, evidently known to Babai the Great (d. 628), for he alludes to "the wonder in the town of Ephesus", in his "Commentary on Evagrius' Centuries", in W. Frankenberg (ed.), *Evagrius Ponticus*. *Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, Philologisch-historische Klasse NS 13.2 (Berlin 1912) 4-471, at 30. There are a number of

All five of the Syriac manuscripts listed above are clearly interrelated in some way, although at least two separate recensions are involved; this emerges clearly from a comparison of the texts in the two Chronicles. Most obviously, these provide two different lists of names, the first of seven, the second of eight:¹³

ps-Zacharias (p. 109/75-76): Achilleides, Diomedes, Eugenios, Stephanos, Probatos, Sabbatos, and Quriaqos;

ps-Dionysius (p. 137/102): Maximilianos, Iamlikha (= Iamblichos), Martellos, Dionysios, Ioannis, Serapion, Exakostodinos,¹⁴ and Antoninos.

We find the two traditions already conflated in Gregory of Tours' *Passio septem dormientium*,¹⁵ where the second set of names is said to have been their baptismal names. Gregory specifically states that he had been assisted in translating his text from Greek¹⁶ by "Ioannes Syrus", so it is not surprising that his combined list corresponds very closely to that of ps-Zacharias, and only slightly less so to that of ps-Dionysius: (1) Achillidis, Diomedis, Diogenus, Probatos, Sambatus, Stephanus, Quiriacus; and (2) Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Constantinus, Dionisius, Iohannis, Serapion. The second list is also that known to London, Add. 12160, and Sachau 321, and in the rest of his narrative Gregory concurs by employing the names Maximianus and Malchus (rather than Achillidis and Dionysius). An early attestation to the first list is to be found in the account of his travels by the pilgrim Theodosius, c. 530, who gives a slightly different order: Achillidis,

agreements with Sachau 321. For a motif that the Sogdian and East Syriac traditions share with Jacob, see n. 30, below.

¹³ For the different traditions of the names, see esp. the materials in Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, 91-96, and his discussion, 491-509. Add. 12160 and Sachau 321 both follow the tradition in ps-Dionysius.

¹⁴ In the Greek and Latin traditions either Exacustudianus (thus Photius) or Constantine is found.

¹⁵ See B. Krusch (ed.), *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum*, VII.2 (Hanover and Leipzig 1920) 757-769, here 761-762. A somewhat different text of the *Passio* has been edited by S. Martorana, *La "passio sanctorum septem dormientium" tratta dal codice 2 della Biblioteca Comunale di Noto*, Saggi e testi 12 (Catania 1998).

¹⁶ The language of the original is not stated, but Greek is much more likely than Syriac (which, however, has been assumed by a number of scholars, owing to Ioannes' designation as "Syrus").

Diomedis, Eugenius,¹⁷ Stephanus, Probatos, Sabbatius, and Quiriacus.¹⁸ Unfortunately the names themselves are not preserved in the St Petersburg manuscript, but the title specifically mentions eight.¹⁹

In his poem Jacob speaks of eight young men, but only gives a name, Iamlikha, to one of them; this makes it clear that he is following the second list, that of ps-Dionysius.²⁰ Since it is thought that this chronicler's source here (as elsewhere for the sixth century) was John of Ephesus, who was writing in the penultimate decade of the sixth century, this will take John's source back by some sixty or more years. Elsewhere, too, Jacob is generally closer to the account in ps-Dionysius than to that in ps-Zacharias.

Jacob's poem could, in fact, in many ways be described as an abbreviated account of the narrative common to ps-Zacharias and ps-Dionysius. The close correspondence in content can be seen from the following tabulation of the contents of the poem:

(lines)	Jacob	ps-Zacharias	ps-Dionysius ²¹
1-6	Invocation to Christ.	—	—
7-9	Topic announced.	—	—
10-17	Decius comes to Ephesus; <i>sacra</i> from him order everyone to sacrifice to the gods.	106	135
18-21	Some boys, "sons of leading men", go into hiding.	109	137
22-23	Their companions denounce them.	110	138
24-31	The emperor sends for them, promises preferment if they sacrifice.	—	—
32-37	The "son of a hyparchos" ²² speaks in defiance.	110	138

¹⁷ Thus supporting ps-Zacharias against Gregory's Diogenus, which must be a corruption of Eugenius.

¹⁸ P. Geyer, *Itinera Hierosolymitana saeculi IIII-VIII*, CSEL 39 (Vienna 1898) 148. They are also found in the Coptic tradition and in part of the Greek; for the former, see J. Drescher, *Three Coptic Legends*, ASAE, Supplément 4 (Cairo 1947) vii-viii, 32-67 (Coptic and Greek) 100-119 (trans.).

¹⁹ Where the second list is used in texts which mention only seven sleepers, it is either Antoninus (so Gregory) or Serapion (so many Greek witnesses) who is omitted.

²⁰ Iamlikha corresponds to Dionysius in ps-Zacharias (but Diometes in Coptic).

²¹ Cited by page of the Syriac texts (this is given in the margins of the accompanying volumes with Latin translations).

²² Achilleides in ps-Zacharias, but Maximilianos in ps-Dionysius. The specific phrase, "son of a hyparchus" is not found in ps-Dionysius, but it does occur here in Sachau 321.

(lines)	Jacob	ps-Zacharias	ps-Dionysius
38-42	The emperor orders they be flogged and kept till he returns to Ephesus.	(111)	(139)
43-49	They decide to escape from Ephesus and hide in a cave on the mountain.	111	139
50-53	Instead of fineries, they take some of their parents' money.	111	139
54-56	They go up to pass the night in the cave, and pray to God.	111	140
		The two prose narratives have Iamlika/Dionysios, disguised as a beggar, descend to buy bread. Decius returns, and in fear they take nourishment to strengthen themselves against any coming ordeal.	
57-61	God raises up their spirits to heaven, and sends a watcher to guard their bodies.	112	141
62-67	On his return, learning where they are, the emperor orders a mason to cut a stone to block the cave's entrance.	114	142/143
68-73	Two "sophists" ²³ write down their names, deeds and the date on tablets of lead.	114	143
74-75	The pagan era having passed, God wishes to awaken them.	114	143
		Ps-Zacharias gives some historical matter, then each chronicle introduces separate details on theological issues (Theodore of Aegae features in ps-Dionysius and related texts, but not in ps-Zacharias).	
76-81	A wealthy man ²⁴ of Ephesus wants to build a sheepfold on top of the mountain; he re-uses the stones at the cave's entrance, whereupon the light wakes the boys up.	116	197

²³ Athenodoros and Rabanos (ps-Zacharias; 'rbws in ps-Dionysius); for other traditions, see Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, 99.

²⁴ Named Aidelios in both chronicles; for other traditions, see Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, 101.

(lines)	Jacob	ps-Zacharias	ps-Dionysius
82-85	Deliberating what to do, they decide to send one of their number to see if the emperor has come back.	117	198
86-91	Iamlikha ²⁵ volunteers; they give him some small change to buy bread.	117	198
92-105	He descends and prays. He is surprised to see a cross above the city gate; he tries another gate, but finding the same asks himself, "Am I crazy?"	117	199
106-111	He asks if it really is Ephesus; he goes to the palace, but finds the doors closed.	117	200
111-119	He tries to buy bread and produces the coins. The bread-seller examines them and passes them to five others. Seeing them whispering, Iamlikha says he will be off.	118	200
120-125	They grab him and ask where he is from; thinking he has discovered some treasure, they ask to share in it, otherwise they will take him to court. He denies having found anything.	118	200
126-133	Rumour that he has found treasure gets around; hearing of it, the bishop ²⁶ sends for him and questions him.	118	201
	He says he is the son of Rufus, ²⁷ one of the leading citizens.	-	-
134-139	Looking around, he fails to see anyone he recognises who might rescue him.	(119)	(201)
140-144	A "sophist" ²⁸ in the church questions him.	119	202
145-155	When the boy asks where Decius is, the sophist thinks he is mad, since that would make Decius 372 years old! ²⁹	(119)	(203)

²⁵ Thus ps-Dionysius; in ps-Zacharias he is called Dionysius.

²⁶ Named Maris in ps-Dionysius. For other traditions, see Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, 102; according to Honigmann, "Stephen of Ephesus", this name replaces that of Stephen (who had fallen out of favour).

²⁷ This detail appears to be unique to Jacob.

²⁸ In both chronicles (and in Add. 12160 and Sachau 321) it is the *anthupatos* who questions him.

²⁹ In ps-Zacharias Decius died "more or less 200 years ago"; in ps-Dionysius "many generations ago". The figure "372" features in Add. 12160 and Sachau 321, but referring to the age of one of the coins, said to have been minted *before* the time of Decius ("372"

(lines)	Jacob	ps-Zacharias	ps-Dionysius
156-157	The boy tells the bishop how he and his seven companions had run away to the mountain, to escape.	120	203
158-161	People gather round to go up the mountain to see "the living treasure".	120	203
162-163	Hearing them approach, the boys in the cave think that the emperor is sending for them. ³⁰	—	—
164-167	The "son of a hyparchos" encourages them.	—	—
168-171	The bishop and the others enter and greet them.	120	203
172-173	They send <i>sacra</i> to Theodosius, telling him to come.	120	204
174-177	He arrives, greets them, and reads the lead tablet. ³¹	(121)	(205)
178-183	He urges them to come down, and he will build a shrine over their bodies. They decline and state why they have been resurrected.	(121)	(206)
184-185	The emperor covers them with a mantle ³² as they "slept the sleep of repose".	121	206
186-187	Exordium.	—	—

Although a much more detailed comparison between the different Syriac texts would be worthwhile, this is not possible here, and it must suffice to draw attention to the fact that, especially at the end, Jacob goes against the two chronicles on a number of points. Furthermore, the wildly exaggerated figure of 372 years for the putative age of Decius, had he lived to the time of Theodosius (line 155), must represent a very early stage in the Syriac tradition, since all the other witnesses have clearly independently altered the text of this passage in different ways, seeking to avoid the glaring miscalculation.

also features in the Coptic and some Greek manuscripts). Honigmann, "Stephen of Ephesus", 136-137, 168, however, considers "372" a later development, the work of "a fabulist", but this seems implausible in view of the early witnesses to this figure.

³⁰ Absent from the chronicles, this detail is mentioned in Sachau 321 (but not in Add. 12160); it also features in the Sogdian (Sims-Williams [ed.], *The Christian Sogdian Manuscript C2*, 158), and in the later East Syriac tradition.

³¹ In the chronicles it is the bishop who reads the tablet, on reaching the top of the mountain.

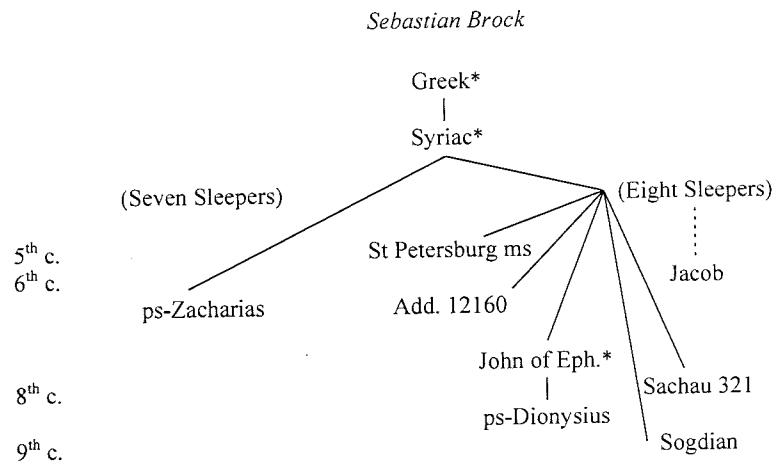
³² Vat. Syr. 115 has *baland[in]*, i.e. *balantion*, but this means a "purse" or "money bag"; an easy emendation is to read *klndyn* for *blndyn*, i.e. Greek *khlanidion*, which is well attested in Syriac. Vat. Syr. 217 has *klamys*, while the chronicles just give "royal garments"; the Greek and Coptic have a "purple (garment)".

Furthermore, there are a few places where the poem agrees with Sachau 321, against the chronicles (and sometimes) Add. 12160 (see nn. 22, 30). This suggests that Jacob and Sachau 321 (probably also Add. 12160) draw on the lost early Syriac narrative that was used by John of Ephesus and taken over in ps-Dionysius.³³ These details are important, for without them, one might have been tempted to suppose that Baumstark's hesitations concerning the poem's authenticity³⁴ were justified, and that it was just a later composition based on the prose narrative in ps-Dionysius which probably goes back to John of Ephesus. In the absence of any really strong reasons for doubting Jacob's authorship, it would seem entirely reasonable to accept the traditional attribution, already to be found in the oldest manuscript. If this judgment is correct, then the witness of Jacob's poem is of considerable interest, for it takes the main structure of the narrative found in the two chronicles back to the early years of the sixth century;³⁵ it also means that an edition of the St Petersburg manuscript, which van Esbroeck held to go back to the fifth century, is an urgent desideratum before any more detailed study of the early Syriac tradition. Once that is available, a synoptic translation of the early Syriac witnesses of the prose narrative would no doubt greatly assist any study of these Syriac texts with the early Greek and Latin traditions. Very tentatively, one might in the meantime suggest the following provisional schema for the early development of the Syriac tradition:

³³ The fact that the story serves different functions in Jacob and in the chronicles also militates against such an explanation; for its function in Jacob, see M. Vogt, "Der Sieben-schläfer – Funktion einer Legende", *Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft* 38 (2004) 223-247, esp. 231-234.

³⁴ A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn 1922) 158, on the grounds that the memra is left without any attribution in two manuscripts. Peeters, "Le texte original", 374, n. 2, is likewise hesitant, but simply says that the authenticity has not been sufficiently examined.

³⁵ In the sixth-century Add. 12160 only the second half is preserved.



The Syriac text of Jacob's poem was edited long ago by I. Guidi, in two somewhat different forms, one based on Vatican Syr. 115 (seventh/eighth century), the other taken from Vatican Syr. 217, of a much later date.³⁶ The text of the former manuscript has recently been republished in the extra Volume VI of the Gorgias Press reprint of P. Bedjan's five-volume edition of *memre* by Jacob.³⁷ In the translation below the main differences in Vatican Syr. 217 are indicated in footnotes; this procedure immediately highlights the fact that the differences are for the most part simply expansions of a secondary nature.³⁸

³⁶ Guidi, "Testi orientali", 18-29 = *Raccolta*, 82-94; he gives an Italian translation of the text in Vatican Syr. 217.

³⁷ P. Bedjan, *Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug/Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, vol. 6, ed. by S.P. Brock (Piscataway, NJ 2006) 268-274. The text is also reproduced in H. Gismondi, *Linguae Syriacae Grammatica cum Chrestomathia et Glossario* (Rome 1913) 45-53. There is a Latin translation in *Acta Sanctorum, Julii*, VI (Antwerp 1729) 387-389, and a German one by A. Allgeier, "Untersuchungen zur syrischen Ueberlieferung der Siebenschläferlegende", *OrChr* NS 4 (1914) 279-297; NS 5 (1915) 10-59, 263-270. I failed to note the latter in my list of modern translations of Jacob's *memre* in Bedjan, *Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug*.

³⁸ This was also the view of Allgeier (who likewise gives its variants in footnotes), *OrChr* NS 5 (1915) 54. Vatican Syr. 217 also has a number of omissions; these are also indicated in the footnotes below. The attentive reader will notice that, as usual in Jacob's poems, there are numerous biblical allusions.

Translation

O Son of God, whose door is open to whoever calls on him,
open your door to me, so that I may sing of the beauty³⁹ of the children of
light.

O good shepherd who chose lambs from the midst of his flock,
and gathered them into the sheepfold on high to be with him.⁴⁰
Blessed is the farmer who selected the wheat from the tares
and sowed them in the field of life, in the kingdom. 5

It is concerning the offspring of the leading men of Ephesus
that I am to utter a discourse before (my) listeners.
Give ear to me, labourers, and sing praise, O children of the bridal
chamber.⁴¹

The emperor Decius set out from his place to another one 10
to visit the towns and cities in his realm;
he entered Ephesus and threw it into great commotion,
making a festival to Zeus, Apollo and to Artemis too.

He wrote a missive to the lords of his realm⁴²
that everyone should come⁴³ and place incense before the gods. 15
He assembled the leaders, old men⁴⁴ and infants, along with the children,
and they placed incense for the deaf images, the work of (human) hands.
Now there were there some dear boys, sons of leading men,
who despised the order and did not subject themselves to it, like their
companions.

They went in and hid themselves in the sheepfold of Jesus⁴⁵ 20
so that the unclean smell of impure incense should not ascend for them.⁴⁶
Their companions saw,⁴⁷ and denounced them in the emperor's presence:
"There are some boys here who have rebelled against your order."
The emperor listened and was clothed in anger⁴⁸ against the innocent.

³⁹ B tale.

⁴⁰ B and protected them in a sheepfold of love and of faith.

⁴¹ B (with an extra line) children of the bridal chamber, become workers for me so that I may sing praise to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who has crowned them.

⁴² B omits the line.

⁴³ B bring; B adds a line: and whoever does not come I will cut up limb by limb.

⁴⁴ B nobles.

⁴⁵ B They fled and took refuge in the sheepfold of the Lord, and hid themselves there.

⁴⁶ B so that they would not have to put choice incense before the gods.

⁴⁷ B heard.

⁴⁸ B The emperor's anger went up like smoke.

The emperor gave orders that the boys be brought, for him to see them. 25
 The wolves rushed off and grabbed the lambs from the midst of the sheep,
 bringing them in haste to the emperor's presence.
 The emperor saw how admirable were their persons
 and he spoke to them with blandishments,⁴⁹ saying,
 "Tell me, boys, why have you transgressed⁵⁰ my orders?" 30
 Come along and sacrifice, and I will make you leaders."⁵¹
 The son of the hyparchos opened his mouth, along with his seven
 companions,
 "We will not worship deaf images, the work of (human) hands:
 we have the Lord of heaven, and he will assist us.
 It is him that we worship, and to him do we offer the purity of our hearts. 35
 You have as king Zeus and Apollo, along with Artemis,
 but we have as King Father, Son and Holy Spirit."⁵²
 The emperor gave orders and they beat them with rods.⁵³
 He gave orders again, "Leave them until I come";
 for he was in a hurry to visit the towns and the cities 40
 and (then) to return back to Ephesus with this intention.⁵⁴
 (So) the emperor departed from Ephesus on his business.⁵⁵
 The dear boys deliberated among themselves,
 "Let us leave and escape from this town of Ephesus
 before the accursed emperor comes to judge us."⁵⁶ 45
 There was there a rock cave on the top of the mountain
 and the dear boys decided to hide there.
 They took with them some of their parents' money
 so that it might serve them (both) as an accusation and as a source of pride.
 They did not take with them choice clothing or fineries.⁵⁷ 50
 It was some of the coinage of the pagan emperors that they took with them,

⁴⁹ B in haste.

⁵⁰ B despised; B adds a line: and you have not sacrificed in accordance with the law which my royalty has instructed.

⁵¹ B adds a line: If you do not sacrifice, you shall die amid tortures in a bitter fashion.

⁵² B adds two lines:

for he will deliver and save us from harm,
 the emperor heard, and his wrath went up like smoke.

⁵³ B adds a line: until they placed choice incense before the gods.

⁵⁴ B omits the line.

⁵⁵ B adds a line: to visit the towns and cities of his realm.

⁵⁶ B adds a line: and separate us from the harmony we embrace.

⁵⁷ B silks.

for whoever carries any of that coinage meets with accusation.
 They ascended the mountain and went into the cave to spend the night
 there,
 and they called upon the Lord with a plaintive voice, saying as follows:
 "We beg you, good shepherd who has chosen his sheep, 55
 preserve your flock from that wolf who is thirsting for our blood."
 The Lord saw the faith of the dear lambs
 and came to give a good reward as their recompense.
 He took their spirits and raised them up above, to heaven,
 and left⁵⁸ a watcher to be guarding their limbs. 60
 The emperor returned, entered Ephesus, and was asking,⁵⁹
 "Where are the boys who rebelled against the commandment?"⁶⁰
 In answer they told him, "They are hidden in a cave at the top of the
 mountain".
 The tyrant⁶¹ emperor thought he would make them die there;
 he gave orders once more, and along came craftsmen with their skills. 65
 They cut stones with skill and placed them against the entrance.
 There were there two sophists,⁶² sons of the leading men,
 and they reckoned that the Lord would resurrect them,
 so they made tablets of lead and placed them beside them;
 on them they wrote down the names of the children of light,⁶³ 70
 and why the young men had gone to hide in the cave,
 and at what time they had fled from the presence of the emperor Decius.⁶⁴
 The time of the pagan emperors and their rule passed away,
 and the Lord wished to arouse⁶⁵ these children of light.
 There was there in Ephesus a wealthy man 75
 who wanted to build a fold for his sheep at the top of the mountain.⁶⁶

⁵⁸ B sent down.

⁵⁹ B adds two lines:

"Come, boys who have dared to transgress the commandment."

He seized their parents and whipped them.

⁶⁰ B "Bring me the boys who have transgressed my commandments."

⁶¹ B accursed.

⁶² B wise men.

⁶³ B their names and their deeds.

⁶⁴ Instead of 71-72 B has:

And after a time the years of the pagan emperor passed away
 and wrath abated and there was peace for the whole world.

⁶⁵ B resurrect.

⁶⁶ B adds a line: this too having been devised by God.

He gathered stones and built the fold for his sheep there,
 and he saw the cut stones and tore them down:
 the light entered in and awoke the children of light.
 They shook off sleep and sat up on the ground – a wonder to tell.⁶⁷ 80
 The dear boys deliberated amongst themselves,
 “Who will go down and see if the emperor has come,
 and (so) we will learn and see what he has ordered concerning us.
 Let him go down and show us whether he has required us or not.”⁶⁸
 There was there one of them whose name was Iamlikha; 85
 he said, “I will go down and I will find out;
 I will go into the palace as a poor person
 and learn and see what he has commanded concerning us.”
 They answered him and said, “Take some small change and bring back
 some bread:
 ever since evening we have been short of bread, and we have not had a 90
 meal.”
 The boy dashed down from the top of the mountain and reached the city.
 He called on the Lord with a plaintive voice, saying as follows:
 “I beg of you, good shepherd who has chosen his sheep,
 guard your flock⁶⁹ from that wolf who thirsts after our blood.”
 He lifted up his gaze and saw a cross above the gate; 95
 he bowed his head in veneration before it, feelingly.⁷⁰
 He began to look round, in case any of the pagans had seen him;
 he began to say in his mind, “What is this?”⁷¹
 In the evening the cross was hidden from pagan eyes,
 but here it is today, openly placed above the gate!”⁷² 100
 The boy turned back to go and enter by another gate;
 he lifted up his gaze and saw a cross above the gate.
 He began to say, “I have gone completely mad, and I am crazy:

⁶⁷ B altogether; B then adds a line: and they were praising the Lord of the heights who had awoken them.

⁶⁸ Instead of 83-84 B has:

What is he commanding concerning us, or devising,
 for ever since yesterday he has been menacing and threatening to whip us.

⁶⁹ B my innocence.

⁷⁰ B with penitence.

⁷¹ Instead of 97-98 B has:

That disciple was thinking in his mind
 “What is this, that a cross is fixed above the gate?”

⁷² B but here today the cross of the Son is openly placed.

is this not Ephesus, the city where I was brought up?”⁷³
 He saw a man sitting⁷⁴ in the street; he approached him and asked, 105
 “Tell me, sir,⁷⁵ this city – what is it?”
 The man said, “This city is named Ephesus.”
 And he was wondering in his mind what had happened to him.
 The boy ran among the streets, unperturbed;⁷⁶
 he arrived at the palace, and saw its door closed in front of him.⁷⁷ 110
 He went out to the street to buy some bread to take it (back) with him;⁷⁸
 he took out and produced some of the small change he had in his purse.
 The man who was selling took it and examined it;
 he gave it to his companion, so that his [companion] too might examine it.
 The small change passed through the hands of five people as they 115
 examined it,
 [and they began] whispering amongst themselves over it.
 The boy saw that they were whispering and he answered and said,⁷⁹
 “Give me some bread if you are going to give me any; otherwise I am off.”
 The man who was selling came up and grabbed the boy:⁸⁰
 “Tell me, boy, where are you from, and what is your country? 120
 As for the treasure you have found, let us be sharers with you in it;
 if you do not reveal it to me, I will hand you over to the law-court.”⁸¹
 The boy said, “This is not at all the case, it is not true:
 I have never seen any treasure, or been aware of any.”⁸²
 Gossip fell on all the streets of the Ephesians 125
 that a boy has found some treasure; and they immediately grabbed hold
 of him.

⁷³ B where I was born?"; B adds a line: While that child was standing and wondering.

⁷⁴ B a boy passing by.

⁷⁵ B boy.

⁷⁶ B wondering.

⁷⁷ B adds two lines:

He was thinking, “What is this unusual thing”,
 seeing that the gates of this blood-thirsty lioness are closed?

⁷⁸ B adds a line: and bring to his companions all the signs his eyes had seen.

⁷⁹ Instead of 116-118 B has:

and they were thinking as follows amongst themselves:
 “This man has found some treasure and is keeping it to himself.
 Come, let us question him gently between ourselves and him.”
 But the child was saying, feeling sorry.

⁸⁰ B But the person selling turned round and questions him.

⁸¹ B lest the whole city becomes aware and it slips away from you.

⁸² B There is no treasure that has been found, as you are saying.

Word entered the holy church, reaching the bishop;
 he sent and snatched him from their hands; he asks him,⁸³
 "Tell me, boy, where are you from, and what is your country?
 What is your family, and where is the treasure they are saying you have
 found?"⁸⁴ 130

The boy said, "I am from Ephesus;
 I am the son of Rufus, the elect,⁸⁵ one of the leading men."
 Iamlikha⁸⁶ began looking around all the crowd
 in case he might see one of his family or relations,
 or one of his friends and neighbours and acquaintances,⁸⁷ 135
 so that he might summon his father to come and snatch him from their hands;
 but he did not see any of his family or relations:
 tears welled up in his eyes, and he began to cry.⁸⁸

There was there a sophist in the holy church
 who took hold of the boy and questioned him discerningly: 140
 "Tell me the truth, boy; why should you die?
 Disclose and explain to me where you are from, and do not hide it from me."⁸⁹
 The boy said, "I will show you the truth,
 (but) do you reveal and show to me what I should say to you truly."⁹⁰
 He went on and said, "Where is the emperor Decius? 145

⁸³ B took him off quickly from their hands.

⁸⁴ Instead of 131 B has:

The boy imagined that the pagan emperor had sent to bring him,
 to take him to the palace to be whipped there.
 He was unaware that the Lord, Christ, was with him,
 and was bringing him into the church so that he might renowned there.
 The child had never seen a church building,
 and he began looking around at the furnishing of the house of God.
 There was there in the holy church a wise man:
 he sent and took him aside, questioning him gently:
 "Tell me, boy, who are you, and what is your country?"

⁸⁵ B a prince.

⁸⁶ B The child.

⁸⁷ B omits the line.

⁸⁸ B adds four lines:

The Lord saw that he was greatly saddened because of him,
 and he called David to come and comfort him.
 David says, "What is up, man, why are you sad? (Ps 43:5)
 Come close and speak with me in righteousness, and do not be sad."

⁸⁹ B up to now you have been uttering all sorts of excuses.

⁹⁰ B (but) reveal to me what you are wanting, and explain what I should tell you.

Then I will reveal to you concerning the affair."⁹¹
 The sophist heard; a gasp seized him as he wondered greatly⁹²
 at that youth who was showing forth deep matters.
 He bent his fingers and stretched them as he spoke with him,
 "Crazy idiot, you deserve to die for mocking me; 150
 I can see that you are about twelve⁹³ years old,
 and the person you are talking about was a great long time ago.
 By the reckoning and accounting among the Greek
 the emperor (would be?) 372 years (old)!"⁹⁴

The boy said, "It was from him that I and my companions ran away; 155
 we went to sleep at the top of the mountain,⁹⁵ I and my seven companions."
 The head men and elders, the nobles and youths, gathered
 to go up and see the living treasure that had been revealed to them.⁹⁶
 Talk went out in all the district of the Ephesians:
 "Come and see this treasure that has been revealed to us."⁹⁷ 160

The youths in the cave heard, and trembled in fright
 supposing that the emperor had sent to take them off.⁹⁸
 The son of the hyparchos encouraged them, saying as follows:
 "Stand up and take courage; put on the armour of faith,
 and we will rely on God, for it is he who assists us, 165
 giving us strength and guiding us according to his will."⁹⁹

While he was encouraging¹⁰⁰ them, the boy entered and stood beside them,
 and the bishop, and the leaders too, entered with him.
 They saw the boys sitting on the ground;¹⁰¹

⁹¹ B omits the line.

⁹² B heard the boy mentioning the name of Decius. (B omits the next line, 148).

⁹³ B fifteen.

⁹⁴ B Decius...350.

⁹⁵ B we went up and hid in a cave. B then adds five lines:

He made a festival to Zeus, Apollo and Artemis,
 and in order not to sacrifice we ran away from him and hid.
 I left my companions in the cave and it was I who came down.
 Word went out through all the region of the Ephesians,

"A living treasure has been revealed to us at the top of the mountain!" (cf. lines 159-160).

⁹⁶ B treasure at the top of the mountain.

⁹⁷ B omits 159-160 (but see n. 58).

⁹⁸ B to destroy them.

⁹⁹ B omits 165-166.

¹⁰⁰ B speaking to.

¹⁰¹ B and he found inside the cave the fine sheep.

they¹⁰² greeted them saying, "Peace be with you". 170
 And straightway they wrote a missive to the emperor Theodosius.¹⁰³
 "Come, my lord, and see a living treasure that has been revealed to us."
 The emperor made haste and came down and saw them;¹⁰⁴
 he greeted them, saying 'Peace be with you'.
 He took the lead tablet and began to read 175
 (the reason) why the youths had gone into the cave to hide.¹⁰⁵
 Theodosius the emperor urged them to come down with him
 in the midst of Ephesus, and he would build a shrine over their bodies.¹⁰⁶
 They say in reply, "Here we shall be, for here we love;
 the shepherd who chose us is the one who bade us be here."¹⁰⁷ 180
 For your sake has Christ our Lord awoken us
 so that you might see and hold firm that the resurrection truly exists."¹⁰⁸
 He took a mantle (with which) he was covered, and covered them up;
 and he left them, and they slept the sleep of repose.
 Blessed is the shepherd who chose the lambs from his sheep 185
 and caused them to inherit the bridal chamber, the garden and the kingdom
 on high.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² B he. B then adds two lines:

He took hold of the tablet of bronze that was with them
 and read for himself their names and their deeds.

¹⁰³ B He wrote a missive to Theodosius quickly.

¹⁰⁴ B came down quickly. B then adds two lines:

to see the treasure that had been revealed at the top of the mountain.
 The emperor went in and found them inside the cave.

¹⁰⁵ B and read on it their names and their deeds.

¹⁰⁶ Instead of 177-178 B has:

He urged them to come down with him to Ephesus,
 and he would build a shrine over their bodies in truth.

¹⁰⁷ Instead of 179-180 B has:

They say in reply, "Here it has pleased the Lord who has chosen us,
 and he has commanded that we should be here in the cave."

¹⁰⁸ B omits 181-182.

¹⁰⁹ Instead of 185-186 B has:

Blessed is the Lord who chose his sheep from his flock
 and caused them to inherit the bridal chamber of life in the kingdom;
 and to him be glory, and us his compassion at all times.

For the eschatological "bridal chamber", see my "The bridal chamber of light: a distinctive feature of the Syriac liturgical tradition", *The Harp* 18 (2005) 179-191.

The Naming of the Son of Man, the Light, the Son of God:
 How the *Parables of Enoch* May Have Influenced the *Odes of Solomon*

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Introduction

In the late sixties and early seventies, sitting in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, I would open Rylands Cod. Syr. 9 and on folio 30a see the word ܪܫܝܘܢܝ . What was intended by the one who wrote or transcribed this word? It could mean "psalm" or "ode". On this folio the noun denoted *Ode* 41 in the *Odes of Solomon*, but on folio 31b the same word reappeared.¹ There it introduced the first psalm in the *Psalms of Solomon*. As M. Lattke observes, the *Odes of Solomon* and the *Psalms of Solomon* were once numbered together as sixty hymns and known as "Solomon's Hymns".² Bodmer Papyrus XI reminds us that the *Odes* were also extant in Greek; in such circles they may have been known as $\text{\Omega\Delta\text{AI}\ K\text{AI}\ \Psi\text{A}\text{A}\text{M}\text{O}\text{I}\ \Sigma\text{O}\text{L}\text{O}\text{M}\text{O}\text{N}\text{T}\text{O}\text{S}}$, perhaps in *scriptio continua*.³

The *Psalms of Solomon* were numbered in sequence with the *Odes of Solomon*. What we have separated into Jewish hymns and "Christian" hymns was once perceived as united. This one observation should warn us from separating the *Odes of Solomon* from the history of Judaism and the desire of early Jews to compose new hymns to the Creator. This observation is finally clear, thanks to the relatively recent publication of numerous hymns, prayers, and odes from Second Temple Judaism, including *Non-Masoretic Psalms* (4Q88), the *Angelic Liturgy* (4Q400-407), *Qumran Pseudepigraphic Psalms* (4Q380-381), *Hymn of Praise* (3Q6), *Hymns* (6Q18), the *Thanksgiving Hymns* (1QH, 1Q35), as well as the *Psalms of Solomon* (not found in the Qumran caves).

¹ For facsimiles, see J.H. Charlesworth, *Papyri and Leather Manuscripts of the Odes of Solomon*, Dickerson Series of Facsimiles I (Durham 1981).

² M. Lattke, *Die Oden Salomos in ihrer Bedeutung für Neues Testament und Gnosis*, Band 1, OBO 25/1 (Fribourg and Göttingen 1979) 53.

³ For an image of P. Bodmer XI, see Charlesworth, *Papyri and Leather Manuscripts of the Odes of Solomon*, 8.