

# *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch*

Reconstruction after the Fall

*Edited by*

Matthias Henze  
Gabriele Boccaccini

*With the Collaboration of*

Jason M. Zurawski



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## CONTENTS

Preface .....	XI
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### PART 1

#### INTRODUCTION

<i>4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: The Status Quaestionis</i> .....	3
<i>Matthias Henze</i>	

### PART 2

#### 4EZRA, 2BARUCH AND PRE-70 CE JEWISH LITERATURE

<i>4 Ezra and 2 Baruch in Light of Qumran Literature</i> .....	31
<i>Devorah Dimant</i>	

The Evilness of Human Nature in <i>1 Enoch, Jubilees</i> , Paul, and <i>4 Ezra</i> : A Second Temple Jewish Debate.....	63
<i>Gabriele Boccaccini</i>	

### PART 3

#### PSEUDEPIGRAPHY IN 4EZRA AND 2BARUCH

Enoch and Ezra .....	83
<i>John J. Collins</i>	

Traditional Processes and Textual Unity in <i>4 Ezra</i> .....	99
<i>Hindy Najman</i>	

Who Is the 'I' of <i>4 Ezra</i> ? .....	119
<i>Lorenzo DiTommaso</i>	

## PART 4

A CLOSE READING OF *4 EZRA* AND *2 BARUCH*

- Ezra's Vision of the Lady: The Form and Function of a Turning Point . . . 137  
*Loren T. Stuckenbruck*
- The Epistle of Baruch and Its Role in *2 Baruch* . . . . . 151  
*Lutz Doering*
- The Otherworldly Mediators in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*: A Comparison  
 with Angelic Mediators in Ascent Apocalypses and in Daniel,  
 Ezekiel, and Zechariah . . . . . 175  
*Benjamin E. Reynolds*
- Baruch as a Prophet in *2 Baruch* . . . . . 195  
*Balázs Tamási*

## PART 5

THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL  
 CONTEXT OF *4EZRA* AND *2BARUCH*

- 4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in Social and Historical Perspective . . . . . 221  
*Lester L. Grabbe*
- Why Ezra and Not Enoch? Rewriting the Script of the First Exile with  
 the Hope for a Prompt Restoration of Zion's Fortunes . . . . . 237  
*Pierluigi Piovaneli*

## PART 6

*4EZRA*, *2BARUCH*, AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

- The Uses of Apocalyptic Eschatology . . . . . 253  
*Adela Yarbro Collins*
- A New Testament Reader's Guide to *2 Baruch*: Or a *2 Baruch* Reader's  
 Guide to the New Testament . . . . . 271  
*George W.E. Nickelsburg*
- On a Possible Baptismal Background of *4 Ezra* 13:3–6 . . . . . 295  
*Alexander Toepel*

The Nature of the Resurrected Bodies: <i>2 Baruch</i> and the New Testament .....	309
<i>Eugen J. Pentiu</i>	

## PART 7

*4 EZRA, 2 BARUCH, AND POST-70 CE JEWISH LITERATURE*

Enoch, Ezra, and the Jewishness of “High Christology” .....	337
<i>Daniel Boyarin</i>	
<i>4 Ezra</i> and <i>2 Baruch</i> with the (Dis-) Advantage of Rabbinic Hindsight ..	363
<i>Steven D. Fraade</i>	

## PART 8

*THE NACHLEBEN OF 4 EZRA AND 2 BARUCH*

The Preservation of <i>4 Ezra</i> in the Vulgate: Thanks to Ambrose, Not Jerome .....	381
<i>Karina Martin Hogan</i>	
<i>Nachleben</i> and Textual Identity: Variants and Variance in the Reception History of <i>2 Baruch</i> .....	403
<i>Liv Ingeborg Lied</i>	
Index of Modern Authors .....	429
Index of Ancient Sources .....	434

## 4EZRA AND 2BARUCH: THE STATUS QUAESTIONIS\*

Matthias Henze

Of the many changes in the field of biblical studies in recent decades, the turn of interest toward the Second Temple period and its diverse literatures is surely one of the more promising developments. The advances made in the study of the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha in particular can transform not only our reading of some neglected texts. These new initiatives have the potential of changing the way we think about a host of related issues, including the increasing fragmentation of Judaism during Second Temple times, the diversity of Jewish practices and beliefs towards the end of the biblical period, the processes of canonization and community formation, the transmission and dissemination of texts and ideas, and the emergence of rabbinic Judaism and nascent Christianity, to name but a few. It is also true, however, that not all apocryphal and pseudepigraphic texts have benefited equally from this new interest in the old literature. Among the winners in the field are books like *1 Enoch*, *Ben Sira*, and *Jubilees*, now household names in biblical studies and frequently referred to by an increasing number of biblical scholars. A great many other titles are still waiting to gain equal recognition.

The two books that are the subject of this volume, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, are both early Jewish apocalypses. When Antonio Maria Ceriani, Prefect of the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana in Milan, rediscovered the *Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, or *2 Baruch*, in the 1860s, it immediately became clear that the two works are closely related.<sup>1</sup> Both are apocalypses, attributed to biblical scribes

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\* This essay is a reworked version of the opening address delivered at the Sixth Enoch Seminar in Gazzada, Italy, on June 26, 2011.

<sup>1</sup> Whereas *4 Ezra* is attested in numerous versions, including the Vulgate, *2 Baruch* was largely forgotten soon after its composition and survives in its entirety in a single Syriac biblical manuscript only. On *4 Ezra* see Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 1–9. On *2 Baruch* see Antonio Maria Ceriani, “Apocalypsis Baruch, olim de graeco in syriacum, et nunc de syriaco in latinum translata,” in *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* (1.2; Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosiana Mediolani, 1866), 73–95. The elements shared by both texts are listed by George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 2005), 270–285.

who were active at the time of the Babylonian Exile or, in Ezra's case, shortly thereafter. In addition to the many formal, thematic, and verbal parallels that exist between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, both works are set fictitiously at the time of the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in the sixth century BCE and its aftermath, even though they were written in response to the Roman destruction of the city in the year 70 CE. Composed in the land of Israel, these twin sisters have succinctly captured the *Zeitgeist* of their time. When read in conversation not only with each other but with other texts across canonical divides, texts that, since the Renaissance, have been grouped into distinct libraries and therefore are typically kept in segregation, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* point beyond themselves and have much to contribute to our understanding of the wider Jewish and Christian landscape during the turn of the Common Era.

The purpose of this essay is to offer a brief overview of some more prominent topics in current scholarship on *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. Specifically, I wish to look forward and identify six areas that seem particularly promising fields of further study with regard to our two texts. These are (1) the place of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in the literature of Second Temple Judaism; (2) some select themes and topics in the study of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*; (3) the relationship of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, with an eye toward their respective compositional structures; (4) *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and early Christianity; (5) *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and post-70 Jewish literature; and (6) the *Nachleben* of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, with particular attention paid to the manuscript traditions. The essay concludes with a bibliography of recent scholarship on *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, published in between 2000 and 2012.

1. *The Place of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch  
in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism*

An obvious point of departure into our discussion is to inquire about the place of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in early Jewish literature and thought—"obvious" because we are better informed about the books' date of composition and provenance than is generally the case with pseudepigraphic literature, and it may be prudent to begin with what we can say with some degree of certainty. *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* were written in the late first century CE, most likely in the land of Israel.

The two texts have been called "late" apocalypses. This is because they bring to an end a creative time during which ancient Jewish scribes wrote apocalypses. This period began with the earliest Enochic compositions in

the third century BCE and ended in the late first century CE with our two texts.<sup>2</sup> Apocalypses of the historical type would not reemerge until the Byzantine period and the Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup> *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* have also been labeled “proto-,” i.e., “proto-rabbinic” and “proto-Christian” texts, meaning that they lead up to the emergence of rabbinic Judaism and nascent Christianity. The implication is that *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* occupy a place in between the Second Temple period, in which they have deep roots, and the time of the Sages and the first Christian writers, which they anticipate. While it is true that the two apocalypses occupy an important place at a transitional moment in early Jewish thought, the label “proto-” is not helpful. *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* are not “proto-rabbinic” texts in the sense that they are precursors of rabbinic thought. They may agree with the Sages in some aspects, but they are rather different in many others. Also, there is nothing to suggest that either apocalypse had any formative influence on rabbinic Judaism, however defined. The complete absence of any Hebrew manuscripts of either work corroborates this impression. They are not “proto-Christian” either, if only because most of the New Testament had already been written by the time *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* were composed. And yet, what we learn from these designations—“late” and at the same time “proto”—is that *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* occupy a significant space *in between*, after the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the biblical period and prior to the time when rabbinic authority became more widely accepted and Christianity began to form.

Even though *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* were both written after the Second Temple period, both texts have deep roots in Israel's past. To mention this continuity may seem banal, but it raises some intriguing questions that are anything but trivial: to what extent does the year 70 CE constitute an intellectual (as opposed to physical) disruption in early Judaism? Did the diversity in religious expressions and beliefs that characterized Second Temple Judaism collapse together with the temple? While the pendulum of scholarly opinion

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<sup>2</sup> The Aramaic Astronomical Book of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 72–82), which dates from the third century BCE, may well be the oldest known composition attributed to Enoch; James VanderKam, *1 Enoch 72–82: The Book of the Luminaries* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 339–345. Together with *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, mention should be made of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, also a work of the late first century, which, like the two other works, offers an apocalyptic response to the calamity of the year 70; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 285–288.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Collins, “From Prophecy to Apocalypticism: The Expectation of the End,” in *The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (Vol. 1 of *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*; ed. John J. Collins; New York: Continuum, 1998), 129–161 (157).

appears to be swinging away from theories of radical discontinuity toward a greater appreciation for the continuities across the alleged abyss of the year 70, it is a different matter altogether to find specific textual evidence that demonstrates this continuity. It is here that *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* prove helpful.<sup>4</sup>

There are several ways to assess the continuity between pre-70 Jewish literature and *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. One is to examine how these two works relate to earlier apocalypses.<sup>5</sup> Of particular interest are the connections that exist between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* on the one hand and the Dead Sea Scrolls on the other. Florentino García Martínez has identified several themes and topics shared by *4 Ezra* and the Scrolls.<sup>6</sup> In her DJD edition of the *Pseudo-Ezekiel* and *Apocryphon of Jeremiah C* texts, Devorah Dimant makes frequent reference to *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.<sup>7</sup> In the article for this volume she expands further on her previous work.<sup>8</sup> Dimant closely examines several common themes, though the focus of her investigation is on the notion of time, its unfolding, divisions and calculations, the approaching eschatological age,

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<sup>4</sup> A number of studies have appeared on the Jewish responses to the loss of the Jerusalem temple. Those in which *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* are especially considered include Michael E. Stone, "Reactions to Destructions of the Second Temple: Theology, Perception, and Conversation," *JSJ* 12 (1981), 195–204; Anitra B. Kolenkow, "The Fall of the Temple and the Coming of the End: The Spectrum and Process of Apocalyptic Argument in *2 Baruch*," *SBL Seminar Papers* 21 (1982), 243–250; Hermann Lichtenberger, "Zion and the Destruction of the Temple in *4 Ezra* 9–10," *Gemeinde ohne Temple = Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, Armin Lange, and Peter Pilhofer; WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 239–249; Jesús María Asurmendi, "Baruch: Causes, Effects and Remedies for a Disaster," in *History and Identity: How Israel's Later Authors Viewed Its Earlier History* (ed. Núria Caldach-Benages and Jan Liesen; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 187–200; Robert Goldenberg, "The Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple: Its Meaning and Its Consequences," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Vol. IV: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period* (ed. Steven T. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 191–205; and Dereck Daschke, *City of Ruins: Mourning the Destruction of Jerusalem through Jewish Apocalypse* (BIS 99; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 194–225.

<sup>6</sup> Florentino García Martínez, "Traditions Communes dans le IV<sup>e</sup> Esdras et dans les MSS de Qumrân," *RevQ* 15 (1991), 281–301, and his "Traditions Common to *4 Ezra* and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Qumranica Minora* (ed. Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar; STDJ 63; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1153–187; Daniel J. Harrington, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic in *4QInstruction* and *4 Ezra*," in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition* (ed. Florentino García Martínez; BETL 68; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 343–355.

<sup>7</sup> Devorah Dimant, *Qumran Cave 4. XXI: Parabiblical Texts, Part 4: Pseudo-Prophetic Texts* (DJD 30; Oxford: Clarendon, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Devorah Dimant, "*4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in Light of Qumran Literature."



as well as on some narrative traditions common to *Apocryphon of Jeremiah C* and *2 Baruch*. These points of affiliation, Dimant argues, not only illumine the sources of apocalyptic thinking, they also shed light on some of the sapiential compositions at Qumran. In his article “The Evilness of Human Nature,” Gabriele Boccaccini finds continuity in the various Jewish attempts to explain the origin of human sin by referring back to the Torah.

A different approach to uncover the lines of continuity between pre-70 Jewish literature and *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* is to look at the use of Pseudepigraphy in the two texts. Both apocalyptic authors adopt the identity of a biblical character, Ezra and Baruch. Hindy Najman has long been at the forefront of the discussion regarding the function of Pseudepigraphy.<sup>9</sup> She argues that one fruitful way of making sense of this rhetoric device is through the model of “a discourse tied to a founder.” The idea is that certain post-biblical writings are secondarily ascribed to an authoritative figure of the biblical past. In her present essay Najman expands on that idea.<sup>10</sup> Drawing on the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, Najman argues that the figure of “Ezra” in *4 Ezra* is only partially developed already by the tradition. His persona is fully formed only in *4 Ezra*. Najman speaks of the “traditionary process” of *4 Ezra* that generates the specific tradition tied to a founder. In response to Najman’s work, John Collins counters that her account of Pseudepigraphy works well in the case of Enoch but that the situation with *4 Ezra* is more complex.<sup>11</sup> The “Ezra” whom we find in *4 Ezra* has been radically transformed, in Collins’ words, “almost beyond recognition.”<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Collins goes so far as to suggest that the author of *4 Ezra* chose Ezra as his pseudonym precisely because the theology that was traditionally associated with biblical Ezra was found to be wanting. The destruction of the temple implied a breakdown of Ezra’s traditional theology.

Pierluigi Piovaneli also takes up the question why the author of *4 Ezra* writes under the name of Ezra and not that of Enoch, Isaiah, or Ezekiel. Piovaneli suggests that there may have been multiple reasons for the choice of pseudonym: by the time of *4 Ezra*’s composition, Ezra was highly regarded

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<sup>9</sup> Hindy Najman, with Itamar Manoff and Eva Mroczek, “How to Make Sense of Pseudonymous Attribution: The Case of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*,” in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism* (ed. Matthias Henze; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 308–336, and her earlier essay “How Should We Contextualize Pseudepigrapha? Imitation and Emulation in *4 Ezra*,” in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez* (ed. Anthony Hilhorst, Émile Puech, and Eibert Tigchelaar; JSJSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 529–536.

<sup>10</sup> Hindy Najman, “Traditionary Processes and Textual Unity in *4 Ezra*.”

<sup>11</sup> John J. Collins, “Enoch and Ezra.”

<sup>12</sup> John J. Collins, “Enoch and Ezra,” p. 92.

as the restorer of the worship, he was exceptionally pious, he was a scribe, and he was active soon after the Babylonian exile.<sup>13</sup>

There are several other ways to describe the continuity that exists between the Hebrew Bible and *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. In his essay, Balázs Tamási examines the character and role of Baruch as it is developed in *2 Baruch*. He finds that it is an amalgam of several biblical figures, most prominently that of Jeremiah and Moses.<sup>14</sup> Benjamin Reynolds compares the angelic figures in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, Uriel and Ramiel, with angels found in the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible and in three ascent apocalypses, the Enochic Book of Watchers, *2 Enoch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. He finds that Uriel and Ramiel in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* resemble much more their biblical precursors than the angels in the ascent texts.<sup>15</sup>

Another way of evaluating continuity with the biblical corpus is by examining the playfulness with which our apocalyptic authors conceptualize time, a potent theme in both *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.<sup>16</sup> Two late-first-century thinkers produce historical accounts of past events that happened seven-hundred years earlier in order to reflect about their own time and the eschatological end of time, which they think is imminent. In other words, the memory of the past is the vehicle that enables the authors to reach into the future. Cultural memory is here employed in the service of eschatological speculation. The texts are explicit about this. Baruch, for example, is concerned about the memory of the past and fears that those who have gone before will simply be forgotten. In his reply, God seeks to assure the seer that God will not forget: "For as you have not forgotten those who live now and those who have passed, so I remember those who are remembered and those who are to come" (*2 Bar.* 23:3). God remembers even those who are yet to come, God remembers the future.

Finally, in the attempt to locate *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*'s place in early Judaism, questions of literary composition and worldview tell only part of the story. Another, somewhat neglected aspect concerns the historical and

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<sup>13</sup> Pierluigi Piovanelli, "Why Ezra and not Enoch? Rewriting the Script of the First Exile with the Hope for a Prompt Restoration of Zion's Fortunes."

<sup>14</sup> Balázs Tamási, "Baruch as a Prophet in *2 Baruch*."

<sup>15</sup> Benjamin Reynolds, "The Otherworldly Mediators in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*: A Comparison with Angelic Mediators in Ascent Apocalypses and in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah."

<sup>16</sup> Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context* (TSAJ 142; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 278–293; Dimant, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch in Light of Qumran Literature."

social context of the two books.<sup>17</sup> In his contribution to this volume, Lester Grabbe wonders what sort of social group or social setting may have produced *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.<sup>18</sup> He concludes that the background of both books is remarkably similar: both originate in Judah, likely in or around Jerusalem, both respond to the destruction of the city, neither is a sectarian composition but is mindful of, and reaches out to, the “lost tribes,” both books are governed by an eschatological outlook, both hope for deliverance by means of divine intervention, and behind both we can detect an eschatological community that is moving toward a revolt, hence anticipating the Bar Kokhba revolt half a century later.

## 2. *Topics in the Study of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch*

During the second half of the nineteenth and on into the twentieth century, scholarship on *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* was dominated by the question of the literary unity of the books. Coming from a source-critical background, the majority of scholars argued that the two apocalypses were put together by redactors who worked with individual sources.<sup>19</sup> Around the middle of the twentieth century the general perception changed and many scholars came to accept the literary unity of both works. According to this reading, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* are carefully produced books written by individuals who incorporated into their work preexisting materials. With this new understanding gradually taking hold, the chief issues in the debate shifted accordingly.

For both *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* the question of the exact relationship between the book's individual parts remains a critical issue. In the case of *4 Ezra* two issues figure prominently in the debate. One concerns the question of how the dialogues in the first three episodes of the book relate to the visions in its latter half. It has long been proposed that the fourth episode, Ezra's vision of the mourning woman who transforms into a city (*4 Ezra* 9:26–10:59), marks *the* central turning point of the book. Michael Stone

<sup>17</sup> George W.E. Nickelsburg, “Social Aspects of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypticism,” in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979* (ed. David Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck]), 1983), 641–654.

<sup>18</sup> Lester Grabbe, “*4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in Social and Historical Perspective.”

<sup>19</sup> The history of scholarship on *4 Ezra* is summarized by Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 11–21; on *2 Baruch* see my *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context* (TSAJ 142; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 53–70.

speaks of “Ezra’s conversion” that leads him to a complete change, so that he now internalizes Uriel’s previous position.<sup>20</sup> In his essay for this volume, Loren Stuckenbruck examines the narrative shifts that occur in the fourth episode and concludes that it is not only Ezra who is transformed but also the woman whom he meets and who represents Zion.<sup>21</sup>

The second prominent issue in *4 Ezra* scholarship has been the function of the dialogue and the question of the authorial voice. In the dialogue between Uriel and Ezra and the apocalyptic visions that follow, where can we detect the actual voice of the author? Of particular importance has been the study of Karina Martin Hogan.<sup>22</sup> Hogan argues that neither Uriel or Ezra represent the author’s view and that in the end their exchange remains inconclusive. In Hogan’s reading, the solution comes in form of the apocalyptic visions, even if these do not directly address the issues raised in the dialogue. Rather than offering a cognitive solution to the problems of the time, the author of *4 Ezra* appeals to divine revelation and the recognition of the limits of human reason and understanding.<sup>23</sup> In response, Lorenzo DiTommaso suggests in his essay for this volume that the voice of *4 Ezra*’s author is found in both Ezra and Uriel, the two figures represent different stages in the development of the author. Ezra’s contribution to the conversation represents the traditional thinking that has been found wanting, whereas Uriel voices the author’s actual state of mind at the time of *4 Ezra*’s composition. The discrepancies between the two are crucially important as they reflect what DiTommaso calls “the conversion process as the author had experienced it.”<sup>24</sup>

The question of the relationship of the book’s individual parts has been equally relevant for *2 Baruch*. There the focus has been on Baruch’s epistle at the end of *2 Baruch* (*2 Baruch* 78–87). In part triggered by the fact that the epistle has been transmitted independently of *2 Baruch* and is preserved in thirty-eight manuscripts, the debate has focused on the question of whether the epistle is an integral part of the apocalypse or a secondary addition to it.<sup>25</sup> Mark Whitters anticipated a new consensus in the field when he argued

<sup>20</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 31–32.

<sup>21</sup> Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Ezra’s Vision of the Lady: Form and Function of a Turning Point.”

<sup>22</sup> Karina Martin Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict in 4 Ezra: Wisdom Debate and Apocalyptic Solution* (JSJSup 130; Leiden: Brill, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict in 4 Ezra*, 229–230; and Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Who is the ‘I’ of *4 Ezra*?”

<sup>24</sup> Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Who is the ‘I’ of *4 Ezra*?”

<sup>25</sup> Peshitta Institute, *List of Old Testament Peshitta Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 99.

in his 2003 monograph that the letter is part of the apocalypse and forms an extension of Baruch's public addresses. Whitters aptly speaks of "the interconnection" of apocalypse and letter.<sup>26</sup> Lutz Doering reaches a similar conclusion. In his article for this volume, Doering understands the epistle to be part of *2 Baruch's* concluding section of the book's narrative frame (*2 Bar.* 77:18–87:1) that picks up on several themes the reader has already encountered in the apocalypse.<sup>27</sup> Equally significant is Doering's interpretation of Baruch's letter in the wider context of Jewish epistolography.<sup>28</sup>

In recent decades scholarship on *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* has diversified, and articles and books have appeared on a variety of subjects. On *4 Ezra*, these include studies on Jewish Messianism,<sup>29</sup> the book of *4 Ezra* as a response to the destruction of Jerusalem,<sup>30</sup> and theological topics such as the function of the Torah<sup>31</sup> and Israel's chosenness.<sup>32</sup> On *2 Baruch*, monographs appeared on the question of whether *2 Baruch* is a Jewish or Christian text,<sup>33</sup> on the epistle of Baruch,<sup>34</sup> on the construction of the land in *2 Baruch*,<sup>35</sup> and on the place of *2 Baruch* in Second Temple Judaism.<sup>36</sup>

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provides a list of manuscripts; also Willem Baars, "Neue Textzeugen der syrischen Baruch-apokalypse," *VT* 13 (1963): 476–478.

<sup>26</sup> Mark F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message* (JSPSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 32.

<sup>27</sup> Lutz Doering, "The Epistle of Baruch and its Role in *2 Baruch*."

<sup>28</sup> Lutz Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters and the Beginnings of Christian Epistolography* (WUNT I 298; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation: Jewish Messianic and Visionary Traditions and New Testament Christology* (WUNT 207; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Messianic Ideas in the Apocalyptic and Related Literature of Early Judaism," in *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 90–113; Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

<sup>30</sup> James L. Crenshaw, *Defending God: Biblical Responses to the Problem of Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Dereck Daschke, *City of Ruins: Mourning the Destruction of Jerusalem through Jewish Apocalypse* (BIS 99; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Shannon Burkes, "Life' Redefined: Wisdom and Law in Fourth Ezra and *Second Baruch*," *CBQ* 63 (2001): 55–71; Karina M. Hogan, "The Meanings of *tôrâ* in *4 Ezra*," *JSJ* 38 (2007): 530–552.

<sup>32</sup> John J. Collins, "The Idea of Election in *4 Ezra*," *JSQ* 16 (2009): 83–96.

<sup>33</sup> Rivka Nir, *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch* (SBLEJL 20; Atlanta: SBL, 2003).

<sup>34</sup> Mark F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message* (JSPSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003).

<sup>35</sup> Liv I. Lied, *The Other Lands: Imaginations of the Land in 2 Baruch* (JSJSup 129; Leiden: Brill, 2008).

<sup>36</sup> Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel*.

### 3. *The Relationship of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch and Their Literary Composition*

The majority of scholars of the late nineteenth and twentieth century who advanced the debate on *2 Baruch* in significant ways—chief among them Ferdinand Rosenthal,<sup>37</sup> Robert Henry Charles,<sup>38</sup> Richard Kabisch,<sup>39</sup> Bruno Violet,<sup>40</sup> Wolfgang Harnisch,<sup>41</sup> and Albertus F.J. Klijn<sup>42</sup>—initially worked on *4 Ezra* and then broadened their academic interests to include *2 Baruch*. In a sense, their contributions to *2 Baruch* are an extension of their work on *4 Ezra*. Richard Kabisch, who in 1889 first published a monograph on *4 Ezra* and then, three years later in 1892, followed up with an article on *2 Baruch*, is rather outspoken about his initial reluctance to write about *2 Baruch*. He states right at the outset of his article that he would have rather left to task to someone else but then adds that he feels “constantly compelled” (*auf Schritt und Tritt genöthigt*) to produce his source-critical study of *2 Baruch* in order to place our understanding of the people in, and authors of, the New Testament on firmer ground.<sup>43</sup>

Not surprisingly, and as a direct consequence, the preferential treatment of *4 Ezra* has not been without influence on the general perception of *2 Baruch*. What is more, scholars who have worked on both books have not always been kind in their comparison. Even those who only wrote on

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<sup>37</sup> Ferdinand Rosenthal, *Vier apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba's* (Leipzig: Otto Schulze, 1885).

<sup>38</sup> Robert H. Charles, *The Apocalypse of Baruch: Translated from the Syriac* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1896).

<sup>39</sup> Richard Kabisch, *Das vierte Buch Esra auf seine Quellen untersucht* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1889), and “Die Quellen der Apokalypse Baruch,” *Jahrbuch für protestantische Theologie* 18 (1892), 66–107.

<sup>40</sup> Bruno Violet, *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt* (Leipzig: Hinrich, 1924).

<sup>41</sup> Wolfgang Harnisch, *Verhängnis und Verheißung der Geschichte: Untersuchungen zum Zeit- und Geschichtsverständnis im 4. Buch Esra und in der syr. Baruchapokalypse* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969).

<sup>42</sup> Albertus F.J. Klijn, *Die syrische Baruchapokalypse*, *JSHRZ* 5/2 (1976): 103–191, and “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” *OTP* 1:615–652.

<sup>43</sup> “Die vorliegende Untersuchung, die wohl früher oder später einmal geführt werden musste, hätte der Verfasser lieber anderer Zeit oder anderer Hand überlassen. Allein mit geschichtlichen Arbeiten aus dem Gebiet des N. T.'s beschäftigt, sieht er sich auf Schritt und Tritt genöthigt, aus der Fülle des in Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen niedergelegten reichen Gedankenmaterials zu schöpfen, um für das Verständnis neutestamentl. Personen und Autoren in der Kenntnis der religiösen Anschauungen der neutestamentlichen Zeit eine feste Grundlage zu gewinnen.” Kabisch, “Die Quellen der Apokalypse Baruch,” 66.

*4 Ezra* often did not have good things to say about *2 Baruch*. A good example is Hermann Gunkel, whose psychological analysis of *4 Ezra* was a milestone in the debate that continues to be tremendously influential. Gunkel wrote, "I have therefore no doubt that the author of *4 Ezra* is an independent thinker, who does not have to borrow his concepts from an inferior text, whereas the author of the Apocalypse of Baruch appears to be one who expresses his appreciation of a good book by adding a mediocre imitation of it. ... The spirit of the Apocalypse of Baruch appears to be a more trivial text with a more pronounced legalism and thirst for revenge on corruptive Rome."<sup>44</sup>

The undue influence of *4 Ezra* on the scholarly reception of *2 Baruch* is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the attempt to detect *2 Baruch*'s compositional structure. As is universally recognized, *4 Ezra* is structured in seven parts, or visions.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, the structure of *2 Baruch* is much less clear. And yet, because of the proven consanguinity of the two works, scholars have tended to take for granted that, like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, too, must have seven parts. The problem is that there is nothing in *2 Baruch* itself to support the hypothesis of a heptadic structure. It does not surprise to find, therefore, that there is little if any agreement among scholars about the exact demarcations of *2 Baruch*'s alleged seven parts, with no two scholars agreeing on the same partition.<sup>46</sup> Clearly the heptadic division of *2 Baruch* is an imposition imported from *4 Ezra*. Without *4 Ezra*, no reader of *2 Baruch* would have argued for a seven-fold division.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, an independent look at *2 Baruch* reveals a structure that is rather different.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> "So zweifle ich nicht daran, daß der Verfasser des IV Esra ein selbständiger Denker ist, der seine Gedanken nicht aus einer tief unter ihm stehenden Schrift zu borgen braucht, während mir die Baruchapokalypse als Typus eines Schriftstellers erscheint, der den Empfang eines guten Buchs dadurch quittiert, daß er eine mäßige Nachahmung hinzuliefert. ... Dem Geiste nach erscheint die Baruchapokalypse trivialer; viel schärfer treten darin hervor die Gesetzlichkeit und der Durst nach Rache an dem verderblichen Rom." Hermann Gunkel, "Das vierte Buch Esra," in *APAT*, 351.

<sup>45</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 28–30.

<sup>46</sup> For a summary of the debate see my *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 36–41.

<sup>47</sup> See also the discussion on *2 Baruch*'s composition by Lutz Doering, "The Epistle of Baruch and its Role in *2 Baruch*," in this volume.

<sup>48</sup> Among the scholars who have divided *2 Baruch* without the preconceived notion of a heptadic structure are Louis Ginzberg, "Apocalypse of Baruch (Syriac)," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1902), 2:551–556; Otto Plöger, "Baruchschriften, apokryphe," *RGG*<sup>3</sup> (1957), 901–902; Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *OTP* 1:615; my "Baruch, Second Book of," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2010), 426–428; and my *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 41–43.

It is not only the number of text units in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* that is at stake here. In the case of *2 Baruch*, that number will always be somewhat arbitrary, if only because in *2 Baruch*, unlike in *4 Ezra*, there is no single organizing principle or set of formal narrative markers (e.g., Baruch's sporadic fasts, his prayers, the dialogue scenes with God, or his occasional change of location) that systematically structure the book. Another aspect that has not received sufficient attention is the use and function of sub-genres in *2 Baruch*. The author's deliberate use of sub-genres—the narrative, the revelatory dialogue, prayer, public speech, symbolic vision, and the epistle—is a major key to the composition of the book as a whole. The author quite deliberately writes in different genres to communicate different aspects of his apocalyptic program: the narrative ties *2 Baruch* back to the Bible; the dialogue sections are argumentative and contentious; the prayers are mournful; in the visions the author develops his notion of time; and so forth. The shift from one genre to another, often marked in the text by a brief formula (“After these things ...;” “And I went from there ...”), coincides with the transition from one of the book's segments to the next. The situation is, again, not unlike *4 Ezra*. It is true that *4 Ezra* has seven parts, but within these parts the author makes use of different genres that greatly resemble those of *2 Baruch*.

The larger issue here is the relationship between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in general. Clearly the two texts are closely related to one another, as has often been pointed out, but exactly how are we to describe and explain this relationship? The dominant mode of analysis has been to postulate that one text served as the *Vorlage* for the other. Simple linearity has governed the debate: either the author of *4 Ezra* knew *2 Baruch* (more or less in the form in which we have it) and responded to it by composing his own work, or vice versa. This century-and-a-half-old debate has not reached a satisfactory conclusion. Michael Stone puts it well when he summarizes the scholarly impasse as follows: “In fact, the existence of an intimate relationship is quite obvious, but the direction of dependence is very difficult to determine. If there were decisive arguments in one or the other direction, of course, the matter would not still be the subject of difference of opinion. We have not discovered any arguments in the course of our work that seem to be decisive in the one or the other direction.”<sup>49</sup>

It has become clear that the problem is not a lack of exegetical acumen on the part of those who have tried to understand the literary histories of the two works and their points of affiliation. Instead, the problem lies with

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<sup>49</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 39.



the approach to the problem. Hypotheses of linear, literary dependence will never furnish a satisfying explanation of the parallels between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. The two apocalypses and their compositional units exhibit patterns of a relationship that is far more complex than simple dependence of one finished text version on the other.

It is helpful in this context to remember that the same phenomenon we seek to explain—the relationship of two (or more) closely related texts with strong thematic and verbal parallels—is not uncommon in early Jewish and Christian literature. One example are the *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Jubilees*, and *1 Enoch*, three texts that show some overlap, yet whose exact relationship remains unresolved.<sup>50</sup> Another example are the synoptic Gospels and their relationship. Similarly, the relationship between the Mishnah and the Tosefta, perhaps the closest analogy to *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, has recently generated some considerable debate.<sup>51</sup> In the last two cases, the synoptic Gospels and the Mishnah/Tosefta, the methodological discussion has become more sophisticated and has long moved beyond simple literary dependence. It takes into consideration the complex processes involved in the production of ancient literature, and it is open to the possibility that oral performance and literary composition may both have played a role in the shaping of the ancient writings. These promising new approaches can provide us with new models for understanding the relationship between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* and their respective literary histories.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Daniel K. Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (CQS 8; London: T&T Clark, 2007), 96–100; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108* (CEJL; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 612–621; Daniel A. Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon: A New Text and Translation with Introduction and Special Treatment of Columns 13–17* (STDJ 79; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 16–17.

<sup>51</sup> Martin S. Jaffee, “Writing and Rabbinic Oral Tradition: On Mishnaic Narrative, Lists and Mnemonics,” *JJPT* 4 (1994): 123–146, and *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200 BCE–400 CE* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Elizabeth Shanks Alexander, “The Orality of Rabbinic Writing,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (ed. Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 38–57, and *Transmitting Mishnah: The Shaping Influence of Oral Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For a different approach altogether see Judith Hauptmann, *Rereading the Mishnah: A New Approach to Ancient Jewish Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

<sup>52</sup> See my “*4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*: Literary Composition and Oral Performance in First-Century Apocalyptic Literature,” *JBL* 131 (2012): 181–200.

#### 4. *4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and Early Christianity*

In 1994, Anthony J. Saldarini published a study on the Gospel of Matthew titled *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*. In the introduction he explains his contextual reading of Matthew in the following terms.

Looked at in this way, the Gospel of Matthew (dating from the last two decades of the first century) fits not only into the development of Christian theological thought but also into the Jewish debate after 70 CE over how Judaism was to be lived and how that way of life was to be articulated in order to ensure the survival of the Jewish community without the Temple and its related political institutions. Thus, the Gospel of Matthew should be read along with other Jewish postdestruction literature, such as the apocalyptic works 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, and Apocalypse of Abraham, early strata of the Mishnah, and Josephus. All this Jewish literature tried to envision Judaism in new circumstances, reorganize its central symbols, determine concretely the will of God in a new changed world, and propose a course of action for the faithful community. The Jews of Matthew's group believed that Jesus was the crucial person sent by God to save them, and thus they made him the center of their understanding of Judaism.<sup>53</sup>

Saldarini is persistent in his insistence that Matthew emerged out of a messianic branch of first century Judaism. With his impressive book he joins a group of New Testament exegetes who try to rethink early Christian literature in Jewish terms. No doubt, Saldarini is correct to point out that Matthew needs to be read in tandem with works such as *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the other Jewish books he lists. Surely we have come a long way in our thinking about the birth of Christianity since the pioneers who worked on *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in the late 19th century. Chief among them were Richard Kabisch and Robert H. Charles, who could only think of Judaism and Christianity as polar opposites. R.H. Charles introduces *2 Baruch* in his 1896 edition through two different sets of opposition, one between Pharisaic Jews and Christians, and the other between *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*, oppositions he takes to be self-evident.

The Apocalypse of Baruch has had a strange history. Written by Pharisaic Jews as an apology for Judaism, and in part an implicit polemic against Christianity, it gained nevertheless a larger circulation amongst Christians than amongst Jews, and owed its very preservation to the scholarly cares of the Church it assailed. But in the struggle for life its secret animus against Christianity begat an instinctive opposition in Christian circles, and so proved a bar to

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<sup>53</sup> Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 4–5.

its popularity. Thus the place it would naturally have filled was taken by the sister work, 4 Ezra. This latter work having been written in some degree under Christian influences, and forming, in fact, an unconscious confession of the failure of Judaism to redeem the world, was naturally more acceptable to Christian readers, and thus, in due course, the Apocalypse of Baruch was elbowed out of recognition by its fitter and studier rival.<sup>54</sup>

Charles' claim that 2 Baruch stems from a Pharisaic author was motivated by the persuasion that all post-70 CE Jewish texts that show an interest in the Law must be Pharisaic. Since the discovery of the library at Qumran we know that this is not true.<sup>55</sup> The modern reader will be hard-pressed to find in 2 Baruch "an apology for Judaism" or an "implicit polemic against Christianity," for that matter. Similarly, the reasons for 4 Ezra's greater popularity in antiquity that led to its preservation by Christian scribes are surely complex, but we can be certain that the book's appeal was not due to the fact that it was "written in some degree under Christian influences."

Over the last three decades, a number of scholars working on early Christianity have turned to 4 Ezra. The aim has largely been to compare the theological concerns found in the New Testament with those of this contemporary Jewish text. Several of these authors were working on Paul. Martinus de Boer's book, for example, focuses on Paul and Jewish apocalyptic eschatology, and particularly on the role of Adam and the hope in resurrection.<sup>56</sup> Bruce Longenecker has compared 4 Ezra and Romans 1–11, with a special interest in the theological parallels between Paul and 4 Ezra.<sup>57</sup> Francis Watson has written a thorough study on what he calls "Paul's Jewishness," and

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<sup>54</sup> Robert Henry Charles, *The Apocalypse of Baruch: Translated from the Syriac* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1896), viii–ix.

<sup>55</sup> Later Charles writes, "We have here contemporaneous records of the Jewish doctrines and beliefs, and of the arguments which prevailed in Judaism in the latter half of the first century, and with which its leaders sought to uphold its declining faith and confront the attacks of a growing and aggressive Christianity," xvi.

On the Pharisees in particular see Roland Deines, *Die Pharisäer: Ihr Verständnis im Spiegel der christlichen und jüdischen Forschung seit Wellhausen und Graetz* (WUNT 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), and "Pharisees," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 1061–1063.

<sup>56</sup> Martinus Christianus de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988).

<sup>57</sup> Bruce W. Longenecker, *Eschatology and the Covenant: A Comparison of 4 Ezra and Romans 1–11* (Sheffield: JOST Press, 1991); see also his *2 Esdras* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). In response to E.P. Sanders' much quoted concept of "covenantal nomism," Longenecker proposes that the author of 4 Ezra is an advocate of an "ethnocentric covenantalism." Quoted approvingly by John J. Collins, "The Idea of Election in 4 Ezra," *JSQ* 16 (2009): 83–96 (87–88).

particularly on Paul's interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, which Watson compares with biblical interpretation in early Jewish works, chief among them *Jubilees* and *4 Ezra*.<sup>58</sup> Among the scholars who have turned their attention to *2 Baruch* is Rivka Nir, who has written a monograph on some of the central pericopes in the apocalypse.<sup>59</sup> Nir's exegetical work is thorough, though the main argument of her book, that *2 Baruch* is a Christian work, is without any basis and has to be rejected. More recently, Preston Sprinkle has written an article on afterlife in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the *Apocalypse of Moses*, and *2 Baruch*.<sup>60</sup>

Much remains to be done. The essays in this volume by Alexander Toepel and Eugen Pentiuć are each devoted to a particular text or topic, in Toepel's case the man rising from the sea in *4 Ezra* 13:3–6 and the motif of a seaborne savior figure, and in Pentiuć's article the description of the post-resurrected bodies in *2 Baruch*.<sup>61</sup> The essays by Adela Yarbro Collins and George Nickelsburg cast their net a bit wider. Yarbro Collins returns to the theme of apocalyptic eschatology in *4 Ezra* and the Pauline epistles and argues that even though both authors share a number of central ideas and teachings—e.g., that the present age is evil and transitory, that the end is imminent, and that the Messiah is a heavenly figure—these ideas are employed to serve different rhetorical purposes.<sup>62</sup> Nickelsburg provides a long list of what he calls “parallels in wording, form, rhetoric, and conception” between the writings of the New Testament and *2 Baruch*. Particularly the parallels between Paul, who wrote before the year 70 CE, and texts such as *2 Baruch*, *4 Ezra*, and Pseudo-Philo, all written after 70, raise some intriguing questions about the continuity vs. discontinuity of the religious thought and social history of first century Judaism and Christianity.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004).

<sup>59</sup> Rivka Nir, *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch* (SBLEJL 20; Atlanta: SBL, 2003).

<sup>60</sup> Preston Sprinkle, “The Afterlife in Romans: Understanding Paul's Glory Motif in Light of the *Apocalypse of Moses* and *2 Baruch*,” in *Lebendige Hoffnung—ewiger Tod? Jenseitsvorstellungen im Hellenismus, Judentum und Christentum* (ed. Manfred Lang and Michael Labhan; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007), 201–233.

<sup>61</sup> Alexander Toepel, “On a Possible Baptismal Background of *4 Ezra* 13:3–6,” and Eugen Pentiuć, “The Nature of the Resurrected Bodies in *2 Baruch* and the New Testament,” both in this volume.

<sup>62</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Uses of Apocalyptic Eschatology.”

<sup>63</sup> George W.E. Nickelsburg, “A New Testament Reader's Guide to *2 Baruch*: Or a *2 Baruch* Reader's Guide to the New Testament.”

5. *4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and Post-70 Jewish Literature*

In 1885 Ferdinand Rosenthal published a study on the *Assumption of Moses*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and the book of Tobit, titled *Four Apocryphal Books from the Period and School of Rabbi Akiba*.<sup>64</sup> Not included in the Hebrew Bible, these four books have in common, in Rosenthal's reading, that they all stem from the "School of Javneh." With regard to *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, Rosenthal first emphasizes their differences. The author of *4 Ezra* is a skilled author and philosopher, whereas the author of *2 Baruch* is writing "for the general populace" and is much "easier to understand." He is not a man of high learning but belongs to the *am ha'aretz*; he lacks basic insight into the biblical tradition and his metaphors are easy to grasp. *4 Ezra* is the older of the two texts, which Rosenthal infers from *4 Ezra's* alleged proximity in thought to the New Testament, while *2 Baruch* was composed during the first decades of the second century, when the separation of Jews and Christians was further advanced. Rosenthal makes much of the distinguishing elements between *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. He finds the same disagreements between Rabbi Elieser ben Hyrcanus and his student, Rabbi Akiva, from which he draws the conclusion that the author of *4 Ezra* was a student of Rabbi Eliezer's, whereas the author of *2 Baruch* was a student of Rabbi Akiva's.<sup>65</sup>

Much of this will seem problematic today, for example the largely subjective judgment about the proximity, or lack thereof, of our texts to Christian thought, or the reliance on halakhic disputes between Rabbi Elieser ben Hyrcanus and Rabbi Akiva as a means of locating *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in post-destruction Judaism. Still, Rosenthal's attempt to read *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in the broader context of post-70 Jewish literature is to be applauded.

Not long after Rosenthal, in 1902, Louis Ginzberg wrote a brief entry on "Second Baruch" for *The Jewish Encyclopedia*.<sup>66</sup> This short article is truly astounding for its care and foresight. After describing the structure of *2 Baruch* (Ginzberg does not find a haptadic structure in *2 Baruch*), Ginzberg provides a long annotated list of points of connection between *2 Baruch*

<sup>64</sup> Ferdinand Rosenthal, *Vier Apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba's*.

<sup>65</sup> Bruno Violet, *Die Apokalypsen*, finds Rosenthal's assumption "very likely" (p. xci) that the author of *2 Baruch* was influenced by R. Akiva and his followers and that the author of *4 Ezra* was a student of R. Elieser's. Violet also cites as additional support for Rosenthal's hypotheses that the author of *2 Baruch* was a lay person that the book is intended for all of the people, whereas *4 Ezra* was written for the wise.

<sup>66</sup> Louis Ginzberg, "Apocalypse of Baruch (Syriac)," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1902), 551–556.

and the rabbinic writings, a list which remains unparalleled even a century later. Whereas others sought to find direct “parallels” between the rabbis and *2 Baruch*, Ginzberg wisely reserves judgment, never attempts to match *2 Baruch*’s viewpoints with that of any particular Sage, and is content to point out that certain rabbinic writings can assist in the interpretation of *2 Baruch*. “Many parallels exist between the Apocalypse and rabbinical literature, a consideration of some of which will throw light upon certain misunderstood passages in the former, and, at the same time, be of material assistance in forming a judgment upon the whole work.”<sup>67</sup>

After a second, shorter list, this time of the differences between *2 Baruch* and rabbinic thought, Ginzberg takes on the source-critics of his time, mostly Robert H. Charles. Ginzberg observes that, just as *2 Baruch* is an amalgam of different, at times contradictory positions, so are several of the rabbinic writings. “The same inconsistency has been ascribed to the eschatological views of the Apocalypse as to its theological. In reality they combine standpoints which contradict one another because derived from divergent sources, but such contradiction is found in many works.”<sup>68</sup> In other words, Ginzberg uses his insight that *2 Baruch* is not that unlike the early rabbinic writings as a powerful counter-argument to the source-critical reading that dominated the debate at the time. Finally, Ginzberg counters the anti-Pharisaic rhetoric, prevalent among his Christian colleagues. He agrees with the common understanding that *2 Baruch* is a Pharisaic text and concludes his entry, “The Apocalypse is full of truly poetic passages, occurring in the visions and prophecies as well as in the laments. It shows that the Pharisees were not so narrow-minded as the New Testament books, written at the same time, represent them. There were still among them those who could bewail their sorrows with poetic fire, and portray the future in a strain of holy inspiration.”<sup>69</sup>

Since Ginzberg it has become a commonplace to note the similarities between *2 Baruch*, *4 Ezra*, and the early rabbinic writings, but a detailed study on the subject remains a *desideratum*. Albertus F.J. Klijn, for example, in his influential English translation of *2 Baruch*, comments in passing on the provenance of the apocalypse and writes, “the work shows a close acquaintance with Jewish rabbinic literature.” Then he remarks about *2 Baruch*’s author a bit later in his introduction that he was “an expert on both apoc-

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<sup>67</sup> Ginzberg, “Apocalypse of Baruch,” 552.

<sup>68</sup> Ginzberg, “Apocalypse of Baruch,” 553.

<sup>69</sup> Ginzberg, “Apocalypse of Baruch,” 556.

alyptic imagery and rabbinic teaching.” Unfortunately Klijn remains somewhat vague in his statements and does not provide any examples or supportive evidence.<sup>70</sup> If, following a wide consensus among modern readers of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, the two sister compositions were written toward the end of the first century CE, then there would not have been much rabbinic literature in circulation with which the apocalyptic authors could have had “a close acquaintance.” Rather, the points of connection that undoubtedly exist need to be explained by means other than a familiarity with already existing rabbinic documents. Also, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* need to be treated separately, as the latter places a greater emphasis on Torah obedience than does *4 Ezra* and in general seems to be closer in thought to the Sages.

The two studies in this volume that reexamine the place of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in early Jewish literature come at the problem from different angles. Daniel Boyarin’s interest is in the Jewish background of the divinity of Jesus.<sup>71</sup> Specifically he argues that the belief in the divinity of Jesus did not develop *after* the resurrection among the followers of Jesus. Rather, the concept of two divine figures can be traced back to early Judaism, and it is from here that the first Christians inherited it. At the center of Boyarin’s argument stands the messianic title “Son of Man,” as it is found in Daniel 7, the Similitudes of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 48), and *4 Ezra* 13. The central tenet of “High Christology,” that Christ is entirely divine, is thus not a Christian novelty but stems from the Second Temple milieu. Steven Fraade begins his essay with a reference to Klijn’s claim, quoted above, that the author of *2 Baruch* was closely acquainted with rabbinic writings.<sup>72</sup> He sets out to examine exactly how close their points of connection really are, without *a priori* presuming any direct contact. After a careful examination of some more prominent affinities—the use of dialogue; the imminent eschatology; the centrality of the Mosaic Torah; Ezra as a Second Moses; the role of exoteric revelations; the *revelatio continua* in the interpreting communities; Esau as Rome, Jacob as Israel—Fraade concludes that there is nothing to support the hypothesis of a direct familiarity of the authors of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* with the writings of the Sages. Instead he insists that the differences, both in form and content, are just as telling as their parallels.

<sup>70</sup> Albertus F.J. Klijn, “2 Baruch,” *OTP* 1:617, 620.

<sup>71</sup> Daniel Boyarin, “Enoch, Ezra, and the Jewishness of ‘High Christology?’” See also his *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

<sup>72</sup> Steven D. Fraade, “4 Ezra and 2 Baruch With the (Dis-) Advantage of Rabbinic Hind-sight.”

Apocalyptic, early Christian, and early rabbinic texts show some significant overlap. Boyarin and Fraade show that further studies are needed to explain both the origin and the significance of these points of affiliation, as well as to gain a clearer understanding of the precise lines of demarcation between the groups that produced these texts.

### 6. *The Nachleben of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch*

In recent years, the fact that the Pseudepigrapha were almost exclusively transmitted through Christian channels has been the subject of some considerable debate.<sup>73</sup> Initially the debate was driven by the desire to determine more objective criteria that will allow the modern reader to identify whether a pseudepigraphic text is Jewish or Christian in origin. In recent years the debate has widened, however, and the investigation of the reception histories of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, the lives of their versions, and the diverse manuscript traditions have increasingly moved into the center of the debate. There still is a great dearth of knowledge in this field. If there is any area in the study of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* where more work needs to be done, it is in the transmission, dissemination, and (liturgical) use of the twin apocalypses in Judaism and Christianity.<sup>74</sup>

The two essays in this book on the reception history of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* address this issue. Karina Martin Hogan poses the question who included *4 Ezra* in the Vulgate and hence contributed immeasurably to its preservation and dissemination.<sup>75</sup> The answer, Hogan argues, is that whereas Jerome had nothing but contempt for the book, a sentiment one needs to understand within the wider context of Jerome's general feelings toward Jewish eschatology, it was Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who had a much more positive attitude. He refers to *4 Ezra* repeatedly in his theological writings and

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<sup>73</sup> The debate is progressing quickly. Robert A. Kraft, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (ed. John C. Reeves; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 55–86, and his "The Pseudepigrapha and Christianity, Revisited: Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions," *JSJ* 32 (2001): 371–395; James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* (JSJSup 105; Leiden: Brill, 2005); Annette Yoshiko Reed, "The Modern Invention of 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,'" *JTS* 60 (2009): 403–436.

<sup>74</sup> Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 172–194.

<sup>75</sup> Karina Martin Hogan, "The Preservation of *4 Ezra* in the Vulgate: Thanks to Ambrose, not Jerome."



found great value in the book. Liv Ingeborg Lied has long had an interest in the reception of 2 *Baruch* in medieval Syriac writings, and particularly in the liturgical texts.<sup>76</sup> In her essay for this volume, Lied traces the use of 2 *Baruch* to three medieval West Syrian lectionary manuscripts.<sup>77</sup> Her interests are broad and reach well beyond the question of biblical interpretation, narrowly defined. Instead, Lied is interested in questions of scriptural authority, the use of scriptural texts in the liturgy, and the potential change of identity of a scriptural passage through its ritual performance. In the end, Lied calls on modern students of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha to pay greater attention to the liturgical materials, if only because the reception and perception of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic books was often shaped by their liturgical employment.

Hogan and Lied's important work demonstrates how the chronological and methodological focus of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha studies is gradually broadening to include the *Nachleben* of the texts in the diverse communities that cared to pray over, preserve and interpret them. The field is vast, the implications of such studies are far-reaching, and much work remains to be done.

*A Bibliography of Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch, 2000–2012*<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Liv Ingeborg Lied, "The Reception of the Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Traditions: The Case of 2 *Baruch*," in *"Non-Canonical" Religious Texts in Early Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James H. Charlesworth; London: T&T Clark, 2012), 52–60.

<sup>77</sup> Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Nachleben and Textual Identity: Variants and Variance in the Reception History of 2 *Baruch*."

<sup>78</sup> The bibliography up to 1999 has been assembled by Lorenzo DiTommaso, *A Bibliography of Pseudepigrapha Research 1850–1999* (JSPSup 39; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 469–524 (on 4 *Ezra*) and 257–282 (on 2 *Baruch*). For the following years see Hogan, *Theologies in Conflict*, 1–35, 237–252 (on 4 *Ezra*), and Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Recent Scholarship on 2 *Baruch*: 2000–2009," *Currents in Biblical Research* 9 (2001), 238–276 (on 2 *Baruch*).

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