



THE ATONING
DYAD: THE TWO
GOATS OF YOM
KIPPUR IN THE
*APOCALYPSE
OF ABRAHAM*

Andrei A. Orlov

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The Atoning Dyad: The Two Goats of Yom Kippur in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*

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By

Andrei A. Orlov



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Andrei A. Orlov

Milwaukee

Feast of the Placing of the Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos, 2015

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AGAJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ARBIB	Aramaic Bible
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BIB	<i>Biblica</i>
BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BSAC	<i>Bibliotheca sacra</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
EJL	Early Judaism and Its Literature
EXPTIM	<i>Expository Times</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
JATS	<i>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSS	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSQ	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
JSSSS	Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement Series
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
JZWL	<i>Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar
LCL	Loeb Classical Library

LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
NOVTSUP	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTT	New Testament Theology
OBS	Österreichische Biblische Studien
OTL	Old Testament Library
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
REVQ	<i>Revue de Qumrân</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
SJ	Studia Judaica
SJJTP	Supplements to the Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	<i>Studia patristica</i>
SPB	Studia Post-Biblica
ST	Studia theologica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
TCS	Text-Critical Studies
TED	Translations of Early Documents
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
UBL	Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YJS	Yale Judaica Series
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ŽM	Źródła i monografie

Introduction

Chapter 12 of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, a Jewish pseudepigraphon written in the first centuries of the Common Era, narrates a striking apocalyptic scene laden with portentous cultic significance. It depicts the great angel, Yahoel, standing between the protagonist and the antagonist of the story—the patriarch Abraham and the fallen angel Azazel. During the course of their interaction, Yahoel informs Azazel that he is predestined to receive the garment of corruption—the deposit of the patriarch’s human sins.¹ Further along in Yahoel’s speech, the reader also learns that Abraham, in his turn, receives the former angelic attire of Azazel.²

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- 1 A. Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha: Toward the Original of the Apocalypse of Abraham* (TCS, 3; Atlanta: Scholars, 2004) 20.
 - 2 On the Azazel traditions, see J. Blair, *De-Demonising the Old Testament: An Investigation of Azazel, Lilith, Deber, Qeteb and Reshef in the Hebrew Bible* (FAT, 2.37; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2009) 55–63; C. Carmichael, “Azazel,” *Henoch* 33.1 (2011) 40–46; J. De Roo, “Was the Goat for Azazel destined for the Wrath of God?” *Bib* 81 (2000) 233–241; H. Drawnel, “The Punishment of Asael (1 En. 10:4–8) and Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Literature,” *RevQ* 25 (2012) 369–94; W. Fauth, “Auf den Spuren des biblischen Azazel (Lev 16): Einige Residuen der Gestalt oder des Namens in jüdisch-aramäischen, griechischen, koptischen, äthiopischen, syrischen und mandäischen Texten,” *ZAW* 110 (1998) 514–534; C.L. Feinberg, “The Scapegoat of Leviticus Sixteen,” *BSac* 115 (1958) 320–31; M. Görg, “Beobachtungen zum sogenannten Azazel-Ritus,” *BN* 33 (1986) 10–16; L.L. Grabbe, “The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation,” *JSJ* 18 (1987) 165–79; P.D. Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11,” *JBL* 96 (1977) 195; R. Helm, “Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition,” *AUSS* 32 (1994) 217–226; B. Janowski, *Sühne als Heilgeschehen: Studien zur Sühnetheologie der Priesterchrift und der Wurzel KPR im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament* (WMANT, 55; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982); idem, “Azazel,” in: *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (eds. K. van der Toorn et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 128–131. B. Jurgens, *Heiligkeit und Versöhnung: Leviticus 16 in seinem Literarischen Kontext* (New York: Herder, 2001); H.M. Kümmel, “Ersatzkönig und Sündenbock,” *ZAW* 80 (1986) 289–318; R.D. Levy, *The Symbolism of the Azazel Goat* (Bethesda: International Scholars Publication, 1998); O. Loretz, *Leberschau, Sündenbock, Asael in Ugarit und Israel: Leberschau und Jahwestatue in Psalm 27, Leberschau in Psalm 74* (UBL, 3; Altenberge: CIS-Verlag, 1985); J. Berenson Maclean, “Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative,” *HTR* 100 (2007) 309–334; C. Molenberg, “A Study of the Roles of Shemihaza and Asael in 1 Enoch 6–11,” *JJS* 35 (1984) 136–46; J. Milgrom, *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology* (SJLA, 36; Leiden: Brill, 1983); A.Y. Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 152–82; D. Rudman, “A Note on the Azazel-goat Ritual,” *ZAW* 116 (2004) 396–401; W.H. Shea, “Azazel in the Pseudepigrapha,” *JATS* 13 (2002) 1–9; D. Stökl Ben Ezra, “Yom Kippur in the Apocalyptic Imaginaire and the Roots

It has been noted that the peculiar spatial arrangement and some details of this enigmatic apocalyptic episode invoke the memory of the scapegoat ritual, since all the actors in this eschatological scene appear to be endowed with peculiar cultic roles related to this atoning rite.³ Thus, the angel Yahoel appears to be depicted here as the heavenly high priest handling the eschatological scapegoat, represented by Azazel. Abraham also appears to have a distinctive sacerdotal role in this cultic nexus within the Slavonic apocalypse: he is envisioned as the second cultic animal in the Yom Kippur ordinance, the goat for YHWH.⁴

The possible associations of the antagonist and the protagonist of the story with the two goats of the atoning rite have already been suggested in previous studies. Moreover, it has been proposed that the ascent of Abraham with his angelic companion, Yahoel, into the upper heaven, found in the second part of the pseudepigraphon, might be envisioned as the entrance of the celestial high

of Jesus' High Priesthood," in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions* (eds. J. Assmann and G. Stroumsa; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 349–366; idem, "The Biblical Yom Kippur, the Jewish Fast of the Day of Atonement and the Church Fathers," *SP* 34 (2002) 493–502; idem, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (WUNT, 163; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2003); A. Strobel, "Das jerusalemische Sündenbock-ritual. Topographische und landeskundische Erwägungen zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Lev. 16,10,21f," *ZDPV* 103 (1987) 141–68; H. Tawil, "cAzazel the Prince of the Steepe: A Comparative Study," *ZAW* 92 (1980) 43–59; M. Weinfeld, "Social and Cultic Institutions in the Priestly Source against Their ANE Background," *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem, 1983) 95–129; A. Wright, *The Origin of the Evil Spirits*, 104–117; D.P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* (SBLDS, 101; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987).

- 3 For the Yom Kippur traditions in *Apoc. Ab.*, see Grabbe, "The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation," 157; C. Fletcher-Louis, "The Revelation of the Sacral Son of Man," in: *Auferstehung-Resurrection* (eds. F. Avemarie and H. Lichtenberger; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2001) 282; R. Helm, "Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition," *AUSS* 32 (1994) 217–226 at 223; B. Lourié, "Propitiatorium in the Apocalypse of Abraham," in: *The Old Testament Apocrypha in the Slavonic Tradition: Continuity and Diversity* (eds. L. DiTommaso and C. Böttrich; TSAJ, 140; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2011) 267–77; Stökl Ben Ezra, "Yom Kippur in the Apocalyptic Imaginaire and the Roots of Jesus' High Priesthood," 349–366; idem, "The Biblical Yom Kippur, the Jewish Fast of the Day of Atonement and the Church Fathers," 493–502; idem, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century*, 94.
- 4 A. Orlov, "Eschatological Yom Kippur in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Part I. The Scapegoat Ritual," in: *Symbola Caelestis. Le symbolisme liturgique et paraliturgique dans le monde chrétien* (Scrinium, 5; eds. A.A. Orlov and B. Lourié; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009) 98–100.

priest with the blood of the immolated goat, represented by Abraham's soul, into the upper Holy of Holies.⁵

If such a cultic understanding is indeed present in the Slavonic apocalypse, and Abraham is truly imagined in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* as the goat for YHWH, the setting of the whole scene found in chapter 12 is strikingly reminiscent of the depiction of the scapegoat ritual narrated in *m. Yoma* 4:2, where the high priest standing between two goats transfers the deposit of humanity's sins, represented by the crimson thread, onto the head of the scapegoat.⁶ The crimson band on the horns of this released goat has often been interpreted by scholars as a garment signifying the ominous attire of the cultic animal.⁷ If the crimson band is indeed envisioned as the garment in the atoning rite, then this connection is of paramount significance for the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, where both the antagonist and the protagonist of the story are endowed with eschatological attire. In this respect, it is important to remember that the immolated goat of the mishnaic passage also receives its own "garment"—a piece of wool that was tied around its neck. These endowments with cultic attire appear to be reminiscent of the transference of vestments to the antagonist and the protagonist of the story in *Apoc. Ab.* 12, where both "goats" receive "garments": Azazel is endowed with a garment of sins, while Abraham is given an angelic garment.

The possibility that Abraham and Azazel might indeed be envisioned as the goats of the atoning rite appears to be corroborated by other features found in the Slavonic apocalypse. This study will attempt to explore the influences of the two goats' typology on Abraham and Azazel and will also explore the background of this imagery in early Jewish and Christian accounts.

5 Orlov, "Eschatological Yom Kippur in the Apocalypse of Abraham: Part 1: The Scapegoat Ritual," 99.

6 "He bound a thread of crimson wool on the head of the scapegoat and he turned it towards the way by which it was to be sent out; and on the he-goat that was to be slaughtered [he bound a thread] about its throat." H. Danby, *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) 166.

7 A. Orlov, *Dark Mirrors: Azazel and Satanael in Early Jewish Demonology* (Albany: SUNY, 2011) 47–81; idem, *Heavenly Priesthood in the Apocalypse of Abraham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) 119–153; idem, *Divine Scapegoats: Demonic Mimesis in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Albany: SUNY, 2015) 13–28.

PART 1

*Interpretation of the Two Goats' Imagery
in Early Jewish and Christian Materials*



It appears that the striking eschatological reappropriation of the Yom Kippur rite found in the Slavonic apocalypse attempts to envision human or angelic characters in the story as the cultic animals of the atoning ritual. But how novel is this conceptual development?

In order to answer this question we must now direct our attention to some earlier Jewish interpretations of the Yom Kippur goats wherein the imagery of these cultic animals has been applied to human figures, including a number of prominent characters from biblical narratives. It is impossible to revisit all instances of such applications. We will concentrate our attention only on several conceptual developments that will be pertinent to our study of the Yom Kippur goats in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

The possibility that the typology of the two goats of the atoning rite is reflected in the stories of some human protagonists of the biblical stories, even in the Hebrew Bible, has been noted by several scholars. These studies often attempted to argue that the sacerdotal typology involving two prominent cultic animals appears to be reflected in the portrayals of various siblings found in the Genesis accounts, including, among others: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau.⁸ According to these interpreters, in these implicit cultic reinterpretations, one of the siblings is envisioned as the goat for YHWH, who is directed into the divine presence, while the other is understood as the scapegoat predestined for exile into the wilderness. Keeping in mind the realities of the atoning rite, modern and ancient exegetes have often highlighted the twinship of these brotherly pairs, which, in their opinion, is reminiscent of the twinship of the goats. This is because these atoning goats, according to rabbinic and patristic testimonies, ought to resemble each other. Another feature that has been often noted in these interpretations is that the aforementioned human pairs represent mostly male siblings, more specifically brotherly pairs—a gender marker which, again, invokes the imagery of the Yom Kippur rite, where the goats selected for the ritual must be male.⁹

These connections between the pairs of brothers and the cultic animals have been noted by ancient interpreters, as well as by modern scholars. While I am not necessarily convinced by modern scholars' hypotheses about the presence of the two goats' typology in some biblical materials, especially in

8 M. Douglas, *Jacob's Tears: The Priestly Work of Reconciliation* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 56. See also M. Douglas, "The Go-Away Goat," in: *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception* (eds. R. Rendtorff and R.A. Kugler; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 121–141. On the later application of the two goats' typology to human and angelic beings, see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 130.

9 Cf. Lev 16:5.

the patriarchal narratives, their research helps to draw attention to some features of the original stories that possibly inspired later rabbinic and patristic interpretations of the biblical narratives in light of the Yom Kippur traditions. Since modern formulations often contain clearer lines of argumentation than their pre-modern counterparts, we will begin our exploration with expositions of some contemporary hypotheses. It should be noted that, in contemporary scholarship, the imagery of the brotherly pairs and their connection with the proverbial goats of the atoning rite came under scrutiny not only from biblical scholars, but also from systematic theologians as well.

Thus, while reflecting in *Church Dogmatics* on the description of the rituals found in the Book of Leviticus, Karl Barth draws attention to the similarities between the selection of cultic birds and goats in Lev 14 and Lev 16 and God's choices in relation to the siblings of the Genesis stories.¹⁰ Barth notes that

both Lev. 14 and Lev. 16 say that one creature is to be used, and that the other is not to be used—or only used to the extent that it is, so to speak, solemnly and necessarily not used. One creature is slain, that is, and the other is allowed to go free. . . . we can hardly fail to recall the Genesis stories of Abel and Cain, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. . . . The ceremonies are obviously a comment on the history of Israel as a history of the different choices, and its character as witness is fixed in the legal instructions which relate to these actions.¹¹

Barth suggests that the stories about two brothers that are found in Genesis might serve as a formative archetype for the cultic ceremonies found in Leviticus, which attempt to “comment on the history of Israel as a history of the different choices.”¹² This hypothesis concerning the primacy of the narrative over the ritual was later supported by a number of other scholars, including Mary Douglas and Calum Carmichael, who suggested that “the drama of the brothers’ actions becomes a ritualized annual confession of the historical sin.”¹³ These scholars suggest that it is instructive “to treat the biblical laws as if they were framed as an ongoing commentary on the biblical narratives.”¹⁴

10 For an in-depth analysis of Barth's contribution see K. Greene-McGreight, “A Type of the One to Come?: Leviticus 14 and 16 in Barth's Church Dogmatics,” in: *Thy Word is Truth: Barth on Scripture* (ed. G. Hunsinger; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012) 67–85.

11 K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957) II-2.358.

12 Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, II-2.358.

13 Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 57.

14 M. Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 250.

Yet, in contrast to this position that affirms the formative priority of the biblical brotherly narratives for shaping the atoning ritual, other scholars attempt to embrace a different possibility: they argue for the primacy of the ritual settings, understanding them to be the formative bedrock for the patriarchal stories. Thus, for example, Gershon Hepner suggests that the Genesis narratives were written in light of biblical laws, which serves as their *Vorlage*.¹⁵ Analyzing the Genesis narratives of human scapegoats, Hepner concludes that “they did not influence Priestly law; rather, Priestly law influenced the construction of Genesis narratives.”¹⁶

Establishing the primacy of the patriarchal narratives over the rituals’ descriptions, or vice-versa, is not an easy task, since it is often difficult to trace the genealogical connections between different strata of biblical materials to establish with certainty their priority in relation to one another. Fortunately, establishing the exact genealogical relationships between the patriarchal stories and the legal ordinances is not crucial for our study of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, a writing composed long after the formation of the Pentateuch was completed. Our task is, therefore, more simple and straightforward; namely, it is an attempt to discern what features of the patriarchal stories of these aforementioned siblings might have provoked their later cultic interpretations and allowed later exegetes to reimagine the human characters of these stories as the proverbial goats of the atoning rite.

Keeping in mind the aforementioned scholarly hypotheses, we must now proceed to close analysis of several biblical narratives that relate the tales of these brotherly pairs, in order to explore their possible connections with the symbolism of the two emblematic cultic animals within Jewish tradition.

15 G. Hepner, *Legal Friction: Law, Narrative, and Identity Politics in Biblical Israel* (Studies in Biblical Literature, 78; New York: Peter Lang, 2010) 539.

16 Hepner, *Legal Friction*, 539.

Cain and Abel

One of the important features of the siblings stories found in Genesis that, according to interpreters' opinions, helps to establish a connection between these narratives and the ritual of the two goats found in Leviticus is the motif of banishment of one of the siblings—an existential and physical procession reminiscent of the cultic exile of the scapegoat. This theme is often repeated in the stories of brotherly pairs found in the Hebrew Bible, particularly manifested in the peculiar destinies of Cain, Ishmael, Esau and other biblical figures. Karl Barth interprets the motif of banishment not only in connection with the physical withdrawal of a biblical character into the desert (e.g., Cain and Ishmael), but also with the characters' withdrawal into the "existential wilderness," a condition represented by their non-election.¹⁷ This banishment through non-election of one of the brothers, therefore, is reminiscent of the go-away goat's exile—a state which is usually inversely mirrored in the biblical stories by the election of the other sibling who is, in his turn, envisioned as the goat for YHWH. Already in the atoning ritual, these inversely symmetrical processions of the sacerdotal agents appear to be complimentary in their own sacrificial task. Barth reflects on the cultic animals' inverse mirroring by pointing to the complimentary nature of the respective destinies of both goats/brothers. He notes that

the second goat is also "placed before the Lord," that the treatment meted out to him and the tragic record of his unusability also form an integral part of the sign and testimony set up on the Day of Atonement. Cain is just as indispensable as Abel, and Ishmael as Isaac. For the grace which makes an elect man of the first can be seen only from the second, because

17 Barth argues that "... those who are not chosen do not testify in their existence only and primarily to their own sin, but to the sin and punishment of every man; and it is therefore laid upon the head of the second goat, the one not used for sacrifice, so he may take and bear it away before all eyes to the place where it belongs, and where it is its own punishment, far from the community, into the wretchedness of the wilderness. Incapable of purification! Unworthy of sanctification! Useless for the redemptive sacrificial death that wins the reconciliation and opens the way to a new life! Useful only for a life that is no life at all! That is the sentence which is pronounced upon the second goat, and which is carried out by his banishment. It is the image of the non-elect as they (Cain, Ishmael, Esau) stand apart from the elect; the embodiment of man as he is in and of himself, as he is even now without the grace of election; the demonstration of what is the sole possibility and future of this man." Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, II-2.360.

the first, the elect, must see in the second, the non-elect, as in a mirror, that from which he was taken, and who and what the God is who has delivered him from it. It is only as one who properly belongs to that place that God has transferred him from it.¹⁸

The complimentary dynamics of banishment/election and exile from the deity/drawing near to God's presence recall the foundational spatial dynamics of the Yom Kippur ritual with its inverse processions of the two goats. As one remembers, during this rite one cultic animal was banished into the wilderness, while the blood of the other goat was brought into the Holy of Holies.¹⁹

Already in the account of the first brotherly pair found in the Hebrew Bible—the story of Cain and Abel—the reader encounters the dynamics of banishment/election and exile from the deity/drawing close to him. Moreover, in some scholars' opinion, some other features of the atoning ritual appear to be implicitly hinted at in the narrative about this first brotherly pair.

Let us reflect on some peculiar traits of the story—the features that might have drawn attention of later interpreters in their attempts to connect the story with the cultic settings of the Yom Kippur rite.

The first significant detail here is that, like the ritual of the two goats, the episode in the Genesis account of Cain and Abel begins with selection. In both cases the choice is a binary one between two very similar creatures.²⁰

The figure who is making the choice is also important. In the story of the first brotherly pair, as well as in the atoning rite, it is the deity who makes the choice. While *Mishnah Yoma* depicts the high priest casting lots in the selection ritual between the two goats, the ultimate choice is, of course, not made by this cultic servant, but by God himself. As Jacob Milgrom rightly observes,

18 Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, II-2.360.

19 Regarding this spatial arrangement, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra notes that the Yom Kippur ritual “consisted of two antagonistic movements . . . centripetal and centrifugal.” Stökl Ben Ezra, “The Biblical Yom Kippur, the Jewish Fast of the Day of Atonement and the Church Fathers,” 494.

20 Rabbinic and early Christian descriptions of the two goats often underline their similarity. Thus, *m. Yoma* 6:1 reports concerning the similarity of the goats: “The two he-goats of the Day of Atonement should be alike in appearance, in size, and in value, and have been bought at the same time.” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 169. See also the *Epistle of Barnabas* 7:8. In this respect, it is intriguing that some later rabbinic testimonies often speak about Cain and Abel as being twins. Thus, for example, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* 21 conveys the following tradition: “Rabbi Joseph said: Cain and Abel were twins, as it is said, ‘And she conceived, and bare (with) Cain.’” *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* (ed. G. Friedlander; 2nd ed.; New York: Hermon Press, 1965) 152.

“the purpose of the lots is clearly to leave the selection of the animals to the Lord.”²¹ In the story of Cain and Abel the choice is also made by God.

The second important feature is that, already in the beginning of the biblical story, the two brothers are associated with different sacrificial offerings that are both strikingly emblematic. These different gifts, one of which involves the animal’s slaughtering, might anticipate the brothers’ destinies as respective eschatological “goats.” We further learn from the biblical story that one of these offerings is accepted by God, while the other is rejected. It might allude to the nature of the two goats as two distinctive offerings²²—one of which was predestined “for the Lord,” and the other “for Azazel.”²³

Finally, the third important detail is the respective final destinies of the two brothers: one is killed, while the other is banished. This mirrors the peculiar cultic functions that are outlined for the two animals in the course of the atoning ritual, wherein one goat procures atoning purposes by its slaughter, and the other achieves its purposes through its banishment into the wilderness.

21 J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991) 1020.

22 Whether or not the scapegoat really represents an offering or a sacrifice has been debated by scholars. In relation to this issue Nobuyoshi Kiuchi observes that “since the Azazel goat is not slaughtered, it is indeed unlike other ordinary sacrifices. Yet the assertion that it is not a sacrifice is problematic, for Lev 16:5 explicitly states that the two goats are designated for the sin offering. The flow of the ritual procedure indicates that when a lot is cast, one of the goats ceased to be a sin offering in a normal sense. Whether it is a ‘sacrifice’ is another question, and the answer depends on the definition of ‘sacrifice.’ However, whatever the modern definition of the term, it is important to consider the question in biblical terms. In this regard, there is no reason why there cannot be a live sacrifice.” N. Kiuchi, *Leviticus* (Apollos Old Testament Commentary, 3; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007) 298. Other scholars often point to the fact that some features of the scapegoat ritual, like the imposition of both hands on the head of the goat, often appear in non-sacrificial contexts where they express the notion of transference. On this see R. Péter, “L’imposition des mains dans l’Ancien Testament,” *VT* 27 (1977) 48–55; Janowski, *Sühne als Heilgeschehen*, 201; N. Kiuchi, *The Purification Offering in the Priestly Literature. Its Meaning and Function* (JSOTSS, 56; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987) 112–119.

23 In this respect, it is noteworthy that *Zohar* 111.86b–87a assigns Cain to the Other Side, the portion to which in the *Zohar* the scapegoat is offered: “We have a proof of this in Cain and Abel, because they came from different sides; therefore the offering of Cain was rejected for that of Abel. . . . Cain was of the type of *kilaim* because he came partly from another side which was not of the species of Adam and Eve; and his offering also came from that side.” *The Zohar* (5 vols.; eds. H. Sperling and M. Simon; London and New York: Soncino, 1933) 5.103.

Now we should draw our attention to an in-depth analysis of the depictions of the respective brothers. First, in the eyes of later Jewish and Christian interpreters, Abel is, by the fact of his death, representative of the immolated goat in the atoning rite. One of the intriguing features of the Genesis story is the motif of Abel's blood—the crucial substance that, according to the biblical narrative, provoked such a harsh response from the deity. Thus, from Gen 4:10–11, one learns the following:

And the Lord said, “What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.” (NRSV).

If Abel is indeed, as suggested by some interpreters, representative of the goat for YHWH in this story, the reference to his blood is noteworthy. As one remembers, the blood of the immolated goat played a very important role in the Yom Kippur ceremony: in the course of the ritual, it was brought in by the high priest into the very presence of the deity in the Holy of Holies. In this respect, the deity's statement found in Gen 4:10 that Abel's blood is “crying out” to him is intriguing. Such a statement might hint at the cultic importance of the blood as a substance that somehow attracts the deity's attention. Does the story understand the death of Abel as having atoning significance? If so, it is noteworthy that later rabbinic tradition compares the death of the righteous with the atonement obtained on Yom Kippur. Thus, from *Leviticus Rabbah* 20:12 one learns that “. . . just as Yom Kippur atones, so does the death of the righteous. . . .”²⁴ Abel was often included in early Jewish and Christian lists of righteous martyrs. In this respect, it is also becomes significant that some later

²⁴ “R. Abba b. Abina enquired: For what reason was the section recording the death of Miriam placed in close proximity to that dealing with the ashes of the Red Heifer? Simply this, to teach that as the ashes of the Heifer effect atonement, so the death of the righteous effects atonement. R. Judah asked: For what reason was the death of Aaron recorded in close proximity to the breaking of the Tables? Simply this, to teach that Aaron's death was as grievous to the Holy One, blessed be He, as the breaking of the Tables. R. Hiyya b. Abba stated: The sons of Aaron died on the first of Nisan. Why then is their death mentioned in connection with the Day of Atonement? It must be to teach that as the Day of Atonement effects atonement, so the death of the righteous effects atonement.” *Midrash Rabbah* (eds. H. Freedman and M. Simon; 10 vols; London: Soncino, 1961) 4:264.

rabbinic testimonies, including *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Gen 37:31 and *Genesis Rabbah* 84:31, compare the blood of the male goat to human blood.²⁵

The motif of Abel's blood *on the ground* is also noteworthy. It might again hint at Abel's role as a cultic animal because it evokes a plethora of familiar motifs, including Deut 15:23 which commands that the blood of an animal should not be eaten, but instead is to be poured upon the earth like water.²⁶

We now direct our attention to Cain's character and his possible cultic role as the scapegoat. Interpreters have previously noticed some similarities between Cain and the go-away goat. One of the important features here is that Cain does not go into the wilderness by himself. Rather, he is directed there, as in the atoning ritual, at the deity's command. Therefore, it is possible that the patriarchal story presupposes some atoning or purifying purposes for his exile.²⁷

It is therefore possible that Cain is envisioned in this biblical story as the bearer, or even as the remover, of sin(s). Later Jewish exegetes often hint at such a possibility. As one remembers, in Gen 4:13 Cain exclaims to God: "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" The rabbinic interpreters often read this phrase as a reference to Cain's function as the bearer of sin(s). Thus, both the Palestinian and Babylonian targumic renderings of Cain's story contain formulae that suggest connections with the motif of bearing sin. In this regard, it is noteworthy that *Targum Onqelos* to Gen 4:13 changes "punishment" to "sin," and introduces the motifs of repentance and forgiveness,²⁸ offering the

25 On this tradition see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 130. Stökl Ben Ezra notes that "men could become scapegoats, too, as a passage from the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Yoma* 42a) demonstrates: 'On that day Ravya bar Qisi died, and they erected a sign: Ravya [bar] Qisi achieves atonement like [or: as] the goat that was sent away.' This must mean that the death of the righteous Ravya bar Qisi effected atonement vicariously." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 130.

26 Deut 15:23: "... Its blood, however, you must not eat; you shall pour it out on the ground like water." (NRSV).

27 In this respect, John Dunnill observes that "the scapegoat which goes into the wilderness by divine decree, like Cain and Ishmael, goes there to serve God's purpose not to be cast away utterly: hence its death is not disorder but life-bringing sacrifice, and at the moment of its death, according to *m. Yoma* 6.8,22 the scarlet cord in the Temple turned white." J. Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews* (SNTSMS, 75; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 158.

28 Michael Maher notes that "... the rabbis regarded Cain's words in Gen 4:13 as an expression of repentance (cf., e.g., *Lev. Rab.* 10, 5; *PRE* 21 [155-156]). This tradition was [also] known to Josephus (*Ant.* 1 §58)." M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (ArBib, 1B; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992) 34. On this motif see also L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998) 1.111; 5.140, n. 24.

following interpretation: “Then said Cain before the Lord, ‘My sin is too great to be forgiven’”²⁹ The themes of repentance/forgiveness are also found in the Palestinian targumic tradition, including *Targum Neofiti* to Gen 4:13 and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen 4:13.³⁰ The motif of repentance is important for our study, since it might betray sacerdotal overtones that are reminiscent of various Yom Kippur practices. *Leviticus Rabbah* 10 appears to bring even more forceful cultic connotations to the motif of Cain’s repentance:

R. Judah and R. Joshua b. Levi expressed differing views. R. Judah said: Repentance effects half [atonement], but prayer effects a complete [atonement]. R. Joshua b. Levi said: Repentance effects a whole, but prayer only a half. Whence is derived the view of R. Judah b. Rabbi that repentance effects only half? From the case of Cain, against whom a decree was pronounced. When he repented, half of the decree was withheld.

In the *Babylonian Talmud* and *Midrash Rabbah* the theme of Cain’s sin is further elaborated.³¹ As *b. Sanh.* 101b reads:

Our Rabbis taught: Three came with a circuitous plea . . . Cain, Esau and Manasseh. Cain—for it is written, [And Cain said unto the Lord.] is my sin too great to be forgiven? He pleaded thus before Him: “Sovereign of the Universe! Is my sin greater than that of the six hundred thousand [Israelites] who are destined to sin before Thee, yet wilt Thou pardon them!”³²

Finally, *Genesis Rabbah* 22:11 brings another portentous link by connecting the sin of Cain with the transgression of Adam:

And Cain said unto the Lord: My sin is too great to bear. Thou bearest the heavenly and the earthly, yet Thou canst not bear my transgression! [Another interpretation]: My sin is greater than my father’s. My father

29 B. Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis* (ArBib, 6; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988) 49.

30 *Trg. Neof.* to Gen. 13 reads: “And Cain said before the Lord: ‘My debts are too numerous to bear; before you, however, there is power to remit and pardon.’” M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* (ArBib, 1A; Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 1992) 67; *Trg. Ps.-Jon.* to Gen 4:13: “Cain said before the Lord, ‘My rebellion is much too great to bear, but you are able to forgive it.’” Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 33–34.

31 See also *PRE* 21: “And Cain said unto the Lord, My sin is too great to be borne.” Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 156.

32 I. Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Sanhedrin* (London: Soncino, 1935–1952) 101b.

violated a light precept and was expelled from the Garden of Eden; this is a grave crime, to wit, murder; how much greater then is my sin!³³

This motif of the removal of sin, which now pertains to—and even supercedes—Adam's original transgression, appears to also be assumed in the atoning program of the Yom Kippur ritual. There the high priest's entrance into the Holy of Holies was often envisioned, by later interpreters, as a return to the protoplast's prelapsarian condition.³⁴

Another important feature that appears to connect Cain's story with the atoning rite is the fact that he was cursed before his journey into an inhabitable realm. From Gen 4:10–11 one learns the following tradition of cursing: "And the Lord said, 'What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.'" ³⁵ Cursing Cain is noteworthy, since it is reminiscent of the symbolism of ritual curses that were placed on the go-away goat immediately before its exile into the inhabitable realm. From the description of the atoning ritual found in *Mishnah Yoma*, we learn about the ritual curses imposed on the go-away goat before its banishment into the wilderness. Thus, *m. Yoma* 6:4 relates the following:

And they made a causeway for it because of the Babylonians who used to pull its hair, crying to it, "Bear [our sins] and be gone! Bear [our sins] and be gone!"³⁶

Although the cursing of the scapegoat is not openly mentioned in the biblical version of the ritual, it might have its antecedent in Lev 16:21, which depicts the imposition of sins on the head of the scapegoat before his departure into the

33 Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, 1.190.

34 It is noteworthy that in the *Book of Jubilees* Eden is understood as the Holy of Holies where Adam was serving as the high priest. On this see J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, "Eden and the Temple: The Rewriting of Genesis 2:4–3:24 in the Book of Jubilees," in: *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. G.P. Luttikhuisen; TBN, 2; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 76; idem, "Visions of the Temple in the Book of Jubilees," in: *Gemeinde ohne Tempel/Community without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum* (eds. B. Ego et al.; WUNT, 118; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1999) 215–228. For the identification of the Garden of Eden with the macrocosmic temple in Qumran literature and Jewish Merkabah mysticism, see J.R. Davila, "The Hodayot Hymnist and the Four Who Entered Paradise," *RevQ* 17 (1996) 457–78.

35 NRSV.

36 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 169.

wilderness: "... and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness." The *Apocalypse of Abraham* further develops the theme of the scapegoat's curses by depicting the heavenly high priest, Yahoel, imposing rebukes onto the fallen angel, Azazel. In light of these connections, it is noteworthy that both Cain and the scapegoat then appear to be envisioned as accursed creatures.

Another important feature of Cain's story is a reference to a mark imposed on him by the deity.³⁷ Later rabbinic testimonies often interpret Cain's mark as an endowment of the antagonist with the divine Name. The possibility of such an interpretation appears to be present in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* 21, where the following passage can be found:

... further, Cain said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Now will a certain righteous one arise on the earth and mention Thy great Name against me and slay me. What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He took one letter from the twenty-two letters, and put (it) upon Cain's arm that he should not be killed, as it is said, And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain...³⁸

This passage appears to suggest the practice of the imposition of the divine Name on Cain, since the text mentions both the motif of the divine Name, along with the theme of putting a letter on the antagonist. Although the conventional rendering of the divine Name was routinely executed by four Hebrew consonants, in rabbinic literature we find various abbreviations of the Tetragrammaton. Oftentimes the abbreviation is rendered by only one letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

In *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* the motif of endowment is even more evident, as this text interprets the mark of Cain as the divine Name placed on him. Thus, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen 4:15 reads: "Then the Lord traced on

37 Gen. 4:15 "And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him." (NRSV).

38 Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 156. See also *Zohar* 1.36b: "Therefore the Lord appointed a sign for Cain. This sign was one of the twenty-two letters of the Torah, and God set it upon him to protect him." Sperling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 1.137.

Cain's face a letter of the great and glorious Name, so that anyone who would find him, upon seeing it on him, would not kill him."³⁹

It is intriguing that *Pseudo-Jonathan* is the same targum that relates a similar imposition of the divine Name on the scapegoat. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Lev 16:21 reads:

Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, in this fashion: his right hand upon his left. He shall confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their rebellions, whatever their sins; he shall put them on the head of the goat with a declared and explicit oath by the great and glorious Name. . . .⁴⁰

Here, during the rite of the hand-laying, the high priest was not only obliged to transfer to the scapegoat the iniquities of the children of Israel, but also to seal the head of the cultic animal with a great oath containing the divine Name. This placement of the divine Name both on Cain and the scapegoat is noteworthy, since in various apocalyptic scapegoat traditions the imposition of the cultic curses was often linked to endowment with the divine Name.⁴¹

The peculiar destination of Cain's exile is also noteworthy. From Gen. 4:16 one learns that "Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden." The destination of Cain's exile "away from the divine presence . . . in the land of Nod" is reminiscent of the antagonistic movement of the go-away goat. As one remembers, in the course of the ritual the two goats went in opposite directions: while the blood of the immolated goat was brought into God's very presence in the Holy of Holies, the scapegoat was heading away from the divine presence, carrying the people's sins outside the realm of human habitation. In this respect, it is significant that, in some Jewish traditions, while Eden was often understood as the Holy of Holies, the land of Nod came to be understood as opposed to the paradisaical location.⁴²

39 Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 34.

40 McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 169.

41 On this tradition see Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 28–34.

42 Philo, *On the Cherubim*, 140–141: "Of the first sense, that of hostility, we find an example in what is said of Cain that " he went out from the face of God and dwelt in Nod over against Eden " (Gen iv. 16). The meaning of Nod is 'tossing' and Eden is 'delight.' The former is the symbol of the vice that creates tumult in the soul; the latter of the virtue which wins it well-being and delight, not the weak and wanton sort, which the brute passion pleasure brings, but that sense of profound content and joy, which knows not toil or trouble." *Philo*

Moreover, the land of Nod was also often envisioned, by later interpreters, as the wilderness.⁴³

(10 vols.; LCL; trs. F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1929–1964) 2.15–17.

- 43 “It may be noted, however, that early commentators emphasized the supposed antithesis between Eden, the place of bliss, and the land of Nod, or ‘wandering’ to the east of Eden. The land of Nod was naturally the desert, the joyless land.” O.F. Emerson, “Legends of Cain, Especially in Old and Middle English,” *PMLA* 21.4 (1906) 831–929 at 865. “The common interpretation of the land of ‘Nod’ was as ‘a land of wandering,’ ‘an unstable place,’ but it was also a desert, that is uninhabited by men. The nearest direct reference to wild beasts, and perhaps quite sufficient for our purpose, is in Ambrose, *De Cain et Abel*, Lib. II, cap. x. . . .” Emerson, “Legends of Cain, Especially in Old and Middle English,” 872. See also, *Targum Onqelos* to Gen 4:16: “Then Cain left from before the Lord and dwelt in the land of Exile and Wandering, which had been made for him east of the garden of Eden.” Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 49.

Isaac and Ishmael

In later Jewish, Christian, and Muslim interpretations, the story of Abraham and his two sons often receives sacerdotal significance, as it is often tied to various Jewish festivals, including the Yom Kippur ordinance. Thus, later rabbinic traditions often envision Abraham's sacrificial attempt on Mount Moriah as an episode that pertains to the atoning rite. These traditions often represent the patriarch as a priestly figure, performing familiar cultic actions.⁴⁴ Thus, both *Genesis Rabbah* 55:7⁴⁵ and *Pesikta Rabbati*⁴⁶ recount that God himself affirmed Abraham's priestly status during the binding of Isaac. In *Genesis Rabbah* this is recounted directly, and in *Pesikta Rabbati* it is depicted through the promise. Moreover, in these traditions Abraham was often envisioned not just as an ordinary priest, but as the high priest celebrating the Yom Kippur rites in their distinctive geographical locale, where the Holy of Holies would be erected in the future. This later cultic perspective provides us with some important conceptual lenses through which we might look at another brotherly dyad in Genesis: Ishmael and Isaac. These two can also be understood as agents exemplifying the goats of the Yom Kippur rite. In such a sacerdotal perspective, Abraham can be envisioned not simply as a family man, managing domestic conflicts, but as the high priestly figure who performs familiar cultic actions by dispatching one "goat" (Ishmael) into the wilderness and preparing another "goat" (Isaac) as a sacrificial goat for YHWH. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra suggested that *Pirke Rabbi Eliezer* 31 connects the *Aqedah* with Yom Kippur

44 For an analysis of these traditions in rabbinic and patristic literature, see E. Kessler, "The Exegetical Encounter between Greek Church Fathers and the Palestinian Rabbis," *SP* 34 (2001) 395–412 at 404–406.

45 "R. Judah said: He [Abraham] said to Him: 'Sovereign of the Universe! Can there be a sacrifice without a priest?' 'I have already appointed thee to be a priest,' replied the Holy One, blessed be He: thus it is written, 'Thou art a priest forever' (Ps. cx, 4)." Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, 1.488.

46 "Another comment on Moriah: Abraham said to God: 'Master of universes, am I fit to offer Isaac up? Am I a priest? Shem is High Priest. Let him come and take Isaac from me for the offering.' God replied: When thou reachest the place, I will consecrate thee and make thee a priest. Accordingly, the term Moriah suggests that Abraham was to be a substitute for Shem, his replacement." *Pesikta Rabbati* (2 vols; tr. W.G. Braude; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) 2.714–715.

by placing Isaac's binding at the Holy of Holies itself.⁴⁷ It offers the following striking interpretation of the familiar scene:

Rabbi Jehudah said: When the blade touched his neck, the soul of Isaac fled and departed, (but) when he heard His voice from between the two Cherubim, saying (to Abraham), "Lay not thine hand upon the lad" (Gen. xxii. 12), his soul returned to his body, and (Abraham) set him free, and Isaac stood upon his feet. And Isaac knew that in this manner the dead in the future will be quickened. He opened (his mouth), and said: Blessed art thou, O Lord, who quickeneth the dead.⁴⁸

The connection with Yom Kippur, however, is not entirely explicit in this passage. Yet, Stökl Ben Ezra noted that such a link may be deduced since "Abraham is likened to the high priest and the heavenly voice comes from between the two Cherubim (on the ark of the covenant), i.e. in the holy of holies."⁴⁹

The question, however, remains: which particular features of the original biblical story provoked later cultic allusions and helped Jewish interpreters to shepherd the story of the brotherly pair into the confines of the atoning ritual?

Mary Douglas's research draws attention to one such important feature of Ishmael's biblical story, namely, his exile into the wilderness. This exile, in her opinion, is reminiscent of the scapegoat's banishment into the desert. Here again the destinies and progressions of the respective brothers are closely tied to the theme of election—a crucial choice made in our narrative by the

47 In relation to other possible links between the *Aqedah* and Yom Kippur, Stökl Ben Ezra notes that "Jacob Lauterbach suggested that a background to the *kapparot*, especially that with horned animals, is provided by identification of two mythological sacrifices with the scapegoat: the ram that Abraham sacrificed instead of Isaac and the male goat with whose blood Joseph's brothers colored his coat and tried to fool their father. He refers to a passage from *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Leviticus 9:3 for a combination of these ideas together with the golden calf." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 66–67. See also J.Z. Lauterbach, *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom, and Folklore* (New York: KTAV, 1970) 369; idem, *Rabbinic Essays* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1951) 356.

48 Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 228.

49 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 124. See also Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5.252. Louis Ginzberg notes that "... a different opinion, favored by the Kabbalists, maintains that this event occurred on the Day of Atonement." Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5.252.

deity even before the birth of the protagonists.⁵⁰ In this respect, Douglas notes that

the two goats on the Day of Atonement stand for the two pairs of brothers; in each pair only one becomes a patriarch of Israel. Isaac was chosen before he was born, it was no merit on his part that earned him God's choice, and no lack of merit caused the unborn Ishmael to be sent away. . . . The strong parallel confirms that the wilderness in the rite of the Day of Atonement means precisely what is said, a place outside the habitations of Israel.⁵¹

Douglas' reflection helps underline the significance of the sacred geography both in patriarchal story and in the ritual. In both of these, the animal and human "scapegoats" are forced into exile in those places that are beyond the sacred *oikoumene*, the places surrounded by wilderness. This connection between Ishmael's exile and the banishment of the scapegoat might already be hinted at in the biblical narrative. Douglas notices distinct terminological similarities between the formulae used in the Genesis description where Hagar and Ishmael are sent into the wilderness⁵² and the account of the scapegoat's dispatch found in the Book of Leviticus.⁵³ In relation to these parallels, Douglas notes that, "after Isaac was born, Sarah wants to get rid of Ishmael lest he prejudice the rights of her son. Abraham does not want to cast him out, but the Lord promises to look after the mother and child. Accordingly Abraham 'sent her away' to the wilderness, the same word as that in Leviticus for 'sending away' (שלח) and the same place as the scapegoat went to."⁵⁴

50 In this respect John Dunnill observes that "... the scapegoat which goes into the wilderness by divine decree, like . . . Ishmael, [who] goes there to serve God's purpose. . . ." Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 158.

51 Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 56.

52 Gen 21:14: "So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba." (NRSV).

53 Lev 16:10: "but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel"; Lev 16:21: "Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task." (NRSV).

54 Douglas, "The Go-Away Goat," 135–136.

Jacob and Esau

As we have already learned from our study of the brotherly dyads found in Genesis, scholars often attempt to connect the motif of election of biblical siblings with the selection of the cultic animals at Yom Kippur. In a manner similar to Karl Barth, Mary Douglas sees the motif of election as one of the most crucial links between the stories of the brotherly pairs and the two goats' ritual, wherein one animal was selected for the Lord and the other for Azazel. She argues that, in the Book of Genesis, "the theme of conspicuously uneven destinies occurs prominently. Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, of two brothers one is chosen and the other is not."⁵⁵ The mystery of election is paradoxically highlighted by a role reversal, as the expected recipient of the blessing, the elder son, is rejected, and the younger sibling somewhat unexpectedly receives the blessing. In this respect, Douglas further notes that:

the Leviticus rite of atonement points to the central theological theme of the Pentateuch, a chosen people and the contrast with the people who have not been chosen. The Genesis stories are about the eldest sons, for example, Ishmael and Esau, being superseded. Their respective younger brother, Isaac and Jacob, destined before birth to the disciplines of the Covenant, would parallel the goat on which the lot of the Lord fell. Ishmael and Esau would parallel the bird and the goat not chosen, set free in a remote uncultivated land.⁵⁶

This theme of election would eventually become a very important motif in a later eschatological reinterpretation of the Yom Kippur ritual found in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. In this text, the celestial scapegoat will be associated with the lot of Azazel and the patriarch with the lot of the deity.

As has been already noticed in the course of our investigation, the biblical accounts of the two siblings repeatedly portray one of the brothers as being forced into exile from the divine presence, while the other sibling is drawn into the center of the sacred geographical realm. Gershon Hepner draws his attention to the similar spatial dynamics taking place in the biblical story of Jacob and Esau, where the peculiar destinations of both brothers are overlaid with some conspicuous allusions to the atoning rite. One of the important locales involves the conceptual developments found in Genesis 33. Thus,

55 Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 54.

56 Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 55.

Hepner notices that when Jacob and Esau are separated in Genesis 33, Esau is there depicted as leaving Canaan forever, heading to Seir: “So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir (שעירָה).”⁵⁷ Hepner suggests that the mysterious place of Esau’s permanent departure from Canaan “echoes the שעירָ, *goat*, that is dedicated to Azazel, the scapegoat.”⁵⁸ While one brother, like the proverbial scapegoat, departs from the sacred geographical habitat, the other, like the immolated goat, is drawn into this locale. In this respect, Hepner notes that, in contrast to Esau, who is leaving the Holy Land, Jacob returns to Canaan. Gen 33:17–18 reports the following:

But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house, and made booths for his cattle; therefore the place is called Succoth. Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram; and he camped before the city. (NRSV).

Hepner argues that the two movements, as in the atoning rite, are inter-related, and Esau’s exile to Seir allows Jacob to enter into the sacred realm. He argues that “unlike Esau, he [Jacob] escapes the role of scapegoat. Jacob receives expiation when Esau departs to Seir, because his journey to Succoth, narratively foreshadows the expiation obtained by Israelites on Yom Kippur (Lev. 23:26–33).”⁵⁹ Hepner sees in the stories of Jacob and Esau the reenactment of the atoning rite. He does so by arguing that

the partial reconciliation between Jacob and Esau echoing the reconciliation between God and the Israelites after the שעירָ, *he-goat*, designated to Azazel has been sent out to the wilderness in a ritual that occurs five days before the festival of Succoth—“Booths” (23:33–34). The fact that he returns to the place from which he was expelled implies that he follows the ostracism paradigm rather than that of the scapegoat. . . .⁶⁰

The similarities between the biblical features of Esau’s story and the details of the scapegoat ritual might not be limited solely to the theme of the final destination of Jacob’s brother. John Dunnill draws his attention to the red color of Esau, seeing in that attribute a possible connection with the red color of the

57 Gen 33:16.

58 Hepner, *Legal Friction*, 540.

59 Hepner, *Legal Friction*, 540.

60 Hepner, *Legal Friction*, 540.

scapegoat's band.⁶¹ He also brings his attention to another brotherly pair in the Genesis narrative: Zerah and Perez, where the color symbolism of the red band also appears to suggest a connection with the scapegoat imagery.⁶² He notes that

the story of the birth of Zerah and Perez, sons of Judah and Tamar, has similarities to that of Esau and Jacob—Perez like Jacob supplanting his elder brother in the womb itself—with the curious addition that when Zerah puts out his hand from the womb the midwife ties round it a scarlet thread (Gen. 38:28), such a scarlet thread (κόκκινος) as was to be used in the leper-cleansing and the red-heifer rite (Lev. 14:4, Numb. 19:6), and which, according to *Mishnah Yoma* 4.2,20 was to be tied around the head of the scapegoat (and around the throat of the other goat) on the Day of Atonement; it was also what Rahab tied in her window (Josh. 2:18).⁶³

Dunnill further suggests that “the significance of this blood-symbol attached to extremities is not the rejection of the bearer, however, but the setting-apart by God of this particular liminal object or figure as the means for the reaffirming of the covenant: as such it may entail divine protection.”⁶⁴ Indeed, as in the aforementioned story of Cain where the endowment with the role of the

61 Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 158, note 21. Such an interpretation appears to be present also in *Zohar* 1.153a, which demonstrates parallels between Esau and Azazel, drawing on his red color: “Contrariwise, from the side of the North there issue a variety of grades, extending downwards, to the world below. This is the region of the dross of gold, which comes from the side of impurity and loathsomeness and which forms a link between the upper and nether regions; and there is the line where the male and female principles join, forming together the rider on the serpent, and symbolized by Azazel. Now from thence there spread many grades which dominate the world, all of them presenting sides of defilement and acting as chieftains and prefects in the world. Observe that Esau, when he emerged into the world, was red all over like a rose, and was hairy after the pattern of a goat (*sa'ir*), and from such a being came forth chieftains and prefects, fully armed, who dominate the world.” Sperling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 2.89–90. Calum Carmichael also connects Esau's color with Yom Kippur imagery, namely by the symbolism of the red heifer.

62 The Yom Kippur imagery might also be present in another brotherly pair, Manasseh and Ephraim. Thus, Gen 48:8–20, a passage which depicts Jacob putting Ephraim ahead of Manasseh, appears to allude to the ritual of selecting the goats. Several details are notable—the symbolism of left and right sides, laying hands, etc.

63 Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 157.

64 Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 157–8.

human scapegoat grants the antagonist the special protected status, in other biblical scapegoat stories we can see similar connections.

Our study so far has been drawing on the insights of a relatively small group of modern scholars who attempted to uncover a set of illusive connections between the brotherly pairs of Genesis and the goats of the atoning rite. Yet, by leaning on the arguments of Barth, Douglas, Hepner, and Dunnill, we should not assume that these conceptual links were only recognized in the modern exegetical enterprise. Already in pre-modern exegesis such correspondences between the siblings' narratives and the ritual became a prominent line of interpretation. In rabbinic literature, the story of Jacob and Esau has been repeatedly placed in the context of the Yom Kippur rite and interpreted through the two goats' imagery. One of these instances can be found in chapter 65 of *Genesis Rabbah*, a text that relays the following tradition:

And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother: Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man—*ish sa'ir* (xxvii, 11): he is demonic, as in the verse, And satyrs (*se'irim*) shall dance there (Isa. xiii, 21). And I am a smooth man—*halak* as in the verse, For the portion (*heleq*) of the Lord is His people (Deut. xxxii, 9). R. Levi and R. Isaac. R. Levi said: This may be illustrated by two men, one possessing a thick head of hair and the other bald-headed, who stood near a threshing-floor. When the chaff flew into the locks of the former, it became entangled in his hair; but when it flew on to the head of the bald man, he passed his hand over his head and removed it. Even so, the wicked Esau is polluted by sin throughout the year and has nought wherewith to procure forgiveness, whereas Jacob is defiled by sin throughout the year, but has the Day of Atonement wherewith to procure forgiveness. R. Isaac observed: This interpretation is farfetched [but the same idea may be deduced from this verse]: And the goat (*sa'ir*) shall bear upon him (Lev xvi, 22)—this alludes to Esau, as it says, Behold, Esau my brother is a man a *sa'ir*. All their iniquities unto a land which is cut off (Lev 16:22).

Reflecting on this passage David Halperin notes that “this midrash carries us, if the attributions to Rabbi Levi and Rabbi Isaac are to be trusted back to Palestine at the end of the third century. Both these Amoraim . . . make a connection between Yom Kippur and the conflict between Jacob and Esau.”⁶⁵

65 D.J. Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu: A Meeting of Midrashic Trajectories?” in: *Agendas for the Study of Midrash in the Twenty-First Century* (ed. M.L. Raphael; Williamsburg: College of William and Mary, 1999) 18–42 at 20.

Halperin further argues that “Rabbi Isaac understands one of the goats, the ‘goat for Azazel,’ as a representation of Esau himself.”⁶⁶ Moreover, it appears that the aforementioned passage from *Gen. Rab.* 65:15 operates with the imagery of not one, but two sacerdotal agents. Halperin therefore suggests that the implicit affirmation of Jacob as the immolated goat might also be present in this passage, as well. He offers the following hypothesis:

Does he take the other goat, the “goat for the Lord,” as a parallel representation of Jacob? He does not say so explicitly. But this seems a plausible understanding of Rabbi Isaac’s words, for two reasons. First, the anonymous midrash at the beginning of the passage seems to point in this direction. The words *se’ir* and *halaq* are understood to refer, not to the physical characteristics of Esau and Jacob—as in Rabbi Levi’s parable—but to their being a “demon-man” and the Lord’s portion, respectively. This seems to run parallel to the casting of the lots on the two goats, in Leviticus 16:8: one for the Lord, one for Azazel. If we will allow ourselves to interpret Rabbi Isaac’s midrash in accord with the anonymous preface, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that just as Esau corresponds to Azazel’s goat, so Jacob corresponds to the Lord’s.⁶⁷

Halperin notes that “by equating Azazel’s goat with Esau (and presumably the Lord’s goat with Jacob), Rabbi Isaac finds a meaning in the scapegoat ritual that goes beyond its statutory obligation.”⁶⁸ He further argues that the ritual itself represents “a metaphysical commentary on the relation between Jacob and Esau, and therefore presumably between the two peoples who derive from them.”⁶⁹ Halperin concludes his argument by observing that “Rabbi Isaac makes no attempt to explicate the details of the ritual on the basis of this premise; but, obviously, has opened the possibility of doing so.”⁷⁰

In his short study, Halperin offers a set of illuminating remarks on the broader biblical context of Esau and Jacob’s story by noting some suggestive allusions to the two goats’ imagery. One of these allusions is the twinship of

66 Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu,” 20.

67 Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu,” 20–21.

68 Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu,” 21.

69 Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu,” 21.

70 Halperin, “Origen and Seder Eliyahu,” 21.

the two brothers, which is, in Halperin's opinion, reminiscent of the twinship of the two goats of the atoning rite.⁷¹

It appears that the sacerdotal reinterpretation of the story of Jacob and Esau was a quite prominent line of interpretation in the midrashic literature. Thus, another testimony found in *Leviticus Rabbah* 21:11 again strives to overlay the story of the two brothers with distinctive cultic allusions. It offers the following interpretation:

A goat was brought in order to recall the merit of Jacob; as it is written, And fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats (Gen xxvii, 9). They are 'good', explained R. Berekiyah in the name of R. Levi, for yourself, and they are 'good' for your descendants. They are good for yourself, for by their means you will receive the blessings, and they are good for your descendants, for by their means atonement will be made for them on the Day of Atonement, as is proved by the text, For on this day shall atonement be made for you (Lev xvi, 30). I now know that allusion was made to the merit of the Patriarchs.⁷²

71 He notes that "...Jacob and Esau are twins. Not identical twins, to be sure; the Bible is clear enough about that (Genesis 25:25, 27:11). Yet the rabbis found their twinship significant enough to associate Jacob and Esau with the constellation Gemini, and to draw homiletic conclusions. 'Notice what month I chose to give the Torah,' they represent God as saying to the Gentiles. 'The third month, under the constellation of the Twins; [to indicate that] if wicked Esau wants to convert and repent and come study Torah, let him come! I shall welcome him.' The essential difference between the twins is this: that Jacob is righteous, Esau wicked. The Mishnah, without any very solid Biblical grounding, prescribes that the two goats of Yom Kippur must be 'alike in appearance, height, and value, and the two must have been acquired at the same time' (*Yoma* 6:1). To someone who took this prescription for granted, as Rabbi Isaac surely must have done, it would be natural to think of the two goats as twins, distinguished only by their destinies: one for God, one for Azazel. Let one of these twins become identified with Esau, and it seems almost inevitable that the other will be identified with Jacob." Halperin, "Origen and Seder Eliyahu," 21.

72 A similar tradition is found also in *Pesikta de Rab Kahana* 9:9: "A goat, through the merit of Jacob: 'Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats' (Gen. 27:9). Why did Rebekah say 'good?' Because she meant, explained R. Berechiah in the name of R. Helbo, they will be good for you, [O Jacob], and good for your children—good for you since through them you will receive [your father's] blessings; and good for your children, for, because of the offering of he-goats, atonement will be made for your children on Atonement Day: On this day shall atonement be made for you, etc. (Lev. 16:30)." W.G. Braude and I.J. Kapstein, *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana: R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975) 181.

In this rabbinic testimony, the reader again encounters peculiar animal imagery. It refers to Jacob's account found in Gen 27:9, where Rebekah tells her son to bring out two young animals in order to prepare a savory meal for Isaac. Yet, the rabbinic passage appears to connect these "two kids of the goats" with the cultic animals of Leviticus 16. Commenting on this passage, Halperin argues that here the two goats of Yom Kippur, the one "for the Lord" and the one "for Azazel," are linked to the two goats that Jacob used in order to take for himself Esau's blessing.⁷³

Halperin also brings his attention to another rabbinic passage found in the additional chapters of *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta*, additions, which were "made to that text at an unknown date from an equally unknown source."⁷⁴ In this passage it appears that Esau is portrayed as the go-away goat, bearing the iniquities of Jacob-Israel. *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 19 reads:

But when Esau spoke up to the Holy One, saying, "Master of the universe, is my strength such that I can bear all of Jacob's iniquities that You load upon me?" The Holy One took all of Jacob's sins and put them on His own garments, so that their crimson became an intense scarlet. He will wash the garments, however, until they are made white as snow, as is said, His raiment was as white snow (Dan 7:9). All the foregoing discourse was initiated by the question Who is this that cometh from Edom? (Isa 63:1).⁷⁵

In this passage, one can find additional markers that are likewise noticeable in the scapegoat ordinance—most prominently, the reference to the crimson color of the scapegoat's band. The passage also seems to understand this scarlet band as the attire of human transgressions, purged during the atoning rite. Halperin sees this cultic interpretation as dependent on the previously mentioned statement of R. Isaac from *Gen. Rab.* 65:15. He argues that:

it is entirely obvious that the author of our midrash has made use of Rabbi Isaac's midrash, in *Gen. Rab.* 65:15. It is also clear that he has effected a

73 Halperin, "Origen and Seder Eliyahu," 19.

74 Halperin, "Origen and Seder Eliyahu," 23. Halperin notes that these additions "show certain stylistic affinities to *Eliyahu Rabbah* and *Zuta*. . . . And it is at least thinkable that they were added on to the text precisely because they were correctly perceived to derive from the same body of midrashic materials as the rest of the *Seder Eliyahu*." Halperin, "Origen and Seder Eliyahu," 23.

75 W. Braude and I. Kapstein, *Tanna Debe Eliyyahu: The Lore of the School of Elijah* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981) 496.

stunning reversal of the message of his source. Rabbi Isaac's midrash had made Esau, in his role as "goat for Azazel," the permanent repository of "honest" Jacob's sins. Our midrash indeed goes this far, with Rabbi Isaac. But he takes the additional step—wholly unprecedented, in the aggadic tradition on the scapegoat ritual—of having God yield to Esau's pleas, and relieve him of his burden of sin. God then takes that burden upon Himself; or, strictly speaking, upon His clothing.⁷⁶

Later Jewish testimonies reflected in a prominent Jewish mystical compendium, known to us as the *Book of Zohar*, also attempt to connect Jacob and Esau with the two goats of the atoning rite. There one can find familiar interpretive lines, prominent also in *Midrash Rabbah*, including a reflection on Esau's designation as a hairy man—איש שער.⁷⁷ Thus, at *Zohar* I.65a the following passage can be found:

Consider this. At every New Moon the "End of all flesh" is given a portion over and above that of the daily offering, so as to divert his attention from Israel, who are thus left entirely to themselves and in full freedom to commune with their King. This extra portion comes from the he-goat (*sa'ir*), being the portion of Esau, who is also called *sa'ir*, as it is written, "Behold Esau my brother is a hairy (*sa'ir*) man" (Gen XXVII, 11). Esau thus has his portion and Israel their portion. Hence it is written, "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his own treasure" (Ps CXXXV, 4). Consider this point. The whole desire of this "End of all flesh" is for flesh only, and the tendency of flesh is ever towards him; it is for this reason that he is called "End of all flesh". Such power, however, as he does obtain is only over the body and not over the soul. The soul ascends to her place, and the body is given over to its place, in the same way as in an offering the devotion of him who offers ascends to one place, and the flesh to another. Hence the righteous man is, of a truth, himself an offering of atonement. But he who is not righteous is disqualified as an offering, for the reason that he suffers from a blemish, and is therefore like the defective animals of which it is written, "they shall not be accepted for you" (Lev XXII, 25). Hence it is that the righteous are an atonement and a sacrifice for the world.⁷⁸

76 Halperin, "Origen and Seder Eliyahu," 25.

77 See Gen 27:11: "But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, 'Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man (איש שער), and I am a man of smooth skin.'" (NRSV).

78 Sperling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 1.213–214.

The Zoharic passage adds some new conceptual dimensions to patterns that are already familiar. Similar to the mishnaic descriptions of Yom Kippur, this passage mentions that two lots or portions are variously assigned: one to Esau and the other to Jacob. Esau is associated with the portion given to the Other Side, in order to pacify it, which is how the scapegoat ritual is understood in this mystical compendium. Association of the human scapegoat with the portion given to the Other Side is especially noteworthy, since it becomes an emblematic feature of the Zoharic understanding of the scapegoat ordinance as a distraction for the demonic side during the Yom Kippur festival.

In another speculation found in *Zohar* 1.138a–b, Esau is directly named as the scapegoat and becomes understood as an agent of the Adversary:

Observe that Jacob knew that Esau was destined to ally himself to that tortuous serpent, and hence in all his dealings with him he conducted himself like another tortuous serpent, using all cunning devices; and so it was meet. The same idea was expressed by R. Simeon when, in expounding the verse, “And God created the great fishes, and every living creature that creepeth” (Gen 1, 21), he said: “The “great fishes” are symbolic of Jacob and Esau, and “every living creature that creepeth” symbolizes all the intermediate grades.’ Verily Jacob was endowed with cunning to enable him to hold his own with that other serpent; and so it was meet. For the same reason every New Moon a goat is to be offered up so as to draw the serpent to his own place and thus keep him away from the moon. The same applies to the Day of Atonement, when a goat is to be offered. All this is cunningly devised in order to gain dominion over him, and make him impotent to do mischief. So Scripture says: “And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land which is cut off” (Lev XVI, 22), where the goat (*sa’ir* = *Seir*), as already explained, symbolizes Esau.⁷⁹

In this passage, as in the narrative found in *Zohar* I.65a, the scapegoat ritual is also understood to play a role in the deception of the Other Side; it is devised in order to distract the negative forces’ attention during the yearly atoning rite.⁸⁰

79 Spierling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 2.44.

80 See also *Zohar* 1.145b: “For each time the Israelites offered up a he-goat the serpent was subdued and led captive, as already said. Hence Jacob brought his father two he-goats (*se’irim*), one to subdue Esau, who was hairy (*sa’ir*), and the other to subdue the grade to which Esau was beholden and to which he adhered, as has been said already.” Spierling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 2.70.

The popular biblical tricks of Jacob against Esau therefore receive a new sacerdotal meaning here: they are understood as the deceptive tools Israel uses against the powers of the Other Side, which are represented by Esau.⁸¹

81 Another passage from *Zohar* 1.142b appears to allude to the weakening of Esau, who is understood as the sacerdotal agent of the Other Side: "Rebekah therefore prepared two dishes. R. Judah said: Herein were foreshadowed the two he-goats which the children of Jacob were in the future to offer, one for the Lord and the other for Azazel on the Day of Atonement. We see thus Rebekah offering 'two kids of the goats,' one for the supernal grade and the other with the object of subduing the grade of Esau, so as to deprive him of any power over Jacob." Sperling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 2.56. On Esau as the scapegoat see also Hepner, *Legal Friction: Law, Narrative, and Identity Politics in Biblical Israel*, 539.

Joseph

From our previous investigation, we learned that, in the rabbinic materials, some stories concerning biblical siblings became the focus of intense cultic reinterpretations as they were connected with Yom Kippur imagery. Yet, compared to the aforementioned biblical accounts of brotherly pairs that received their sacerdotal reinterpretation only in the later rabbinic materials, the story of Joseph was already placed in the context of the atoning rite in the Second Temple period. It has been previously noted by scholars that chapter 34 of the *Book of Jubilees* envisions the establishment of Yom Kippur as a punishment for Jacob's sons' actions against Joseph, the very actions that caused their father so much suffering. *Jubilees* 34:12–19 narrates the following tradition:

Jacob's sons slaughtered a he-goat, stained Joseph's clothing by dipping it in its blood, and sent (it) to their father Jacob on the tenth of the seventh month. He mourned all that night because they had brought it to him in the evening. He became feverish through mourning his death and said that a wild animal had eaten Joseph. That day all the people of his household mourned with him. They continued to be distressed and to mourn with him all that day. His sons and daughter set about consoling him, but he was inconsolable for his son. That day Bilhah heard that Joseph had perished. While she was mourning for him, she died. She had been living in Qafatefa. His daughter Dinah, too, died after Joseph had perished. These three (reasons for) mourning came to Israel in one month. They buried Bilhah opposite Rachel's grave, and they buried his daughter Dinah there as well. He continued mourning Joseph for one year and was not comforted but said: "May I go down to the grave mourning for my son." For this reason, it has been ordained regarding the Israelites that they should be distressed on the tenth of the seventh month—on the day when (the news) which made (him) lament Joseph reached his father Jacob—in order to make atonement for themselves on it with a kid—on the tenth of the seventh month, once a year—for their sins. For they had saddened their father's (feelings of) affection for his son Joseph. This day has been ordained so that they may be saddened on it for their sins, all their transgressions, and all their errors; so that they may purify themselves on this day once a year.⁸²

82 J. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (2 vols.; CSCO, 510–11; Scriptorum Aethiopicorum, 87–88; Leuven: Peeters, 1989) 2.228–229.

Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra suggests that, while this passage from *Jubilees* does not directly mention Yom Kippur, “the date identifies the festival beyond doubt.”⁸³ Other peculiar features of *Jubilees*’ account also point to the atoning rite. But the main question, as in the other accounts, remains: what features of the original biblical narrative provoke such cultic interpretation?

Scholars have reflected on several peculiar motifs in Genesis 37 that might have inspired the author of *Jubilees* to connect the Joseph story with the atoning rite. In this regard, Anke Dorman attempts to summarize previous scholarly hypotheses concerning the possible links between the *Jubilees* and the Genesis account. The first important feature is Jacob’s grief over his beloved son, a motif already found in Genesis 37.⁸⁴ Dorman suggests that “this element of mourning seems to be the most important aspect of the festival in *Jubilees*.”⁸⁵ While noting that the motif of mourning does not loom large in the description of the ritual found in Leviticus, Dorman suggests that the elaboration on mourning may have been reinforced by the somewhat ambiguous rulings in Leviticus and Numbers (Lev 16:29–31; 23:27–32; Num 29:7) that one has “to deny oneself.”⁸⁶

The second important feature of Joseph’s story that alludes to the Yom Kippur symbolism is “the fact that the brothers kill a goat and dip Joseph’s coat

83 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 96. Ra’anan Boustan also notes that “although the text does not explicitly refer to Yom Kippur, the date indicated for the commemorative mourning of Joseph’s ‘apparent death’—the tenth day of the seventh month—unequivocally denotes this festival.” R.S. Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic. Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (TSAJ, 112; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2005) 87.

84 Gen 37:34–35: “Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, ‘No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.’ Thus his father bewailed him.” (NRSV). In relation to this motif James VanderKam suggests that “Jacob’s self-affliction upon hearing of his son’s ‘death’ may also have contributed [to connections with Yom Kippur], as this is what the Israelites were later commanded to do on the tenth day of the seventh month (see Lev 16:29, 31, translated ‘you shall deny yourselves’ in the NRSV).” J. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Guides to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001) 74.

85 A. Dorman, “‘Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood’: Motives behind the Institution of the Day of Atonement in the Book of Jubilees,” in: *The Day of Atonement: Its Interpretation in Early Jewish and Christian Traditions* (eds. T. Hieke and T. Nicklas; TBN, 15; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 57.

86 Dorman, “‘Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood,’” 57.

in its blood⁸⁷ in Gen 37:31.⁸⁸ James VanderKam has suggested that “the reference to a goat in Gen. 37:31 (*Jub.* 34:18) triggered the association of this event and Yom Kippur.”⁸⁹ Here one can find a familiar interpretive strategy already known to us from our analysis of the cultic reinterpretation of the Jacob and Esau story where various biblical goats that were initially unrelated to the atoning rite became refashioned into the cultic animals of the Yom Kippur rite.⁹⁰

It should be noted that, while in the Genesis account the slaughtering of a goat is merely a part of the cover up wherein the animal’s blood is used to deceive Jacob, in *Jubilees* this event receives a portentous cultic significance, as it is now understood as a sacrifice to procure atonement.⁹¹ Therefore, the slaughtering of the goat by the brothers was often seen by interpreters as a performance of the atoning ritual and even as the establishment of that rite. Thus, Calum Carmichael suggests that:

the author of *Jubilees* inserts this account of the origin of the Day of Atonement into his presentation of the story of Joseph in Genesis 37. He does so in such a way as to suggest that the offending brothers themselves had to institute the ritual. “They should make atonement for themselves with a young goat . . . on the tenth of the seventh month, once a year,

87 Gen 37:31: “Then they took Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood.” (NRSV).

88 Dorman, “Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood,” 57.

89 VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 74.

90 The tendency to connect the goat of Gen 37 with the goats of Yom Kippur remains an important motif in later Jewish interpretation. Thus, Carmichael draws attention to such an interpretation in Maimonides, who writes that “the Sages . . . consider the reason for which the congregation is constantly atoned for by means of kids of goats is that the whole congregation of Israel committed their first act of disobedience [the brothers’ offence against Joseph] with the help of a kid of goats.” C. Carmichael, *Illuminating Leviticus. A Study of Its Laws and Institutions in the Light of Biblical Narratives* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2006) 51.

91 In this respect Carmichael notes that “while crucial aspects of the process of forgiveness are remembering one’s offenses and then confessing them, there is a further requirement that the wrongdoing somehow, somehow, be removed. It is this aspect of the process that provides the most remarkable link between law and story. What the brothers in effect do when they kill the goat is to transfer their offense to it. That is precisely the point of the goat ritual in Leviticus xvi. Aaron leans his two hands on the goat’s head and transfers the transgressions of the Israelites to it before sending the animal off to the wilderness. To be sure, the brothers are deceitfully and wrongfully shifting their wrongdoing to the goat, whereas in the ritual their descendants are openly and honestly having the goat remove theirs.” C. Carmichael, “The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual,” *VT* 50 (2000) 167–82 at 174.

for their sins; for they had grieved the affection of their father regarding Joseph his son" (*Jub.* xxxiv 18).⁹²

This ritual of the goat's slaughtering and the subsequent manipulation with its blood recalls some allusions to cultic actions related to the immolated goat, a portentous sacerdotal agent that, according to biblical and mishnaic testimonies, has to be slaughtered on Yom Kippur in order that its blood might be applied to the adytum. In view of these connections, it is possible that staining the patriarch's garment with the goat's blood might hint at Joseph's role as the immolated goat. Although in the biblical story Joseph is not slaughtered and his blood is not used for cultic purposes, his role as the goat for YHWH appears to be symbolically affirmed through the transference of the goat's blood onto his attire.⁹³

92 Carmichael, "The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual," 170. Scullion also notes that "Gen 37:31 supplies a further link between the story of Joseph and the ritual of Yom Kippur: the slaughter by Joseph's brothers of the goat and the subsequent dipping of his garment into its blood echoes the rite with the two goats on Yom Kippur. The high priest receives two goats from the Israelites and slaughters one of them. He takes the blood of this goat into the sanctuary to make atonement for the people. The author of Jubilees used these verbal echoes to give Yom Kippur a historical foundation in the patriarchal period." J.P. Scullion, *A Traditio-historical Study of the Day of Atonement* (Ph.D. diss.; Catholic University of America, 1991) 130.

93 The parallelism between the slaughtered goat and the patriarch has been previously noted by scholars. Thus, Carmichael suggests that "to devise the ritual the Levitical lawgiver, I suggest, dramatized the steps involved in the offense committed by Joseph's brothers. What would trigger the dramatization is the similarity of the brothers' slaughter of the goat and their dipping Joseph's coat in its blood to the priests' existing use (or memory) of an animal and the sprinkling of its blood for the purpose of purging evil. In the priestly scheme the aim of a purification offering is to achieve the opposite of what an offense achieves. . . . The Book of Jubilees has, it seems to me, viewed the cultic action with the goat and the brothers' offense along the lines I have outlined. The brothers had to kill a goat to atone for their sins, because, conversely, they offend by killing a goat falsely to suggest the death of Joseph. The ritual slaughter of the goat serves both to recall the offense and to purge iniquity. In Leviticus xvi the priest's procedure with the two goats together—each ritual act intimately links with the other—points to the steps the brothers take when deceiving their father. The result is that the cultic procedure combines both the factual and the fictional dimensions of their offense. The brothers kill a goat and use its blood to stain Joseph's coat. This factual aspect of their offense receives dramatic expression in the ritual slaughter of a goat and the use made of its blood by the priest. The other dimension of their offense is the fiction they create. Malevolently, they imaginatively transform the goat into a wild beast that evilly preys on Joseph in the wilderness. This fictional aspect of their offense comes to dramatic expression in the live goat that is sent into the wilderness

Further, scholars also point to another important cultic connection: the parallelism between the offence and the subsequent act of purging the iniquity. Carmichael suggests that “the ritual slaughter of the goat serves both to recall the offense and to purge iniquity.”⁹⁴

Before we proceed to other cultic features of the Joseph story, one important observation must be made. Our previous analysis of the patriarchal stories involved the imagery of siblings assuming the roles of the two goats of the atoning rite. In Joseph’s story, however, there is no sibling that serves as the conceptual counterpart to the hero. Because of this, in Joseph’s story the reader encounters a novel strategy of cultic reinterpretation not found in the previous patriarchal narratives, namely the protagonist’s adoption of the functions of both goats of the atoning rite.

It is therefore possible that, along with assuming the symbolic role of the goat for YHWH, Joseph is understood as another cultic animal of the atoning rite—the scapegoat. As Dorman notes “the sending away of Joseph into a foreign land . . . reminds the reader of the sending away of the goat to Azazel.”⁹⁵ Mary Douglas also suggests that Joseph’s exile is reminiscent of the scapegoat’s banishment. She argues that “Joseph is a better parallel to the go-away goat. . . . the brothers got rid of him to Egypt, a land which was certainly very remote, though not inhospitable to him.”⁹⁶

There are also some other details of the patriarch’s biblical story that provide interpretive possibilities for Joseph’s role as the scapegoat; these features, unfortunately, do not often receive scholars’ attention. For example, another theme that seems to evoke an allusion to the scapegoat ritual is the fact that Joseph is placed in a pit.⁹⁷ Apocalyptic and rabbinic materials that describe

to an imaginary demonic being Azazel, to become, the implication is, a wild, possessed creature capable of an evil deed. The ritual tells us nothing about what happens to the goat after being sent into the wilderness. The explanation for the silence is that the hocus-pocus has to correspond precisely to what happens in the legend, and in it no evil beast, in fact, destroys Joseph. The drama of the brothers’ actions becomes a ritualized annual performance and plays the role of a confession of sin. The performance accomplishes this role by telescoping all the individual transgressions of all the Israelites living at any one time into the manageable form of their ancestors’ offense.” Carmichael, “The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual,” 172–73.

94 Carmichael, “The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual,” 173.

95 Dorman, “Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood,” 57. See also Carmichael, “The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual,” 176–179.

96 Douglas, *Jacob’s Tears*, 57.

97 Gen 37:24: “. . . and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.” (NRSV).

the final moments of the atoning rite often mention the fact that the scapegoat is pushed from a mountainous cliff by its handlers. The antagonist's descent into the pit receives its new eschatological reinterpretation in the *Book of the Watchers*, where the fallen angel, Asael, envisioned in the apocalypse as the eschatological scapegoat, is placed by his angelic handler into the subterranean abyss located in the desert.

Another important feature of the biblical story that alludes to the atoning rite is the event of Joseph's disrobing by his brothers.⁹⁸ It is well-known that the disrobing and re-robing rituals play a prominent role in the Yom Kippur ordinance, wherein the chief priestly celebrant of the rite, represented by the high priest, as well as his infamous counterpart, represented by the scapegoat, change their garments. More specifically, in mishnaic passages, a great deal is made about the handlers disrobing the scapegoat of its "garment," which is represented by the crimson band. In such texts, there is a striking mirroring of the attributes of the sacerdotal animal with the high priest. Such mirroring might also be present in Joseph's story, who is one of the most enigmatic and complex biblical characters, and was predestined to assume a plethora of sacerdotal roles. In this respect, it appears that the details of Joseph's profile found in the biblical and extra-biblical accounts maintain allusions not only to the scapegoat and the goat for YHWH, but also to the chief sacerdotal celebrant of the Yom Kippur ritual—the high priest.⁹⁹ This has led Dorman and other scholars to suggest that "Joseph's coat could refer to the tunic of the high priest. . . ."¹⁰⁰ It should be noted that interpreters often associate both the patriarch's coat of many colors, as well as his coat dipped in blood, with the high priestly garments. This connection of the patriarch's garments with the high priestly accoutrement is not a modern invention. Later rabbinic materials would link Joseph's coat dipped in blood with the high priestly garment—the attire that

98 Gen 37:23: "...So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore. . . ." (NRSV).

99 This feature of accommodation of several cultic roles by one character will become prominent also in Christian reinterpretation of Yom Kippur imagery where Jesus will assume roles of both of the goats of the atoning rite.

100 Dorman, "Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood," 57. See also, Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 96–97. In the conclusion of her observation of the features of Gen 37 Dorman cautiously warns that "drawing attention to these elements does not mean that they should be equated to the elements in Leviticus 16. The origins of etiologies are not quite that logical, but they still have caused the author of Jubilees to connect them. The connection is based upon consciously or unconsciously felt similarities between Leviticus 16 and Genesis 37, but they must not be over interpreted." Dorman, "Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood," 57.

enabled the procuring of atonement. Yet it should not be forgotten that, like the priestly celebrant of the atoning rite, the infamous scapegoat also had its own “garment” that served as the counterpart to the priestly vestment—the crimson band tied around its horns. Elsewhere, I have explored the striking parallelism between the garments of the high priest and the crimson band of the scapegoat. These vestments appear to be paradoxically reflecting each other through the metamorphoses of their colors, indicating the forgiveness of Israel’s transgression.¹⁰¹ In light of the symbolism of the scapegoat’s crimson band, it is possible that Joseph’s coat dipped in blood might also allude to this cultic item that has the same color as the patriarch’s bloody garment. With reference to these connections, Joseph’s character, which attempts to bring together features and functions of several “actors” of the Yom Kippur rite, seems in itself to represent an important conceptual nexus that paradoxically underlines a striking parallelism with the attributes of these sacerdotal agents.

The sacerdotal reinterpretation of the Joseph story, as outlined in *Jubilees*, would not be forgotten by later Jewish interpreters who would also attempt to connect the story of Joseph with Yom Kippur imagery. Thus, for example, in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Leviticus 9:3, which deals with the motif of the offerings for Aaron’s ordination, the following tradition is found:

And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: “You also are to take a male goat and offer it as a sin offering, lest Satan who is comparable to it speak with a slanderous tongue against you over the affair of the male goat which the tribes of Jacob slaughtered in order to deceive their father; (Take) as a burnt offering a calf—because you worshiped the calf—and a lamb, a year old, that the merit of Isaac, whose father tied him like a lamb, may be remembered on your behalf. Both of them (shall be) without blemish.¹⁰²

Scholars have previously noted some allusions to the Yom Kippur symbolism that appear to be present in this passage.¹⁰³ For example, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra observes that while *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Leviticus 9:3 “is not directly linked to Yom Kippur, all of the traditions contained in this passage are sometimes associated with the Day of Atonement. First, the male goat is sacrificed to the lord of the evil powers, Satan, to keep him from accusing Israel in the heavenly court for the selling of Joseph. The sale of Joseph was connected with

101 Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 28–34.

102 McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1: Leviticus, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Leviticus*, 143.

103 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 66–67.

Yom Kippur in *Jubilees*, but it also appears in the Palestinian Talmud as a rationale for the atoning power of the high priest's tunic."¹⁰⁴ The second feature noticed by Stökl Ben Ezra is that "a calf is offered to atone for the sin of the golden calf. As noted above, Yom Kippur commemorates the second giving of the Torah on a day of repentance after the sin of the golden calf and the breaking of the first tablets."¹⁰⁵ The final feature is that "a lamb is sacrificed to evoke God's mercy by reminding him of the merits of the lamb-like Isaac. . . ."¹⁰⁶

Ra'anana Boustán also argues for the presence of the Yom Kippur tradition in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Leviticus 9:3. He observes that

it is not surprising, then, that the Palestinian targumic tradition, which, like *piyyut*, belongs to the institutional sphere of the late antique synagogue, also attests to the vibrancy of this motif in late antique Jewish literature. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, in its expansive rendering of Lev 9:3, similarly likens the blood of the "goat" that Joseph's brothers spread on Joseph's garment to the sin offering sacrificed on Yom Kippur. . . .¹⁰⁷

As we can see, many connections with the atoning rite that were already hinted at in the *Jubilees'* account receive further elaboration in the targumic, mishnaic, and talmudic materials. One of the prominent lines here is the association of Joseph's garment with the high priestly attire. Scholars often suggest that, in some rabbinic materials, Joseph's story was used as "a rationale for the atoning power of the high priest's tunic."¹⁰⁸ One of these passages is found in the Jerusalem Talmud. *Y. Yoma* 7:5, 44b relates the following tradition:

Rebbi Simon said, just as sacrifices atone, so the garments atone, shirt, trousers, turban, and vest. The shirt was atoning for [wearers of *kilaim*. There are those who want to say,] for spillers of blood, as you are saying, they dipped the shirt in blood.¹⁰⁹

104 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 129.

105 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 129.

106 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 129.

107 Boustán, *From Martyr to Mystic*, 90.

108 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 129.

109 *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma. Edition, Translation and Commentary* (ed. H.W. Guggenheimer; SJ, 74; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013) 587. Reflecting on this passage from the Palestinian Talmud Boustán argues that "the association of Joseph's sale with Yom Kippur, which first appears in *Jubilees*, circulated from a relatively early date in rabbinic traditions concerning the expiatory function of the clothing of the High Priest. These traditions were subsequently embellished in the Yom Kippur liturgy that developed in the

Here, the high priest's accoutrement is tied to Joseph's coat, which is destined to procure atonement. In the Babylonian Talmud, the speculation about the atoning powers of the high priestly garments is again linked to Joseph's coat dipped in blood. Thus, *b. Zevachim* 88b reads:

R. 'Inyani b. Sason also said: Why are the sections on sacrifices and the priestly vestments close together? To teach you: as sacrifices make atonement, so do the priestly vestments make atonement. The coat atones for bloodshed, for it is said, And they killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood.¹¹⁰

A similar tradition that attempts to connect the high priestly vestments to Joseph's clothes can be also found in *Midrash Rabbah*. There, however, it is not the patriarch's bloody attires, but rather his multicolored coat, that becomes the center of cultic speculation. Thus, *Leviticus Rabbah* 10:6 states:

R. Simon said: Even as the sacrifices have an atoning power, so too have the [priestly] garments atoning power, as we have learnt in the Mishnah: The High Priest officiated in eight garments, and an ordinary priest in four, namely in a tunic, breeches, a mitre, and a girdle. The High Priest wore, in addition, a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, and a head-plate; the

late fourth and fifth centuries. And, once embedded in the synagogue liturgy, the motif played a generative role in the production of novel literary compositions that were associated with the Day of Atonement, including The Story of the Ten Martyrs. Thus, while the career of this motif can be traced over many centuries, it was continuously adopted and adapted in shifting literary contexts. The link between Joseph's 'apparent' death at the hands of his brothers and the atoning function of Yom Kippur already resurfaces in early rabbinic descriptions of this festival. In a passage that expands upon the list of the eight garments worn by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement found in the Mishnah at Yoma 7:5, it is reported in the name of R. Simon that 'just as the sacrifices atone, so do the vestments (of the High Priest) atone. The tunic would atone for murder, as it is written, They dipped (Joseph's) tunic in the blood (Gen 37:31): It seems that the motif familiar to us from Jubilees—or another comparable written or oral source—provides the basic kernel of this teaching, which conceptualizes the expiatory function of the High Priest's tunic in terms of the sin committed by Joseph's brothers.' Boustán, *From Martyr to Mystic*, 88–89.

110 See also *b. Arachin* 16a: "... R. 'Anani b. Sason said: Why is the portion about the priestly garments placed next to the portion about the sacrifices? It is to tell you that just as sacrifices procure atonement, so do the priestly garments. The tunic procures atonement for bloodshed, as it is written: And they dipped the coat in the blood." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Arachin* 16a.

tunic to atone for those who wear a mixture of wool and linen, as it is said, And he made him a coat [tunic] of many colours (Gen xxxvii, 3).

It is clear that the sacerdotal reinterpretation attempting to weave Joseph's story into the fabric of the atoning ritual enjoyed immense popularity in rabbinic materials, as it was even shepherded into the vast body of martyrological materials.

Ephraim Urbach, Ra'anana Boustán, and others, have demonstrated that Joseph's story became appropriated in materials associated with the so-called *Story of Ten Martyrs*. These accounts of the martyrdom of ten prominent rabbis are "profoundly indebted to literary traditions and even liturgical practices that are associated with the Day of Atonement."¹¹¹

A further passage found in *Hekhalot Rabbati* demonstrates that these Yom Kippur connections were not forgotten even in later mystical compendia where the martyrological traditions are linked both with Joseph's story and with the cultic realities of the Day of Atonement:

The law court on high wrote ten and gave (them) to Sammael, the prince of Rome, saying: Go and destroy every good piece, thigh and shoulder (Ezek 24:4) to complete the decree: and whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death (Exod 21:16); and vengeance was kept for him so as to take vengeance on him, until it arrives: YHWH will deal with the host of the height on high (Isa 24:21) so that he be slaughtered and hurled down along with all of the princes of his kingdom on high, like the young goats and lambs of the Day of Atonement.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Boustán, *From Martyr to Mystic*, 91. See also E.E. Urbach, *The Sages. Their Concepts and Beliefs* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979) 521–523.

¹¹² J.R. Davila, *Hekhalot Literature in Translation: Major Texts of Merkavah Mysticism* (SJJTP, 20; Leiden: Brill, 2013) 67. Some manuscripts of *Hekhalot Rabbati* have the following secondary addition: "And the sons of Jacob who stole Joseph their brother and sold him, what about them? At once permission was given to Sammael to destroy ten eminent men instead of them to complete this decree." In relation to these additions Davila remarks that "although this passage is a secondary addition to the *Hekhalot Rabbati*, the addition correctly spells out the assumption behind the story that Sammael was granted authority to murder the ten sages to make up for the fact that the ten brothers of Joseph remained unpunished for the kidnapping and selling of their brother in the biblical narrative." Davila, *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, 67.

Midrash Proverbs also recounts the martyrdom of ten prominent rabbis and envisions them as the expiation for the sin of selling Joseph:¹¹³

R. Joshua ben Levi said: the ten martyrs were seized [and slain] just for the sin of selling Joseph. R. Abun said: you must conclude that ten [are martyred] in each and every generation—and still this sin remains unexpiated.¹¹⁴

To conclude our investigation of Joseph's tradition, we should again draw our attention to an important conceptual tendency found in these materials: in comparison with other previously explored brotherly pairs, Joseph's story does not operate with a brotherly counterpart who would function as the other "goat." Rather, a single patriarchal figure now represents a complex amalgam of features of both of the goats of Yom Kippur: the scapegoat and the immolated goat. The former is represented by virtue of his exile to Egypt and the latter is signified by his blood-dipped coat. This conflation of features of the two goats and its application to one person would come to play a prominent role in the application of the goats' imagery to Jesus in early Christian materials.

113 Urbach argues that "the influence of the literature of the *Hekhalot*, which developed the tradition of the ten martyrs, on *Midrash Mishle* is not in doubt. . . ." Urbach, *The Sages*, 521.

114 B.L. Visotzky, *The Midrash on Proverbs: Translated from the Hebrew with an Introduction and Annotations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) 24.

The Angel of the Divine Name and Satan in the Book of Zechariah

Our previous investigation dealt mainly with the patriarchal stories found in the Book of Genesis. We explored how features of the brothers' stories attested in this biblical book anticipated future Jewish interpretations that attempted to envision human agents as the goats of the atoning rite. The proclivities of the Jewish cult appear also to be present in some prophetic accounts found in the Hebrew Bible, including the Book of Zechariah. There, however, the eschatological interpretation of the goats imagery reaches another new conceptual level: the cultic animals become associated not merely with human subjects, but also with spiritual beings, both angelic and demonic. As will be demonstrated later in our study, this transition, which envisions the proverbial cultic animals as creatures of other realms, will come to play a prominent role in later apocalyptic reinterpretations of the Yom Kippur imagery found in the early Enochic materials and also in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

In Zech 3:1–10, the prophet receives a vision of the following eschatological scene:

Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was dressed with filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." And to him he said, "See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you with festal apparel." And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with the apparel; and the angel of the Lord was standing by. Then the angel of the Lord assured Joshua, saying "Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they are an omen of things to come: I am going to bring my servant the Branch. For on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the

guilt of this land in a single day. On that day, says the Lord of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tree.” (NRSV).

In comparison with the accounts previously explored, this narrative brings into interaction not only human, but also spiritual beings of the highest level, including the Angel of the Lord and Satan. These otherworldly creatures are acting together with the human protagonist within cultic settings. Moreover, the sacerdotal realities outlined in the text appear to be quite distinctive. As previous studies have suggested, the depiction demonstrates some marked connections with the Yom Kippur ritual.¹¹⁵

The first important theme that is relevant to this study involves the high priestly garment, which is changed during the course of the story.¹¹⁶ Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer notes that “the Torah legislates that the high priest should change garments on two occasions: at his inauguration and at the Day of Atonement.”¹¹⁷ She further argues that there is support for identifying the ceremony in Zech 3 with the Day of Atonement as it is described in Lev 16 rather than with the ceremony of inauguration, as it described in Exod 28–29 and Lev 9.¹¹⁸ Concluding her analysis of Joshua’s investiture, Tiemeyer argues that “the cleansing of Joshua and his symbolic change of clothes (Zech 3:3–5) are . . . the vital preparations for celebration of the Day of Atonement and its resulting removal of sin from the land (3:9).”¹¹⁹

There is another important feature of the prophetic passage that relays possible connections to the accoutrement of the high priest. It involves an enigmatic reference to the engraved stone with seven facets found in Zech 3:9. It is noteworthy that this item is mentioned in the context of the removal of guilt from the land. In view of these features, several scholars have suggested a possible connection¹²⁰ between the mysterious stone found in Zechariah’s

115 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 81; L.-S. Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage* (FAT, 19; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2006) 248–256.

116 Mark Boda argues that “the consistent use of vocabulary from priestly rituals strongly suggests that the scene reflects the investiture and atonement rituals of the high priest.” M.J. Boda, “Oil, Crowns and Thrones: Prophet, Priest and King in Zechariah 1:7–6:15,” *JHS* 3 (2001) §2.1.2. Michael Stead also notes that “although Zech 3 omits some of the specific terminology for the priestly regalia, the thematic parallels are still striking.” M.R. Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8* (LHBOTS, 506; London: T&T Clark, 2009) 159.

117 Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage*, 249.

118 Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage*, 249.

119 Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage*, 251.

120 Thus, Meredith Kline notes that “unmistakably it is this Exodus legislation concerning the golden plaque on the high priest’s mitre that is the source on which Zech 3:9 draws

passage and the high priest's front-plate (פָּרָז) worn on his forehead during the Yom Kippur rituals.¹²¹ Several similarities between the symbolism of the front-plate and the enigmatic stone have been noted. One of them is that both the front plate¹²² and Zechariah's stone are engraved.¹²³

The second important feature is that both the פָּרָז and Zechariah's stone are connected with the motif of the removal of guilt. As we remember from Zech 3, the stone is mentioned in the context of the removal of guilt from the land. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer notes that, similar to Zechariah's stone, the high priestly front plate was also "instrumental in removing the guilt,"¹²⁴ according

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- and that provides the identification of the stone." M. Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah's Night Visions* (Overland Park: Two Age Press, 2001) 123.
- 121 H.G. Mitchell, *Haggai, Zechariah* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912) 157–8; E. Sellin, *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch* (KAT, 12; Leipzig: Deichertsche, 1930) 500; L.G. Rignell, *Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja* (Lund: Gleerup, 1950) 131–4; K. Elliger, *Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959) 124; D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984) 211–12; Kline, *Glory in Our Midst*, 122–124; L.-S. Tiemeyer, "The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3)," in: *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence* (ed. C. Tuckett; Burlington; Ashgate, 2003) 1–19 at 9–11; B.G. Curtis, *Up the Steep and Stony Road: The Book of Zechariah in Social Location Trajectory Analysis* (Leiden: Brill, 2006) 135–136; Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage*, 250; M.A. Sweeney, "Targum Jonathan's Reading of Zechariah 3: A Gateway for the Palace," in: *Tradition in Transition. Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* (eds. M.J. Boda and M.H. Floyd; LHBOTS, 475; London: T&T Clark, 2008) 278.
- 122 Exod 28:36 reads: "You shall make a rosette of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.'" (NRSV). Exod 39:30: "They made the rosette of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.'" (NRSV).
- 123 Tiemeyer, "The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3)," 10.
- 124 Tiemeyer, "The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3)," 10. Kline notes that "There the significance of the stone is expounded in terms of a divine removing of iniquity, a clear reference to v. 4 where the symbolism of Joshua's reclothing is explained in the same way." Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah's Night Visions*, 122. In the extensive description of the פָּרָז found in the *Book of Zohar* 11.217b this item also appears to be closely connected not only with removing guilt but also in detecting human sin: "He opened saying, They made פָּרָז (*tsits*), the medallion of, the holy diadem of pure gold . . . (Exodus 39:30). Come and see: Why is it called *tsits*? Well, looking to see. Since it was intended for human observation, it is called *tsits*. Whoever looked at that *tsits* was thereby recognized. In the *tsits* were letters of the Holy Name, inscribed and engraved. If the one standing before it was virtuous, then those letters engraved in the gold protruded from below upward, rising from that engraving radiantly, and they illumined that person's face—a scintillation sparkled in him and did not sparkle. The first moment that the priest looked at him, he would see the radiance of all the letters in his face; but when he gazed

to Exod 28.¹²⁵ This text informs us that the front plate “shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall take upon himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering. . . .” Tiemeyer further notes that the link between the stone and the front plate “is strengthen[ed] by the additional connection between צִנִּיף in Zech 3:5 and the מְצַנֵּפֶת in Exod 28:37.”¹²⁶

Another possible link with the Yom Kippur ritual includes the expression “I (God) will remove the guilt of this land *in a single day* (בְּיוֹם אֶחָד)” found in Zech 3:9. Scholars previously noted that this statement “is important for the understanding of the *Sitz-im-Leben* of Zech 3 as whole.”¹²⁷ Tiemeyer argues that “the expression בְּיוֹם אֶחָד = ‘in one day’ points to a ceremony which takes place in one day. Based on this definition, the only day known in the OT when God removes the sins of His people is the annual Day of Atonement.”¹²⁸ She further suggests that “assuming that this feast was known to the people at the time of Zechariah, it seems likely that the original audience of this material associated בְּיוֹם אֶחָד with this festival.”¹²⁹ Tiemeyer adds that “the עוֹן in verse 9 is naturally connected with Joshua’s עוֹן in v.4, pointing to a link between the removal of

intently he saw nothing but the radiance of his face shining, as if a sparkle of gold were scintillating. However, the priest knew from his first momentary glimpse that the blessed Holy One delighted in that person, and that he was destined for the world that is coming, because this vision issued from above and the blessed Holy One delighted in him. Then when they gazed upon him, they saw nothing, for a vision from above is revealed only for a moment. If a person stood before the tsits and his face did not display momentarily a holy vision, the priest would know that he was brazen-faced, and he would have to plead for mercy on his behalf and seek atonement for him.” D. Matt, *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* (12 vols.; Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003-) 6.240–241.

125 Michael Stead argues that “based on the intertextual connections between Zech 3:9 and Exod 28 . . . I submit that the engraved stone in Zech 3:9 (presumably engraved with the phrase ‘Holy to Yahweh’) has the same function as the engraved rosette of the holy crown.” Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8*, 170.

126 “You shall fasten it on the turban with a blue cord; it shall be on the front of the turban.” (NRSV).

127 Tiemeyer, “The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3),” 9.

128 Tiemeyer, “The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3),” 9. In relation to this motif Stead notes that “at a thematic level, a one-day removal of sin connects this verse with the sacrificial system in general, and the Day of Atonement in particular. Furthermore, the Day of Atonement (Lev 16) in particular was the occasion for the removal of national guilt on a single day, and, as noted above, the high priest had to be dressed in his regalia on that day. All these connections suggest that the sacrificial system in general, and the Day of Atonement in particular, is the intertextual background for this phrase in Zech 3:9.” Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8*, 170.

129 Tiemeyer, “The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3),” 9.

Joshua's guilt and of that of the land."¹³⁰ She also notes that "Joshua's impurity represents his own guilt, something which must have rendered him unable to carry the guilt of the people on the Day of Atonement. Thus, Joshua's cleansing prepares the way for the Day of Atonement and the cleansing of the land."¹³¹

As we can see, the prophetic account offers not just one, but several possible cultic allusions that point to the atoning rite. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra concisely summarizes these important details that have previously been noted by a number of scholars. He suggests that

the protagonist is a high priest. He stands at a special place where only he, God, a defending angel and the accusing Satan are present. The right of access to this place is dependent on observance of certain regulations and a moral code. This evokes the holy of holies. The central act is a symbolic change of vestments. The soiled high priest's vestments symbolize his sins. Exchanging these soiled clothes for clean ones signifies atonement. The "single day" of purification of the land evokes Yom Kippur and gives it an eschatological ring. The cultic scene alluded to could be the picture of a high priest who changes his linen vestments, which have become stained from sprinkling the blood on Yom Kippur.¹³²

His summative assessment is as follows: "regarding the number of corresponding elements, a connection to Yom Kippur is probable."¹³³

Indeed, the prophetic passage portrays several characters who hold familiar cultic roles, and it evokes attributes of the atoning rite: a human high priest who is re-clothed during the ceremony, a character bearing the divine Name, and an accursed antagonist.¹³⁴

130 Tiemeyer, "The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3)," 9.

131 Tiemeyer, "The Guilty Priesthood (Zech 3)," 9.

132 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 81.

133 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 81.

134 Some scholars have suggested that the phrase "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan!" that is found in Zech 3:2 can be understood as an imposition of a curse on the antagonist, since this expression was often used as a cursing formula in later Jewish and Christian materials. André Caquot observes that "Zech. 3:2 is the passage which seems to have guaranteed the verb גער a certain reviviscence in the later literature. . . . in a later period, this verse became an incantation, as the references in Jude 9, the Babylonian Talmud *Berakhoth* 51a, and the quotations of Zech. 3:2 in the Jewish Aramaic magical bowls show. *Ga'ar* is found in the Qumran texts in connection with the exorcism of demons: in 1QM 14:10, Heb. *ga'ar* takes "the spirits of destruction" as its object; and in 1QGenAp 20:28, the passive form of Aram. *ge'ar* has "evil spirit" as its subject (cf. also 1QH 9:11; 1Qf 4:6; 4QM^a 7;

While most scholarship has concentrated on the high priestly symbolism of the passage and the clothing metaphors that are associated with it, it appears that the narrative contains not only allusions to the high priestly figure, but also to the imagery of the goats. What first catches the eye is that, in a manner similar to the Yom Kippur goat ritual, the passage contains a familiar sacerdotal structure: the high priest, Joshua, finds himself in the company of a distinctive pair: a celestial being endowed with the divine name (Angel of YHWH) and an antagonistic creature that is accursed (Satan).¹³⁵ This peculiar constellation of the eschatological triad is reminiscent of the three main actors of the Yom Kippur ordinance: the high priest, the goat for YHWH, and the accursed scapegoat. The peculiar sacerdotal agents this time participate not in an earthly ritual, but an eschatological one.

Concluding this section of our study, we should note that if the imagery of the two goats is indeed present in Zechariah's account, it represents a significant and novel step in the long and complex history of the two goats' interpretation: here the proverbial cultic animals have become, for the first time, associated with spiritual beings. This conceptual turn will be crucial for angelological developments found in the *Book of the Watchers*, the *Animal Apocalypse*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. In all of these texts, the symbolism of the scapegoat undergoes remarkable demonological reshaping.

ge'arah, 1QH 10:18)." A. Caquot, "גער," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (eds. G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979) 3:52. In a similar vein, George Klein notes that "... the word 'rebuke' communicates such strong divine cursing that the expression became a curse formula widely attested in the postexilic period, including the documents of the Qumran community." G. Klein, *Zechariah: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008) 136. And finally, the Meyers note that "the divine pronouncement of 3:2 becomes an incantation in later Jewish literature and is found in the Aramaic magic bowls from Nippur." C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8* (AB, 25B; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987) 187.

135 Meredith Kline suggests that "indeed, the rebuke formula found in Zech 3:2 came to be used in execratory incantation. In the 'Yahweh rebuke you, O Satan,' of Zech 3:2 we can hear reverberating the primal 'Cursed are you' of Gen 3:14." Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah's Night Visions*, 103.

Asael in the *Book of the Watchers*

In the Book of Zechariah, the angelological and demonological reinterpretation of the goats' imagery was still clouded with some uncertainty. However, the conceptual trend that depicts the cultic animals as spiritual beings received a more distinctive embodiment in the early Enochic circle, as is reflected in the composition known to us as 1 (*Ethiopic*) *Enoch*.

One of the earliest Enochic booklets of this composition, the *Book of the Watchers*, reinterprets the scapegoat rite by incorporating certain details of the sacrificial ritual into the story of its main antagonist, the fallen angel Asael. 1 *Enoch* 10:4–7 constitutes an important nexus of this conceptual development, which describes Asael's punishment:

And further the Lord said to Raphael: "Bind Azazel by his hands and his feet, and throw him into the darkness. And split open the desert which is in Dudael, and throw him there. And throw on him jagged and sharp stones, and cover him with darkness; and let him stay there forever, and cover his face, that he may not see light, and that on the great day of judgment he may be hurled into the fire. And restore the earth which the angels have ruined, and announce the restoration of the earth, for I shall restore the earth. . . ."¹³⁶

As in the aforementioned prophetic account, the role of the scapegoat is taken on by the leader of the fallen angels, who also becomes the celestial adversary. Unlike Zechariah's account, though, even the name of the antagonist brings to memory the atoning rite in this text. Other details of Asael's punishment also evoke the scapegoat ritual. For example, just like the proverbial scapegoat, Asael's punishment occurs in the desert. While many actions in biblical history occur in the wilderness, the place of Asael's punishment is designated in 1 *Enoch* as *Dudael*. This is, no doubt, reminiscent of the terminology used for the designation of the ravine of the scapegoat (בית הדורו / הדורו) in later rabbinic interpretations of the Yom Kippur ritual.¹³⁷ This tradition is reflected both in *m. Yoma* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*.¹³⁸

136 M. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A New Edition in the Light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 2.87–88.

137 A. Geiger, "Einige Worte über das Buch Henoch," *JZWL* 3 (1864) 196–204 at 200.

138 Cf. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Lev 16:10: "The goat on which the lot of Azazel fell shall be set alive before the Lord to make atonement for the sinfulness of the people of the house

Atoning overtones that overshadow the story of the celestial rebel are also noteworthy. Thus, one of the significant outcomes of the fallen angel's punishment is the healing or "restoration" of the earth—a motif that is also prominent in the scapegoat ordinance.¹³⁹

Another important detail that appears to pertain to the scapegoat rite is the antagonist's placement into a pit situated in the wilderness. In *1 Enoch* 10, the deity orders Raphael to open the pit in the desert and throw Asael into the darkness. The account further portrays the angelic scapegoat's fall into the depths of the abyss.¹⁴⁰ This detail evokes the description of the scapegoat's descent, which is found in rabbinic materials where, in the final moments of the atoning rite, the go-away goat is pushed off a mountainous cliff into the abyss. Thus, *m. Yoma* 6:6 offers the following portrayal of the violent descent of the cultic animal:

of Soq, that is Beth Haduri." McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 167; *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Lev 16:22: "The goat shall carry on himself all their sins to a desolate place; and the man shall let the goat go into the desert of Soq, and the goat shall go up on the mountains of Beth Haduri, and the blast of wind from before the Lord will thrust him down and he will die." McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 169.

139 R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893); D. Dimant, *The Fallen Angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Related Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Ph.D. diss.; The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1974) [Hebrew]; idem, "1 Enoch 6–11: A Methodological Perspective," *SBLSP* 17 (1978) 323–339; C.H.T. Fletcher-Louis, "The Aqedah and the Book of Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36)," in: *Studies in Jewish Prayer* (eds. R. Hayward and B. Embry; JSSS, 17; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 1–33 at 24; Geiger, "Einige Worte über das Buch Henoch," 200; Grabbe, "The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation," 165–79; P. Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11," *JBL* 96 (1977) 195–233; Helm, "Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition," 217–226; G. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11," *JBL* 96 (1977) 383–405; D.C. Olson, "1 Enoch," in: *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (eds. J.D.G. Dunn and J.W. Rogerson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 904–41 at 910; R. Rubinkiewicz, *Die Eschatologie von Henoch 9–11 und das Neue Testament* (OBS, 6; Klosterneuburg: Verlag Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1984) 88–89; Stöckl Ben Ezra, "Yom Kippur in the Apocalyptic Imaginaire and the Roots of Jesus' High Priesthood," 349–366; idem, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 85–88.

140 Regarding this tradition, Patrick Tiller cautiously suggests that "the temporary rocky prison of Asael may be somehow related to the offering of a live goat, which bears the sins of Israel, to Azazel on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)." P.A. Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch* (EJL, 4; Atlanta: Scholars, 1993) 371.

What did he do? He divided the thread of crimson wool and tied one half to the rock and the other half between its horns, and he pushed it from behind; and it went rolling down, and before it had reached half the way down the hill it was broken in pieces. He returned and sat down beneath the last booth until nightfall. And from what time does it render his garments unclean? After he has gone outside the wall of Jerusalem. R. Simeon says: From the moment that he pushes it into the ravine.¹⁴¹

In the Talmudic account, the cliff from which the scapegoat falls is designated as the Zok (Heb. צוק).¹⁴² An example is found in *b. Yoma* 67a:

What did he do? He divided the thread of crimson wool, and tied one half to the rock, the other half between its horns, and pushed it from behind. And it went rolling down and before it had reached half its way down hill it was dashed to pieces. He came back and sat down under the last booth until it grew dark. And from when on does it render his garments unclean? From the moment he has gone outside the wall of Jerusalem. R. Simeon says: from the moment he pushes it into the Zok.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

¹⁴² Among the early sources, Zok is mentioned in both *m. Yoma* 6:4–6 and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Lev 16:10. Isidore Epstein suggests that “Zok means a mountain peak; it may be the special name of the mountain whence the he-goat was flung down.” Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Seder Mo’ed*, 3:316.

¹⁴³ See also: *b. Yoma* 67b: “Raba said: The view of him who says they are permitted is more reasonable, for the Torah did not say ‘Send away’ to create [possibility of] offence. Our Rabbis taught: Azazel—it should be hard and rough. One might have assumed that it is to be in inhabited land, therefore the text reads: ‘In the wilderness.’ But whence do we know that it [is to be in] a Zok?—therefore the text reads: ‘Cut off.’” Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67b; *b. Yoma* 67b: “R. Simeon says: And he that letteth go the goat for Azazel shall wash his clothes, i.e., he flings it down headlong and his garments become then unclean.” Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma*, 67b; *b. Yoma* 71a: “Raba said, Scripture says: [But the goat . . . for Azazel] shall be set alive. How long must it needs be set alive? Until the time of Atonement—Now when is the time of Atonement? At the time when the blood is sprinkled, not beyond it.” Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 71a. The tradition of pushing the scapegoat off a mountain may also be reflected in the tradition of naming the mountain Azazel. Regarding this, see *b. Yoma* 67b: “Another [Baraitha] taught: Azazel, i.e., the hardest of mountains. . . .” Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67b.

Y. Yoma 6:3 also contains this tradition:

All during Simeon the Just's lifetime he [the scapegoat] did not fall down half the mountain before he dissolved into limbs; after Simeon the Just's death he fled to the desert and was eaten by the Saracens.¹⁴⁴

As shown above, both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds make reference to high places as the animal's final destination. Both accounts also portray its violent descent, culminating in the dramatic disintegration of the scapegoat's body.

It is also important that *1 Enoch* 10 narrates the detail that the antagonist is covered in darkness. As has been already noted in our study, the clothing metaphors are highly significant in the descriptions of Yom Kippur, where the high priestly figure undergoes a series of changes in garments during the course of the atoning ritual. Mishnaic and early Christian testimonies bring important additions into this panoply of this cultic pageantry, extending these clothing metaphors to the scapegoat. Thus, from rabbinic and early Christian depictions of the scapegoat ritual, one learns about the symbolism of the crimson band. Tied around the cultic animal's head, the ribbon was said to change colors miraculously at the climax of the atoning ceremony, which signified the forgiveness of Israel's sins. Early interpretations suggest that the scarlet band adorning the scapegoat's head was intended to be a garment—the attire of human sins—carried by the animal into the uninhabitable desert. There, according to Christian and mishnaic testimonies, the cultic animal was “disrobed” by its handlers when its ribbon was either fully or partially removed.¹⁴⁵

In light of these clothing metaphors applied to the scapegoat, the covering of Asael with darkness is noteworthy. But does this covering with

144 Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma. Edition, Translation and Commentary*, 559. See also *y. Yoma* 6:5: “What did he do? He split the shiny strip; half of it he bound on the rock and half of it he bound between its horns. Then he pushed it backwards, it rolled descending. It did not reach half of the declivity before it dissolved into limbs.” Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma. Edition, Translation and Commentary*, 565.

145 See *m. Yoma* 6:6: “He divided the thread of crimson wool and tied one half to the rock and the other half between its horns, and he pushed it from behind.” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170; also, *Barnabas* 7: “When this happens, the one who takes the goat leads it into the wilderness and removes the wool, and places it on a blackberry bush, whose buds we are accustomed to eat when we find it in the countryside.” Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.39.

darkness represent an allusion to the endowment of the scapegoat with a garment of human “darkness”—namely the transgressions and sins of the Israelites? The symbolism of the scapegoat’s covering, enhanced by the dichotomy of light and darkness, seems to parallel another cluster of clothing metaphors often found in Jewish apocalyptic accounts: namely, the imagery of the seer’s endowment with the garment of light, which was received upon his entrance into the upper realm. Asael undergoes a similar, albeit reverse, transformation when he is covered with darkness and prepared for his forced exile into the subterranean realm.

In view of these transformational correspondences, it is especially significant that Asael’s *face* is covered. It appears that, here, like in the metamorphoses of the Jewish patriarchs and prophets, the term “face” serves as a *terminus technicus* for designating the character’s entire “extent.” Moreover, the ontological refashioning of the visionary’s “face” leads to his new status vis-à-vis the deity, as his face literally becomes the reflection of the glorious Face of God. Covering the antagonist’s “face” leads to the opposite metamorphosis. In this context, therefore, the covering of Asael’s “face” may suggest that he receives a new ontological garment that deprives him from access to, or vision of, the deity.¹⁴⁶

Asael’s special execution in *1 Enoch* 10, especially in comparison with the undifferentiated punishment of the other leader of the fallen angels, Shemihazah, which simply takes place with the rest of the celestial rebels,¹⁴⁷ strengthens the cultic interpretation of his punishment. It portrays him as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the giants and the fallen angels,¹⁴⁸ and a remedy to remove the impurity and defilement caused by the celestial rebels and

146 The motif of throwing Asael onto jagged and sharp stones in *1 Enoch* 10 is also noteworthy in light of the tradition found in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, which tells how, during the ceremony of the goats’ selection, their lots were thrown upon them. Thus, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Lev 16:8 reads: “And Aaron shall place equal lots on the two goats, one lot (marked) ‘for the name of the Lord,’ and the other (marked) ‘for Azazel.’ He shall shake them in the urn, take them out, and throw them on the goats.” McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1: Leviticus, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Leviticus*, 167.

147 *1 Enoch* 10:11: “And the Lord said to Michael: ‘Go, inform Semyaza and the others with him who have associated with the women to corrupt themselves with them in all their uncleanness.’ *1 Enoch* 10:14: “And then he (Semyaza) will be burnt and from then on destroyed with them; together they will be bound until the end of all generations.” Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2.89–90.

148 *1 Enoch* 10:8: “And the whole earth has been ruined by the teaching of the works of Azazel, and against him write down all sin.” Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2.88.

their offspring.¹⁴⁹ Józef Tadeusz Milik draws attention to one such motif found in fragments from the *Book of Giants* (4Q203), in which Asael/Azazel seems to be an expiatory agent. It reads:¹⁵⁰

...and [yo]ur power [...] Blank Th[en] 'Ohyah [said] to Hahy[ah, his brother...] Then he punished, and not us, [bu]t Aza[ze]l and made [him... the sons of] Watchers, the Giants; and n[o]ne of [their] be[loved] will be forgiven [...]...he has imprisoned us and has captured yo[u]. (4Q203, frag. 7, col 1).¹⁵¹

Moreover, some Qumran materials appear to be aware of the angelological interpretation of the scapegoat figure. In particular, they depict Azazel as the eschatological leader of the fallen angels,¹⁵² incorporating him into the story of the Watchers' rebellion.¹⁵³ All these strands of evidence demonstrate that the conceptual link between the scapegoat and the fallen angel is documented in a number of important materials across a substantial span of history.

A large number of scholars now affirm this connection by arguing that "a comparison of 1 Enoch 10:4–8 with the Day of Atonement ritual (cf. Lev 16:8–26),

149 Concerning the theme of pollution caused by the fallen angels' actions, see Dimant, "1 Enoch 6–11: A Methodological Perspective," 325; M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Praeger, 1969) 41–57; and Molenberg, "A Study of the Roles of Shemihazah and Asael in 1 Enoch 6–11," 139.

150 In his comments on 4Q203, Milik suggests that "Azazel appears here in his expiatory role (Lev. 16: 8, 10, 26), for he seems to be punished for the sins of the giants." J. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 313.

151 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 411.

152 4Q180 1:11–10 reads: "Interpretation concerning the ages which God has made: An age to conclude [all that there is] and all that will be. Before creating them he determined [their] operations [according to the precise sequence of the ages,] one age after another age. And this is engraved on the [heavenly] tablets [for the sons of men,] [for] / [a]ll/ the ages of their dominion. This is the sequence of the son[s of Noah, from Shem to Abraham,] [unt]il he sired Isaac; the ten [generations...] [...] Blank [...] [And] interpretation concerning 'Azaz'el and the angels wh[o came to the daughters of man] [and s]ired themselves giants. And concerning 'Azaz'el [is written...] [to love] injustice and to let him inherit evil for all [his] ag[e...] [...] (of the) judgments and the judgment of the council of [...]" García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 371–373. For similar traditions, see also 4Q181.

153 Later rabbinic materials also link the sacrificial animal known from the scapegoat ritual to the story of the angelic rebels. *b. Yoma* 67b, for example, records the following tradition: "The School of R. Ishmael taught: Azazel—[it was so called] because it obtains atonement for the affair of Uza and Aza'el." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67b.

where we find a goat sent off ‘to Azazel,’ leaves little doubt that Asael is indeed Azazel.”¹⁵⁴ Indeed, the similarities can be found on several levels since “the punishment of the demon resembles the treatment of the goat in aspects of geography, action, time and purpose.”¹⁵⁵

It is intriguing that, while the main antagonist of the *Book of the Watchers* is envisioned as the eschatological scapegoat, the main protagonist of the story—the patriarch Enoch—appears to be understood as the high priestly figure who is destined to enter into the celestial Holy of Holies. This dynamic once again mimics the peculiar processions of the protagonist and the antagonist on the Day of Atonement, wherein the high priest enters the divine presence, and the scapegoat is exiled into the wilderness.¹⁵⁶ The *Book of the Watchers* reflects the same cultic pattern as its hero, Enoch, progresses in the opposite direction of his antagonistic counterpart Asael. Enoch ascends into heaven and acquires a special priestly status that allows him to enter into the celestial sanctuary. Enoch’s procession into the heavenly sanctuary has been previously noted by several scholars.¹⁵⁷

1 Enoch 14 unveils the following tradition:

And I proceeded until I came near to a wall which was built of hailstones, and a tongue of fire surrounded it, and it began to make me afraid. And I went into the tongue of fire and came near to a large house which was built of hailstones, and the wall of that house (was) like a mosaic (made) of hailstones, and its floor (was) snow. Its roof (was) like the path of the

154 D. Olson, *Enoch. A New Translation: The Ethiopic Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch* (North Richland Hills: Bibal Press, 2004) 34.

155 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 87; Olson, *Enoch. A New Translation*, 38.

156 In this respect Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra rightly observes that the Yom Kippur ritual “... consisted of two antagonistic movements... centripetal and centrifugal: the entrance of the High Priest into the Holy of Holies and the expulsion of the scapegoat.” Stökl Ben Ezra, “The Biblical Yom Kippur, the Jewish Fast of the Day of Atonement and the Church Fathers,” 494.

157 M. Himmelfarb, “The Temple and the Garden of Eden in Ezekiel, the Book of the Watchers, and the Wisdom of ben Sira,” in: *Sacred Places and Profane Spaces: Essays in the Geographics of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (eds. J. Scott and P. Simpson-Housley; New York: Greenwood Press, 1991) 63–78; idem, “Apocalyptic Ascent and the Heavenly Temple,” *SBLSP* 26 (1987) 210–217. See also H.S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and of the Son of Man* (WMANT, 61; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988) 101–102; D. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Response to Ezekiel’s Vision* (TSAJ, 16; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1988) 81.

stars and flashes of lightning, and among them (were) fiery Cherubim, and their heaven (was like) water. And (there was) a fire burning around its wall, and its door was ablaze with fire. And I went into that house, and (it was) hot as fire and cold as snow, and there was neither pleasure nor life in it. Fear covered me and trembling, I fell on my face. And I saw in the vision, and behold, another house, which was larger than the former, and all its doors (were) open before me, and (it was) built of a tongue of fire. And in everything it so excelled in glory and splendor and size that I am unable to describe to you its glory and its size. And its floor (was) fire, and above (were) lightning and the path of the stars, and its roof also (was) a burning fire. And I looked and I saw in it a high throne, and its appearance (was) like ice and its surroundings like the shining sun and the sound of Cherubim.¹⁵⁸

Commenting on this enigmatic depiction, Martha Himmelfarb draws attention to the peculiar description of the celestial edifices that Enoch encounters in his approach to the Throne. According to the Ethiopic text, on his route to the divine presence, the seventh antediluvian patriarch passes through three celestial constructions: a wall, an outer house, and an inner house. In contrast to the Ethiopic version, the Greek version mentions a house instead of a wall. As Himmelfarb observes, “more clearly in the Greek, but also in the Ethiopic, this arrangement echoes the structure of the earthly temple with its vestibule, sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies.”¹⁵⁹ God’s throne is situated in the innermost chamber of this heavenly tripartite structure and is represented by a throne of cherubim (14:18). This celestial entity holding the deity’s presence can be compared to the cherubim found in the Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem Temple. It appears that Enoch’s entrance into the heavenly adytum is endowed with sacerdotal significance. Enoch’s priestly functions have been previously noted by several scholars. Thus, Himmelfarb suggests that in the *Book of the Watchers* the patriarch himself, in the course of his ascent, becomes a priest¹⁶⁰

158 Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 1.50–52; 2.98–99.

159 Himmelfarb, “Apocalyptic Ascent and the Heavenly Temple,” 210.

160 David Halperin’s research also stresses the “apocalyptic” priestly function of Enoch in the *Book of the Watchers*. He observes that “Daniel and Enoch share an image, perhaps drawn from the hymnic tradition of merkabah exegesis (think of the Angelic liturgy), of God surrounded by multitudes of angels. But, in the Holy of Holies, God sits alone. . . . The angels, barred from the inner house, are the priests of Enoch’s heavenly Temple. The high priest must be Enoch himself, who appears in the celestial Holy of Holies to procure forgiveness for holy beings.” Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot*, 81–2.

in a manner similar to the angels.¹⁶¹ Moreover, if the seer does indeed enter the celestial Holy of Holies, this entrance once again points to the Yom Kippur setting, since the high priest alone had the privilege of entering into the inner chamber of the Temple and only on the Day of Atonement. In view of the peculiar cultic details of the description found in *1 Enoch* 14, some scholars have argued for a Yom Kippur origin of this chapter. Thus, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra argues that “many details attest to a major priestly component in the apocalyptic thought of *1 Enoch* 14. The white garment is best understood as referring to the linen vestments worn daily by the priests—and worn, too, by the high priest, on Yom Kippur. Enoch’s intercessory prayer on behalf of the Watchers matches the high priest’s actions on Yom Kippur.”¹⁶²

The connection of Enoch’s story with the Yom Kippur ritual is important for our study of the eschatological scapegoat Asael. It demonstrates that the symbolism of Yom Kippur is not only confined to the portrayal of the antagonist’s punishment in *1 Enoch* 10, but permeates other parts of the pseudepigraphon, revealing persistent cultic tendencies of this early apocalyptic work.

161 Himmelfarb, “Apocalyptic Ascent and the Heavenly Temple,” 213.

162 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 82–83.

Barabbas and Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew

The appropriation of the two goats' typology to both human and otherworldly characters continued on into early Christian traditions. Although it received its most lucid and unambiguous expressions in second- and third-century Christian writings, especially in the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, some scholars have suggested that traces of the goats typology, as applied to human subjects, can be noticed as early as the canonical Gospels.¹⁶³ Matthew 27:15–26 is one text where the typology can be possibly found:

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So

163 Regarding the two goats' typology in the canonical Gospels, see A.H. Wratislaw, *Notes and Dissertations Principally on Difficulties in the Scriptures of the New Covenant* (London: Bell and Daldy; Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co., 1863) 12–23; idem, "The Scapegoat-Barabbas," *ExpTim* 3 (1891/92) 400–403; J.D. Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke: The Origins of the Passion Narrative* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988) 114–159; H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels. Their History and Development* (Philadelphia and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 1990) 216–31; Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 167–169; E.B. Aitken, *Jesus' Death in Early Christian Memory: The Poetics of the Passion* (NTOA, 53; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004) 115–20; J. Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," *HTR* 100 (2007) 309–334.

he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. (NRSV).

Here, the Jewish crowd demands that Pilate release Barabbas and crucify Jesus. Scholars note that it is difficult to ascertain the historicity of the release of a prisoner in this manner. Raymond Brown purports that "... there is no good analogy supporting the historical likelihood of the custom in Judea of regularly releasing a prisoner at a/the feast [of Passover]."¹⁶⁴ Scholars often assume that this episode is present in the gospel for "theological-literary reasons."¹⁶⁵

Some details of the story appear to be linked to various Jewish sacerdotal traditions, and more specifically to the realities of the Yom Kippur ritual. Thus, it has been noted that the Barabbas episode can be illuminated by a comparison with the lottery of the goats that occurred on the Day of Atonement.¹⁶⁶ These cultic allusions did not escape the notice of early Christian exegetes. For example, Origen attempts to interpret the Barabbas narrative in light of the scapegoat ritual. In his *Homily on Leviticus 10:2* he offers the following striking cultic interpretation of the Barabbas passage:

Nevertheless, since the word of the Lord is rich and, according to the opinion of Solomon "must be written on the heart" not once but also twice and "three times," let us also now attempt to add something to what was said long ago to the best of our ability, that we may show how "as a type of things to come" this one he-goat was sacrificed to the Lord as an offering and the other one was sent away "living." Hear in the Gospels what Pilate said to the priests and the Jewish people: "Which of these two do you want me to send out to you, Jesus, who is called the Christ, or Barabbas?" Then all the people cried out to release Barabbas but to hand Jesus over to be killed. Behold, you have a he-goat who was sent "living into the wilderness," bearing with him the sins of the people who cried out and said, "Crucify, crucify." Therefore, the former is a he-goat sent "living into the wilderness" and the latter is the he-goat which was

164 R.E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave* (2 vols.; ABRL, 7; New York: Doubleday, 1994) 818–819.

165 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 167. Berenson Maclean notes that "... for these reasons many scholars have concluded that while a Barabbas may have been released by Pilate, the story as we have it in the gospels is a literary creation." Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," 310.

166 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 166.

offered to God as an offering to atone for sins and he made a true atonement for those people who believe in him. But if you ask who it is who led this he-goat “into the wilderness” to verify that he also was washed and made clean, Pilate himself can be taken as “a prepared man.” Certainly he was the judge of the nation itself who sent him by his sentence “into the wilderness.” But hear how he was washed and made clean. When he had said to the people, “Do you want me to release to you Jesus, who is called the Christ,” and all the people had shouted out, saying, “If you release this one, you are not a friend of Caesar,” then it says “Pilate demanded water and washed his hands before the people, saying, I am clean from his blood; you should see to it.” Thus, therefore, by washing his hands he will appear to be made clean.¹⁶⁷

Here, both Jesus and Barabbas are compared to the two goats of the atoning rite. As was the case with the patriarchal brotherly pairs that we have already explored, both members of the male dyad found in the Gospel are endowed with peculiar functions and traits that relate to the cultic animals of the atoning ritual. Thus, according to Origen’s interpretation, Jesus assumes the role of the immolated goat that must be “offered to God as an offering to atone for sins.” In contrast, Barabbas is given the role of the scapegoat—the one sent “living into the wilderness.” The release of Barabbas is, therefore, equated with the release of the scapegoat into the desert.

Another striking sacerdotal feature found in Origen’s interpretation is the portrayal of Pilate as a cultic servant. It is not entirely clear if Pilate is to be understood here as a high priest who, according to mishnaic testimonies, was responsible for making the goats’ selection, or if he is merely understood as a handler of the scapegoat who leads the animal into the wilderness. One of the key cultic elements in the passage, according to Origen, is Pilate’s hand-washing. This purification ritual can relate to either the washing done by the high priest after his handling of the scapegoat¹⁶⁸ or to the handler(s) who

167 G.W. Barkley, *Origen, Homilies on Leviticus: 1–16* (Fathers of the Church, 63; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2010) 204–205.

168 Lev 16:22–24: “The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness. Then Aaron shall enter the tent of meeting, and shall take off the linen vestments that he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. He shall bathe his body in water in a holy place, and put on his vestments. . . .” (NRSV). On the high priest’s washing after handling the scapegoat, see also Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 31.

accompany the animal into the desert.¹⁶⁹ This again makes it unclear what specific cultic role Pilate is performing. What is significant, however, is that he is indeed functioning in *some* cultic role.

Another early Christian interpreter, Jerome, conveys a similar interpretation of the episode with Barabbas. He also compares Jesus to the immolated goat and Barabbas to the scapegoat in Homily 93:

They have rejected Christ, but accept the Antichrist; we have recognized and acknowledged the humble Son of God, that afterwards we may have the triumphal Savior. In the end, our he-goat will be immolated before the altar of the Lord; their buck, the Antichrist, spit upon and cursed, will be cast into the wilderness. Our thief enters Paradise with the Lord; their thief, a homicide and blasphemer, dies in his sin. For them, Barabbas is released; for us, Christ is slain.¹⁷⁰

Here, however, additional anti-Jewish polemics are present. These nuances attempt to separate further the two goats' cultic functions and place them in different confessional camps. From this perspective, the release of the human scapegoat, Barabbas, is identified with the Antichrist and represents the offering for the Jews. The immolated goat, represented by Christ, is understood as the sacrifice for the Christians.

This line of interpretation attempts to place the Barabbas episode in the context of Yom Kippur traditions, and would be taken up by several other pre-modern Christian exegetes¹⁷¹ who tried to discern the two goats' imagery within the canonical Gospels themselves.¹⁷² Moreover, the hypothesis that the two goats' typology was present in the Gospels has not escaped notice even in

169 Lev 16:26: "And he who lets the goat go to Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp." (NRSV). See also *b. Yoma* 67b: "And he that letteth go the goat for Azazel shall wash his clothes, i.e., he flings it down headlong and his garments become then unclean." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67b.

170 M.L. Ewald, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome* (Fathers of the Church, 57; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2010) 249.

171 On these sources see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 167.

172 Thus, for example, Pseudo-Jerome's *Commentary on Mark* 15:11 also follows this line of interpretation: "The High Priests stirred up the crowds so they would ask for Barabbas, and so that they might crucify Jesus (cf. Mark 15:11). Here we have the two goats. One is termed ἀποπομαίος meaning 'the scapegoat.' He is set free with the sin of the people and sent into the desert of hell. The other goat is slain like a lamb for the sins of those who have been set free. The Lord's portion is always slaughtered. The portion of the devil, who is their master, is cast out, without restriction, into the infernal regions." M. Cahill, *The*

modern biblical exegesis. The revival of interest in the Yom Kippur interpretation of the Barabbas tradition can be traced to the works of Albert Wratislaw.¹⁷³ Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra concisely summarizes Wratislaw's argument, highlighting five important conceptual points:

- a) Two "victims" are presented (Jesus-Barabbas);
- b) They are similar to each other (both are named Jesus and Son of the Father);
- c) They symbolize opposed powers (Jesus, the peaceful Messiah God; Barabbas, the murderer, as Messiah of the people);
- d) There is a lottery/election between the two as to who is to be released and who is to be killed;
- e) A "confession" is pronounced ("His blood be on us").¹⁷⁴

Wratislaw's proposal has not enjoyed a high level of scholarly acceptance. Yet, Stökl Ben Ezra notes that if Wratislaw's suggestion concerning the influence of the two goats' tradition were to be applied only to the Matthean pericope, and not to all three synoptic accounts, the plausibility of the argument improves considerably. Indeed, the comparison between Matthew's episode and its *Vorlage*, Mark, demonstrates intriguing redactional changes. In respect to these differences, Berenson Maclean notes that Matthew supplements Mark's story in three ways: (1) by making the two prisoners more similar (as required of the goats in the Mishnah); (2) by narrating the ritual action upon the scapegoat/φάρμακός; and (3) by hinting that disaster has been averted. More specifically, for Berenson Maclean, the key redactional elements include the following features:

- a) The ambiguity of Barabbas;
- b) The specification of Barabbas's first name as "Jesus" (27:16);
- c) Pilate's explicit presentation to the crowd of a choice between two prisoners (27:17, 21);
- d) The portrayal of the crowd as on the verge of rioting (27:24a);
- e) Pilate's declaration of his own innocence (27:24b);
- f) Pilate's challenge to the crowd when he says, "See to it yourselves" (27:24);

First Commentary on Mark. An Annotated Translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 116.

173 Wratislaw, *Notes and Dissertations Principally on Difficulties in the Scriptures of the New Covenant*, 12–23; idem, "The Scapegoat-Barabbas," 400–403.

174 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 167.

g) The crowd's acceptance of blood guilt (27:25).¹⁷⁵

Important Matthean additions also include Pilate's hand-washing at the end of the scene and the double confession that announces Pilate's innocence and the guilt of the people. These features, in Stökl Ben Ezra's opinion, may also be connected to the Yom Kippur ordinance.¹⁷⁶ Regarding Pilate's hand-washing, he notes that, "among the biblical descriptions of temple rituals, Yom Kippur stands out as the only ritual with a washing after the procedures."¹⁷⁷

Scrutinizing the Matthean version of the Barabbas story, Stökl Ben Ezra suggests that five important features of Yom Kippur appear to be playing a role in Matthew's narrative:

- a) The lottery of the two goats;
- b) The similarity of these goats;
- c) Their contrasting destinations;
- d) The confession spoken over the scapegoat;
- e) The washing of the hands at the end of the ritual.¹⁷⁸

The immediate literary context of the Barabbas's episode in the Gospel of Matthew also deserves our attention, since it provides additional striking sacerdotal connections. The mocking of Jesus in the Matthean version, which follows the Barabbas' narrative, appears also to contain some allusions to the scapegoat ritual. Matthew 27:27–31 reads:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe (χλαμύδα κοκκίνην) on him, and after twisting

¹⁷⁵ Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," 324–325.

¹⁷⁶ Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 169.

¹⁷⁷ Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 169.

¹⁷⁸ Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 169. In his recent article, Stökl Ben Ezra reaffirms his position on the Yom Kippur traditions in Matthew, noting that he is "much intrigued by a number of smaller and bigger changes the first Evangelist makes with regard to his Markan *Vorlage*. The changes imply a consistent tendency (1) to make Jesus and Barabbas the most similar possible and (2) to oppose these two almost identical figures in direct juxtaposition. (3) They turn the Markan episode into a choice by the people between two figures that look so similar that choosing between them comes close to chance, just as the lottery between the two identical goats on Yom Kippur where God has to choose." Stökl Ben Ezra, "Fasting with Jews, Thinking with Scapegoats," 180.

some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (NRSV).

Regarding this passage, Helmut Koester notes that “in Mark 15:17, Jesus is dressed with a royal purple (πορφύρα); Matt 27:28, reproducing this Markan passage, substitutes the garment that was developed in the exegetical scapegoat tradition and replaces Mark’s royal robe with scarlet garment (χλαμύς κοκκίνη).”¹⁷⁹ This change represents an allusion to the scapegoat’s crimson band that is envisioned in the atoning ritual as the garment of the cultic animal. Commenting on Jesus’ conspicuous attire, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra notes that “. . . the expression χλαμύς κοκκίνη is an exceptional combination of words appearing only in Matthew 27:28 and its commentaries.”¹⁸⁰

In conclusion to this section, it is important to note that, despite the fact that the Barabbas episode assigns the scapegoats’ features and functions to Barabbas, the broader context of the gospel attempts to simultaneously envision Jesus as both the immolated goat and the scapegoat. This tendency to apply the features of both cultic animals to a single protagonist in the story was previously noted in our analysis of Joseph’s story. This strategy would remain an influential trait in later Christian interpreters, including the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, who envisioned Jesus as both the immolated goat and as the go-away goat.¹⁸¹

179 Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 225. See also Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 170–171; idem, “Fasting with Jews, Thinking with Scapegoats,” 183.

180 Stökl Ben Ezra, “Fasting with Jews, Thinking with Scapegoats,” 183.

181 Berenson Maclean notes “. . . in these three texts, Jesus is identified with both of the two goats.” Berenson Maclean, “Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative,” 318.

Jesus as the Immolated Goat in the Epistle to the Hebrews

With reference to the Epistle to the Hebrews, it has become common in scholarship to highlight Jesus's portrayal as the high priest of the Yom Kippur rite.¹⁸² What has escaped notice, however, is Jesus's possible identification with the goats of the atoning rite. Because the text possesses such a complex Christological agenda that attempts to reinterpret the atoning ritual in light of the Jesus story, scholars have had difficulty demonstrating allusions to the goats' typology in the Epistle.¹⁸³ In preceding scholarly interpretive endeavors, some features of the Yom Kippur ritual have received enormous attention, while other characteristics have been, for the most part, ignored. This is likely because the Epistle itself seems to hone in on a limited number of aspects of the atoning rite. It has been previously noted that the Epistle mainly "focuses on the blood ritual of the Day of Atonement and not the whole feast. . ."¹⁸⁴ Moreover, some reinterpretations found in the Epistle attempt to bring in familiar cultic motifs, but with novel conceptual dimensions.¹⁸⁵ It has also

182 For a review of this literature, see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 180ff.

183 Harold Attridge argues that "the application of the model of the Yom Kippur ritual to the death of Christ in Hebrews is a complex and subtle hermeneutical effort." H.W. Attridge, "The Uses of Antithesis in Hebrews 8–10," in: *Christians among Jews and Gentiles: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl on His Sixty-fifth Birthday* (eds. G.W.E. Nickelsburg and G.W. MacRae; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 9.

184 F.H. Cortez "From the Holy to the Most Holy Place: The Period of Hebrews 9:6–10 and the Day of Atonement as a Metaphor of Transition," *JBL* 125 (2006) 527–47 at 528. Barnabas Lindars also notes that "Hebrews is extremely selective in his use of the Day of Atonement regulations, only using the essential items." B. Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (NTT; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 92. Stökl Ben Ezra concludes that "despite the extensive use of Yom Kippur typology in Hebrews, it is clear that its author did not intend to provide a complete typology of Yom Kippur." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 193.

185 Reflecting on the appropriation of the Yom Kippur imagery by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Stökl Ben Ezra notes that "the author of Hebrews employs various sources in creating his typological myth. He is inspired by the Bible, as can be seen in the focus on the tabernacle (and not the temple) and in formulations imitating Leviticus 16. Yet the Bible is by no means the only fount of his wisdom. The intercession, the solemn exit from the holy of holies and the conflation of the sprinklings belong to Second Temple ritual and the *imaginaire* of Yom Kippur, and he probably borrowed the victory over the lord

been suggested that Jesus's sacrifice is described in terms that are inconsistent with the blood ritual(s) outlined in Leviticus.¹⁸⁶

Hebrews' strong emphasis on the atoning power of blood is significant for our study. Because of the prominent role the blood ritual holds in this text, it has been suggested that the Epistle might attempt to portray Jesus as the immolated goat, an animal whose blood was so significant in the purgation ritual on Yom Kippur.¹⁸⁷ In relation to the blood motif, Berenson Maclean has suggested that the identification of Christ as the immolated goat "has a very early precedent in the Book of Hebrews. Without any mention of the scapegoat, the author of Hebrews presents Jesus' death in light of the goat's sacrifice in the purgation ritual. . . . Christ's entry into Holy of Holies in Heb 9:11–14 is explicitly modeled upon the high priest's presentation of blood in that inner sanctuary."¹⁸⁸ She further argues that "although Hebrews does not mention the

of evil and the liberation of his good prisoners from the apocalyptic *imaginaire* of Yom Kippur. As in Qumran, Hebrews sees the current period of afflictions as a *Mo'ed Kippur*, a period of atonement, which began with Jesus' death and will end with his *Parousia*." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 193.

186 Cortez, "From the Holy to the Most Holy Place," 528. For criticism of this position see W. Horbury, "The Aaronic Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JSTNT* 19 (1983) 43–71.

187 This interpretative trajectory certainly has ancient roots. Cyril of Alexandria attempted to discern the imagery of the immolated goat in Heb. 9:12 and 13:12 in his *Letter* 41:12: "The name, therefore, of the immolated goat was the Lord's, and he received his allotted immolation, a holy sacrifice, and it was sacred as a sign of Christ who did not die for himself but for us, as I said, and sanctified the church with his blood. Moses says, 'He shall slaughter the male goat, the one for sin, the one for the people, before the Lord and shall bring its blood inside the veil, and shall sprinkle it upon the propitiatory and before the propitiatory, and he shall cleanse the sanctuary from the defilements of the sons of Israel and from their transgressions on account of all their sins. And he shall do the same for the Tent of Testimony which is set up among them in the midst of their uncleanness.' 'For Christ entered into the Holy of Holies, not by virtue of blood of goats and calves, but by virtue of his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption' and sanctifying, as I said, the truer tent, that is, the church and all those in it. Therefore, the divinely inspired Paul once wrote, 'and so Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his blood, suffered outside the gate.' And once again, 'Be you, therefore, imitators of God, as very dear children and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and delivered himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God to ascend in fragrant odor.' Except for the destruction of death and sin we must perceive the Emmanuel in the slaughtered goat by his death in the flesh, for he was 'free among the dead,' that is, untainted by sins and not subject to the penalty of death together with us." J.I. McEnerney, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Letters 1–50* (Fathers of the Church, 76; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1987) 174–175.

188 Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," 319.

pair of goats, the implication is that Christ's blood corresponds to that of the immolated goat."¹⁸⁹ Berenson Maclean then concludes that "Jesus' death must have been modeled on the goat's sacrifice in the purgation ritual."¹⁹⁰

If Jesus is indeed identified with the immolated goat in the Epistle to the Hebrews in some fashion, it is possible that the allusions to the goat are present not only in the later chapters of the Epistle—those that deal explicitly with the priestly traditions and the blood rituals—but also in the early chapters of the text. These early chapters have often escaped notice of those who try to discern possible allusions to the immolated goat imagery. One of the intriguing cultic loci in this respect appears to be situated in the first chapter of the Epistle.¹⁹¹ Heb 1:3–4 reads: "When he had made purification for sins (καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν), he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs." Several scholars have noticed that the expression καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν (purification for sins) is similar to the formula present in the Septuagint version of Exod 30:10, the passage that describes some of the actions of the high priest that take place on Yom Kippur: "Once a year Aaron shall perform the rite of atonement on its horns. Throughout your generations he shall perform the atonement for it once a year with the blood of the atoning sin offering. It is most holy to the Lord."¹⁹² Because of this important terminological connection, scholars traditionally include Heb 1:3–4 as one of the "Yom Kippur passages" found in the Epistle.¹⁹³

The affinities of Heb 1:3–4 with Yom Kippur traditions often have been noted in previous studies. However, scholars have not investigated this narrative closely for its possible allusions to the other cultic animal of the atoning rite: the goat for YHWH. This passage, however, appears to possess several

189 Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," 319. David Moffitt also argues that "the author of Hebrews assumes a concept of blood offering that aligns well with the Levitical account." D.M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (NovTSup, 141; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 257.

190 Berenson Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative," 319.

191 In relation to the first chapter of the Epistle, Harold Attridge notes that "the hymn probably had a liturgical setting. . . ." H.W. Attridge, *Hebrews. A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 42.

192 Exod 30:10 (LXX): "καὶ ἐξιλάσεται ἐπ' αὐτὸ Ααρῶν ἐπὶ τῶν κεράτων αὐτοῦ ἅπαξ τοῦ ἔνιαυτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τοῦ ἐξίλασμοῦ ἅπαξ τοῦ ἔνιαυτοῦ καθαριεῖ αὐτὸ εἰς τὰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν ἅγιον τῶν ἁγίων ἐστὶν κυρίῳ."

193 Harold Attridge observes that for understanding Heb 1:3 "the description of the expiatory ceremony on Yom Kippur at Exod 30:10 is particularly important." Attridge, *Hebrews*, 46.

striking details that evoke the memory of the immolated goat ritual and especially the version of this cultic ordinance reflected in the Mishnah. It is surely significant that this compilation of Jewish legal traditions was codified close to the time that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written. The first important detail that reflects the immolated goat tradition is the purification of sins, which we have already briefly noted. It is well known that the goat for YHWH played a significant role in the purification rites performed on the Day of Atonement. The Book of Leviticus presents the immolated goat's blood as the cultic detergent that removes pollution from the sanctuary. Lev 16:15–16 reads:

He shall slaughter the goat of *the sin offering* (תִּשְׁחֶה) that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. Thus he shall make atonement for the sanctuary, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which remains with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. (NRSV).

The passage puts the immolated goat in the category of the תִּשְׁחֶה, the purification/sin offering detailed in Lev 4:1–5:13 and 6:24–23.¹⁹⁴ Because of these unambiguous functions of the immolated goat, scholars often label this cultic agent the “purification goat.”¹⁹⁵

The expression καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν found in Heb 1:3 combines the formula of purification with the concept of sin. In this respect, it is noteworthy that removal of sins represents a crucial function of the immolated goat, who is named as the “sin offering” in Lev 16:5 and other passages.¹⁹⁶

There is another possible cultic connection in Heb 1:3, since it assigns an atoning function to the cultic agent situated on *the right side*. Jesus, who accomplished purification for sins, is placed at the right side of the deity. Although the right and left sides are not mentioned at the goats' selection in Lev 16:7–10, the symbolism of the two sides becomes highly significant in later mishnaic and talmudic portrayals of the ritual. There, the immolated goat is repeatedly associated with the right side, while the scapegoat is consistently associated with the left. For example, in *m. Yoma* 4:1 the following tradition is found:

194 Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 258.

195 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1015.

196 See, for example, Lev 16:9: “Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord, and offer it as a sin offering.” (NRSV).

He shook the casket and took up the two lots. On one was written “For the Lord,” and on the other was written “For Azazel.” The prefect was on his right and the chief of his father’s house on his left. If the lot bearing the Name came up in his right hand the Prefect would say to him, “My lord High Priest, raise thy right hand”; and if it came up in his left hand the chief of the father’s house would say to him, “My lord High Priest, raise thy left hand.” He put them on the two he-goats and said “A sin-offering to the Lord.”¹⁹⁷

Although the passage from the Mishnah does not openly identify the right side with the immolated goat, the Babylonian Talmud makes this connection explicit. Thus, *b. Yoma* 39a reads:

Our Rabbis taught: Throughout the forty years that Simeon the Righteous ministered, the lot [“For the Lord”] would always come up in the right hand; from that time on, it would come up now in the right hand, now in the left. And [during the same time] the crimson-colored strap would become white. From that time on it would at times become white, at others not.¹⁹⁸

In view of these traditions, it is likely that Jesus’ placement at the right hand of the deity takes on sacerdotal significance.

The fact that Jesus is given a name superior to the angels in Heb 1 is also an important detail that alludes to the goat for YHWH in the Yom Kippur tradition. Interpreters of this passage often argue that the Epistle is attempting to make a reference to the divine Name.¹⁹⁹ If the protagonist is indeed endowed

197 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

198 Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 39a.

199 B.F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays* (2nd ed.; London; New York: Macmillan and Co., 1892) 17; C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982) 113; J.H. Ulrichsen, “Διαφορώτερον ὄνομα in Hebr. 1,4: Christus als Träger des Gottesnamens,” *ST* 38 (1984) 65–75; H.F. Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (KEK, 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) 153–54; C.A. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (AGAJU, 42; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 296–97; R. Bauckham, “Monotheism and Christology in Hebrews 1,” in: *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (eds. L.T. Stuckenbruck and W.E.S. North; London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004) 167–85 at 175; J. Webster, “One Who Is Son: Theological Reflections on the Exordium to the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in: *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (eds. R. Bauckham et al.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 69–94 at 93; C. Rowland and C.R.A. Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God:*

with the divine Name, we might presume that this naming takes on sacerdotal significance. It raises the question: where else in Jewish cultic traditions can one find this peculiar endowment to an atoning agent? The list of such characters remains rather limited. However, it does immediately bring to mind the Yom Kippur festival, where the immolated goat responsible for the purification of sins is also endowed with the divine Name and is specifically called the goat for YHWH.

Yet, the manner in which the sacerdotal symbolism in Heb 1:3–4 unfolds might appear to be inconsistent with the manner in which the imagery unfolds during the immolated goat ritual: during the atoning rite the goat for YHWH was first selected and assigned to the right lot associated with the divine Name. Only after this was the goat used in the purification ritual. In Heb 1:3–4 there seems to be an inversion of this traditional order: the cultic agent first makes purification for sins and only then is he placed at the right hand of the deity and endowed with the divine Name. Scholars have noted this inversion of the sacerdotal events in Heb 1:3–4, arguing that the passage “turns upside down Leviticus 16 . . .”²⁰⁰ However, it appears that the author of the Epistle rearranges the Yom Kippur tradition according to his Christological agenda. He attempts to fit the progression of events in Jesus’ story into the logic of the atoning ritual. In light of these Christological developments, Stökl Ben Ezra proposes that the “inversions of the ritual sequence demonstrate that the typology is subject to the main aim of Hebrews.”²⁰¹

There is another important dimension that makes the sacerdotal elements of Heb 1:3–4 even more complex; namely, the author’s tendency to simultaneously assign several cultic roles to Jesus. Jesus not only takes on the functions of the goats of the atoning rite, but also that of the High Priest. This is clearly evidenced by his ability to execute purification for sins through use of the divine Name and his progression into the heavenly Holy of Holies, as these are reminiscent of the actions of the high priest, who happens to be decorated with the Tetragrammaton. Therefore it seems likely that Heb 1:3–4 endows Jesus with multiple sacerdotal functions. These include both the tasks of the high priest and the immolated goat. This strategy is very similar to a conceptual amalgam used later in Heb 9:11–12.

Other aspects of the immolated goat ritual also appear to have received attention from the Epistle’s author(s). As we have already learned from the

Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament (CRINT, 12; Leiden: Brill, 2009) 168–69; J.A. Barnard, *The Mysticism of Hebrews* (WUNT, 331; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2012) 162.

200 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 189.

201 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 189.

descriptions of the atoning rite, the blood of the immolated goat was brought into the adytum, and the animal's body was destroyed. Lev 16:27 offers specific instructions about the destruction of the immolated goat's carcass.²⁰² In order to further develop the cultic profile of Jesus as the immolated goat, the author of the Epistle attempts to weave this part of the ritual into the fabric of Jesus's story. This is evident in Heb 13:11–12, which reports the following about the cultic meaning of Christ's Passion: "For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood."²⁰³ According to some scholars, the suffering and death endured by Jesus is here compared with the destruction of the immolated goat's body. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra notes that "according to Leviticus 16:27, the remains of the sacrificial goat are burned outside the camp in order to preserve its sanctity. Hebrews applies this to Jesus, who sanctified the people (in the camp) by suffering outside it."²⁰⁴

In conclusion to our reflections on the Yom Kippur traditions as they are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we must again draw our attention to one striking tendency of its cultic interpretation: the intertwining roles of the one who makes the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself—that is, the high priest and the immolated goat. It appears that this amalgamation of multiple roles further obscures the sacerdotal universe of the Epistle, preventing its readers from discerning Jesus' role as the immolated goat. Yet, this peculiar cultic mirroring that attempts to blur the sacerdotal lines of the Epistle might not stem only from the Christological agendas of the text's authors, but they may also derive from the realities of the original ritual itself.

Scholars have previously noted that the main actors of the sacerdotal drama that takes place on Yom Kippur are mysteriously mirroring each other. In my previous studies, I have explored a paradoxical mirroring of the attributes of the high priest and the scapegoat. I argued that in the cultic framework of the atoning rite the high priest and the go-away goat are standing in inverse opposition.²⁰⁵ The symmetry of the cultic attributes appears to be also present in another sacerdotal pair of Yom Kippur—the high priest and the immolated

202 Lev 16:27: "The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire." (NRSV).

203 NRSV.

204 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 192. See also H. Koester, "Outside the Camp": Hebrews 13:9–14," *HTR* 55 (1962) 299–317.

205 Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 9–36.

goat, as they both enter the adytum of the sanctuary—one as the servant and the other as the purifying offering. Unlike the scapegoat, the symmetrical correspondences between the high priest and the immolated goat are not inverse, which makes their discernment even more difficult. Indeed, some features of both sacerdotal agents are very similar, if not identical. Unlike the scapegoat, who is moving from the sacred center to the periphery (represented by the wilderness,) both the high priest and the immolated goat share the same direction of sacred progression. They are both predestined to enter the divine presence represented by the Holy of Holies. Both cultic agents also share an important common attribute: they both are endowed with the divine Name. It has already been mentioned that the immolated goat bears the divine Name by being designated as the goat for YHWH. The high priest is also endowed with the divine Name, as the letters of the Tetragrammaton shine on the golden plate of his headgear. This mirroring of attributes, progressions, and destinations, which are shared by both cultic agents, appears to provide an important interpretive framework for the portrayal of the cultic functions of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where he is envisioned as both the sacerdotal servant, who is bringing the atoning sacrifice and as the offering itself.²⁰⁶ This strategy, which depicts the simultaneous assumption and execution of several cultic roles, also plays a prominent role in second- and third-century Christian appropriations of the Yom Kippur typology.

206 It appears that Heb 9:11–12 reflects this unity of the high priestly office and the immolated goat's office, as it brings sacerdotal symmetry to both roles on a new conceptual level: "But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption." (NRSV).

Jesus as the Scapegoat and the Immolated Goat in Second- and Third-Century Christian Materials

While the connections with the Day of Atonement imagery are only implicitly hinted at in certain New Testament texts, they are unambiguously expressed in second- and third-century Christian writings. These texts openly attempt to weave the details of Jesus' Passion and his second coming into the very fabric of the Yom Kippur rite. In these Christian re-appraisals, Jesus was simultaneously depicted as the scapegoat of the atoning rite, who took upon himself the sins of the world during his Passion, as well as the goat for $\Upsilon\text{H}\text{W}\text{H}$, which is demonstrated most clearly by his glorious *Parousia*. In what follows, we will overview, outline, and highlight the sacerdotal reappropriations and reinterpretations of the Yom Kippur ritual by several important early Christian authors.

One of the earliest explicit applications of the goat imagery from Yom Kippur to Jesus can be found in the *Epistle of Barnabas*, a text that scholars usually date to the end of the first century or the beginning of the second century CE.²⁰⁷ The *Epistle of Barnabas* 7:6–11 reads:

Pay attention to what he commands: "Take two fine goats who are alike and offer them as a sacrifice; and let the priest take one of them as a whole burnt offering for sins." But what will they do with the other? "The other," he says, "is cursed." Pay attention to how the type of Jesus is revealed. "And all of you shall spit on it and pierce it and wrap a piece of scarlet wool around its head, and so let it be cast into the wilderness." When this happens, the one who takes the goat leads it into the wilderness and removes the wool, and places it on a blackberry bush, whose buds we are accustomed to eat when we find it in the countryside. (Thus the fruit of the blackberry bush alone is sweet.) And so, what does this mean? Pay attention: "The one they take to the altar, but the other is cursed," and the one that is cursed is crowned. For then they will see him in that day wearing a long scarlet robe around his flesh, and they will say, "Is this not the one we once crucified, despising, piercing, and spitting on him? Truly this is the one who was saying at the time that he was himself the Son of God." For how is he like that one? This is why "the goats are alike, fine, and equal," that when they see him coming at that time, they may be amazed at how much he is like the goat. See then the type of Jesus who was about

207 Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke*, 121.

to suffer. But why do they place the wool in the midst of the thorns? This is a type of Jesus established for the church, because whoever wishes to remove the scarlet wool must suffer greatly, since the thorn is a fearful thing, and a person can retrieve the wool only by experiencing pain. And so he says: those who wish to see me and touch my kingdom must take hold of me through pain and suffering.²⁰⁸

Here we find a complex mix of cultic traditions that surely reflects the atoning ritual in Leviticus 16. However, the tradition, in its new form, is quite different than its predecessor in Leviticus. Some striking new details are added that reveal our author's familiarity with later elaborations on the atoning rite—additions also found in the mishnaic Yom Kippur testimonies. The reference to the crimson band on the go-away goat—an attribute absent in Leviticus 16, but one that later became a crucial symbol of the scapegoat ritual—is a prime example of this development. The ritual abuses that the go-away goat endures during its exile into the wilderness is another innovation added to the classic description of the atoning rite found in Leviticus 16. These abuses are also prominent in *Mishnah Yoma*. It is surely not coincidental that the *Epistle of Barnabas* emphasizes these novel features of the ritual, since they enable the author to make important connections between the atoning ordinance and the story of Jesus: Christ's suffering during the Passion is here compared with the abuses that scapegoat endures on Yom Kippur.²⁰⁹ It is also significant that the *Epistle of Barnabas* depicts the scapegoat alongside another important animal of the atoning rite: the sacrificial goat for YHWH.²¹⁰ *Barnabas* makes the point that the goats are quite similar, perhaps evoking the concept of twinship, as they are "alike, fine, and equal."

The depiction of the scapegoat's crowning and his investiture is yet another important feature of the passage from the *Epistle of Barnabas*.²¹¹ Here again we can find an artistic and skillful application of the conceptual blend drawn from the various details of the atoning rite to Jesus' Passion and his *Parousia*. In the *Barnabas* text, the scarlet wool from the atoning rite is endowed with sacerdotal significance as it is portrayed as Jesus's high priestly robe that is worn at the second coming.²¹²

208 Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.37–41.

209 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 154.

210 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 152.

211 Concerning this motif, see J.C. Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas* (WUNT, 2.64; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1994) 138–40.

212 See Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 154.

It is important to recognize that the *Epistle of Barnabas* is not a totally unique extrabiblical testimony in its attempt to apply the goats' typologies to Jesus. In fact, this trope was quite common. A close analysis of the Christian literature of the second and third centuries CE shows that this interpretation was popular among a number of Christian sources from the period. Another good example of this application comes from the 40th chapter of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*, a text written in the middle of the second century CE. Here, Justin also compares Jesus with the scapegoat:

Likewise, the two identical goats which had to be offered during the fast (one of which was to be the scapegoat, and the other the sacrificial goat) were an announcement of the two comings of Christ: Of the first coming, in which your priests and elders send him away as a scapegoat, seizing him and putting him to death; of the second coming, because in that same place of Jerusalem you shall recognize him whom you had subjected to shame, and who was a sacrificial offering for all sinners who are willing to repent and to comply with that fast which Isaiah prescribed when he said, *loosing the strangle of violent contracts*, (διασπώντες στραγγαλιὰς βιαιῶν συναλλαγμάτων)²¹³ and to observe likewise all the other precepts laid down by him (precepts which I have already mentioned and which all believers in Christ fulfill). You also know very well that the offering of the two goats, which had to take place during the fast, could not take place anywhere else except in Jerusalem.²¹⁴

While Justin's text is written after the *Epistle of Barnabas*, it is not a reworking of *Barnabas's* tradition; instead, it represents an independent attestation of a traditional typology.²¹⁵ Regarding this, John Dominic Crossan observes that:

[T]here are significant differences between the application in *Barnabas* 7 and *Dialogue* 40 that indicate that Justin is not dependent on Barnabas. The main one is the divergent ways in which each explains how two goats can represent the (two comings of) the one Christ. For *Barnabas* 7 the two goats must be alike. For *Dialogue* 40 the two goats and the two

213 *Iustini Martyris Dialogus Cum Tryphone* (ed. M. Marcovich; PTS, 47; Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1997) 137; *Justin Martyr: Dialogue avec Tryphon* (ed. and trans. P. Bobichon; Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg, 2003) 284.

214 *St. Justin Martyr. Dialogue with Trypho* (trs. T.F. Falls and T.P. Halton; ed. M. Slusser; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003) 62.

215 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 156.

comings are both connected to Jerusalem. They represent, therefore, two independent versions of a traditional typology foretelling a dual advent of Jesus, one for Passion and death, the other for *Parousia* and judgment.²¹⁶

Justin's understanding of the scapegoat ritual reveals striking similarities with the interpretation of the Yom Kippur imagery that is found in extra-biblical Jewish materials.²¹⁷ This points to the strong possibility that early Christian interpretations were developed in dialogue with contemporaneous Jewish traditions.

While we saw that the *Epistle of Barnabas* introduced new features to the ritual, Justin makes several other new and interesting appropriations of the biblical traditions that the *Epistle of Barnabas* does not make. One of these is his usage of the tradition from Isaiah 58:6 to elaborate on the symbolism of the messianic scapegoat. It is significant that Justin's use of this passage is the first time that this text is reinterpreted using Yom Kippur imagery, as Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra has observed.²¹⁸ It is also of interest that the Septuagint version of this passage from Isaiah uses the language of "loosing,"²¹⁹ which is similar to some formulae from the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. We will return to this and its significance later in our study.

Yet another messianic reinterpretation of the scapegoat imagery is present in Tertullian's *Against Marcion* 3:7 and also his *Against the Jews* 14:9.²²⁰ Both of these texts were written in the beginning of the third century CE. *Against Marcion* 3:7 reads:

216 Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke*, 129.

217 Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra observes that "this is shown, for example, by the reference to the death of the scapegoat, a fact Justin could not have learnt from the Bible or from Barnabas, but only from Jewish tradition." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 156.

218 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 156.

219 Isa 58:6 (LXX): "... λδε πάντα σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας διάλυε στραγγαλιὰς βιαιῶν συναλλαγμάτων..."

220 Another early influential Christian interpreter, Hippolytus of Rome, also shows familiarity with the traditions that tie Jesus to the imagery of two goats of the Yom Kippur ceremony. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra argues that the passage from Hippolytus of Rome's *Catena on Proverbs* (Proverbs 30:31b [LXX]) that mentions "scarlet wool" "makes very plausible that it is a variety of the Yom Kippur typology known to *Barnabas*, Justin and Tertullian..." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 158. He, however, cautions that "the poetic form and the brevity of the fragment render an exact comparison difficult." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 158.

If also I am to submit an interpretation of the two goats which were offered at the Fast, are not these also figures of Christ's two activities? They are indeed of the same age and appearance because the Lord's is one and the same aspect: because he will return in no other form, seeing he has to be recognized by those of whom he has suffered injury. One of them however, surrounded with scarlet, cursed and spit upon and pulled about and pierced, was by the people driven out of the city into perdition, marked with manifest tokens of our Lord's Passion: while the other, made an offering for sins, and given as food to the priests of the temple, marked the tokens of his second manifestation, at which, when all sins have been done away, the priests of the spiritual temple, which is the Church, were to enjoy as it were a feast of our Lord's grace, while the rest remain without a taste of salvation.²²¹

In his testimonies about the messianic scapegoat, Tertullian appears to rely on the traditions conveyed by both the *Epistle of Barnabas* and Justin.²²² We cannot be certain whether or not he would have been familiar with the earlier typology.

By way of conclusion to this section, let us again underline the similarities between the reinterpretations of the goats typology as they are found in the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Justin, and Tertullian along with the conceptual developments that we found in the Old and New Testaments. Not unlike

221 *Tertullian. Adversus Marcionem* (ed. E. Evans; 2 vols; Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972) 1.191. The passage that appears in *Against the Jews* 14:9 is nearly identical. It reads: "In fact, thus also let me make an interpretation of the two goats that were offered at the fast. Do these not also show the two conditions of the Christ who is already come? They are indeed of the same age and appearance on account of the one and the same aspect of the Lord, because he will return in no other form, seeing that he has to be recognized by those from whom he has suffered injury. One of them, however, which was surrounded with scarlet, cursed and spat upon and perforated and punctured, was driven outside the city by the people to ruin, marked with obvious emblems of the suffering of Christ, who, having been surrounded with a scarlet garment, spat upon and knocked about with every physical violence, was crucified outside the city. The other, however, made an offering for offences, and given as food only to the priests of the temple, is marked with the proof of his second manifestation, because when all offences have been done away, the priests of the spiritual temple—that is, the church—were to enjoy as it were a feast of our Lord's grace, while the rest remain without a taste of salvation." G.D. Dunn, *Tertullian* (London: Routledge, 2004) 103.

222 Crossan notes that "in the case of *Against Marcion* 3.7.7, however, we are not dealing with a third independent version of the two goats' tradition but rather with one which dependent both on *Barnabas* 7 and on Justin, *Dialogue* 40." Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke*, 131.

the aforementioned biblical developments, these early Christian writings attempted to intertwine the imagery of the two goats chosen during the Yom Kippur ceremony, and they applied this conceptual amalgam to Jesus. This generated utterly paradoxical descriptions. For example, the goat's humiliation, much like Jesus's humiliation, is paradoxically juxtaposed in these texts with its exaltation. The goat's curses are elided with its crown. This exaltation is interwoven with a number of significant cultic features, including the motif of worship and the motif of transference. These sacerdotal features of the various characters involved in the Yom Kippur ceremony are then applied to the Christian Messiah.

There is one last significant way that these early Christians reappropriate the Yom Kippur imagery and apply it to Jesus. They depict the two emblematic animals of the Yom Kippur ceremony as the two manifestations of Christ: one in its suffering and the other in its victory. Justin effectively summarizes this idea when, at the beginning of his passage, he suggests, "the two identical goats which had to be offered during the fast (one of which was to be the scapegoat, and the other the sacrificial goat) were an announcement of the two comings of Christ."²²³ That both of the goats' features in this complex amalgam are applied to one human character is surely reminiscent of the Joseph story explored earlier. There, as here, the human character simultaneously stands for both the scapegoat and the immolated goat.

223 Falls, Halton, Slusser, *St. Justin Martyr. Dialogue with Trypho*, 62.

PART 2

*Azazel as an Eschatological Scapegoat in the
Apocalypse of Abraham*



The Sacerdotal Vision of the Slavonic Apocalypse

Having explored Jewish and Christian appropriations of the two goats of Yom Kippur ritual, with specific reference given to how they relate to human and otherworldly figures, we may now return to the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Before we proceed to an in-depth investigation and reconstruction of the two goats' typology in this pseudepigraphon, it is important that we draw our attention to another, more general, inquiry—one that addresses why these sacerdotal traditions were so important for the authors of our text, and also why they attempted to offer a nonconventional, eschatological version of the Yom Kippur rite, wherein human and angelic beings take on the familiar roles of the cultic animals.

The answer to this inquiry might be found in the circumstances of Jewish communal life at the time the *Apocalypse of Abraham* was composed. These circumstances may account for the radical and peculiar sacerdotal reformulations that, according to some scholars, permeate the very fabric of the Slavonic pseudepigraphon.²²⁴ There is a current scholarly consensus that the text was written soon after the destruction of the Second Jerusalem Temple. This calamity led to efforts to preserve and perpetuate priestly practices in the absence of the terrestrial sanctuary.²²⁵ Because the earthly temple was no longer standing, the authors of the Slavonic apocalypse refashioned and perpetuated the most important Jewish festival and its sacerdotal tradition in an eschatological manner. The idea that earthly cultic realities were mere reflections of heavenly ones was not an entirely novel conceptual development. This concept was previously employed by various priestly groups during other religious crises that resulted from the destruction or defilement of the

224 D. Harlow, "Idolatry and Alterity: Israel and the Nations in the Apocalypse of Abraham," in: *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism. Essays in Honor of John J. Collins* (eds. D.C. Harlow, M. Goff, K.M. Hogan, and J.S. Kaminsky; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) 302–30.

225 On the date and provenance of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, see G.H. Box and J.I. Landsman, *The Apocalypse of Abraham. Edited, with a Translation from the Slavonic Text and Notes* (TED, 1.10; London, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918) xv–xix; B. Philonenko-Sayar and M. Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes* (Semitica, 31; Paris: Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1981) 34–35; R. Rubinkiewicz, and H. Lunt, "Apocalypse of Abraham," in: *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. J.H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983–85) 1.681–705 at 683; idem, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham en vieux slave*, 70–73; A. Kulik, "К датировке 'Откровения Авраама,'" in: *In Memoriam of Ja. S. Lur'e* (eds. N.M. Botvinnik and Je.I. Vaneeva; St. Petersburg: Fenix, 1997) 189–95; idem, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 2–3.

Jerusalem Temple.²²⁶ The conceptual roots of this powerful sacerdotal option can even be located in biblical traditions. A fine example of this is the vision of

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- 226 On the heavenly temple and heavenly priesthood traditions, see J.L. Angel, *Otherworldly and Eschatological Priesthood in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ, 86; Leiden: Brill, 2010); V. Aptowitz, "The Celestial Temple as Viewed in the Aggadah," in *Binah: Studies in Jewish Thought* (ed. J. Dan; Binah: Studies in Jewish History, Thought, and Culture, 2; New York: Praeger, 1989) 1–29; M. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991); J.J. Collins, "A Throne in the Heavens: Apotheosis in Pre-Christian Judaism," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys* (eds. J.J. Collins and M. Fishbane; New York: SUNY, 1995) 43–57; B. Ego, "Im Himmel wie auf Erden" (WUNT, 2.34; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1989); R. Elior, "From Earthly Temple to Heavenly Shrines: Prayer and Sacred Song in the Hekhalot Literature and Its Relation to Temple Traditions," *JSQ* 4 (1997) 217–267; D.N. Freedman, "Temple Without Hands," in *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times: Proceedings of the Colloquium in Honor of the Centennial of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Jerusalem, 14–16 March 1977* (ed. A. Biran; Jerusalem: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981) 21–30; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (2nd ed.; Leiden: Brill 2014); Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot*; idem, "Heavenly Ascension in Ancient Judaism: The Nature of the Experience," *SBLSP* 26 (1987) 218–231; R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, "The Temple and the Origins of Jewish Apocalyptic," *VT* 20 (1970) 1–15; M. Himmelfarb, "From Prophecy to Apocalypse: The Book of the Watchers and Tours of Heaven," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible Through the Middle Ages* (ed. A. Green; New York: Crossroad, 1986) 145–165; idem, "Apocalyptic Ascent and the Heavenly Temple," *SBLSP* 26 (1987) 210–217; idem, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); idem, "The Practice of Ascent in the Ancient Mediterranean World," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys* (eds. J.J. Collins and M. Fishbane; Albany: SUNY, 1995) 123–137; C.R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature and the New Testament* (CBQMS, 22; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989); J.D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64 (1984) 275–298; idem, "The Jerusalem Temple in Devotional and Visionary Experience," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible Through the Middle Ages* (ed. A. Green; New York: Crossroad, 1986) 32–59; A.J. McNicol, "The Heavenly Sanctuary in Judaism: A Model for Tracing the Origin of the Apocalypse," *JRS* 13 (1987) 66–94; C.R.A. Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition," *JJS* 43 (1992) 1–31; idem, "The Temple Within: The Embodied Divine Image and its Worship in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Jewish and Christian Sources," *SBLSP* 37 (1998) 400–431; C. Newsom "He Has Established for Himself Priests: Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath Shirot," in: *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The New York University Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin* (ed. L.H. Schiffman; JSPSS, 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 101–120; G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "The Apocalyptic Construction of Reality in 1 Enoch," in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquium* (ed. J.J. Collins; JSPSS, 9; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991) 51–64; R. Patai, *Man and Temple in Ancient Jewish Myth and Ritual* (New York: KTAV, 1967); C. Rowland, "The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature,"

the celestial Chariot in the Book of Ezekiel, where the catastrophic demise of the terrestrial sanctuary is placed in striking contrast with the existence of the celestial sacerdotal abode.²²⁷

The *Apocalypse of Abraham* makes a similar conceptual move in the absence of the earthly temple: it attempts to channel the familiar realities of the atoning ritual into its new eschatological and celestial framework. It does this by portraying the main characters in the apocalypse as emblematic sacerdotal agents. As we have already mentioned, Abraham and Azazel are both eschatologically refashioned into the cultic “animals” of the atoning rite. Another character, the chief angelic protagonist of the story, Yahoel, is also recast in a new role: the celestial high priest. A number of scholars have already noted his priestly attributes and credentials. The sacerdotal functions Yahoel takes on are mainly hinted at through the details of his accoutrement: he is dressed in purple garments and wears a turban reminiscent of “the bow in the clouds.”²²⁸ What’s more, Abraham also sees a golden staff in the great angel’s right hand. Interpreting the angel’s attire, Daniel Harlow has recently suggested that “Yahoel’s clothing . . . indicates that he is the heavenly high priest: he wears a ‘turban on his head like the appearance of the bow in the clouds,’ his garments are purple, and he has a golden staff in his hand (11:2). These elements evoke

JSJ 10 (1979) 137–154; idem, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982); A.F. Segal, “Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and Their Environment,” *ANRW* 2.32.2 (1980) 1333–94; M.S. Smith, “Biblical and Canaanite Notes to the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice from Qumran,” *RevQ* 12 (1987) 585–588.

227 Within this formative narrative, the vision of the Merkabah is surrounded by a set of distinctive cultic markers that portray the divine throne as the upper prototype of the earthly sanctuary. The idea that the earthly sanctuary serves as a mere replica of the heavenly one appears implicitly and explicitly in a variety of biblical texts and has its origins in early Mesopotamian traditions. In these traditions, the earthly temples are repeatedly portrayed as counterparts to their heavenly realities. This notion is also developed in the biblical revelation of the sacerdotal settings given to Moses on Mount Sinai, where the earthy tabernacle and its furnishings are made according to the pattern of the heavenly sacerdotal realities shown to the prophet on the mountain. Other biblical passages, including 1 Chr 28:19, further affirm the idea that the plan of the earthly sanctuary came from God. Extra-biblical pseudepigraphical accounts (*The Book of the Watchers*, *Jubilees*, *Aramaic Levi Document*) and some Qumran materials (*Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, *4QInstruction*, *4QVisions of Amram*, *11QMelchizedek*) also develop the concept of the heavenly temple and associate it with the notion of the heavenly priesthood.

228 “. . . and a turban (кудартъ) on his head like the appearance of the bow in the clouds. . . .” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 19; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes*, 60.

the wardrobe and accoutrement of Aaron (Exod 28; Num 17).²²⁹ Harlow's affirmation of Yahoel's priestly profile is not a totally novel interpretation. Martha Himmelfarb has similarly noted that "Yahoel's wardrobe has strong priestly associations since the linen band around his head recalls Aaron's headdress of fine linen (Exod 28:39)."²³⁰ Like Harlow, Himmelfarb recognizes that Yahoel's purple robe echoes the high-priestly garb described in Exodus 28. She also notes that the angel's golden staff invokes Aaron's rod that miraculously sprouted in the wilderness after Korah's rebellion "to indicate the choice of Aaron and his descendants as priests (Num 17:16–26)."²³¹ Finally, Himmelfarb draws attention to the rainbow-like appearance of Yahoel's turban, which, she writes, "brings together the two central color schemes employed elsewhere in the description of God as high priest, whiteness and the multicolored glow."²³²

It is surely significant that associating the high priest's headgear with "the rainbow in the cloud" is a tradition present in several Jewish texts. One prominent example is the description of the high priest Simon in the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira 50:7.²³³ A number of rabbinic passages²³⁴ describe the high

229 Harlow, "Idolatry and Alterity: Israel and the Nations in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*," 313–14.

230 Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 62. Aaron's "headdress" is another noteworthy feature that Himmelfarb explicates. Jacob Milgrom also observes that the high priest's head covering was a turban (מִצְנֵפֶת) and not מַגְבָּעוֹת, the simpler headdresses of the ordinary priests (Exod. 28:39–40). Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1016.

231 Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 62. Yahoel's role as a heavenly high priest is also hinted at later in the text (*Apoc. Ab.* 10:9). This is done through his liturgical office as the choirmaster of the Living Creatures, which is reminiscent of the liturgical office of Enoch-Metatron in the Merkabah tradition. On this tradition see A. Orlov, "Celestial Choir-Master: The Liturgical Role of Enoch-Metatron in 2 *Enoch* and the Merkabah Tradition," *JSP* 14 (2004) 3–24.

232 Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 62.

233 "Greatest of his brothers and the beauty of his people was Simeon the son of Johanan the priest . . . how honorable was he as he gazed forth from the tent, and when he went forth from the house of the curtain; like a star of light from among clouds, and like the full moon in the days of festival; and like the sun shining resplendently on the king's Temple, and like the rainbow which appears in the cloud. . . ." C.N.R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996) 41–42.

234 One extensive description of the קָרָן is found in the *Book of Zohar*, which describes its unusual luminosity: "[Rabbi Simeon] began quoting: 'And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, [and wrote upon it a writing, like the engravings of a signet: Holy to the Lord]' (Exodus 39:30). Why was [this plate called] קָרָן? It means 'being seen, to be looked at.' Since it was there to be seen by people, it was called קָרָן. Whoever looked upon

priest's front-plate (פָּרֶזֶט), which was worn on his forehead.²³⁵ These texts tell also that the front-plate was made of gold, was inscribed with the divine Name, and shone like a rainbow.²³⁶

Given these traditions, it is impossible that Yahoel's priestly accoutrement is merely coincidental. This is also corroborated narratively. Yahoel appears at a crucial juncture in the story: Abraham had just left his father's destroyed sanctuary, which had been polluted by idolatrous worship. God then calls the hero of faith "to set a pure sacrifice" in worship. Within the narrative, Yahoel's role extends beyond the usual functions of angels in apocalyptic texts: he is more than an *angelus interpres* or a celestial guide. Indeed, he possesses a priestly office, initiating an apprentice into the sacerdotal work of heaven. He instructs Abraham in his high priestly role, by explaining how to prepare sacrifices, how to deliver proper praise to the deity, and how to appropriately enter into the heavenly throne room. All these details demonstrate that the priestly praxis is of great importance for the conceptual framework of the Slavonic apocalypse. However, these practices were not earthly practices. They were eschatologically refashioned ordinances which were envisioned as the heavenly archetypes of the earthly cult which were intended to compensate for the loss of terrestrial sacerdotal routines.

If Yahoel's priestly garb and role were not coincidental, then neither can it be coincidental that the authors of the Slavonic text pay so much attention to the Yom Kippur ritual, as it was the central sacerdotal ordinance of Jewish tradition. This cultic ceremony was laden with transformational possibilities, and it thus provided an ideal playground that could channel and reinterpret traditional apocalyptic imagery into a new cultic dimension. This new sacerdotal and eschatological dimension of the Yom Kippur ritual within the *Apocalypse of Abraham* was inestimably important because it brought together and established the roles and cultic credentials of both the protagonists and antagonists of the story into an overarching cosmic drama.

this plate was recognized by it. The letters of the holy name were inscribed and engraved upon this plate, and if the person who stood in front of it was righteous, the letters inscribed in the gold would stand out from bottom to top and would shine out from the engravings, and illuminate the person's face." (*Zohar* II.217b). I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar. An Anthology of Texts* (3 vols.; London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989) 3.920–21.

235 Exod 39:30–31: "They made the rosette of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.' They tied to it a blue cord, to fasten it on the turban above. . . ." (NRSV).

236 *b. Yoma* 37a.

Azazel as a Demonic Being

We begin our exploration of the scapegoat typology in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* by bringing attention to the main character of this enigmatic ritual, the fallen angel Azazel. In the *Book of Watchers*, we have already noted that a fallen angel, Asael, was assigned the function of the scapegoat. This indicates that relegating this role to a fallen angel is not a novel development. However, the Slavonic apocalypse does bring a new dimension to this conceptual apocalyptic mold. The text is still deeply indebted to Enochic lore and Azazel is still a fallen angelic being, but he also functions as the arch-demon who rules over all evil agents. And so Lester Grabbe has noted that the depiction of the antagonist in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* reflects the “basic arch-demon complex under the name of Azazel.”²³⁷ In what follows, we will explore the roots of this developed demonic profile of the eschatological scapegoat.

The origins of Azazel’s image as a demonic being are clouded in mystery. Some scholars have suggested that Azazel’s image as an arch-demon may already be hinted at in the Book of Leviticus, where his lot is placed in conspicuous parallel with the lot of the deity. Reflecting on the various hypotheses about the expression *the goat “for Azazel,”* Jacob Milgrom proposes that Azazel “could be the name of a demon.”²³⁸ Milgrom argues that this proposition is supported first of all by the parallel syntactic structures in which one goat is designated “for the Lord,” the other “for Azazel,” which imply that Azazel is the personal name of a divine being. Milgrom also notes that “the wilderness to which the goat is dispatched (vv. 10, 22) is the habitation of demons (e.g., Isa 13:21; 34:14; Bar 4:35; Tob 8:3; Matt 12:34; Luke 11:24; Rev 18:2).”²³⁹ He also brings attention to the tradition found in *1 Enoch* 10:4–5 where the demonic rebel is incarcerated in the wilderness.²⁴⁰ Milgrom goes even further to suggest that “the most plausible explanation is that Azazel is the name of a demon who has been eviscerated of his erstwhile demonic powers by the Priestly legislators.”²⁴¹ Other scholars, arguing along similar lines, conclude that the peculiar circumstances of the lots’ casting, hint to the fact that we are dealing here with an antagonistic spiritual entity that stands in striking

237 Grabbe, “The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation,” 158.

238 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1020.

239 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1020–1021.

240 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1020–1021.

241 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1021.

opposition to the deity.²⁴² They point to the fact that “the parallelism between ‘for . . . Yahweh’ and ‘for . . . Azazel’ (Lev 16:8) suggests the name of a supernatural being, ‘a being opposed to Yahweh.’”²⁴³

Despite what seems to be implicit connections to a demonic figure, it is only much later in Jewish interpretations that Azazel unambiguously takes on the demonic role in a way that leaves no doubt about his true nature. Reasons for this late transition are not entirely clear. It has been proposed that “. . . the process of the demonization of Azazel was intensively pursued in early Judaism under the influence of dualistic tendencies.”²⁴⁴ What’s more, in apocalyptic literature Azazel/Asael becomes not simply one of many demonic beings, but an archetypal representative for all negative spiritual forces. In this novel perspective, the punishment and exile of the antagonist has an effect on the destiny of the whole race of demonic creatures. According to some apocalypticists, this punishment is understood to be a cosmic paradigm for the subjugation of evil forces. Once again, the roots of this conceptual development can be traced to early Enochic literature. In this respect, Asael’s destiny in the *Book of the Watchers* is instructive. Asael’s punishment is endowed with distinct and unique cultic elements in *1 Enoch* 10. He is envisioned as a sort of expiatory offering for the sins of fallen angels and the giants,²⁴⁵ or as a sacrifice to remove the impurity and defilement caused by the celestial rebels and their offspring. Asael’s castigation is especially pronounced when it is compared with the undifferentiated penalty of the other leader of the fallen angels, Shemihazah, which takes place with the rest of the celestial rebels.²⁴⁶ Others have noted some of these cultic elements as they survive in the fragments from the *Book of*

242 Robert Helm notes that the practice of casting lots is mentioned throughout the Hebrew Bible as a method of deciding between individuals (Num 26:55–56; Josh 14:2; Judg 20:9; 1 Chr 24:5; Jonah 1:7). R.T. Helm, *The Development of the Azazel Tradition* (Ph.D. Diss; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992) 22, footnote 36.

243 G. Hasel, “Studies in Biblical Atonement II: The Day of Atonement,” in: *The Sanctuary and the Atonement* (eds. A.V. Wallenkampf and W.R. Lesner; Washington: Review and Herald, 1981) 122.

244 Janowski, “Azazel,” 130.

245 *1 Enoch* 10:8: “And the whole earth has been ruined by the teaching of the works of Azazel, and against him write down all sin.” Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2.88.

246 *1 Enoch* 10:11: “And the Lord said to Michael: ‘Go, inform Semyaza and the others with him who have associated with the women to corrupt themselves with them in all their uncleanness.’” *1 Enoch* 10:14: “And then he (Semyaza) will be burnt and from then on destroyed with them; together they will be bound until the end of all generations.” Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2.89–90.

Giants (4Q203 and 4Q180) found in Qumran, wherein Asael/Azazel seems to be envisioned as an expiatory agent. In this regard, 4Q203 reads:²⁴⁷

...and [yo]ur power [...] Blank Th[en] 'Ohyah [said] to Hahy[ah, his brother...] Then he punished, and not us, [bu]t Aza[ze]l and made [him... the sons of] Watchers, the Giants; and n[o]ne of [their] be[loved] will be forgiven [...]...he has imprisoned us and has captured yo[u]. (4Q203, frag. 7, col I).²⁴⁸

4Q180 frag. 1 1–10 provides additional hints at the unique expiatory role of Asael/Azazel:

Interpretation concerning the ages which God has made: An age to conclude [all that there is] and all that will be. Before creating them he determined [their] operations [according to the precise sequence of the ages,] one age after another age. And this is engraved on the [heavenly] tablets [for the sons of men,] [for] /[a]ll/ the ages of their dominion. This is the sequence of the son[s of Noah, from Shem to Abraham,] [unt]il he sired Isaac; the ten [generations...] [...] Blank [...] [And] interpretation concerning 'Azaz'el and the angels wh[o came to the daughters of man] [and s]ired themselves giants. And concerning 'Azaz'el [is written...] [to love] injustice and to let him inherit evil for all [his] ag[e...] [...] (of the) judgments and the judgment of the council of [...] ²⁴⁹

In this passage, Azazel/Asael is the one who accrues the transgressions of his age. Reflecting on this passage, Annette Yoshiko Reed notes that "...it is intriguing that the author distinguishes this Watcher from the rest, singling him out as the one who 'inherits evil.'"²⁵⁰

In the *Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael*, Azael (Asael) is again depicted as the archetypal rebel whose actions profoundly shape the very aetiology of the atoning rite, necessitating the establishment of the scapegoat ritual in the first place. The relevant portion of the *Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael* states:

²⁴⁷ In his comments on 4Q203, Milik suggests that "Azazel appears here in his expiatory role (Lev. 16: 8, 10, 26), for he seems to be punished for the sins of the giants." Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 313.

²⁴⁸ García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 411.

²⁴⁹ García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 371–373.

²⁵⁰ A.Y. Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 98.

What did Semhazai do? He repented and suspended himself between heaven and earth head downwards and feet upwards, because he was not allowed to open his mouth before the Holy One—Blessed be He—, and he still hangs between heaven and earth. Azael (however) did not repent. And he is appointed chief over all kinds of dyes which entice man to commit sin and he still continues to corrupt them. Therefore, when the Israelites used to bring sacrifices on the day of atonement, they cast one lot for the Lord that it might atone for the iniquities of the Israelites, and one lot for ‘Azaz’el that he might bear the burden of Israel’s iniquity. This is the ‘Azaz’el that is mentioned in the Scripture.²⁵¹

This passage is conspicuously different from the early Enochic tradition, as it does not mention Asael’s underground confinement, but instead portrays him as an unrestrained demonic force. He is “appointed chief over all kinds of dyes” whose function is to torment humankind, and must be pacified yearly. This is accomplished through the use of scapegoats. The *Apocalypse of Abraham* seems to be a part of this interpretive trend that considers Azazel the emblematic representative of all the enemies of God and His people who are now gathered in the rebel’s infamous lot—a lot full of symbolism that is now appropriate to explore more closely.

251 Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 328.

The Lot of Azazel

Before we proceed to a close analysis of the imagery of Azazel's lot found in the various parts of the Slavonic apocalypse, it will be beneficial to clarify the overall logic of our excursus into the scapegoat typology manifested in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. This in-depth study of the go-away goat tradition found in the Slavonic apocalypse will attempt to follow the major steps of the atoning ritual as they are outlined in Leviticus. At the same time, we will also keep in mind some additional details of the ritual as they appear in variegated mishnaic and patristic testimonies. The scapegoat ritual seems to follow these conceptual steps:

1. The lottery of the goats, during which the immolated goat and the scapegoat were selected;
2. The placement of the red band on the scapegoat;
3. The high priest's confession of communal sins, which are placed on the head of the scapegoat;
4. The ritual maltreatment of the animal wherein verbal curses and physical abuses are inflicted upon the scapegoat;
5. The scapegoat's exile into the wilderness;
6. The scapegoat's descent from a precipice into the desert.

All these crucial steps of the scapegoat ordinance will be carefully investigated in our study. We will see that many of them appear to be reflected in the eschatological reinterpretation of the atoning rite found in the Slavonic apocalypse.

The scapegoat ritual begins with the lottery that is outlined in the biblical testimonies. This lottery is described in even greater detail in rabbinic texts. During this lottery, two lots were cast in order to determine which of the two animals would take on the role of the immolated goat and which would be designated as the go-away goat. Lev 16:7–10 offers this description of the ritual of selection:

Then he shall take the two goats, and set them before the Lord at the door of the tent of meeting; and Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel.²⁵² And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord, and offer it as a sin offering;

252 *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Lev 16:8: "And Aaron shall place equal lots on the two goats, one lot (marked) 'for the name of the Lord,' and the other (marked) 'for Azazel.' He shall

but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel. (NRSV).

M. Yoma 4:1 further elaborates on the selection ritual, and adds some novel details:

He shook the casket and took up the two lots. On one was written "For the Lord," and on the other was written "For Azazel." The prefect was on his right and the chief of his father's house on his left. If the lot bearing the Name came up in his right hand the Prefect would say to him, "My lord High Priest, raise thy right hand"; and if it came up in his left hand the chief of the father's house would say to him, "My lord High Priest, raise thy left hand." He put them on the two he-goats and said "A sin-offering to the Lord."²⁵³

The most important elements of these descriptions pertain to the symbolism of the two lots, which would ultimately determine each goat's destiny. There is very similar symbolism that heavily permeates the conceptual core of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. This shared imagery is a crucial link between the Slavonic pseudepigraphon and the Yom Kippur rite. It comes as no surprise that the lots' symbolism in the Slavonic apocalypse, like all the other realities of the atoning rite, underwent radical eschatological reformulation. In this refashioning the lots remained not merely the pebbles of the goat lottery, but they became the eschatological portions of humankind. The transference of this imagery of the two lots onto humankind is significant here, as the cultic functions of the lots are assigned not merely to eschatological or human characters, but to the social bodies themselves. These bodies, along with their emblematic representatives, now become envisioned as the sacerdotal goats.²⁵⁴

shake them in the urn, take them out, and throw them on the goats." McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti I, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 167.

253 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

254 It is possible that this understanding of the human portions as the lots of the atoning ritual may already be present in certain Qumran texts. Reflecting on the lots imagery found in some of the Qumran materials, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra entertains the possibility that "... the people from Qumran understood their own existence through the image of the two lots—they themselves are the people of God's lot in opposition to the lot of Belial led by the wicked priest.... Considering that it was probably on a Yom Kippur that the group's persecution started, this typology of Yom Kippur as a fight between the good and the evil forces must have reinforced the importance of the annual festival in

The imagery of the two eschatological lots of humanity that are found in the second part of the text have captivated scholars' imagination for some time. Students of the Abrahamic pseudepigraphon have often tried to discern possible connections between these two portions and the dualistic developments found in some of the Qumran texts where the imagery of the two eschatological allocations also played a significant role. Indeed, in the Dead Sea Scrolls we find a broad appropriation of the imagery of the two lots of humanity. In those texts the portions of humanity are often depicted as standing in striking antagonism to each other, as they anticipate the final eschatological battle. It has been frequently noted that the peculiar symbolism of these eschatological parties often takes the form of dualistic symmetrical oppositions in the Scrolls.

Enigmatic metaphors that involve dichotomies such as darkness and light, good and evil, and election and rejection are frequently used to describe these groups. This dualistic "mirroring" of the respective portions is often underscored by the eschatological leaders of these lots. In many cases the leaders possess peculiar sobriquets that negatively or positively reflect, and sometimes even polemically mock, the names of their respective rivals. The case of Melchizedek and Melchireša' or the Prince of Lights and the Angel of Darkness are good examples of this.

We find that this peculiar imagery of the eschatological portions of humanity is dispersed throughout the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Scholars have previously noted that the conceptual elaborations surrounding these portrayals are reminiscent not only of the eschatological reinterpretations and terminology found in the Qumran materials,²⁵⁵ but also of the peculiar imagery of the sacrificial lots that is so prominent in the Yom Kippur ritual. Regarding this, it is certainly significant that the Slavonic term for "lot" (часть) found in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* appears to be connected to the Hebrew גורל, a notion prominent in many of the cultic descriptions found in biblical and rabbinic

determining the identity of the community of Qumran." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 98. Stökl Ben Ezra also suggests that, "the demonology of 11QMelchizedek, 4Q180 and 4Q181 . . . indicate that even in the community of Qumran, which did not attend services in the temple and did not experience the scapegoat ritual as an annual reenactment of the final victory over evil, the influence of Yom Kippur's temple ritual was persistent enough to lead to creative literary activity and produce myths." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 98.

255 For example, Marc Philonenko noted that the word "lot" (Slav. часть) appears to be connected to the Hebrew גורל, a term attested multiple times in the Qumran materials. Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham*, 33. On the two lots, see also B. Philonenko-Sayar and M. Philonenko, *Die Apokalypse Abrahams* (JSHRZ, 5:5; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1982) 413–460 at 418; Rubinkiewicz, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham en vieux slave*, 54.

accounts,²⁵⁶ as well as in the eschatological developments attested by the Qumran materials.²⁵⁷

In the Qumran materials, the lots of humanity are tied to the fallen angelic figures or the translated heroes (i.e. Belial or Melchizedek). This is similar to the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, where the portions of humanity are linked to the main protagonist and antagonist of the story—the fallen angel Azazel²⁵⁸ and the translated patriarch Abraham.²⁵⁹

It is noteworthy that in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, again similar to the Qumran materials,²⁶⁰ the positive lot is often designated as the lot for the deity, namely as “my [God’s] lot”:

And the Eternal Mighty One said to me, “Abraham, Abraham!” And I said, “Here am I!” And he said, “Look from on high at the stars which are beneath you and count them for me and tell me their number!” And I said, “Would I be able? For I am [but] a man.” And he said to me, “As the number of the stars and their host, so shall I make your seed into a company of nations, set apart for me in my lot with Azazel.”²⁶¹

It is also worth noting that the spatial assignments of both lots hold significance, as they are both laden with cultic meaning. In this respect, it is important that in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* the lot of Azazel is consistently associated with the left side, while the lot of Abraham is identified with the

256 For the גורל terminology see Lev 16:8–10.

257 See for example, גורל בליעל IQS (the lot of Belial); גורל קדושים (the lot of the holy ones). IQM גורל בני הושך (the lot of the sons of darkness); גורל הושך (the lot of darkness). 11Q13 אנש[י] גורל מל [כי] צדק (the men of the lot of Melchizedek).

258 *Apoc. Ab.* 13:7: “... And he said to him, ‘Reproach is on you, Azazel! Since *Abraham’s portion* (часть Авраамля) is in heaven, and *yours* is on earth...’” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 66. *Apoc. Ab.* 14:6: “Since your inheritance are those who are with you, with men born with the stars and clouds. And *their portion is you* (ихъже часть еси ты).” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 21; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes*, 68.

259 *Apoc. Ab.* 10:15: “Stand up, Abraham, go boldly, be very joyful and rejoice! And I am with you, since *an honorable portion* (часть вѣчная) has been prepared for you by the Eternal One.” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 18; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 60.

260 IQM 13:5–6: “For they are the lot of darkness but the lot of God is for [everlast]ing light.” García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 135.

261 *Apoc. Ab.* 20:1–5. Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 25.

right side. This symbolism of the left and right sides takes on portentous significance in many rabbinic accounts. There, the lot of the goat for Azazel is consistently associated with the left hand of the high priest, while the portion of the immolated goat is consistently associated with his right hand. We will explore these important spatial correspondences in greater detail later in our study.

The Crimson Band and the Placement of the Garment of Human Sins on Azazel

Perhaps the most significant event in ancient Judaism associated with both the transference and removal of the impurity caused by human transgressions was the scapegoat ritual.²⁶² During the rite, the infamous goat carried Israel's sins into the uninhabitable realm after they had been transposed onto the creature's head. Quite literally, through the laying on of hands and the high priest's confession, the communal sins of Israel were heaped upon the scapegoat. The steps outlining this ritual can first be found in the Book of Leviticus. Lev 16:20–22 offers the following description:

And when he has made an end of atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat; and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities upon him to a solitary land; and he shall let the goat go in the wilderness. (NRSV).

The *Temple Scroll* from Qumran gives a similar testimony to the transference of sins by confession and the laying on of hands in *11Q19* col. XXVI 10–13:

And he shall wash his hands and his feet from the blood of the sin-offering and will go to the living he-goat and will confess over its head all the sins of the children of Israel with all their guilt together with all their sins; and he shall place them upon the head of the he-goat and will send it to

262 Scholars often note the important distinction between the purifying function of the scapegoat rite and the immolated goat ritual. The immolated goat ordinance that was performed in the adytum of the Temple was intended to remove the impurity that became attached to that place. David Wright observes that, in contrast to this blood rite that removed impurity from the sanctuary, “the scapegoat rite serves to eliminate the transgressions of the people. Aaron is to confess over the goat ‘all the transgressions of the Israelites’ which the animal then carries to the wilderness.” D.P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* (SBLDS, 101; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987) 18.

Azazel, (to) the desert, from the hand of the man indicated. And the he-goat will take with itself all the sins. . . .²⁶³

The transference ritual is further elaborated in *m. Yoma* 6:2, which even provides the words spoken by the high priest during his confession:

He then came to the scapegoat and laid his two hands upon it and made confession. And thus used he to say: O God, thy people, the House of Israel, have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before thee. O God, forgive, I pray, the iniquities and transgressions and sins which thy people, the House of Israel, have committed and transgressed and sinned before thee; as it is written in the law of thy servant Moses, For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you: from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord? And when the priests and the people which stood in the Temple Court heard the Expressed Name come forth from the mouth of the High Priest, they used to kneel and bow themselves and fall down on their faces and say, "Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever!"²⁶⁴

As the tradition developed in rabbinic and patristic texts concerning the scapegoat rite, the deposit of the human transgressions onto the goat became symbolically associated with the crimson band that was tied to the animal's head.²⁶⁵ What's more, the band's mystical color change from crimson to white became connected with the forgiveness of sins in these testimonies.²⁶⁶

Because there seems to be a level of continuity between these traditions, it is important to explore the relationship between the transference of sins and the crimson band in the development of the scapegoat ritual.

²⁶³ *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1249.

²⁶⁴ Danby, *The Mishnah*, 169. Günter Stemberger notes that "*m. Yoma* 6:2 quotes the confession of sins which the high priest has to recite while he lays on his hands on the second goat. Codex Kaufmann offers a short text: 'O Lord, I pray: your people, the house of Israel, has committed iniquities, transgressed, and sinned before you. O Lord, I pray' . . . Codex Parma adds: 'Please, forgive, etc.' The normal printed text has a much larger version, imitating the confession of the high priest for himself and for his family (3:8: quoting Lev 16:30 in both places)." G. Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," in *The Day of Atonement: Its Interpretation in Early Jewish and Christian Traditions* (eds. T. Hieke and T. Nicklas; TBN, 15; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 130.

²⁶⁵ On this tradition see Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 14–28.

²⁶⁶ Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 17–20.

We have already noted many of the ways that the *Apocalypse of Abraham* attempts to enhance various features of the scapegoat rite with more sophisticated eschatological imagery. Among other aspects of the scapegoat ritual, this new apocalyptic dimension also affected the symbolism of the goat's crimson band, which, according to mishnaic and patristic testimonies, was placed on the head of the cultic animal during the process of the goats' selection. In the Slavonic pseudepigraphon, the crimson band came to represent an eschatological garment of human sins as one aspect of the ritual's apocalyptic reformulation.²⁶⁷

There is a great deal of mystery surrounding the origins of the scarlet band's imagery.²⁶⁸ It is common for rabbinic passages to associate the band's symbolism with the imagery from Isa 1:18: "[T]hough your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."²⁶⁹ By connecting the band with this passage, it is clear that, for the Rabbis, the change of the band's color was a sign of the forgiveness of sins. Mishnaic passages also relate that, during the Yom Kippur ceremony, the crimson band—tied either to the rock or to the door of the sanctuary—would turn white as soon as the goat reached the wilderness,²⁷⁰ thus fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy.²⁷¹

While the band of the cultic animal is not mentioned anywhere in the original description of the ritual in Leviticus, later Jewish and Christian sources provided a plethora of references to this mysterious item. A number of mishnaic passages, including *m. Yoma* 4:2, 6:6, and 6:8, mention this scarlet ribbon.²⁷² *M. Yoma* 4:2 is a good representative of the mishnaic tradition in this regard:

267 Regarding the clothing metaphors within the scapegoat rite, see Dorman, "Commit Injustice and Shed Innocent Blood," 57.

268 For possible Mesopotamian antecedents of the scapegoat's band, see I. Zatelli, "The Origin of the Biblical Scapegoat Ritual: The Evidence of Two Eblaite Texts," *VT* 48 (1998) 254–263. In some Eblaite texts a goat wears a silver bracelet hanging from its neck. Ida Zatelli argues that "the bracelet hanging from the neck signifies an offering, almost a payment for the purgation." Zatelli, "The Origin of the Biblical Scapegoat Ritual," 257.

269 Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," 133.

270 Stökl Ben Ezra notes that, although the "Mishnah does not explicitly refer to the whitening of the scapegoat ribbon, this seems to be assumed." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 131.

271 Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," 133.

272 See also *m. Shekalim* 4:2: "The [Red] Heifer and the scapegoat and the crimson thread were bought with the *Terumah* from the Shekel-chamber." Danby, *The Mishnah*, 155; *m. Shabbat* 9:3: "Whence do we learn that they tie a strip of crimson on the head of the

He bound a thread of crimson wool on the head of the scapegoat and he turned it towards the way by which it was to be sent out; and on the he-goat that was to be slaughtered [he bound a thread] about its throat.²⁷³

Shortly after this passage, the tradition of the crimson wool is further expanded in *m. Yoma* 6:6, which offers the following description:

What did he do? He divided the thread of crimson wool and tied one half to the rock and the other half between its horns, and he pushed it from behind; and it went rolling down, and before it had reached half the way down the hill it was broken in pieces. He returned and sat down beneath the last booth until nightfall. And from what time does it render his garments unclean? After he has gone outside the wall of Jerusalem. R. Simeon says: From the moment that he pushes it into the ravine.²⁷⁴

While *m. Yoma* 4:2 details the beginning of the scapegoat ritual, where an animal was chosen and then marked with the crimson thread, *m. Yoma* 6:6 goes on to relate the conclusion of this rite in its climactic moment when the scapegoat is thrown violently down the hill by its handlers. It is significant that, before the end of the ritual, the scapegoat's band was temporarily removed. This was done so that half of the band could be retained, and tied to a rock, while the other half went with the goat as it took its final plunge into the abyss. As the text continues, one novel feature of the tradition appears in *m. Yoma* 6:8, wherein R. Ishmael relates the following:

R. Ishmael says: Had they not another sign also?—a thread of crimson wool was tied to the door of the Sanctuary and when the he-goat reached the wilderness the thread turned white; for it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.²⁷⁵

In direct opposition to *m. Yoma* 6:6, here we are told that the crimson band was not tied to a rock, but rather to the door of the sanctuary. What is more, in this passage, the scapegoat's headgear seems to be more explicitly represented as the deposit of human sins that were carried by the scapegoat into the wil-

scapegoat? Because it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." Danby, *The Mishnah*, 108.

273 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

274 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

275 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

derness. Only after the goat, and the people's sins with it, had left humanity's presence and entered into the wilderness would the thread change its color from red to white.

We have previously shown that early Christian traditions, such as the Gospel of Matthew, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Justin Martyr and Tertullian, display a similar familiarity with the symbolic representations of the crimson band. Thus, for example, the *Epistle of Barnabas* uses the imagery of the crimson band in a manner that is quite similar to some mishnaic materials. It is important to remember that *Barnabas* 7:6–11 describes a ritual wherein the priest wraps a piece of scarlet wool²⁷⁶ around the scapegoat's head. At the end of the ritual the scapegoat's handler removes the wool and places it not on a rock or door, but on a blackberry bush.²⁷⁷ This parallels both *m. Yoma* 4:2, where the crimson wool is tied onto the scapegoat's head, and also *m. Yoma* 6:6, where the handler of the scapegoat divides the thread of crimson wool and ties one half of the cultic band to a rock.

Another early Christian author, Tertullian, also demonstrates that he is familiar with the tradition that the scapegoat was bound with scarlet thread.²⁷⁸ In *Against Marcion* 3:7, he writes:

276 For a comparative analysis of *Barnabas*' account and the mishnaic testimonies concerning the crimson band, see O. Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (NovTSup, 56; Leiden: Brill, 1987) 308.

277 Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.39.

278 See Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 157. The binding motif that is accomplished with the scarlet band has a curious parallel to the binding of Azazel in *1 Enoch*, where the demon is bound as a sacrificial animal and thrown into the abyss. Later rabbinic traditions are also cognizant about the demon's binding. For example, *Zohar* III.208a reads: "Now when God saw that these fallen angels were seducing the world, He bound them in chains of iron to a mountain of darkness. Uzza He bound at the bottom of the mountain and covered his face with darkness because he struggled and resisted, but Azael, who did not resist, He set by the side of the mountain where a little light penetrated. . . . Now Uzza and Azael used to tell those men who came to them some of the notable things which they knew in former times when they were on high, and to speak about the holy world in which they used to be. Hence Balaam said of himself: 'He saith, which heareth the words of God'—not the voice of God, but those things which he was told by those who had been in the assembly of the Holy King. He went on: 'And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,' meaning that he knew the hour when punishment impended over the world and could determine it with his enchantments. 'Which seeth the vision of the Almighty': this vision consisted of the 'fallen and the open of eyes,' that is Uzza, who is called 'fallen' because he was placed in the darkest depth, since after

... [one of the goats was] surrounded with scarlet, cursed and spit upon and pulled about and pierced, was by the people driven out of the city into perdition, marked with manifest tokens of our Lord's passion; while the other, made an offering for sins, and given as food to the priests of the temple, marked the tokens of his second manifestation, at which, when all sins have been done away, the priests of the spiritual temple, which is the Church, were to enjoy, as it were, a feast of our Lord's grace, while the rest remain without a taste of salvation.²⁷⁹

Unlike the mishnaic testimonies that we have explored, the early Christian interpreters attempt to refashion the ritual, giving it a new, messianic mold. They do this by linking the symbolism of the crimson thread with the cultic or messianic accoutrement of Christ, whose robe or crown they often describe as red.²⁸⁰ We find a remarkably similar account of the cultic vestment in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, where crimson band is likewise understood as a garment. More precisely, in the chapter 12 of the *Apocalypse of Abraham* the band is represented as a garment of the patriarch's transgressions. This becomes the deposit of human sins, which is then placed upon Azazel.²⁸¹

As one remembers, the only accoutrement that the scapegoat was "wearing" in the ritual was the crimson band. For this reason the garment found in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* give us telling insight into the "clothing nature" of the crimson band. Moreover, if it is assumed that the crimson-dyed wool on the horns of the scapegoat indeed represents a "garment," the mishnaic passage then also seems to indicate that the immolated goat also receives its own "garment," namely, a piece of wool that is tied around its neck.²⁸² And so,

falling from heaven he fell a second time, and Azael, who is called 'open of eye' because he was not enveloped in complete darkness." Sperling and Simon, *The Zohar*, 5:312.

279 Evans, *Tertullian. Adversus Marcionem*, 1.191. See also *Against the Jews* 14:9.

280 Similarly, Hippolytus of Rome also knows the various traditions of the scarlet wool of the scapegoat. A fragment of his *Catena on Proverbs* reads: "And a goat as leader of the flock since, it says, this is who was slaughtered for the sins of the world and offered as a sacrifice and sent away to the Gentiles as in the desert and crowned with scarlet wool (κόκκινον ἔριον) on the head by the unbelievers and made to be ransom for the humans and manifested as life for all." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 158; M. Richard, "Les fragments du commentaire de S. Hippolyte sur les Proverbes de Solomon," *Le Muséon* 79 (1966) 65–94 at 94.

281 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

282 For a discussion about whether or not both goats were decorated with ribbons, see Stemmerger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," 126. *B. Yoma* 41b offers a discussion on this subject as well.

in the reinterpretation of the Yom Kippur ritual in *Apoc. Ab.* 12, both eschatological “goats” receive “garments”: Azazel receives the stained garment of sins, and Abraham receives the celestial garment that is taken from the former heavenly being.

This interpretation hints at an important connection between the tradition of the scarlet band as the deposit of humanity’s iniquities and the garment of sins given to the fallen angel Azazel in the Slavonic apocalypse. Just as the scapegoat took on a stained garment, so also Azazel is divested of his clean garment and takes on a garment stained by human sin.²⁸³

There is an important point of overlap with the *Apocalypse of Abraham* here: the garment of Azazel in the Slavonic pseudepigraphon and the crimson band in the mishnaic testimonies are both the symbolic deposits of human sin. As far as the mishnaic testimonies are concerned, *m. Yoma* 6:8²⁸⁴ and *m. Shabbat* 9:3²⁸⁵ both connect the tradition of the crimson band to a significant passage from Isaiah that explicitly speaks to the forgiveness of the sins. A connection has often been made between the scarlet thread and human sins in other texts, as well. This is because Jewish lore is often quick to associate the color red with sin, and the color white with forgiveness. This color symbolism is summarized well in the *Book of Zohar* 11.20a–b:

Sin is red, as it says, “Though your sins be as scarlet”; man puts the sacrificial animal on fire, which is also red; the priest sprinkles the red blood round the altar, but the smoke ascending to heaven is white. Thus the red is turned to white: the attribute of Justice is turned into the attribute of Mercy.

283 *m. Yoma* 6:6 reads: “He divided the thread of crimson wool and tied one half to the rock and the other half between its horns, and he pushed it from behind.” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170; *Barnabas* 7 reads: “When this happens, the one who takes the goat leads it into the wilderness and removes the wool, and places it on a blackberry bush, whose buds we are accustomed to eat when we find it in the countryside.” Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.39.

284 *m. Yoma* 6:8: “R. Ishmael says: Had they not another sign also?—a thread of crimson wool was tied to the door of the Sanctuary and when the he-goat reached the wilderness the thread turned white; for it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

285 *m. Shabbat* 9:3: “Whence do we learn that they tie a strip of crimson on the head of the scapegoat? Because it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 108.

There is a very similar appropriation of the color imagery that also occurs in the scapegoat ritual. There, the band is transformed from red to white.²⁸⁶ This simultaneously represents the forgiveness of Israel's sins, and strengthens the association of the color red with sin.²⁸⁷ Similarly, in a variety of mishnaic and talmudic passages the band is also whitened²⁸⁸ during the scapegoat ritual, and this indicates that Israel's sins have been cleansed.²⁸⁹

It is also likely that the loosing of the crimson band at the end of the scapegoat ritual signifies that the people's sins have been forgiven. This has led a number of scholars to emphasize the semantic overlap between formulae of loosing and forgiving in Semitic languages. They stress that "there is a

286 "The traditional text adds a third solution, that is not found in the best manuscripts, Kaufmann and Parma: a crimson thread tied to the door of the sanctuary would turn white as soon as the goat had reached the wilderness, thus fulfilling Isa 1:18: "though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," 133.

287 *b. Yoma* 39a: "Our Rabbis taught: Throughout the forty years that Simeon the Righteous ministered, the lot [For the Lord] would always come up in the right hand; from that time on, it would come up now in the right hand, now in the left. And [during the same time] the crimson-colored strap would become white. From that time on it would at times become white, at others not." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 39a; *b. Yoma* 39b: "Our Rabbis taught: During the last forty years before the destruction of the Temple the lot [For the Lord] did not come up in the right hand; nor did the crimson-coloured strap become white." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 39b.

288 *b. Yoma* 67a: "But let him tie the whole [thread] to the rock?—Since it is his duty [to complete his work with] the he-goat, perhaps the thread might become fast white, and he would be satisfied. But let him tie the whole thread between its horns?—At times its head [in falling] is bent and he would not pay attention. Our Rabbis taught: In the beginning they would tie the thread of crimson wool on the entrance of the Ulam without: if it became white they rejoiced; if it did not become white, they were sad and ashamed. Thereupon they arranged to tie it to the entrance of the Ulam within. But they were still peeping through and if it became white, they rejoiced, whereas, if it did not become white, they grew sad and ashamed. Thereupon they arranged to tie one half to the rock and the other half between its horns. R. Nahum b. Papa said in the name of R. Eleazar ha-Kappar: Originally they used to tie the thread of crimson wool to the entrance of the Ulam within, and as soon as the he-goat reached the wilderness, it turned white. Then they knew that the commandment concerning it had been fulfilled, as it is said: If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white wool." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67a.

289 See also *m. Shabbat* 9:3: "Whence do we learn that they tie a strip of crimson on the head of the scapegoat? Because it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." Danby, *The Mishnah*, 108.

semi-technical use of language of loosing (שׂר) in the Palestinian Aramaic of the Targums to mean forgiving.”²⁹⁰

The priest’s transference of Israel’s sins and impurities onto the head of the scapegoat during the ritual forms another close tie between the scarlet band and human iniquity that ought to be elucidated. It is significant that this aspect of the ritual is found in the very earliest accounts of the atoning rite: the biblical texts themselves. Leviticus 16:21 narrates that the chief cultic celebrant places his hands upon the head of the scapegoat and confesses over him, and thus transfers upon him, the sins of all the people of Israel.²⁹¹

Regarding this, there is an important connection between the placement of the scarlet band on the scapegoat’s head and the placement of sins on the goat’s head in the course of the hand-leaning rite. Jacob Milgrom suggests that the hand-leaning rite itself is the very ritual that transfers human sin onto the scapegoat. He writes:

[T]he fact that the text stresses that the hand-leaning rite is executed with both hands is the key to understanding the function of Azazel’s goat. It is not a sacrifice, else the hand-leaning would have been performed with one hand. The two-handed ceremonial instead serves a transference function: to convey, by confession, the sins of Israel onto the head of the goat.²⁹²

David Wright makes a similar claim, arguing for the distinctiveness of the two-handed rite, and its importance for the transference of sins onto the cultic animal’s head:

[T]wo-handed handlaying is distinct in form and meaning from the one-handed handlaying found in sacrifice (cf. Lev 1:4; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4, 24, 29, 33). The two-handed rite identifies the scapegoat as the recipient of the ritual action (in this case, as the recipient of the sins, cf. Lev 24:14; Num 27:18, 23)

290 See Fletcher-Louis, “Revelation of the Sacral Son of Man,” 284; J.A. Emerton, “Binding and Loosing—Forgiving and Retaining,” *JTS* 13 (1962) 325–31 at 329–30.

291 Lev 16:21: “[A]nd Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness.” (NRSV).

292 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1041.

while the one-handed rite in sacrifice identifies the animal as belonging to the offerer. . . .²⁹³

The fact that both the sins and the crimson band are placed directly *on the head* of the animal is certainly significant. This further strengthens the connection between the band of the cultic animal and the transgressions that the animal is intended to bear.

There is another noteworthy dimension of the “clothing” metaphor aside from its symbolic representation of the transference and purgation of sins; it also takes on a transformative function in the ritual. Scholars have noted that in the Yom Kippur ordinance the cultic vestments are predestined to play an essential role thus underlying significant changes of the participants’ former limits. This change of ontological condition, and its anthropological significance, is especially prevalent in the high priest, the central sacerdotal figure in the Yom Kippur ritual. The chief priest’s re-clothing during the ritual proleptically anticipates the transition from the garments of skin to the garments of light, and signifies the eschatological return of humanity to its original state. In this context, the original state is the prelapsarian condition of the proto-Adam.

In later Jewish apocalyptic reinterpretations of the atoning rite, such as the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, this transformation, indicated by the garments’ change, occurs not only to the high priestly figure but also to his ominous cultic counterpart. In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, for example, the celestial scapegoat Azazel receives an unclean garment of sin from Yahoeel.²⁹⁴

In our attempt to uncover the roots of this clothing metaphor, it is essential that we notice that the crimson wool is connected with unclean garments already in the earliest rabbinic accounts of the scapegoat ritual. For example, *m. Yoma* 6:6 reveals that even handling the scapegoat and its crimson band renders the garments of the handler unclean:

He divided the thread of crimson wool and tied one half to the rock and the other half between its horns, and he pushed it from behind; and it went rolling down, and before it had reached half the way down the hill it was

293 Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature*, 17.

294 It is intriguing that in the *Book of Jubilees* the scapegoat imagery is overlaid with clothing metaphors. With respect to this tradition, see Scullion, *A Traditio-historical Study of the Day of Atonement*, 125–131; Carmichael, “The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual,” 167–82.

broken in pieces. He returned and sat down beneath the last booth until nightfall. And from what time does it render his garments unclean?²⁹⁵

In this early reflection on the Yom Kippur rite, we find a peculiar mirroring: the scapegoat's unclean "apparel" is paralleled by the subsequent uncleanness of its handlers' garments. In these accounts, we also find another intriguing correlation: the correspondence between the removal of the scapegoat's crimson band and the subsequent stripping of the goat handler's unclean garment.²⁹⁶ Leviticus 16:26 is the earliest testimony to this procedure, as the text notes that the animal's handlers must wash their clothes, presumably due to the impurity accrued from handling the goat.²⁹⁷

There are other early reinterpretations of the Yom Kippur imagery that we have already explored in this study, including the passage in Zech 3:1–5, that also highlight the importance of clothing in the scapegoat ritual. It is striking how similar the clothing scene in Zechariah is to the clothing scene that is found in the Slavonic apocalypse. In the prophetic account and in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the attire of the human sacerdotal subject, the high priest, is altered from the defiled garments of sin to festal apparel. However, in Zechariah's account, unlike the Slavonic apocalypse, the human's now-impure clothing is not transferred to the demonic creature. Although it is possible that the ritual of Satan's cursing suggests that the antagonist becomes the recipient of Joshua's impure vestments.²⁹⁸

These early references to the changing of cultic attire, in so far as they are intrinsically connected to the scapegoat ritual, are critical for our study. It is also important that the removal of garments significantly affects even the high priest, who is required to be purified and vested with the new, golden garments, which happens after the scapegoat is sent away.²⁹⁹

The preceding analysis has demonstrated that the earliest biblical and extra-biblical accounts of the scapegoat ritual already contained a panoply of clothing metaphors. Some mishnaic passages even go on to develop a peculiar

295 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

296 See *b. Yoma* 67b: "And he that letteth go the goat for Azazel shall wash his clothes, i.e., he flings it down headlong and his garments become then unclean." Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 67b.

297 See Lev 16:26: "And he who lets the goat go to Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp." (NRSV).

298 On the phrase "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan" as a cursing formula, see Caquot, "גער," 3:52.

299 Lev 16:23–24a. See also Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 31.

parallelism between the crimson band of the scapegoat and the garments of its handlers. These developments provide a central and operative interpretive framework for understanding Azazel's garment in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

However, the representation of the fallen angel's sinful attire in the Slavonic apocalypse does not only stem from these biblical and mishnaic testimonies. The symbolism of his sinful vestments was also developed out of apocalyptic accounts that reinterpreted the scapegoat rite eschatologically. Perhaps one of the most formative texts in this regard is again *1 Enoch* 10. Asael's punishment is detailed in this text: the deity orders one of his angelic executors to throw Asael into the abyss and to cover him with darkness. It would not be novel to reflect on features of Asael's punishment in *1 Enoch* 10; a number of scholars have already done so, noting that Asael's punishment is remarkably similar to the scapegoat ritual. However, what interpreters have failed to notice is that there is another Yom Kippur motif reflected in the detail that the fallen angel is covered with darkness.³⁰⁰ As in the Jewish atoning rite found in Leviticus, this covering with darkness ought to be correlated with both the placement of the scarlet band on the scapegoat and with the transference of Israelite sins upon the goat by the laying of hands—the sacerdotal action that symbolically endows the cultic animal with human transgressions.³⁰¹

300 Grabbe, "The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation," 165–79; Stökl Ben Ezra, "Yom Kippur in the Apocalyptic *Imaginaire* and the Roots of Jesus' High Priesthood," 349–366; idem, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 85–88.

301 The formulae of binding found in *1 Enoch* 10 are also significant since they are likely related to the ritual of binding the scapegoat with the band, a procedure that looms large in mishnaic and early Christian accounts of the Yom Kippur ritual.

The Ritual Maltreatment of the Scapegoat: Azazel's Accursing

We have already illustrated several ways in which the scapegoat tradition underwent an extensive interpretive development. One significant elaboration that we have not yet illuminated is the abuses heaped on the scapegoat. According to rabbinic and patristic testimonies, the cultic animal endured variegated abuses before and during its journey into the uninhabitable realm. *Mishnah Yoma* 6:4 reports the go-away goat's maltreatment on its way out of the city:

And they made a causeway for it because of the Babylonians who used to pull its hair, crying to it, "Bear [our sins] and be gone! Bear [our sins] and be gone!"³⁰²

According to this passage, the scapegoat not only underwent physical abuse, but also verbal maltreatment. These verbal curses showered upon the scapegoat were an indispensable part of the purgation and elimination rites that were exercised on the Day of Atonement. Stephen Finlan clarifies the importance of the verbal abuses heaped on the animal, arguing that "curse-transmission is one of the key moments in expulsion rituals."³⁰³ Jacob Milgrom also notes that these curses have cultic significance. He notes that the nullification of impurity can be "accomplished in one of three ways: curse, destruction, or banishment."³⁰⁴ The scapegoat ritual does not just use one of these methods, but employs all three simultaneously.

The scapegoat's cultic humiliation also received attention in early Christian contexts, and perhaps even more prominently than in the rabbinic tradition. Christian authors connected the Yom Kippur tradition's maltreatment of the scapegoat with the abuses Jesus underwent in the moments before his death on the cross. This connection endowed the Passion motifs with new sacerdotal dimensions. Early Christian exegetes highlight not only the physical abuses that the messianic scapegoat suffers, but also the verbal humiliation that Jesus

302 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 169.

303 S. Finlan, *Problems with Atonement: The Origins of, and Controversy About, the Atonement Doctrine* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005) 45.

304 J. Milgrom, *Leviticus. A Book of Ritual and Ethics. A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004) 166.

undergoes. As an example, the *Epistle of Barnabas* repeatedly describes the scapegoat as the one who is cursed: “. . . But what will they do with the other? ‘The other,’ he says, ‘is cursed.’” . . . “The one they take to the altar, but the other is cursed, and the one that is cursed is crowned. . . .”³⁰⁵ Tertullian, in *Adversus Marcionem*, also highlights the simultaneity of verbal and physical abuses: “surrounded with scarlet, cursed and spit upon and pulled about and pierced. . . .”³⁰⁶ These early Christian testimonies affirm the development of the scapegoat’s curses, and show their prominence in different traditions.

I have suggested elsewhere that the author of the *Apocalypse of Abraham* not only recognizes the tradition concerning the scapegoat’s ritual humiliation, but that he even strives to clothe this motif in novel eschatological garb.³⁰⁷ In particular, the pseudepigraphon’s author is captivated with the ritual curses that are placed upon the scapegoat. Further analysis of the story will demonstrate not only the importance of these curses in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, but will also show the development of this theme in our text.

It is helpful to divide the ritual curses bestowed on the celestial scapegoat in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* into two major groups. The first cluster is represented by the curses that are bestowed on Azazel directly by Yahoel. These occur in chapter 13. The second group occurs in the following chapter, where these ritual actions are reaffirmed by Yahoel as he instructs Abraham. We will begin by exploring the themes and developments of the curses in chapter 13.

Apoc. Ab. 13:7–14 narrates the following interaction between the heavenly high priest, Yahoel, and the celestial scapegoat, Azazel:

Reproach is on you, Azazel! Since Abraham’s portion is in heaven, and yours is on earth, since you have chosen it and desired it to be the dwelling place of your impurity.³⁰⁸ Therefore the Eternal Lord, the Mighty

305 Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.37–41. The tradition of the scapegoat’s curse might be also present in Gal 3. For discussion of this tradition see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 173–176.

306 Evans, *Tertullian. Adversus Marcionem*, 1.191. This tradition of the scapegoat’s accursing is also found in Tertullian’s other opus *Against the Jews* 14:9: “One of them, however, which was surrounded with scarlet, cursed and spat upon and perforated and punctured, was driven outside the city by the people to ruin, marked with obvious emblems of the suffering of Christ. . . .” Dunn, *Tertullian*, 103.

307 Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*, 9–36.

308 The phrase “dwelling place of your impurity” here alludes to the previously mentioned purgation function of the scapegoat ceremony. That rite centered on removing the impurity, as it was heaped on the sacrificial animal and was taken to the dwelling place of the demon in the wilderness. As Jacob Milgrom observes “. . . the goat is simply the vehicle to

One, has made you a dweller on earth. And because of you [there is] the wholly-evil spirit of the lie, and because of you [there are] wrath and trials on the generations of impious men. Since the Eternal Mighty God did not send the righteous, in their bodies, to be in your hand, in order to affirm through them the righteous life and the destruction of impiety. . . . Hear, adviser! Be shamed by me, since you have been appointed to tempt not all the righteous! Depart from this man! You cannot deceive him, because he is the enemy of you and of those who follow you and who love what you desire. For behold, the garment which in heaven was formerly yours has been set aside for him, and the corruption which was on him has gone over to you.³⁰⁹

A number of Yahoel's actions in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* are reminiscent of the deeds of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. In light of the sacerdotal affiliations of Yahoel that we have already explored, it is likely that his actions against Azazel in this chapter also take on cultic significance. Additionally, there are particular lexemes in this passage that relate to terminology associated with Yom Kippur.³¹⁰ Most relevant for our purposes is that Yahoel's address is reminiscent of the curses that are bestowed on the scapegoat during the atoning rite. In the passage that is quoted above, the transference of Abraham's sin onto the celestial scapegoat conspicuously coincides with the departure command. This is quite similar to a description found in *m. Yoma* 6:4. There, members of the community harassed the scapegoat physically and verbally by pulling the animal's hair and shouting, "Bear [our sins] and be gone! Bear [our sins] and be gone!"³¹¹ The similarity with the *Apocalypse of Abraham* has not gone unnoticed by scholars.³¹² Here, the mishnaic passage includes two explicit cultic elements: first, there is a bestowal of sins ("bear [our sins]") and,

dispatch Israel's impurities and sins to the wilderness/netherworld." Milgrom, *Leviticus* 1-16, 1021.

309 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

310 Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra notes that terminology of "sending" is used in relation to Azazel in *Apoc. Ab.* 13:10. Alexander Kulik traces this to the Greek term ἀποστέλλω or Hebrew שלח. Kulik, *Apocalypse of Abraham. Towards the Lost Original*, 90. Stökl Ben Ezra further proposes that this terminology "might allude to the sending out of the scapegoat." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 94.

311 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 169.

312 For instance, Crispin Fletcher-Louis notes a possible connection between the command found in *Apoc. Ab.* 13:12 and the dispatching formula spoken over the scapegoat in *m. Yoma* 6:4: "Take our sins and go forth." Fletcher-Louis, "The Revelation of the Sacral Son of Man," 282.

second, there is a command of departure (“be gone”).³¹³ We find nearly identical elements in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. The transference of sins onto Azazel³¹⁴ is contained in the phrase “the corruption which was on him has gone over to you.” This eschatological transference appears simultaneously with the departure element, which is indicated by the phrase “depart from this man.” It is significant that, in contrast to the mishnaic tradition, the Slavonic apocalypse places the departure formula before the sins are transferred onto the scapegoat and not following it.

More details concerning the bestowal of curses onto the scapegoat are found in *Apoc. Ab.* 13:7³¹⁵ and 13:11.³¹⁶ These verses describe Yahoel’s reproach and shaming of Azazel. The words of Yahoel are, again, related to the tradition of ritual curses that are imposed on the scapegoat. Regarding this, the language of cursing, or “shame,” found in verse 11 is especially significant since it is reminiscent of some formulations found in the mishnaic tradition.

Following Yahoel’s bestowal of curses onto Azazel in chapter 13, he goes on to explain both the handling of the scapegoat and the ritual cursing to Abraham. Once again, several elements in the text hint at its peculiar sacerdotal setting. Others have noted that Yahoel takes on the role of a senior ritual celebrant who is passing on instruction to his disciple by explaining and demonstrating the ritual.³¹⁷ The ritual instructor—instructee motif is apparent from the

313 The cursing formula likely reflects the earlier biblical form that is found in Lev 16:21. There, the imposition of sins on the head of the scapegoat is followed by his departure to the wilderness: “. . . and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness.” (NRSV).

314 The high priest Yahoel is here performing the so-called “transference function.” This is a crucial part of the scapegoat ritual wherein the high priest places the sins of Israel onto the head of the goat through confession and the physical laying-on of hands. On the “transference” function, see also Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1041. The transference of Abraham’s sins onto Azazel has been traditionally interpreted in the context of Yom Kippur. Robert Helm notes that “the transference of Abraham’s corruption to Azazel may be a veiled reference to the scapegoat rite. . . .” Helm, “Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition,” 223. Similarly, Lester Grabbe argues that the phrasing in the statement that “Abraham’s corruption has ‘gone over to’ Azazel suggest[s] an act of atonement.” Grabbe, “The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation,” 157.

315 “Reproach is on you, Azazel!” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

316 “Be shamed by me. . . .” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

317 For instance, see Harlow, “Idolatry and Alterity: Israel and the Nations in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*,” 314.

beginning of the apocalyptic portion of the text. From the outset, Abraham faithfully follows the orders of his angelic guide while they prepare the sacrifices.³¹⁸ Abraham's obedience to his celestial mentor continues as Yahoel instructs the patriarch on the ritual departure of the scapegoat. After Yahoel himself "handles" Azazel, *Apoc. Ab.* 14:1–8 describes the angel's verbal instructions to Abraham concerning the scapegoat:

And the angel said to me, "Abraham!" And I said, "Here am I, your servant." And he said, "Know by this that the Eternal One whom you have loved has chosen you. Be bold and have power, as I order you, over him who reviles justice, or else I shall not be able to revile him who scattered about the earth the secrets of heaven and who conspired against the Mighty One.

Say to him, 'May you be the fire brand of the furnace of the earth! Go, Azazel, into the untrodden parts of the earth. Since your inheritance are those who are with you, with men born with the stars and clouds. And their portion is you, and they come into being through your being. And justice is your enmity. Therefore, through your own destruction vanish from before me!' And I said the words as the angel had taught me.³¹⁹

Just as we found verbal curses heaped on the scapegoat in *m. Yoma*, this address also contains elements that are intended to denigrate and humiliate the fallen angel that represents the eschatological scapegoat. This is done by labeling him an enemy of justice and by depicting him as a damned celestial creature predestined for destruction in the lower abode.

Yet again in this narrative we find the two departure formulae that were a crucial element in the mishnaic account of the scapegoat's curse. Moreover, these commands of withdrawal take on an even more decisive and forceful tone than they had in *Apoc. Ab.* 13. Now these commands include the orders "Go" (Slav. *иди*)³²⁰ and "Vanish from before me" (Slav. *буди от мене исчезль*).³²¹

318 Harlow observes that "in chap. 12 Yahoel acts like a senior priest showing a junior priest the ropes; he instructs Abraham: 'Slaughter and cut all this, putting together the two halves, one against the other. But do not cut the birds.'" Harlow, "Idolatry and Alterity: Israel and the Nations in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*," 314.

319 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 21.

320 Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham*, 68.

321 Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham*, 68.

Azazel's Exile into the Wilderness and the Abyss

The role of transference, which featured prominently in all of the texts that we have surveyed, was closely connected with the idea of elimination: transgressions were placed onto the cultic animal, and these transgressions were removed from the people as they were taken into the uninhabitable realm.³²² An eschatological reformulation of these cultic elements is also present in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* where the antagonist is endowed with the impure garment of human sin, and he is commanded to depart. *Apoc. Ab.* 13:12–14 reports the departure command:

Depart from this man! You cannot deceive him, because he is the enemy of you and of those who follow you and who love what you desire. For behold, the garment which in heaven was formerly yours has been set aside for him, and the corruption which was on him has gone over to you.³²³

It is significant that, in this text, the departure command and the action that transfers sins onto Azazel are both executed by the eschatological high priest in the story—the great angel Yahoel. Here, human sin, “Abraham’s corruption”, becomes the garment that is put on Azazel. Not only does Azazel take on the impure garment, he also loses his former angelic garb, which is transferred to Abraham. It is intriguing that the transference ritual in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* corresponds with the demotion of the antagonist, which is performed by the high priestly figure. This seems to support Milgrom’s suggestion that one of the objectives of the scapegoat ritual was priestly evisceration of the demonic leader.

In chapter 14 the ritual concerning the scapegoat’s banishment is retold. Here, after Yahoel “handles” Azazel, the angel passes on instruction to the patriarch, as he verbally teaches Abraham how to deal with the scapegoat:

³²² Milgrom notes that “purgation and elimination rites go together in the ancient world. Exorcism of impurity is not enough; its power must be eliminated. An attested method is to banish it to its place of origin (the wilderness or the netherworld) or to some place where its malefic powers could work in the interest of the sender.” Milgrom, *Leviticus. A Book of Ritual and Ethics*, 172.

³²³ Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

Say to him, "May you be the fire brand of the furnace of the earth! Go, Azazel, into the untrodden parts of the earth. Since your inheritance are those who are with you, with men born with the stars and clouds. And their portion is you, and they come into being through your being. And justice is your enmity. Therefore through your own destruction vanish from before me!" And I said the words as the angel had taught me (*Apoc. Ab.* 14:5–8).³²⁴

There is an element in the language of this text that again reflects the scapegoat ritual from the Yom Kippur rite. The dispatch formula "Go, Azazel, into the untrodden parts of the earth" specifically designates Azazel's destination for the removal of sins. It is in "the untrodden parts of earth." The word "untrodden" (Slav. *беспроходна*)³²⁵ is significant since it designates a place uninhabitable (lit. impassable) to human beings.

Reflecting on the language of Lev 16 where the scapegoat is similarly dispatched "to the solitary place" (אל-ארץ גזרה) "in the wilderness," (במדבר),³²⁶ Jacob Milgrom notes that "the purpose of dispatching the goat to the wilderness is to remove it from human habitation."³²⁷

These verbal similarities suggest that the *Apocalypse of Abraham* is here establishing the so-called "elimination" aspect of the scapegoat ritual. In the elimination aspect, human impurity must be removed from the human space into an inhabitable realm. To reflect this idea, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* uses the nomenclature "untrodden." This possibility has been suggested by Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, who argued that the phrase found in *Apoc. Ab.* 14:5, "into the untrodden parts of the earth," is related to the Septuagintal translation of Lev 16:22 (εις γῆν ἄβατον).³²⁸ He also notes that the phrase in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* is likely reminiscent of the expression chosen by Philo in *De Specialibus Legibus* 1:188, where he describes Yom Kippur.³²⁹

However, the exile of the eschatological scapegoat is not confined merely to the earthly realm. In Yahoel's speech in *Apoc. Ab.* 14, we learn that the place of expulsion for this antagonist is not just the wilderness, but the furnace of the

324 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 21.

325 Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham*, 68.

326 Lev 16:22: "The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness." (NRSV).

327 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1045.

328 Kulik, *Apocalypse of Abraham. Towards the Lost Original*, 90.

329 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 94.

earth.³³⁰ Moreover, Azazel himself is portrayed as the “burning coal” or the “firebrand” of this infernal kiln.³³¹ What we find, then, is a two-step removal of the scapegoat: first to the earth itself and then to the fiery underworld. This is noteworthy because it has a curious parallel to some rabbinic testimonies about the scapegoat ritual.

The biblical narrative gives no real information about the demise of the scapegoat. However, later rabbinic testimonies fill in the gap here: they portray the cultic animal as being pushed off a cliff into the abyss. This is a close correlation to the two-step banishment of Azazel that we explored above. In contrast to Leviticus, which is a one-step removal process, these rabbinic texts depict the two-step removal in which the cultic animal first will be taken to the wilderness and then, in the second step, be pushed off a cliff into the abyss. This rabbinic development, however, is not entirely novel. Early apocalyptic accounts of angelic scapegoats also attest to a similar development. The Yom Kippur ritual, as it is reflected in the *Book of the Watchers* and the *Animal Apocalypse*, also appears to operate under this two-stage removal. Regarding this, it is important that the antagonist in these texts is not just banished to the wilderness, but is placed in a pit in the wilderness. In *1 Enoch* 10, God orders his angel to open the pit in the wilderness and throw Asael into the darkness. The text further describes the celestial scapegoat’s hurling into the depths of the abyss. *M. Yoma* 6:6 also details the animal’s descent from the desert cliff. However, this account is likely a later development from the tradition found in the *Book of the Watchers*, the *Animal Apocalypse*, and other Jewish apocalyptic works, as these were written several centuries before the composition of the Mishnah.

Just as other elements of the scapegoat ritual underwent eschatological reformulation, so too did the tradition concerning the removal of the scapegoat, which originally, in Leviticus, only contained its exile into the wilderness. In the early Enochic lore and later in the mishnaic tradition, this removal took on apocalyptic reinterpretations, which eventually led to a more complex

330 George Box noted the fiery nature of the demonological imagery found in the Slavonic apocalypse and that Azazel is portrayed as the fire of Hell. Box, reflecting on this fiery theophany of Azazel, argues that “. . . in fact, according to the peculiar representation of our Apocalypse, Azazel is himself the fire of Hell (cf. chap. xiv ‘Be thou the burning coal of the furnace of the earth,’ and chap. xxxi ‘burnt with the fire of Azazel’s tongue’).” Box and Landsman, *The Apocalypse of Abraham*, xxvi.

331 See *Апоc. Аб.* 14:5 “Say to him, ‘May you be the fire brand of the furnace of the earth! (главьнею пещи земнья).’” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 21; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 68.

understanding of the scapegoat's departure. This understanding began with a one-stage removal, but developed and came to encompass two stages: first, the scapegoat was exiled into the wilderness or the earth, and second, it was banished into the subterranean realm, which was represented by the precipice or the abyss. The *Apocalypse of Abraham* also reflects this pattern: Azazel's banishment occurs in two phases: he first transitions to the earth and then to the abyss. As with Asael in the Enochic tradition, the antagonist's exile in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* encompasses two movements.

Goats to Azazel: The Antagonist as the Recipient of the Scapegoats

We have already shown that there are striking differences between the apocalyptic reformulations of the scapegoat traditions as they are found in *1 Enoch* and in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. We have yet to explore, however, how the chief antagonist in each tradition differs. When we come to these characters—Asael in the *Book of Watchers* and Azazel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*,—we find that there are substantial differences between the two. Asael, on the one hand, is envisioned as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the Watchers and is also the remedy for removal of impurity that is associated with the fallen angels who have descended to earth. Azazel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, on the other hand, is depicted not merely as the vehicle by which human sins are dispatched into the lower regions, but also comes to be the recipient of this ominous offering.³³² In this respect, and as was the case with other characters in the apocalyptic story, Azazel takes on two very distinct roles here: he becomes the sacrifice as well as the recipient of the sacrificial offering. In what follows, we will analyze the features of Azazel's character in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* that point to these two distinct roles.

One unique and significant aspect of Azazel's role in the Slavonic apocalypse is his ruling power over the lower realm. In the Enochic tradition, Asael is more subdued: he is a demoted being, bound and incarcerated in the abyss where he awaits final judgment. There he is deprived of any meaningful action and is covered with darkness. Azazel's situation is quite different. In the *Apocalypse of Abraham* he is depicted as a mighty force who has control over, and even flourishes in, his domain. Azazel's antagonistic power, unlike Asael's power, inversely imitates the power and elevated nature of the deity in our pseudepigraphon. We can go as far to say that the antagonist in this tradition is endowed with theophanic attributes that paradoxically mirror the deity's attributes. One of these attributes that features prominently is the imagery of God's glory—the *Kavod*. In chapter 14, Abraham's celestial guide, the angel Yahoel, warns his human apprentice that God endowed the chief eschatological opponent, Azazel, with a special will and with "heaviness" against those who answer to him. The fact that Azazel is endowed with this mysterious "heaviness" (Slav. *тягота*) has been an interpretive puzzle for those studying the Slavonic

332 Azazel's role as the recipient of these sacrifices is already hinted at in *Apoc. Ab.* 13 where the antagonist descends on Abraham's sacrifices.

apocalypse. Ryszard Rubinkiewicz attempted to solve this puzzle by suggesting that the Slavonic term for “heaviness” (тягота) in *Apoc. Ab.* 14:13 serves as a technical term for rendering the Hebrew word *Kavod*.³³³ Rubinkiewicz has further proposed that the original text was most likely כבוד, which has the sense of “gravity,” but also “glory.” The translation of the passage would then be: “the Eternal One . . . to him [Azazel] he gave the glory and power.”³³⁴ Thus, in the Slavonic apocalypse the antagonist represents a dark mirror of God’s *Kavod*.

The second distinctive feature regarding Azazel’s character is the lot that is prepared for him. In the Slavonic apocalypse, human beings who follow after idols are depicted as Azazel’s portion and, quite literally, end up in his belly. The deity unveils this revelation to the seer in *Apoc. Ap.* 31:3–5:

Since I have destined them to be food for the fire of hell, and ceaseless soaring in the air of the underground depths, the contents of a worm’s belly. For those who do justice, who have chosen my will and clearly kept my commandments, will see them. And they will rejoice with joy at the destruction of the abandoned. And those who followed after the idols and after their murders will rot in the womb of the Evil One—the belly of Azazel, and they will be burned by the fire of Azazel’s tongue.

Here we find a role that has changed quite drastically from the simple scapegoat: now Azazel himself is the recipient of the sacrifice, as he consumes his portion. Throughout the *Apocalypse of Abraham* there is peculiar terminology that seems to hint at the fact that the left lot of humanity is destined for Azazel. The term “inheritance” is particularly telling in this regard. A passage found in *Apoc. Ab.* 14:6 reveals the following enigmatic tradition about the very special “inheritance” given to the fallen angel Azazel:

Since your inheritance (достояние твое) are those who are with you, with men born with the stars and clouds. And their portion is you (ихъже часть еси ты).³³⁵

333 *Apoc. Ab.* 14:13 reads: “. . . Since God gave him [Azazel] the *heaviness* (тяготороу) and the will against those who answer him. . . .” Rubinkiewicz, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham en vieux slave*, 150.

334 Rubinkiewicz points to the presence of the formula as it is contained in the Gospel of Luke 4:6: “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me. . . .” (NRSV).

335 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 21; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 68.

What is striking about this text is that the concept of the eschatological “lot” or “portion” (Slav. часть)³³⁶ of Azazel appears to be used interchangeably with the notion of “inheritance” (Slav. достояние).

This terminological connection is even more intriguing because the two notions, “inheritance” and “lot,” are also used interchangeably in Qumran passages that deal with “lot” imagery. For example, *11Q13* recounts the “inheritance.” This text refers to the portion of Melchizedek that will be victorious in the eschatological ordeal:

... and from the inheritance of Melchizedek, fo[r . . .] . . . and they are the inherita[nce of Melchize]dek, who will make them return. And the d[ay of aton]ement is the e[nd of] the tenth [ju]bilee in which atonement shall be made for all the sons of [light and] for the men [of] the lot of Mel[chi]zedek.³³⁷

In *1QS* 3:13–4:26, the fragment also known as the *Instruction on the Two Spirits*, we have another example wherein the imagery of inheritance is connected with the lot of the righteous:

[T]hey walk in wisdom or in folly. In agreement with man’s *inheritance* in the truth, he shall be righteous and so abhor injustice; and according to his share in the lot of injustice, he shall act wickedly in it, and so abhor the truth.³³⁸

We find another similar connection in *1QS* 11:7–8 and *CD* 13:11–12. Here, the concept of inheritance is connected to a concept closely related to righteousness: participation in the lot of light, designated also as “the lot of the holy ones” in *1QS*:³³⁹

336 While here and in *Апос. Аб.* 10:15 the Slavonic word “часть” is used for designation of the “lots,” *Апос. Аб.* 20:5 and *Апос. Аб.* 29:21 use the Slavonic word “жребий” for their designation of the “lot.” See Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 82 and 102.

337 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1207–1209.

338 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 75–79.

339 In *1QM* 14:9, the terminology of inheritance is again invoked. There, the remnant that is predestined to survive is called “the rem[nant of your inheritance] during the empire of Belial.” García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 137.

To those whom God has selected he has given them as everlasting possession; and he has given them an *inheritance* in the lot of the holy ones. (1QS II:7–8)³⁴⁰

And everyone who joins his congregation, he should examine, concerning his actions, his intelligence, his strength, his courage and his wealth; and they shall inscribe him in his place according to his *inheritance* in the lot of light. (CD-A 13:11–12).³⁴¹

In these last examples, “inheritance” is equated with participation in the eschatological lot. This is explicitly indicated by the phrase “inheritance in the lot” (Heb. נְהִלְתוֹ בְּגוֹרָל).³⁴² Given these examples from Qumran, it is likely that the same idea is at work in the aforementioned passage from *Apoc. Ab.* 14:6 where “inheritance” is depicted as participation in the lot of Azazel.

While there are obvious affinities regarding “lot” and “inheritance” between the *Apocalypse of Abraham* and the texts mentioned above, there is one conspicuous difference: in the Qumran materials the “inheritance” is always connected with the divine lot, in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* it is unambiguously related to the lot of Azazel. It brings the dualistic ideology of the Jewish pseudepigraphon to an entirely new conceptual level when compared with the dualistic developments that are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

This new conceptual development of Azazel’s character contrasts strongly with the eschatological opponents that are found in the Qumran texts. At Qumran, there is an entire gallery of eschatological figures who take on various antagonistic roles. In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, in contrast, Azazel is portrayed as the adversary *par excellence*. Rather than a slew of eschatological enemies, Azazel is the deity’s eschatological opposite—his dark mirror. In this new dualistic framework, not only is Azazel the eschatological scapegoat, but he also becomes the demonic force that requires its own scapegoats to be distracted or pacified.³⁴³

340 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 97.

341 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 573.

342 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 572.

343 This understanding of Azazel as the demonic force or power that must be subdued or pacified on the Day of Atonement is similar to later Jewish mystical developments and especially those found in the *Book of Zohar*. Related to this, Nachmanides interprets Azazel as the power who rules over the wastelands: “However, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded us that on the Day of Atonement we should let loose a goat in the wilderness, to that ‘prince’ [power] which rules over wastelands, and this [goat] is fitting for it because he is its master, and destruction and waste emanate from that power.” Ramban (Nachmanides), *Commentary on the Torah. Leviticus* (trans. C.B. Chavel; New York: Shilo

That Azazel requires scapegoats for his pacification is another novel feature of his character in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. We have already extensively reflected on the shift that separates Asael in early apocalyptic materials from Azazel in the Slavonic apocalypse. While Asael was one figure in a host of antagonists, Azazel becomes the ultimate adversary. This mythological consolidation of the main eschatological opponent advances the dualistic thrust of the Slavonic apocalypse and helps to secure Azazel's confrontational stand not only toward Yahoel and Abraham but, more importantly, towards the deity. Azazel does not just oppose humanity, as was often the case with the other antagonists, but he opposes God himself.

While most of the texts that we have dealt with do not reflect the same development of their antagonist(s) that the *Apocalypse of Abraham* does, it is important to note that the transition from the role of angelic scapegoat to the role of the recipient of the scapegoats is not entirely unique in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. It can be found in other Jewish texts, including a writing already mentioned in our study: the *Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael*. In this text, the antagonist, Azael, is depicted as a fallen angel who remains an active force and must be pacified through annual offerings. This is similar to the development we saw in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* where the eschatological antagonist receives his own earthly, human scapegoats that were predestined to be received in his ominous embrace.

One of these scapegoats for Azazel is depicted in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* 29. The text describes the appearance of a future messianic leader of humankind. He is an ambiguous character depicted in very obscure terms.³⁴⁴ *Apoc. Ab.* 29:4–13 reads:

Publishing, 1974) 210. See also *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* 46: "Sammael said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of all the universe! Thou hast given me power over all the nations of the world, but over Israel Thou hast not given me power. He answered him, saying: Behold, thou hast power over them on the Day of Atonement if they have any sin, but if not, thou hast no power over them. Therefore they gave him a present on the Day of Atonement, in order that they should not bring their offering, as it is said, 'One lot for the Lord, and the other lot for Azazel.'" Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 363.

344 This depiction is one of the most puzzling passages in the entire apocalypse, and this has been well noted by a number of scholars. Alexander Kulik conveys this consensus well, affirming that "chapter 29, where a messianic (or anti-messianic) figure is introduced, is the most enigmatic in the entire writing." Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 51. A number of interpretations have been offered that detect in these passages either a later Christian interpolation or an earlier, original conceptual layer. On these interpretations and debates, see M.J. Lagrange, "Notes sur le Messianisme au temps de Jesus," *RB* 14 (1905)

<And I looked> and saw a man going out from the left side of the heathen. Men and women and children, great crowds, went out from the side of the heathen and they worshiped him. <And> while I was still looking, those on the right side went out, and some shamed this man, and some struck him, and some worshiped him. <And> I saw that as they worshiped him, Azazel ran and worshiped, and having kissed his face he turned and stood behind him. And I said, "Eternal Mighty One! Who is this shamed and struck man, worshiped by the heathen with Azazel?" And he answered and said, "Hear, Abraham, the man whom you saw shamed and struck and again worshiped is the laxity of the heathen for the people who will come from you in the last days, in this twelfth hour of the age of impiety. And in the [same] twelfth period of the close of my age I shall set up the man from your seed which you saw. Everyone from my people will [finally] admit him, while the sayings of him who was as if called by me will be neglected in their minds. And that you saw going out from the left side of the picture and those worshiping him, this [means that] many of the heathen will hope in him. <And> those of your seed you saw on the right side, some shaming and striking him, and some worshiping him, many of them will be misled on his account. And he will tempt those of your seed who have worshiped him."³⁴⁵

In this enigmatic, eschatological scene, Azazel plays a distinctive role during his interaction with the messianic character. The providential ties between the two eschatological characters are then sealed through the mysterious kiss of the arch-demon: "And I saw that as they worshiped him, Azazel ran

513; Box and Landsman, *The Apocalypse of Abraham*, 78; P. Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum ausserhalb der Bibel* (Heidelberg: Kerle, 1927) 1267; Y. Kaufmann, "Abraham-Apokalypse," in: *Encyclopaedia Judaica. Das Judentum in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (eds. J. Klatzkin and I. Elbogen; 10 vols.; Berlin: Eschkol Verlag, 1928–1934) 1.552–53; J. Licht, "Abraham, Apocalypse of," in: *Encyclopedia Judaica* (16 vols.; ed. C. Roth; Jerusalem: Keter, 1971) 2.127; R. Rubinkiewicz, "La vision de l'histoire dans l'Apocalypse d'Abraham," *ANRW* 2.19.1 (1979) 137–151 at 143–144; idem, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham en vieux slave*, 66, 193; idem, "The Apocalypse of Abraham," *JBL* 107 (1988) 107–112; G.S. Oegema, *The Anointed and His People: Messianic Expectations from the Maccabees to Bar Kochba* (JSPSS, 27; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 214; D.C. Harlow, "Anti-Christian Polemic in the Apocalypse of Abraham: Jesus as a Pseudo-Messiah in *Apoc. Ab.* 29.3–14," *JSP* 22.3 (2013) 167–183.

345 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 32–33.

and worshiped, and having kissed his face he turned and stood behind him.”³⁴⁶ This odd episode is yet another connection between the cultic scapegoat traditions that we have been exploring and messianic imagery. As we have seen, ritual mistreatment, cursing, and even death were common tropes concerning scapegoats and their eschatological counterparts in both Christian and Jewish texts. Azazel’s sudden appearance in the eschatological narrative in chapter 29 is also distinctive and may indicate that the messianic tradition in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* is closely connected to the Yom Kippur rite. This possibility is further strengthened by the messianic character’s reception by Azazel, which is again surrounded by distinctive cultic elements.³⁴⁷

The first of these pronounced cultic features is the fact that Azazel embraces the messianic figure. On the Day of Atonement the scapegoat was often depicted, in the Jewish tradition, as a gift to Azazel. The demon, then, was envisioned as the recipient of the ominous sacrificial portion. This notion can be found in the earliest form of the atoning rite in two different ways. First, there are the conspicuous designations of the goats: one was designated as the goat for the Lord and the other was designated as the goat for Azazel.³⁴⁸ Second, there is a peculiar spatial dynamic working in the Yom Kippur ceremony. In this spatial dynamic, the sacerdotal goat was expelled into the wilderness, while the celebrant simultaneously entered into the Holy of Holies. In this inverse cultic symmetry, the demonic and divine realms were understood as mirroring one another: both characters enter into their respective domains, each ruled by an overwhelming power.

In order to fully grasp the role of the mistreated messiah in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* it is necessary to understand the distracting purpose of the scapegoat ritual. One of the ritual’s unique functions that later Jewish interpreters often stress is the scapegoat’s ability to divert or weaken the power of the Other Side during the most important atoning feast of the Jewish liturgical year. In the *Book of Zohar*, for example, the scapegoat serves as a distraction to the Left Side, and, in this way, weakens it. *Zohar* 1.113b–114b reads:

346 “и тече Азазиль и поклонися и обლობызавьи лице его и обратися и ста за нимъ.” Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes*, 98–100.

347 Thus, the kiss of Azazel has often been interpreted by scholars (e.g. R. Hall, M. Philonenko) as an act of worship. See Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *Die Apocalypse Abrahams*, 450 note xxix.

348 *M. Yoma* 4:1 reads: “He shook the casket and took up the two lots. On one was written ‘For the Lord,’ and on the other was written ‘For Azazel.’” Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

Come and see: Similarly, on the day that judgment appears in the world and the blessed Holy One sits on the Throne of Judgment, Satan appears, accusing and seducing above and below, to destroy the world and seize souls. . . . On Yom Kippur one must pacify and appease him with that goat offered to him, and then he turns into an advocate for Israel. . . .³⁴⁹

There is another section in the *Book of Zohar* that is relevant to our elucidation of the scapegoat tradition: the parable of the feast. In the parable a king makes special arrangements for a celebratory feast to be had with his son and friends. The king orders a separate meal for ill-wishers and quarrelers. The purpose is so that their presence would not spoil the happy occasion.³⁵⁰ Isaiah Tishby's interpretation of the parable is significant for our purposes. He notes that, "according to this parable the purpose of sending a goat to Azazel is to remove *sitra ahra* from the 'family circle' of Israel and the Holy One, blessed be He, on the Day of Atonement."³⁵¹

In light of these interpretations, it is likely that the *Apocalypse of Abraham* has depicted the human messiah in a manner reminiscent of the distracting scapegoat. The messiah is sent in to mislead and weaken the heathen on the left lot, and this secures the safe arrival of the true (second) messiah who will arise from the right lot. It is certainly significant in this regard that, in the text,

349 D. Matt, *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* (12 vols.; Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003–) 2.170–173. See also *Zohar* 1.190a: "This is the impure side, the Other Side, who stands perpetually before the blessed Holy One, bringing accusations of the sins of human beings, and who stands perpetually below, leading humans astray. . . . But the blessed Holy One feels compassion for Israel and has advised them how to save themselves from him. How? With a shofar on Rosh Hashanah, and on Yom Kippur with a goat, given to him so that he will disengage from them and occupy himself with that portion of his, as they have established." Matt, *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*, 3.160–161; *Zohar* II.184b: "Come and see: The goat that Israel sends to the desert is in order to give a portion to that Other Side, with which to be occupied." Matt, *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*, 6.37. *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* 46: "Sammael said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of all the universe! Thou hast given me power over all the nations of the world, but over Israel Thou hast not given me power. He answered him, saying: Behold, thou hast power over them on the Day of Atonement if they have any sin, but if not, thou hast no power over them. Therefore they gave him a present on the Day of Atonement, in order that they should not bring their offering, as it is said, 'One lot for the Lord, and the other lot for Azazel.'" Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 363.

350 Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 892.

351 Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 892.

the abused messiah is called the “weakening” of the Gentiles³⁵² (Slav. *ослаба*).³⁵³ As in the later Jewish reinterpretation of the atoning rite, which is reflected in the *Book of Zohar*, the messianic scapegoat becomes here an eschatological instrument for weakening and distracting *sitra ahra*, represented by the heathen. The passage goes on to give several affirmations of this messianic role: it tells the reader that “many of the heathen will have hope in him;” it also notes that that some people from the right lot “will be misled on his account;” and, finally, that “he will tempt those of your [Abraham’s] seed who have worshiped him.”³⁵⁴

352 “ослаба от языкъ.” Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham*, 100.

353 Rubinkiewicz translates *oslaba* as “liberation, security, relaxation,” tracing this term back to the Gk. *adeia*, *anesis*. See Rubinkiewicz and Lunt, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” 1.703. Rubinstein also notes that *oslaba* is used in the Slavonic Bible (for *anesis*) in Acts 24:23. A. Rubinstein, “Hebraisms in the Slavonic ‘Apocalypse of Abraham,’” *JJS* 4 (1953) 108–115 at 113. *Oslaba* can also be translated as “loosing.” In his messianic reinterpretation of the imagery of the two sacrificial goats, Justin Martyr uses similar terminology when he discusses “loosing” the strangle of violent contracts: “[Y]ou shall recognize him whom you had subjected to shame, and who was a sacrificial offering for all sinners who are willing to repent and to comply with that fast which Isaiah prescribed when he said, *loosing the strangle of violent contracts*, (διασπώντες στραγγαλιὰς βιαιῶν συναλλαγματῶν) and to observe likewise all the other precepts laid down by him (precepts which I have already mentioned and which all believers in Christ fulfill). You also know very well that the offering of the two goats, which had to take place during the fast, could not take place anywhere else except in Jerusalem.” Marcovich, *Iustini Martyris Dialogus Cum Tryphone*, 137; Bobichon, *Justin Martyr: Dialogue avec Tryphon*, 284; Falls et al., *St. Justin Martyr. Dialogue with Trypho*, 62. Justin Martyr seems to be reworking the Septuagintal version of Isa 58:6, a passage that addresses loosing the bonds of injustice and the thongs of the yoke: “ἄνε πάντα σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας διάλυε στραγγαλιὰς βιαιῶν συναλλαγματῶν” But Justin’s quotation from the Septuagint has “διασπώντες” instead of “διάλυε.” On the usage of this expression in Justin, see Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy*, 55–56.

354 Reflecting on the misleading function of the false messiah in chapter 29, Alexander Kulik suggests that the Slavonic term *oslaba* might be connected with the notion of laxity and weakness in observance of the Torah. The messianic man, in this suggestion, brings this laxity to the Hebrews, misleading some of them. Kulik invokes later rabbinic materials in which the false messiah brings neglect or laxity in upholding the Law, noting that, “Greek counterparts of *CS* *ослаба*, *ослабление*, *ослабѣние* may also have negative connotations: ‘willfulness’—Gk., *ἀνεσις* or ‘weakening,’ ‘laxity’—Gk. *ἔκλυσις* or *παράλυσις* (Mikl: 518; Srezn: 2.723–724; SR|Jan–17: 13.1013). The last one might have rendered Heb. רפיון and relate to a pseudo-Messiah; cf. התורה רפיון התורה [‘laxity [= neglect] of the Law’ (*Lam. Rab.* 1:4) or התורה מן ידיים מן התורה [‘laxity of hands in upholding the Law’ (*Midrash Tanhuma, Beshalah* 25)].” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 51.

Since, according to the text, the false messiah will mislead not only the Gentiles but also sinful Hebrews, it is possible that the Slavonic term *oslaba* can take on the additional meaning of “liberation.” In this perspective, the term could refer to the cathartic purifying release of Israel’s sins, as they are taken to the realm of the Other Side, which is associated with the Gentiles. The messianic figure takes the idolatrous portion of Israel with him to the Other Side for pacification. This is why the text specifies that the messianic figure will appear at the apex of the impiety. The terminology in the *Apocalypse* is the “twelfth hour of the age of impiety.” By coming at this time of abundant impiety, he will release it to the Left Side, which is represented by Azazel.³⁵⁵ This messianic feature takes on the “elimination” aspect of the Yom Kippur ritual that we have seen in other texts: impurity is removed from the human *oikoumene* into an uninhabitable realm, though this time in a new, eschatological form.

355 Robert Hall underlines this aspect arguing that “the man who is worshiped severs the unfaithful Jews from Abraham’s seed and joins them to the Gentiles.” Hall, “The ‘Christian Interpolation’ in the Apocalypse of Abraham,” 108.

PART 3

*Abraham as an Eschatological Goat for YHWH
in the Apocalypse of Abraham*



Having explored the cultic features of Azazel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, it is now appropriate to proceed to an in-depth investigation of another crucial cluster of cultic traditions that gravitate around another main character in the story—the patriarch Abraham. Abraham, like the other characters in the narrative, is playing a crucial role in the atoning drama of this eschatological pseudepigraphon: he is depicted as the immolated goat in the eschatological Yom Kippur ritual.

Just as was the case in the cultic reinterpretations of the brotherly pairs that were previously interpreted, there is a captivating reformulation of Abraham's life and visionary experience that has been re-fashioned within the cultic and eschatological framework from which the Slavonic pseudepigraphon is working. In this sacerdotal perspective, which seems to touch upon all of the narrative's aspects, nearly every facet of the patriarch's life in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* has been endowed with a pronounced sacerdotal dimension. The text portrays him as an archetypal cultic servant to whom God reveals the very "idea of priesthood."

From the very beginning of the story, the hero of the faith is depicted as a sacerdotal celebrant in the idolatrous cult of his father, Terah. The activities and ordinances taking place in Terah's "house" are reminiscent of those that take place in the Jerusalem Temple, as other scholars have noted.³⁵⁶ As the story progresses and the polluted sanctuary is destroyed by the fire of God's wrath, Abraham is instructed about the service of the celestial sanctuary. The angel Yahoel, Abraham's heavenly pedagogue, relays the rites of celestial priestly praxis, which culminate in the service in the heavenly Holy of Holies. Just as with Abraham's service in his father's house, these cultic instructions also subtly allude to the rituals that took place in the Jerusalem Temple.

The priestly roles of the patriarch in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* have attracted scholarly attention. However, this has led to a level of neglect of his non-priestly cultic offices in the text. Just as other characters do not possess only one sacerdotal role in the Slavonic apocalypse, so also Abraham seems to take on multiple roles: he is both the high priest and also the offering to God. This kind of juxtaposition of several cultic tasks is, by no means, entirely novel in early Jewish and Christian lore. As we have already shown, in many

356 Thus, Alexander Kulik has noted that the description of the sacrificial service of Terah's family, which is found in the first chapter of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, "...precisely follows the order of the Second Temple daily morning *tamid* service as it is described in the Mishna: first, priests cast lots (*Yoma* 2, 1–4; *Tamid* 1, 1–2; cf. also Luke 1:9), then they sacrifice in front of the sanctuary (*Tamid* 1–5), finishing their service inside (*Tamid* 6)..." Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 86.

of the sacerdotal reinterpretations of patriarchal stories, the heroes of these narratives assume multiple cultic functions. It has even been the case that other figures functioned simultaneously as the high priest and as the sacrificial offering. This conceptual constellation, for example, was found in the story of Joseph, where his garments were often reinterpreted as both the high priestly attire, as well as the vestments of the immolated goat. So also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Christian Messiah was explicitly depicted as the celestial high priest, but he could only enter into the Holy of Holies by his own blood, which was depicted as the heavenly counterpart to the earthly goat's blood. These conceptual currents found in the Epistle to the Hebrews are important and seem to mirror what we find in our text. Hebrews, then, is able to elucidate not only Abraham's priestly task, but is also able to shed light on his role as the heavenly, immolated goat. These are the two crucial cultic offices that the patriarch assumes in the Slavonic apocalypse.

Abraham as a Sacrificial Offering

Before attempting to prove that Abraham is being depicted as a very specific sacrificial referent—the immolated goat—in the Slavonic apocalypse, it will be beneficial to demonstrate that he is portrayed as a sacrifice more generally in our text. In this way, we can move from the general to the specific. There are certain details in the story that point to Abraham’s general sacrificial character. One of these hints is found in chapter 13, where his nemesis, Azazel, in pteromorphic form, informs the hero of faith about his surprising new sacerdotal role. *Apoc. Ab.* 13:1–5 reads:

And I did everything according to the angel's command. And I gave to the angels who had come to us the divided parts of the animals. And the angel took the two birds. And I waited for [the time of] the evening offering. And an impure bird flew down on the carcasses, and I drove it away. And the impure bird spoke to me and said, "What are you doing, Abraham, on the holy heights, where no one eats or drinks, nor is there upon them food of men. But these will all be consumed by fire and they will burn you up. Leave the man who is with you and flee! Since if you ascend to the height, they will destroy you."³⁵⁷

There is a panoply of cultic motifs present within this passage. At this point in the text, Abraham is in the middle of preparing sacrificial offerings for the deity. Having made his preparations, Abraham is just about ready to offer his sacrifices to the deity when another spiritual entity, the fallen “bird” of heaven, Azazel, descends upon his preparations. The fallen angel’s address to Abraham brings the narrative’s cultic thrust to a new level. It is from the fallen angel that Abraham learns about his new role, namely, that he is not just the sacrificer, but the sacrifice itself. At this point in the story, Abraham has only been ordered to offer animal sacrifices. However, now the demon informs him that he is predestined to be a sacrifice himself—an offering intended to be consumed by heavenly fire. There are two details in this passage related to Abraham’s sacrificial role that are worth noting. First, Abraham is not a typical sacrificial offering to the Lord. He is not the same kind of earthly offering as the animal carcasses lying in front of him. Rather, he is a celestial sacrifice.

357 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

This is intimated in the last line of the text above, where Azazel says, “since if you ascend to the height, they will destroy you!” The second important detail is that Abraham will be destroyed by fire. This is significant for the seer’s possible role as the immolated goat, because the goat’s body was also predestined to be destroyed by fire during the atoning ritual.

The Lot of God and Abraham

As was the case with the scapegoat ordinance, the ritual of the immolated goat was also initiated by lottery. This is how the goat for YHWH was chosen. We have already seen that the scapegoat's lot was eschatologically refashioned in our text, and became the left portion of humanity. The same is true of the lot of the immolated goat, which was also reformed by the authors of the *Apocalypse of Abraham* into a novel apocalyptic dimension. We first learn of Abraham's lot in *Apoc. Abr.* 10. Here, Yahoel, who is Abraham's celestial guide and instructor, informs Abraham about the special "portion" (Slav. часть) that has been prepared for him by the deity:

Stand up, Abraham, go boldly, be very joyful and rejoice! And I am with you, since an honorable portion (часть) has been prepared for you by the Eternal One.³⁵⁸

In the original Yom Kippur rite, the assignment of lots is first determined by the deity, and is only subsequently communicated by the high priest through his symbolic actions and words. The same order also occurs here, where God's decision concerning Abraham's honorable portion is communicated through the mouth of the heavenly priest, Yahoel. This choice is further affirmed in chapter 13, where the great angel again mentions the patriarch's portion. Here, Yahoel is communicating the choice of Abraham's lot to Azazel: "And he said to him, 'Reproach is on you, Azazel! Since Abraham's portion is in heaven, and yours is on earth. . . .'"³⁵⁹ Throughout the second portion of the apocalypse, there are numerous references to the lot of the patriarch, and, at the end of the narrative, the deity himself orders Abraham to be reunited with his lot.³⁶⁰

When we come to the abundant references of Abraham's lot in the Slavonic apocalypse, we find that Abraham's portion in these eschatological reinterpretations is consistently placed in binary opposition to the lot of Azazel. As we have already argued, Azazel is depicted as the go-away goat in the Slavonic apocalypse. It comes as no surprise, if Abraham is indeed the immolated goat,

358 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 18; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes*, 60.

359 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 20.

360 *Apoc. Ab.* 29:21: "See, Abraham, what you have seen, and <hear> what you have heard, and know <what you have known>. Go to your lot! And behold, I am with you forever." Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 34.

that he is portrayed as Azazel's counter-offering. In this case, the required equality of both goats and even their likeness is paradoxically reaffirmed in the conceptual "twinship" of the lots.

There is another intriguing feature of Abraham's and Azazel's respective lots that connects them to the Yom Kippur rite. We have already noted that there is often significance given to the peculiar spatial arrangement of the lots on the left and the right sides in the Yom Kippur ordinance. We find the same left-right imagery at play with reference to Abraham's and Azazel's portions in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

We first find this in *Apoc. Ab. 22:4–5*, which depicts the two eschatological lots in the following manner:

And he said to me, "These who are on the left side are a multitude of tribes who were before and who are destined to be after you: some for judgment and justice, and others for revenge and perdition at the end of the age. Those on the right side of the picture are the people set apart for me of the people [that are] with Azazel. These are the ones I have destined to be born of you and to be called my people."³⁶¹

This passage portrays two eschatological portions of humanity that are situated either on the left or right side. Those on the left side are associated with Azazel's portion and those on the right with the portion of Abraham and God. In *Apoc. Ab. 27:1–2* and *29:11*, the division of the two lots arranged on the left and right is repeated again:

And I looked and saw, and behold, the picture swayed, and a heathen people went out from its left side and they captured those who were on the right side: the men, women, and children. And some they slaughtered and others they held with them (*Apoc. Ab. 27:1–2*).³⁶²

And that you saw going out from the left side of the picture and those worshiping him, this [means that] many of the heathen will hope in him (*Apoc. Ab. 29:11*).³⁶³

A number of previous studies have attempted to establish conceptual correlations between the depictions of the left and right sides that are found in the

³⁶¹ Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 26–27.

³⁶² Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 30.

³⁶³ Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 33.

Apocalypse of Abraham with the imagery of the eschatological lots that is present in a number of Qumran texts.³⁶⁴ Yet, considerably less attention has been paid to the connections with rabbinic cultic traditions. However, the distinction between left and right is of paramount cultic significance in the mishnaic and talmudic descriptions³⁶⁵ of the selection of the goats on Yom Kippur.³⁶⁶

The left-right spatial arrangements that are found in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* are reminiscent of the cultic correspondences reflected in the mishnaic treatise *Yoma*. Thus, *m. Yoma* 4:1 reads:

He shook the casket and took up the two lots. On one was written “For the Lord,” and on the other was written “For Azazel.” The prefect was on his right and the chief of his father’s house on his left. If the lot bearing the Name came up in his right hand the Prefect would say to him, “My lord High Priest, raise thy right hand”; and if it came up in his left hand the chief of the father’s house would say to him, “My lord High Priest, raise thy left hand.” He put them on the two he-goats and said “A sin-offering to the Lord.”³⁶⁷

364 Francis Schmidt observes that “at Qumran one finds the pre-eminent presence of the concept of *goral*.” F. Schmidt, “Gôral Versus Payîs: Casting Lots at Qumran and in the Rabbinic Tradition,” in: *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IQQS in Groningen* (eds. F. García Martínez and M. Popović; STDJ, 70; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 184.

365 Schmidt has noticed the sacerdotal angle of the term גורל in rabbinic materials. He notes that “the four attestations of *goral* in the Mishnah, all of which are located in the Yoma treatise,” thus make allusion to the “lots” (*goralot*) “for the Lord” and “for Azazel” that “the High Priest in Lev 16:8–10 draws from the urn to place on the two goats at the feast of Yom Kippur. Likewise, the 69 attestations of *goral* in the Yoma of the Palestinian Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud are located in a liturgical or exegetical context, and refer to Leviticus 16 and the casting of lots over the two goats at Yom Kippur. The same is found in other Talmudic treatises.” Schmidt, “Gôral Versus Payîs: Casting Lots at Qumran and in the Rabbinic Tradition,” 181.

366 Along with their emphasis in the mishnaic and talmudic materials, these topological arrangements of the lots on the left and right sides also take on a significant role in later Jewish mysticism. For example, Box noticed that the *Apocalypse of Abraham*’s distinction between the left and the right side is reminiscent of developments that are found in the *Book of Zohar*. He observes that “in the Jewish Kabbalah . . . ‘right side’ and ‘left side’ . . . become technical terms. In the emanistic system of the *Zohar*, the whole world is divided between ‘right’ and ‘left,’ where pure and impure powers respectively operate—on the right side the Holy One and His powers, on the left the serpent Samael and his powers. . . .” Box and Landsman, *The Apocalypse of Abraham*, xx.

367 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

Although this passage from the Mishnah does not openly identify the right side with the divine lot, as does the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the Babylonian Talmud makes this connection explicit in *b. Yoma* 39a:

Our Rabbis taught: Throughout the forty years that Simeon the Righteous ministered, the lot [“For the Lord”] would always come up in the right hand; from that time on, it would come up now in the right hand, now in the left. And [during the same time] the crimson-colored strap would become white. From that time on it would at times become white, at others not.³⁶⁸

This imagery of the selection of the goats in rabbinic materials, in which the scapegoat is placed on the left and the goat for the Lord on the right, recalls the spatial arrangement of the lots in the Slavonic apocalypse, where the divine lot is similarly situated on the right side, and the lot of Azazel is placed on the left side. Abraham, when standing in opposition to the celestial scapegoat, Azazel, is consistently associated with the right side. And this seems to indicate that Abraham is reaffirmed as the immolated goat for YHWH.

368 Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 39a. See also *y. Yoma* 6:3: “All the time that Simeon the Righteous was alive, the lot bearing the Divine Name would come up in the right hand. When Simeon the Righteous died, sometimes it would come up in the right hand, sometimes in the left.” J. Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel. Volume 14. Yoma* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 175.

Yahoel's Right Hand

Other studies have noted that the interaction between Yahoel and Azazel is reminiscent of the interaction between the high priest and the scapegoat in the Yom Kippur rite. This cultic relationship between the great angel and the eschatological scapegoat is certainly significant, but there is another sacerdotal interaction within the story that has consistently escaped scholars' notice: Yahoel's handling of Abraham. Moreover, Yahoel's conduct appears to resemble the high priest's actions toward another cultic animal in the atoning rite: the goat for YHWH.

We have previously noted that the symbolism of the right and the left was highly significant in the ritual of the goats' selection on Yom Kippur and its reinterpretations. The left side was consistently associated with the scapegoat and the right side was typically associated with the immolated goat. Rabbinic descriptions and interpretations of the high priest's right and left hands reinforced this peculiar spatial correspondence. In the ritual of the goats' selection in *m. Yoma* 4, the imagery of the celebrant's hands plays an important role. This passage explicitly mentions the left and right hands of the celebrant:

He shook the casket and took up the two lots. On one was written "For the Lord," and on the other was written "For Azazel." The prefect was on his right and the chief of his father's house on his left. If the lot bearing the Name came up in his *right hand* the Prefect would say to him, "My lord High Priest, raise thy *right hand*"; and if it came up in his *left hand* the chief of the father's house would say to him, "My lord High Priest, raise thy *left hand*." He put them on the two he-goats and said "A sin-offering to the Lord."³⁶⁹

A similar description of the ritual is found in *b. Yoma* 39a, and the symbolism of the high priest's right and left hands is again laden with cultic significance:

Our Rabbis taught: Throughout the forty years that Simeon the Righteous ministered, the lot ["For the Lord"] would always come up in the *right hand*; from that time on, it would come up now in the *right hand*, now in the *left*. And [during the same time] the crimson-colored strap would

369 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

become white. From that time on it would at times become white, at others not.³⁷⁰

During the ritual selection of goats, the celebrant would place his left hand on the scapegoat and his right hand on the immolated goat. It may even be that the peculiar handling of the two goats with each respective hand is present not only during the ritual of the goats' selection, but also during other phases of the atoning ordinance. For example, according to *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, the high priest's manipulation in the Holy of Holies, which is accomplished with the blood of the immolated goat, must be executed with the high priest's right hand. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Lev. 16:18–19 reads:

And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, mixed together, and put it on the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle some of the blood upon it seven times with the finger of his right hand.³⁷¹

The correspondence of the left and the right hands and their relationship to the respective goats is further affirmed in rabbinic descriptions of the transference ritual. In this ritual, both of the high priest's hands were placed on the scapegoat. Certain rabbinic sources specifically instruct that the priest's left hand should be the one that touches the scapegoat. In the depiction of the hand-laying ritual for the scapegoat found in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Lev. 16:21–22, it is explicitly stated that the priest's right hand should be placed on top of his left hand:

Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, in this fashion: his right hand upon his left. He shall confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their rebellions, whatever their sins; he shall put them on the head of the goat with a declared and explicit oath by the great and glorious Name. And he shall let (it) go, in charge of a man who has been designated previously, to go to the desert of Soq, that is Beth Haduri. The goat shall carry on himself all their sins to a desolate place; and the man shall let the goat go into the desert of Soq, and the goat shall go up on the mountains of Beth Haduri, and the blast of wind from before the Lord will thrust him down and he will die.³⁷²

370 Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma* 39a.

371 McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 169.

372 McNamara et al., *Targum Neofiti 1, Leviticus; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Leviticus*, 169.

Given the tradition of interpretation concerning the right and left hands of the high priestly figures in the texts we have explored, it is intriguing that, in the Slavonic apocalypse, the imagery of the heavenly high priest's right hand looms large. This is also true of the seer's right hand. Both the right hand of Yahoel and the right hand of Abraham are mentioned when they come into contact with one another. Thus, in *Apoc. Ab.* 10:4, a passage describing the initial encounter between the seer and his heavenly instructor, the following interaction occurs, emphasizing the symbolism of the right hand: "And the angel whom he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet."³⁷³ The theme again appears in *Apoc. Ab.* 11:1, where the interaction between Yahoel and Abraham is once again executed through the right hand of the patriarch: "And I stood and saw him who had taken my right hand and set me on my feet."³⁷⁴ The heavenly high priest, represented by the great angel, repeatedly grasps not the left hand, but the right hand of the patriarch. This insistence on the right hand cannot be merely coincidental in light of the significance that the imagery of the right and left sides play during the division of God's allies and his enemies. Even more important for our study is the fact that the apocalypse depicts Yahoel's handling of the patriarch as occurring with his right hand. This portentous cultic interaction is found in *Apoc. Ab.* 15:2–3:

And the angel took me with his right hand and set me on the right wing of the pigeon and he himself sat on the left wing of the turtledove, since they both were neither slaughtered nor divided. And he carried me up to the edge of the fiery flame.³⁷⁵

This peculiar hand laying gesture occurs right before Abraham's entrance into the celestial Holy of Holies. This further strengthens the possibility that the patriarch is being portrayed as the immolated goat—the crucial sacrificial agent who was consistently handled in the Jewish atoning rite with the high priest's right hand.

373 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 17.

374 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 18.

375 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 22.

The Garment of Abraham

We have already shown that clothing metaphors often played an important role in the eschatological reinterpretations of the scapegoat imagery. Within this symbolism, the crimson band of the infamous animal was envisioned as his garment of sin. While the symbolism of the scapegoat's attire of sins received enormous attention from rabbinic and patristic authors, the imagery of the immolated goat's garments did not receive the same prominent treatment. There are, however, some rabbinic sources that indicate that the immolated goat was also endowed with its own piece of clothing—a band that was placed around his neck. For example, *m. Yoma* 4:2 notes that the ribbons were placed on both cultic animals during the ritual of the goats' selection:

He bound a thread of crimson wool on the head of the scapegoat and he turned it towards the way by which it was to be sent out; and on the he-goat that was to be slaughtered [he bound a thread] about its throat.³⁷⁶

The Jerusalem Talmud contains a similar tradition of a ribbon's placement onto the immolated goat. *Y. Yoma* 4:2 reads: "He tied a shiny strip on the head of the he-goat to be sent away and put it next to its departure gate, and on the one to be slaughtered around the place of its slaughter."³⁷⁷

These passages portray the high priest marking two chief cultic animals for the Yom Kippur ordinance, designating one as the goat for YHWH and the other as the goat for Azazel. This is done by placing the differing bands on them. The locations where the ribbons were tied onto the goats differed, and this appears to underline the disparate cultic function of each animal. In the scapegoat's case, on the one hand, the band was tied around the animal's head, marking the area where the transference of sins through hand laying would later take place. On the other hand, the thread is tied onto the immolated goat at the place of its future slaughtering, namely around the animal's neck.³⁷⁸

376 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 166.

377 Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma*, 494. Heinrich Guggenheimer comments on this passage, noting that the strip was put around the immolated goat's "neck, so it clearly would be distinguished from the he-goat chosen for the *musaph* sacrifice at the end of the service." Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma*, 494.

378 Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," 126. On this tradition see also Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke*, 118–119; J. Neusner, *The Talmud of Babylonia. An American Translation. Yoma* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994) 5.2, 58.

Placing bands on both of the goats also further reaffirms their symmetry. This was a cultic requirement that is attested to in a variety of rabbinic and patristic materials, which all prescribe that the two animals must be alike.³⁷⁹

There is a long-lasting scholarly dispute as to whether the immolated goat was indeed wearing the ribbon, or whether the ribbon was only required of the scapegoat. These debates are as early as the rabbinic materials themselves. For example, *b. Yoma* 41b represents this heated discussion concerning the immolated goat's band:

They raised the question: And the he-goat that was to be slaughtered at the place of the slaughtering—does this refer to the tying [of the strap] or to the placing [of the animal]? Come and hear: For R. Joseph learned: He bound a crimson-coloured strap on the head of the he-goat which was to be sent away and placed it against the gate whence it was to be sent away; and the he-goat which was to be slaughtered at the place where it was to be slaughtered, lest they become mixed up one with the other, or with others. It will be quite right if you say it refers to the binding [of the strap], but If you say it refers to the placing [of the animal], granted that it would not be mixed up with its fellow [he-goat] because the one had a strap, whilst the other had none, but it could surely be mixed up with other he-goats? Hence we learn from here that It refers to the tying [of the strap]. This proves it. R. Isaac said: I have heard of two straps, one in connection with the [red] heifer, the other with the he-goat-to-be-sent-away, one requiring a definite size, the other not requiring it, but I do not know which [requires the size]. R. Joseph said: Let us see: The strap of the he-goat which required division, hence also required a definite size, whereas that of the heifer which does not need to be divided, does not require a definite size, either. Rami b. Hama demurred to this: That of the heifer also requires weight?—Raba said: The matter of this weight is disputed by Tannaim. But does the strap of the heifer not have to be divided? [Against this] Abaye raised the following objection: How does he do it? He wraps them together with the remnants of the strips [of scarlet wool]! Say: with the tail of the strip.

Modern scholars are likewise skeptical about a ribbon being placed on the immolated goat and whether or not it played a central role in the atoning ritual. But even if the ribbon was never tied around the neck of the immolated

379 *M. Yoma* 61 argues that the two goats have to be equal in appearance, height, and value. They also must be purchased at the same time. The descriptions of the goats in the *Epistle of Barnabas* and Justin Martyr also emphasize that the two goats must be alike.

goat during the actual ritual, the presence of such interpretive tradition is still important for our investigation of various Yom Kippur typologies and their afterlife in Jewish and Christian traditions. Whether or not the ribbon was actually present in the original ritual, the motif of the immolated goat's band, documented in a number of sources, played an important role in eschatological reinterpretations of the atoning ritual. In this respect, the themes of Azazel's and Abraham's garments that are attested in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* provide additional proof for the early existence of this interpretive trend that concerns the accoutrement of both goats of Yom Kippur.

Some early Christian testimonies also provide evidence for this interpretive tradition of the immolated goat's ribbon. As we have already demonstrated, some early Christian texts envisioned the ribbon as Christ's garment. One of the earliest instances of this tradition can be found in the Gospel of Matthew 27:27–31, which speaks about the scarlet robe (χλαμύς κοκκίνη) of Jesus. This Matthean passage follows the Barabbas episode in which Jesus is depicted as the eschatological immolated goat, while Barabbas is portrayed as the scapegoat, as both ancient and modern interpreters have suggested. If Jesus is depicted as the immolated goat, which is indicated by a number of other details that we have already explored, it is possible that Jesus's scarlet robe in Matthew 27 might correspond not to the red ribbon of the go-away goat, but to the band belonging to the goat for YHWH.

Another important, this time rabbinic, piece of evidence that might be related to the immolated goat's ribbon is the tradition regarding the ribbon that is tied to the door of the Holy of Holies.³⁸⁰ *M. Yoma* 6:8 relates this tradition:

R. Ishmael says: Had they not another sign also?—a thread of crimson wool was tied to the door of the Sanctuary and when the he-goat reached the wilderness the thread turned white; for it is written, Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.³⁸¹

B. Yoma 68b, in the name of R. Ishmael, transmits a similar tradition:

R. Ishmael said: But they had another sign too: A thread of crimson wool was tied to the door of the temple, and when the goat reached the

³⁸⁰ For further discussion see Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 131.

³⁸¹ Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170. Stemberger notes that this passage is “not to be found in the best manuscripts Kaufmann and Parma.” Stemberger, “Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma,” 133. See also Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 131.

wilderness the thread turned white, as it is written: Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.³⁸²

And *b. Yoma* 67a further elaborates the motif:

What did he do? He divided the thread of crimson wool: But let him tie the whole [thread] to the rock?—Since it is his duty [to complete his work with] the he-goat, perhaps the thread might become fast white, and he would be satisfied. But let him tie the whole thread between its horns?—At times its head [in falling] is bent and he would not pay attention. Our Rabbis taught: In the beginning they would tie the thread of crimson wool on the entrance of the Ulam without: if it became white they rejoiced; if it did not become white, they were sad and ashamed. Thereupon they arranged to tie it to the entrance of the Ulam within. But they were still peeping through and if it became white, they rejoiced, whereas, if it did not become white, they grew sad and ashamed. Thereupon they arranged to tie one half to the rock and the other half between its horns. R. Nahum b. Papa said in the name of R. Eleazar ha-Kappar: Originally they used to tie the thread of crimson wool to the entrance of the Ulam within, and as soon as the he-goat reached the wilderness, it turned white. Then they knew that the commandment concerning it had been fulfilled, as it is said: If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white wool.³⁸³

Similar traditions are also found in the Palestinian Talmud. Thus, *y. Yoma* 6:5 reads:

Originally they were tying it to their windows; some of them were turning white and some turning red; these were ashamed in front of the others. They changed and tied it to the door of the Sanctuary. Some years it was turning white, in others turning red. They changed and tied it to the rock.³⁸⁴

According to these passages, the crimson thread was tied to the door of the sanctuary, and would turn white as soon as the scapegoat had reached the wilderness. The band tied to the sanctuary's door is a perplexing motif. In some passages it is not entirely clear to whom this ribbon belongs: it may be the scapegoat's ribbon, or it may belong to the immolated goat. Scholars routinely

³⁸² Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma*, 68b.

³⁸³ Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud. Yoma*, 67a.

³⁸⁴ Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud. Tractates Pesahim and Yoma*, 566.

assume that the band belongs to the scapegoat.³⁸⁵ But it seems more logical to suggest that this ribbon was taken from the slaughtered goat for YHWH, whose blood was brought into the Holy of Holies. If the band indeed belonged to the immolated goat, its binding to the door of the sanctuary would represent a symmetrical counterpart to the band of the scapegoat that was tied to the rock in the wilderness. In this case, both bands are situated near each goats' respective final destination. In this respect, it is intriguing that both Abraham and Azazel are stripped and then re-clothed in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* immediately before their entrances into their respective habitats that have been prepared for them because of their respective destinies. The fact that the immolated goat's band was stripped from the animal and tied to the door of the sanctuary then constitutes an intriguing parallel to the garments of Abraham, which are stripped from the patriarch before his entrance into the celestial Holy of Holies.

It is now appropriate to return to *Apoc. Ab. 12*, which portrays the heavenly high priest, Yahoel, standing between Abraham and Azazel and assigning special garments to the protagonist and the antagonist in the story. Azazel takes on the garment of Abraham's sins. The patriarch, in contrast, receives the former angelic garment of Azazel. In this way, the apocalypse exhibits parallelism between the attire of the protagonist and the antagonist. The accoutrement of each is interchangeable and can be suitable for either party. The exchange of garments between Abraham and Azazel again reaffirms the symmetry of the two goats, which were required to be similar in appearance and stature. This is why their eschatological garments can be used interchangeably.

385 Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 131.

The Antagonistic Movements of the Goats: Abraham's Entrance in the Celestial Holy of Holies

In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Abraham's sacerdotal roles vis-à-vis Azazel's roles evoke themes and aspects of another influential dyad that was likewise connected to Yom Kippur symbolism: the antediluvian patriarch, Enoch, and the fallen angel, Asael—a binary opposition between the protagonist and the antagonist found in the Enochic tradition. In the case of Abraham and Enoch, the protagonists inversely mirror their respective negative counterparts, as both stories portray their characters exchanging attributes and roles with each other. Just as Enoch takes the celestial offices of Asael, and the fallen angel assumes some of Enoch's human roles, so also in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Azazel surrenders his angelic garment to Abraham. In this way, both parties accept certain duties of their counterparts as they enter into their opponents' realms.

What's more, in a manner similar to Enoch in the *Book of the Watchers*, in the Abrahamic pseudepigraphon, the hero progresses in the opposite direction of his negative counterpart. Abraham ascends into heaven, while his infamous fallen counterpart descends into the lower realms. In both texts, then, there are the mirroring themes of ascent and descent.

The apocalyptic drama of the Slavonic pseudepigraphon can thus be seen as a reenactment of the two spatial dynamics which are also reflected in the Yom Kippur ritual: there is both an entrance into the upper realm and an exile into the underworld. Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra has reflected extensively on the inverse nature of these two cultic progressions taking place during the Yom Kippur ritual.³⁸⁶

We should be reminded that the spatial dynamics that we previously explored affected not only the high priest and the scapegoat, but also the goat for YHWH whose blood was brought into the Holy of Holies in the Temple. In view of these symmetrical correspondences between Abraham and Azazel, it is possible that Abraham's progressive movement into the heavenly Holy of Holies can be interpreted not only as a priestly action, but also as possessing a sacrificial dimension. Since Azazel possesses the lot of the scapegoat, it naturally follows that Abraham would take the opposite lot associated with the sacrificial goat for YHWH.

386 Stökl Ben Ezra, "The Biblical Yom Kippur, the Jewish Fast of the Day of Atonement and the Church Fathers," 494.

The Slavonic text conceals many of the details of the patriarch's sacrificial role. The other variegated sacerdotal functions of the patriarch also contribute to this obfuscation of his sacrificial role. Some symbolic peculiarities of the text, however, assist us in clarifying these interpretive puzzles, and ascertaining Abraham's role as the sacrificial goat for YHWH.

From the biblical and rabbinic descriptions of the Yom Kippur ritual, we learn that the flesh of the goat³⁸⁷ for YHWH, on the one hand, was destroyed by fire during the ritual. On the other hand, the goat's blood, which, in Jewish tradition, symbolized the soul of the sacrificial animal,³⁸⁸ was brought into the Holy of Holies by the high priest and used for purification.³⁸⁹ In light of these traditions, it is reasonable to suggest that Yahoel's and Abraham's entrance into the heavenly throne room in chapter 18 can be understood as an allusion to the entrance of the high priest into the sanctuary on Yom Kippur. Moreover, the ascension of the angelic high priest with his apprentice's soul³⁹⁰ into the heavenly Holy of Holies might represent the counterpart to the entrance of the earthly high priest with the blood of the immolated goat into the adytum of the earthly temple, wherein the blood of the sacrificial animal symbolizes its soul—its *nefesh*.³⁹¹

The symbolism of *nefesh* is important for interpreting the Yom Kippur rite, and also for the re-appropriation of that rite, as we are suggesting in this study. William Gilders has correctly noted that, in Jewish cultic traditions, "blood is characterized as that which animates the flesh."³⁹² He further argues that "in both Deuteronomy and Genesis 9:4, *nefesh* indicates the force of vitality, that which characterizes a body when it is alive. The vitality of the body is directly

387 Lev 16:27: "The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire." (NRSV).

388 Lev 17:14: "For the life (נפש) of every creature—its blood (דמו) is its life; therefore I have said to the people of Israel: You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off." (NRSV).

389 Milgrom notes that "the blood of the slain goat may have been brought into the adytum in its entirety." Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1031.

390 The patriarch's "spiritual" feeding on the vision and speech of Yahoel during their shared journey to the celestial throne room may also indicate that the human seer travels to heaven not in a physical form, but rather in a spiritual form. His ascent through the song seems also affirm this possibility.

391 For the identification of blood with *nefesh*, a lower soul of a human being, see W.K. Gilders, *Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible: Meaning and Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2004) 12–25.

392 Gilders, *Blood Ritual*, 17.

identified with the blood. In other words, blood is what keeps the body alive. As number of interpreters have noted, the identification of life with blood apparently was based on simple empirical observation that life ebbs with the loss of blood.”³⁹³ That the blood was identified as the “soul” of the sacrificial animal in these contexts is reaffirmed by the alterations that this sacrifice exercises on the human soul. Scholars of the Jewish ritual have noted that there is a connection between the blood of the sacrificial animals and the changes to the soul of the human being who makes that offering. Regarding this, Guilders suggests that, “. . . when the life or ‘soul’ of the sacrificial animal was poured out with its flowing blood and sunk into death, it was just as if the soul of the person who brought it departed from him and likewise died away.”³⁹⁴

These connections between the soul of a creature and its blood point to the possibility that Abraham’s entrance into the celestial Holy of Holies in the company of the angelic heavenly priest was envisioned as the cosmic entrance of the sacerdotal servant with his accompanying purifying sacrifice.

393 Guilders, *Blood Ritual*, 18.

394 Guilders, *Blood Ritual*, 75.

Abraham's Fiery Trials

The present argument is that Abraham was likely envisioned as the immolated goat of Yom Kippur in the Slavonic *Apocalypse of Abraham*. This is corroborated by a number of symbolic features found in the text. One important motif that further supports this supposition is Abraham's testing by fire. This event is found in the second part of the Slavonic apocalypse. We have already noted that one significant aspect of the immolated goat ritual was the destruction of the sacrificial animal's body by fire.³⁹⁵ Lev 16:27 describes this ritual in the following way:

The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire. (NRSV).

A similar tradition concerning the destruction of the immolated goat by fire is found in the *Temple Scroll*. 11Q19 col. xxvi 3–9 reads:

[... The High] Pri[est will cast lots concerning the two] [he-goats:] o[ne] (will fall) by lot [to YHWH, the other to Azazel;] [and] they will slaughter the he-goat which [has fallen by lot to YHWH and the priest will receive] its blood in the golden sprinkling bowl which he has in [his] ha[nd and will tr]eat [its] bl[ood as he treated the blood of] the bullock which was for himself; and with it he will atone for all the people of the assembly. And its fat and the offering of its libation he will burn on the altar of burnt-offering; but its flesh, its hide and its entrails they shall burn next to his bullock.³⁹⁶

M. Yoma 6:7 also attests to the tradition of the fiery annihilation of the immolated goat:

395 Regarding this rite, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra notes that “the carcasses of the bull and the sacrificial goat, whose blood was sprinkled in the holy of holies, are then burned by an adjutant at a special holy place outside the temple.” Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 32.

396 García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1249.

[The High Priest] came to the bullock and the he-goat which were to be burnt. He cut them open and took away the sacrificial portions and put them on a dish and burnt them upon the Altar. He twisted [the limbs of the beasts] around carrying-poles, and brought them out to the place of burning. And from what time do they render garments unclean? After they have gone outside the wall of the Temple Court. R. Simeon says: When the fire has caught a hold on the greater part of them.³⁹⁷

This fiery ordeal of the goat for YHWH during the atoning rite is reinterpreted in the Slavonic apocalypse as the fiery trials of the patriarch. The presence of these fiery tests of Abraham looms large in the second part of the pseudepigraphon: the seer must pass through several flaming thresholds on his way to the celestial Holy of Holies. While these fiery trials—and the cultic significance they carry—are prominent in the second portion of the apocalypse, they are also hinted at in the initial chapters of the apocalyptic section of the book. For example, the first warning about Abraham's possible fiery annihilation comes from the mouth of Azazel. In *Apoc. Ab.* 13:4–5, Azazel warns the patriarch, who represents the “divine” lot, that he will be destroyed by fire along with the other sacrificial animals. It is important for our study of Abraham's cultic office that, here, the patriarch is openly compared with the sacrificial animals that will be consumed by fire.³⁹⁸ As we have already suggested, the last sentence of the demon's address attempts to connect his ascent with the fiery destruction that is to come. The motif of fiery trials during the seer's ascent is also later invoked repeatedly while the patriarch journeys into the upper realm.

Azazel's cryptic warning concerning Abraham's future consumption by fire remains one of the most profound puzzles in the text as a whole. While attempting to solve this puzzle, it is important to keep in mind that the motif of the seer's encounter with fire is significant for the authors of this pseudepigraphon, who often portray fire as a theophanic substance surrounding the very presence of the deity. Thus, later in the text, Abraham's transition into the divine realm is described as entering into fire. Could the promise of a celestial garment to the patriarch in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* signify here, as in many

397 Danby, *The Mishnah*, 170.

398 It appears that, in some other parts of the text, Abraham is similarly depicted as the sacrifice. For example, in *Apoc. Ab.* 17:20, which is a prayer that comes from the mouth of the patriarch, he is envisioned as an offering: “Accept my prayer, <and let it be sweet to you,> and also the sacrifice which you yourself made to yourself through me who searched for you.” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 23.

other apocalyptic accounts, that his “mortal” body must be “altered” through fiery metamorphosis?³⁹⁹

It is important to note that Abraham’s fiery trials in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* are not a novel motif to this text, since the theme of fiery destruction overshadows the patriarch’s story in numerous⁴⁰⁰ Jewish accounts.⁴⁰¹ Many of these testimonies are permeated with the distinctive cultic themes pertinent for our study. This indicates that it is not only within the *Apocalypse of Abraham* that Abraham’s testing by fire is symbolic of his role as the immolated goat for YHWH, but that some other Jewish texts depict him likewise. One of the early, formative accounts, that develops the theme of Abraham’s fiery ordeals is a passage found in the sixth chapter of Pseudo-Philo’s *Biblical Antiquities*. This text tells of Abraham’s refusal to participate in the building of the Tower of Babel:

Then all those who had been separated while inhabiting the earth afterwards gathered and dwelled together. Setting out from the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylon. They dwelled there and said to

399 In this respect, it should be noted that the entrance of a visionary into the fire and the fiery transformation that ensues are both common apocalyptic motifs found in texts ranging from Daniel 3 to *3 Enoch*. In *3 Enoch*, Enoch undergoes the fiery metamorphosis that turns him into the supreme angel, Metatron.

400 One of the early hints at Abraham’s fiery test may be contained in a passage from Judith 8. Judith 8:25–27 reads: “In spite of everything let us give thanks to the Lord our God, who is putting us to the test as he did our ancestors. Remember what he did with Abraham, and how he tested Isaac, and what happened to Jacob in Syrian Mesopotamia, while he was tending the sheep of Laban, his mother’s brother. For *he has not tried us with fire, as he did them*, to search their hearts, nor has he taken vengeance on us; but the Lord scourges those who are close to him in order to admonish them.” (NRSV).

401 It has been previously suggested that “the legend of Abraham in the furnace is based on the interpretation of the place-name Ur (Gen 15:7) as ‘fire.’” Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 51, n. 17. Geza Vermes observes that “by interpreting אֵשׁ as ‘fire,’ ancient commentators of Genesis 15:7 (‘I am the Lord who brought you out of אֵשׁ of the Chaldees’) created a legend out of a pun.” G. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism. Haggadic Studies* (SPB, 4; Leiden: Brill, 1973) 88. See also *Pirke de R. Eliezer* 26: “The second trial was when he [Abraham] was put into prison for ten years—three years in Kithi, seven years in Budri. After ten years they sent and brought him forth and cast him into the furnace of fire, and the King of Glory put forth His right hand and delivered him from the furnace of fire, as it is said, ‘And he said to him, I am the Lord who brought thee out of the furnace of the Chaldees’ (Gen. 15:7). Another verse (says), ‘Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of the furnace of the Chaldees’ (Neh. 9:7).” Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 188.

each other, “Behold, it will come about that we will be scattered from each other and in later times we will be fighting each other. Therefore, come now, let us build for ourselves a tower whose top will reach the heavens, and we will make for ourselves a name and a glory upon the earth.” . . . They each took their own bricks, aside from twelve men who refused to take them. These are their names: Abram, Nahor, Lot, Ruge, Tenute, Zaba, Armodat, Jobab, Esar, Abimahel, Saba, Aulin. . . . When seven days had passed, the people assembled and spoke to their leader, “Deliver to us the men who refused to join in our plan, and we will burn them in fire.” The leaders sent men to bring them, but they found no one except Abram alone. . . . They took him and built a furnace and lit it with fire. They threw the bricks into the furnace to be fired. Then the leader Joktan, dismayed, took Abram and threw him with the bricks into the fiery furnace. But God stirred up a great earthquake, and burning fire leaped forth out of the furnace into flames and sparks of flame, and it burned up all those standing around in front of the furnace. All those who were consumed in that day were 83,500. But there was not even the slightest injury to Abram from the burning of the fire. Abram arose out of the furnace, and the fiery furnace collapsed.⁴⁰²

In this passage, cultic concerns are evident, as the theme of idolatry, which is hinted at through the construction of an idol in the form of the infamous tower, overshadows the entire narrative. The patriarch's placement into the fiery furnace likely also possesses cultic significance. Scholars have noted that Abraham's fiery tests here, performed by the evil leader, are reminiscent of the story of Nebuchadnezzar⁴⁰³ found in the Book of Daniel. In that classic story, the evil foreign ruler tests the faith of three Jewish youths by throwing them into the fiery furnace.⁴⁰⁴ This connection is noteworthy, since the details of the

402 H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, with Latin Text and English Translation* (2 vols.; AGAJU, 31; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 1.97–100.

403 In Vermes' opinion, the influence of the Nebuchadnezzar typology is especially strong in the tradition found in the *Book of Yashar*, because there, “like Nebuchadnezzar, Nimrod is forced to recognize for a time the God of Israel.” Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 90.

404 That אֵשׁ was often interpreted as “fire” in Gen 15:7, as we saw above, further secures the link between Abraham's rescue from the fire of the Chaldeans and the deliverance of the three Jewish youths in Daniel. Vermes notes this connection in *Gen. Rab.* 44:13: “R. Liezer b. Jacob said: Michael descended and rescued Abraham from the fiery furnace. The Rabbis said: The Holy One, blessed be He, rescued him; thus it is written, ‘I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees.’ And when did Michael descend?”

three Jewish youths in this story were often overlaid with Yom Kippur motifs in later rabbinic traditions. Moreover, in some of these passages describing Abraham's fiery trials, he is depicted as the sacrificial animal offered in the fire.

Significantly, in one of the rabbinic passages that portrays the fiery trials of Abraham in the hands of Nimrod, it is reported that the patriarch is tied as a sacrificial animal—by foot and hand,—and is thrown into a furnace. *Eliyahu Rabbah* 27 offers the following description:

How did Abraham come in this world to merit a life with no distress, with no inclination to evil—a life, indeed, such as God bestows upon the righteous only in the world-to-come? Because for the sake of Heaven he was willing to give up his life in the fire of the Chaldees. . . . Keep in mind that the household of Abraham's father, idolaters all, used to make idols and go out to sell them in the marketplace. . . . He [Nimrod] sent men to fetch Abraham and had him appear before him. Nimrod then said to him, "Son of Terah, make a beautiful god for me, one which will be uniquely mine." So Abraham went back to his father's house and said, "Make a beautiful idol for Nimrod." When Terah's household got the idol finished, they put a cincture around it and painted it a variety of colors. [After Abraham brought the image to Nimrod, he said to him, "You are a king, and yet you are so lacking in a king's wisdom as to worship this thing which my father's household has just turned out!"] Thereupon Nimrod had Abraham taken out [to be consumed] in a fiery furnace. In tribute to Abraham's righteousness, however, the day turned cloudy, and presently rain came down so hard that Nimrod's men could not get the fire started. Next, as Nimrod sat [in his throne room], surrounded by the entire generation that was to be dispersed [for its transgressions], Abraham was brought in and put in their midst. He approached Nimrod and again voiced his contempt of the king's idol. "If not this idol, whom shall I worship?" Nimrod asked. Abraham replied, "The God of gods, the Lord of lords, Him whose kingdom endures in heaven and earth and in uppermost heaven of heavens." Nimrod said, "Nevertheless I will rather worship the god of fire, for behold, I am going to cast you into the midst of fire—let the god of whom you speak [of?] come and deliver you from fire." *At once his servants bound Abraham hand and foot and laid him on*

In the case of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, 1:369. Vermes further observes that "... the exegetical association between Genesis 15:7 and Daniel 3 is not mere hypothesis, as *Genesis Rabbah* 44:13 demonstrates. . . ." Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, 90.

*the ground. Then they piled up wood on all sides of him, [but at some distance away], a pile of wood five hundred cubits long to the west, and five hundred cubits long to the east. Nimrod's men then went around and around setting the wood on fire. . . . At once the compassion of the Holy One welled up, and the holiness of His great name came down from the upper heaven of heavens, from the place of His glory, His grandeur, and His beauty and delivered our father Abraham from the taunts and the jeers and from the fiery furnace, as is said, I am the Lord that brought thee out of the fire of the Chaldees (Gen 15:7).*⁴⁰⁵

This depiction of the patriarch tied foot and hand surely evokes the Jewish accounts where the angelic characters are portrayed as sacrificial animals—characters such as Asael in the *Book of the Watchers* and Asmodeus in *Tobit*, who are both bound hand and foot.

All this indicates that in some Jewish materials Abraham's fiery tests were the means to envision him as the cultic offering for YHWH. This sacerdotal thrust concerning the patriarch's fiery trials is also present in the Slavonic apocalypse. In this respect, it is intriguing that Abraham's fiery trials occur outside of the heavenly Temple.⁴⁰⁶ This, again, represents a curious but telling parallel to the fiery ordeal of the immolated goat that also takes place outside of the Temple.

405 Braude and Kapstein, *Tanna Debe Eliyyahu*, 62–63.

406 *Apoc. Ab.* 15:3: "And he carried me up to the edge of the fiery flame . . ." Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 22; *Apoc. Ab.* 17:1: "And while he was still speaking, behold, a fire was coming toward us round about, and a sound was in the fire like a sound of many waters, like a sound of the sea in its uproar." Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 22.

Abraham as the Purification Offering for the Polluted Sanctuary

That Abraham is being depicted as the immolated goat can be further demonstrated by the dominant subject that runs throughout the entire apocalypse: the restoration of the cultic settings that have been polluted by idolatrous worship. The narrative begins by depicting the idolatrous cultic routines of Terah's household. This introduction serves as a cryptic allusion to the improper rituals and services of the defiled terrestrial sanctuary. The polluted shrine is then destroyed in the fiery storm that is sent by the deity. This calamity kills the infamous guild of idol makers.⁴⁰⁷ After the polluted house of worship is destroyed, Abraham travels to heaven where he beholds the true heavenly Temple. It is in this upper heaven that he is then given the vision of the restored earthly sanctuary.

These initial chapters of the apocalypse and their portrayal of the polluted sanctuary and the demise of two of its cultic servants is noteworthy, because they are reminiscent of the death of Nadab and Abihu. Their ordeal is mentioned in the initial verses of Leviticus 16,⁴⁰⁸ and this connection points to the cultic contamination that now requires a purgation ritual. In this respect, Leviticus 16 and the *Apocalypse of Abraham* share an almost identical structure. It is doubtful that this arrangement of cultic traditions is merely coincidental.

The main concerns of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, which begins with the depiction and then the destruction of the polluted earthly shrine, therefore revolve around restoration of the cultic settings and reestablishing the purity of the sanctuary.⁴⁰⁹ In this portentous task of purification, Abraham is predestined to fulfill several cultic functions that the ritual assigns to various sacerdotal subjects. Thus, in *Apoc. Ab.* 9, where God sets the future tasks for the

407 *Apoc. Ab.* 8:5–6: “And I went out. And it came to pass as I was going out, that I had not even gotten as far as going beyond the doors of the courtyard when the sound of thunder came forth and burned him and his house and everything in the house, down to the ground [to a distance of] forty cubits.” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 16.

408 Lev 16:1: “The Lord spoke to Moses, after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord and died. . . .” (NRSV).

409 There are a number of related sacerdotal elements found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where Jesus is likewise envisioned as the immolated goat who purifies the cult. On this see Berenson Maclean, “Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative,” 330.

patriarch, he orders Abraham to set for him a pure sacrifice.⁴¹⁰ This forceful demand for pure sacrifice might not be limited only to “external,” conventional cultic routines, which are embodied by the animal offerings of the patriarch, but they may also require more radical decisions from the former idolater. In this respect, it is intriguing that in *Apoc. Ab.* 6:4 the young hero of faith, who is offended by the idolatrous pollution of the Temple, decides “to risk his life for *purity*.”⁴¹¹ Scholars have correctly noted the cultic significance of this notion of “purity” that appears in the Slavonic apocalypse.⁴¹²

Scholars of Yom Kippur traditions have previously noticed the peculiar role of the immolated goat that appears to be predestined to atone for the sanctuary, thus securing purification and rededication of the earthly shrine.⁴¹³ Regarding this, while reflecting on the respective functions of the two goats, Jacob Milgrom suggests that the purposes of the two goats were different and related respectively to the sanctuary and to the people. He notes that “the sacrificed goat purges the sanctuary⁴¹⁴ . . . of Israel’s impurities (Lev 16:16), whereas the scapegoat carries off . . . ‘all of Israel’s transgressions’ (Lev 16:21).”⁴¹⁵ Milgrom’s conclusion clearly distinguishes between the purifying objectives of

410 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 17.

411 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 13.

412 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 72, note 4.

413 Thus, Berenson Maclean notes that “according to Leviticus, the purpose of the immolated goat is to make atonement for the sanctuary, the tent of the meeting, and the altar (Lev 16:16, 18, 20). This three-fold atonement purifies the entire sanctuary complex from the pollution caused by the sins of Israel.” Berenson Maclean, “Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative,” 330.

414 In relation to the blood of the immolated goat, Milgrom also observes that “the *hattat* blood . . . is the purging element, the ritual detergent. Its use is confined to the sanctuary, but it is never applied to a person.” J. Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary: The Priestly ‘Picture of Dorian Gray,’” in: *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology* (SJLA, 36; Leiden: Brill, 1983) 76.

415 Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary: The Priestly ‘Picture of Dorian Gray,’” 81. Elsewhere, Milgrom observes that “the ritual in the sanctuary concerns itself with removing its pollution (also caused by Israel’s wrongs); while the rite with the Azazel goat, by contrast, focuses not on pollution, the *effects* of Israel’s wrongs, but exclusively on the *wrongs themselves*.” Milgrom, *Leviticus. A Book of Ritual and Ethics*, 170.

the two cultic agents of the Yom Kippur ritual: the slain goat was predestined to purge the sanctuary,⁴¹⁶ and the live goat was intended to purge the people.⁴¹⁷

Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra also points to the respective functions of the two goats, noting, however, that this distinction was not always iron-clad in all Jewish materials. Thus, he notes that, according to the *Temple Scroll*, the sacrificial goat atones for the people, too.⁴¹⁸ Stökl Ben Ezra's nuanced reflection represents a valuable contribution. Yet, for the purposes of our investigation, it is important that, while the immolated goat might be able to atone in some tradition for the people, the scapegoat is not able to function as the purification offering for the polluted sanctuary. As James Scullion rightly observes, the scapegoat "cannot be a purification offering because it was not ritually slaughtered, nor was its blood poured out on the altar or any sancta, all elements of the purification offering as prescribed in 4:1–5:13."⁴¹⁹

Another important detail that might point to Abraham's role as a sacrifice is the enigmatic phrase uttered by Yahoel at the very beginning of the angel's encounter with Abraham in chapter 11. Here, the great angel tells the young hero of faith that he will be visible *until* the sacrifice, and will be invisible after it: "Come with me and I shall go with you, visible *until* the sacrifice, but after

416 The destruction of the goat's carcass by fire was another significant aspect of the ritual. This again underlines the purifying nature of the offering. In this respect, we should again underline the parallelism between the purifying fire that destroys the polluted sanctuaries (in *Apoc. Ab.* 8 and in *Apoc. Ab.* 27) and the purifying fire of Abraham's trials.

417 Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary: The Priestly 'Picture of Dorian Gray,'" 81. Stökl Ben Ezra notes that "the first chapter of *Mishnah Shevu'ot* distinguishes sharply between the sprinkling of the sacrificial goat's blood and the scapegoat ritual. The former rite purges the sanctuary from the impurities caused by sins and then reconsecrates it; the latter expiates the sins of the people. The very next saying in *Mishnah Shevu'ot* states that the confession over the scapegoat and the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrificial goat atone for the sins of Israel, while the confession over the calf and the sprinkling of its blood atone for the priests." Stökl Ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity*, 127.

418 He observes that "some scholars have written highly stimulating works trying to understand early Christian Yom Kippur imagery by applying an alleged distinction between the purposes of the two goats: (1) the sacrificial goat atones for the Sanctuary, purifies and rededicates it; (2) the scapegoat atones for the sins of the people (Kraus 1991). While such an understanding may perhaps be read in Lev 16 and/or *Mishnah Shevuot*, the *Temple Scroll* (11QTM xxvi 5–7) proves that this strict distinction was far from being the only ancient Jewish understanding of the two-goats-ritual as, according to the *Temple Scroll* the sacrificial goat atones for the people, too (Ginsburskaya, forthcoming, cf. Körting 2004)." Stökl Ben Ezra, "Fasting with Jews, Thinking with Scapegoats," 166–167.

419 Scullion, *A Traditio-historical Study of the Day of Atonement*, 41. On this see also Janowski, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen*, 210.

the sacrifice invisible forever.”⁴²⁰ This statement of the angelic high priest must not be related to the animal sacrifices of the patriarch, since Yahoel remains visible after Abraham offered these sacrifices. The angel disappears only after the patriarch and Yahoel enter into the heavenly Holy of Holies—the event that seems, once again, to affirm Abraham’s role as the sacrificial offering.

Finally, there is one last important feature that pertains to Abraham’s role as the sacrifice for YHWH. This detail is situated in his prayer that is uttered during his ascent into the heavenly Holy of Holies, wherein he offers himself as the sacrifice chosen by the deity:

Accept my prayer, and also the sacrifice which you yourself made to yourself through me who searched for you (прими молитву мою и также и жертву юже себе сам створи мною взискающим тебе).⁴²¹

In the verse that immediately follows this one, the patriarch’s self-definition as a sacrifice is also noteworthy. In this verse, the patriarch asks the deity to “receive” him favorably. The formula used, as we have already noted, is likely related to the patriarch’s role as the purification offering.⁴²²

420 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 19.

421 Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 23; Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham. Introduction, texte slave, traduction et notes*, 76.

422 See *Apoc. Ab.* 17:21: “Receive me favorably...” Kulik, *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, 23.

Conclusion

One of the objectives of this study was to highlight the complexity of the sacerdotal universe of early Jewish apocalypticism. This important cultic dimension still remains largely underexplored and underappreciated in contemporary studies of Jewish apocalyptic literature. It is well known that, in these extra-biblical Jewish apocalyptic materials, many biblical patriarchs and prophets were consistently endowed with various sacerdotal offices, making them the distinctive bearers of priestly concerns and aspirations of various social and religious groups. While some priestly roles and functions of these primeval characters have been thoroughly explored in previous studies, scholars have often been reluctant to explore other, non-priestly, cultic functions of these protological heroes—functions that sometimes existed alongside their more apparent priestly duties.

This study has attempted to explore in greater depth some of these non-priestly, sacerdotal offices of protological characters. These offices often portrayed them not as cultic servants bringing sacrifices, but as the very sacrifice itself. These duties often coincided with other sacerdotal functions, including priestly offices, but did so without contradicting each other. In this respect, the plethora of Abraham's sacerdotal duties in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* serves as an important illustration that reveals the paradoxical amalgam of various sacerdotal offices that attempt to reconcile the patriarch's priestly profile with his role as the immolated goat. Moreover, similar to the protagonist of the story, the cultic profile of the antagonist, represented by the fallen angel Azazel, also includes several different sacerdotal dimensions. In some portions of the text, Azazel is depicted as the eschatological scapegoat, but elsewhere the antagonist seems to be portrayed as the demoted priest. The complex nature of the antagonist and the protagonist's sacerdotal profiles has often led to confusion about their roles. As a consequence of this, some of their cultic functions have been obscured and concealed because scholars have tried to fit them into one, single sacerdotal role.

It seems likely, then, that in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the protagonist's profile as the immolated goat had been obscured and even concealed by Abraham's other sacerdotal roles. More specifically, his role as the high priestly figure and as the cultic apprentice to the great angel Yahoel masked his role as the immolated goat. The shadow of the high priestly role quite naturally became instrumental in veiling the patriarch's function as the goat for YHWH because of a marked symmetry between both

offices, where both sacerdotal agents shared common attributes, including the divine Name.

This consolidation of several sacerdotal roles in the conceptual profile of a single protagonist or antagonist that we find in the Slavonic pseudepigraphon demonstrates an intriguing parallel to some Christological developments that were contemporaneous with the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. In these Christological currents, there was often an attempt to assign to the Christian Messiah clusters of sacerdotal roles. This meant that Jesus was often envisioned as the high priest as well as both of the goats of the atoning rite. It is likely that these paradoxical reformulations of the traditional sacerdotal roles and functions that became densely consolidated around a single prominent individual in a given religious tradition were dictated by the realities of the broader religious and social environment. Challenging situations, such as the loss of earthly sanctuaries or the marginalization of existing ones, meant that cultic routines would need to be consolidated around crucial exemplars of the various religious ideologies. These figures themselves became anthropomorphic embodiments of the Temple. Moreover, the expanded life stories of these religious exemplars would later be envisioned as aetiological narratives that attempted to elaborate the origins of the eschatological cultic structures connected with the founders of the religious traditions. In this respect, it is intriguing that, much like contemporaneous Christian traditions that made consistent efforts to sacerdotally reinterpret many crucial moments of Jesus' story, including his suffering and death, the Slavonic apocalypse also attempted to refashion the details of Abraham's biblical career. This endowed each of them with a new eschatological and cultic dimension. In this radical refashioning, it appears that Abraham's entire personality and even his body became envisioned as the sacerdotal entity—the new anthropomorphic shrine. In this all-inclusive sacerdotal perspective, even the patriarch's fast could be reinterpreted as re-consecration and purification of this anthropomorphic sanctuary, which was polluted after the hero's encounter with the idolatrous worship of his father Terah.

While the Slavonic apocalypse offers its readers a panoply of stunning depictions of the various sanctuaries—the earthly and heavenly, the polluted as well as the pristine,—the *Apocalypse's* authors do not confine the sacerdotal settings only to the boundaries of these sacred shrines. Rather, the sacerdotal reinterpretation permeates the entire fabric of the apocalyptic drama. In this overarching sacerdotal vision, its main characters recast many traditional cultic roles and functions into a new eschatological dimension, thus consolidating in themselves the sacred realities that were once compartmentalized

and bound by more narrow time and space. For the authors of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the whole universe was envisioned as the overarching sacerdotal structure that necessitated its own radical purifying ordinance—the eschatological Yom Kippur. This cultic event strikes the readers' imagination, as it encompasses the entirety of the Slavonic apocalypse, including all of its conceptual dimensions—visionary and historical, messianic and eschatological.

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