

apocalyptic authority (see, e. g., *1 Enoch* 8, 14, 17-36; Sir 3.21-22; Reed 2004; 2005: 58-83; cf. Prov 8; Job 38; Alexander 2002). And – whatever the precise targets of the tannaitic traditions behind *m. Hag* 2.1 and their connections with the apocalyptic cosmologies and epistemologies of certain so-called “pseudepigrapha” – it is clear that there was much still at stake in controlling the exposition of Genesis 1 (cf. Niehoff 2005; Kister 2007). Likewise, the discussions in *t. Hag* 2.1-7, *y. Hag* 2.1/77a-c, and *GenR* attest the continued place of creation as a privileged arena for debates about knowledge and power in late antique Roman Palestine (cf. Elijor 2004b: 201-222). That such issues remained resonant is similarly suggested by the efforts of the Babylonian sages responsible for shaping *b. Hag* 12b-13a. When considered alongside the cosmological concerns in works such as *SRdB*, the hexaemeral retelling in *PRE* may thus speak to the enduring significance of the cosmos as a site for contestation, not just in Jewish interactions with Hellenistic, Roman, and Islamic cultures (cf. Alexander 2002; Reed 2007), but also in inner-Jewish debates about the power and limits of human knowledge.

Earthly and Heavenly Jerusalem in Philo and Paul: A Tale of Two Cities

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It is with great pleasure that I dedicate this article on heavenly Jerusalem to my dear friend and senior colleague, Professor Rachel Elijor, who was born and raised in Jerusalem. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem has been her intellectual home, first as a student and for more than thirty-five years as a consummate teacher. Wherever she travels and lectures throughout the world, she transmits some of that magnificent city's spiritual energy. Rachel, may you continue to shed light for many years to come on the recondite writings of the Jewish mystical tradition that you so insightfully elucidate.

Heavenly Jerusalem is a compelling idea. Even today the city of Jerusalem is so freighted with religious significance that one can readily appreciate why the ancients ascribed to it a celestial counterpart. In recent decades there have been numerous scholarly essays on the topic. Although important primary sources have been cited and analyzed, no consensus has emerged as to their significance. Among the remaining, unresolved issues pertaining to biblical and post-biblical Second Temple writings are the following: whether or not the doctrine of heavenly Jerusalem is rooted in Biblical texts, whether or not heavenly Jerusalem is found in the sectarian writings of the Dead Sea scrolls and their antecedents, and whether the New Testament writers were influenced by their Jewish milieu in this matter. The primary focus of this current study will examine these issues and how they relate specifically to Philo and Paul. As we shall discover, each formulated the concept of heavenly Jerusalem independently and in a distinctive manner, as part of their larger intellectual enterprise.

Before beginning our discussion it would be worthwhile highlighting three seminal essays on the topic of heavenly Jerusalem, each of which broke new ground and served as a springboard for much of the subsequent scholarly exploration. The first of these is Arthur Aptowitzer's "The heavenly temple in the Aggadah," published in two parts in 1930-1931. In all, Aptowitzer quoted liberally

from more than 80 primary sources, including biblical passages, apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings, New Testament verses, and a wide-range of classical rabbinic texts, including targumic and midrashic literature. With the obvious exception of the as yet undiscovered Dead Sea scrolls, Aptowitzer presented virtually all of the relevant sources on the interrelated topics of the heavenly Temple and heavenly Jerusalem. In general one could characterize Aptowitzer's perspective as maximalist. He viewed both heavenly constructs as pervasive within Jewish writings from prophetic literature and onwards. A more modest, but nonetheless important contribution is J. A. Seeligman's "Jerusalem in Jewish Hellenistic Thought." This essay was published in 1957, and although it only addresses the theme of heavenly Jerusalem on the final page, in the body of his presentation Seeligman discusses germane phrasings from both the Septuagint and Philo on Jerusalem. A final article that warrants mention is Ephraim Urbach's "Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem," published in 1968. As opposed to Aptowitzer, Urbach championed what could be labeled the minimalist approach. He begins with the forceful assertion: "...it is a fact that the expression *yerushalayim shel ma'alah* (heavenly Jerusalem) does not appear anywhere in tannaitic literature and even in amoraitic literature it is only found in a single statement in the Babylonian Talmud" (Urbach 1968: 156). One of Urbach's most trenchant critiques of Aptowitzer is his insistence that one should not lump together descriptions of the heavenly temple and heavenly Jerusalem, but rather differentiate between the two (Urbach 1968: 158-160). Whereas Aptowitzer's article has been published twice in an English "translation/adaptation,"¹ it is unfortunate that neither essay by Seeligman nor Urbach has been made available to a non-Hebrew reading audience.

1. Biblical Sources Reconsidered

One would be hard pressed to identify any passages in the Tanakh that explicitly refer to heavenly Jerusalem; nevertheless, there are a few suggestive verses. They are important in their own right, as well as for the role they would eventually play in adding scriptural legitimacy to formulations found in post-biblical writings. The most com-

¹ Aryeh Rubinstein is credited with the translation/adaptation. He translated the main body of the text, including all of the primary sources conveniently numbered, but omitted Aptowitzer's scholarly footnotes.

elling verse in this context is Isaiah 49:16: "See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands, Your walls are ever before Me."² Aptowitzer offers an intriguing interpretation of this text. He focuses on the expression *kappayim* (palms) and asserts:

The words of the prophet Isaiah make sense only if we interpret *kapayim* as meaning *shamayim* (heaven). God says through the prophet: I never could forget you. See, I have engraved you on heaven which stands forever, and there have I prepared My seat; hence, your walls are ever before Me. Thus interpreted, Isaiah says explicitly that there is a Zion in heaven. (Aptowitzer 1989: 22)

Aptowitzer interprets the verse simultaneously symbolically and literally. The "palms" of God refer to something else, i. e., heaven, and yet what is "engraved" is accorded a celestial reality, namely that Jerusalem exists in heaven. An alternative approach would be to interpret the verse entirely metaphorically, as an expression of God's ongoing commitment to Jerusalem. It is as if He tattooed Jerusalem's image unto His hands, such that every time He raised His hand to act, there would be a visual reminder of the city. This dramatic assertion is found in Second Isaiah, whose central theme is the anticipated restoration of Jerusalem. The Babylonian captivity was coming to an end, and the Persians had given the exiled Jews permission to return to Israel and rebuild their homeland. According to this historical perspective, the message of the above-cited verse is that God was engineering the restoration of Jerusalem and will see it through to completion. Whereas Aptowitzer takes the verse from Isaiah as proof that heavenly Jerusalem is found "explicitly" in the Tanakh, the alternative proposal merely views the text as symbolically affirming Divine providence over the city.

This same verse also serves as the basis of a midrash on heavenly Jerusalem with which Aptowitzer initiated his discussion. *Tanhuma Pekudei* 1 states: "From His abundant love of the one below, He made another one above, as it is said (Isaiah 49:16), 'See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands, your walls are ever before Me.' And thus said David (Ps. 122:3), 'Jerusalem, that art built as a city that is compact together,' that is, as built by God" (Aptowitzer 1989: 20).

It is noteworthy that according to this midrash, God so loved the mundane Jerusalem that He created a celestial counterpart. This temporal sequence is surprising, as one would have expected heav-

² All translations from the Tanakh are taken from the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh translation as found in *The Jewish Study Bible* Berlin - Brettler (eds.), unless otherwise noted.

only Jerusalem to have been created first. The second verse cited in this passage, Ps. 122:3, was also commonly referenced as a proof-text in other rabbinic writings. For example, the targum on this verse expands it as follows: "Jerusalem that is built *in the firmament* like the city that is joined together with her *in the earth*" (Stec 2004: 220). Once again we find that the heavenly city is modeled after the earthly one. It should also be noted that the verb in Hebrew *hubrah*, translated as "compact/joined," can also be read as something that has a partner (*haver*), which is clearly how it is being interpreted here.³

There are several other scriptural passages that are not usually cited in discussions of heavenly Jerusalem that are nonetheless worth mentioning. After the First Temple was completed, King Solomon dedicated the Temple in a public convocation. He instructed the nation: "When Your people take the field against their enemy by whatever way You send them, and they pray to the Lord in the direction of the city which You have chosen...oh, hear in heaven their prayer" (1 Kings 8:44-45). The Talmud, *b. Berakhot* f. 30a, cites this as the basis for the Jewish practice of praying facing Jerusalem. For our purposes what is significant is the contention that by orientating oneself towards Jerusalem, one's prayers ascend to Heaven, thereby implying a linkage between the two.

An additional text is found in Third Isaiah. Therein the prophet is anticipating a new world order wherein people will live extraordinary long lives: "He who dies at a hundred years shall be reckoned a youth" (Isa. 65:20). This statement is preceded by the following description: "For behold! I am creating a new heaven and a new earth... For I shall create Jerusalem as a joy, and her people as a delight" (Isa. 65:17-18). Note that the Hebrew verb translated herein as "create" is *bor'e*, which is the verb used in Genesis chapter 1. Thus when the universe is constructed anew, Jerusalem will be recreated at that time.

From the preceding survey one can confidently conclude that although there are several verses in the Tanakh that are suggestive and were exploited by later writers, none explicitly refer to heavenly Jerusalem.

³ Interestingly, in the *p. Hagigah* 3:6 this verse is interpreted as referring to Jerusalem's ability to transform all Jews into *haverim*, which the commentary *Ketubot Edah* interprets in the technical sense (i. e. Pharisees). This also fits with Urbach's contention (1968: 156) that the Talmud Yerushalmi ignores the concept of heavenly Jerusalem.

2. Exploring the Dead Sea Scrolls

There is no scholarly consensus on the role that heavenly Jerusalem played in post-Biblical literature either. One finds proponents for both the maximalist and minimalist positions. An example of the former, expansive approach is found in Michael Stone's commentary on *4 Ezra*. "The phrase 'unseen city' is to be taken to refer to the heavenly Jerusalem. This notion occurs elsewhere in *4 Ezra*, and particularly in Vision 4... The idea has roots in the Bible and is widely diffused throughout the literature of the Second Temple age and after" (Stone 1990: 213-214).

On the other hand, some deny that there are any references to celestial Jerusalem in the Jewish literature of the Second Temple period, nor for that matter in early rabbinic writings. An example of the "minimalist" approach is Rivka Nir in her monograph on *2 Baruch*. "Unlike the development of a belief in the existence of a heavenly temple, *there is no image of a heavenly Jerusalem in the early Jewish sources* [emphasis is Nir's]... A heavenly Jerusalem does not at all appear in Second Temple Literature; the same holds true for early talmudic sources, that is, in the Mishnah, the Jerusalem Talmud, or the Palestinian midrashim" (Nir 2003: 26). Not surprisingly, she adduces both Urbach and Seeligman for support.

The earliest references can possibly be found in the sectarian writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls. For example, Lawrence Schiffman's suggested restoration of a fragmentary non-canonical Psalm (4Q380 1 i 2-4) reads: "[Jeru]salem [the city which the Lo]rd [chose] from eternity, [As a place of residence for] the holy ones" (Schiffman 1996: 78). If this is an accurate rendering of the text, then it implies that Jerusalem's selection by God was primordial, which might accord it a supernatural existence. However, as Eileen Schuller has indicated in the original publication of the transcription and plates of this text, the lacunae in the parchment make any reconstruction highly conjectural (Schuller 1986: 252). Even if one accepts Schiffman's reading, the assertion that Jerusalem has existed "from eternity" might be more rhetorical than doctrinal, and merely indicative of the Divine selection of earthly Jerusalem.

At the other end of the time continuum is the much discussed eschatological text referred to by scholars as *New Jerusalem*. According to Lorenzo DiTommaso, fragments of this work have been preserved in seven manuscripts (DiTommaso 2005: 3). Most of the text is devoted to a guided tour of a grandiose unnamed city, presumably Jerusalem. Edward Cook has noted: "The dimensions of the

visionary city and buildings are too large to be realistic... In modern terms these dimensions would be 18.67 miles by 13.33 miles... This new Jerusalem would have been larger than any ancient city and could only have been built by divine intervention" (Wise – Abegg – Cook 2005: 558). One of its structures is described as having been constructed entirely out of precious jewels and metals. "And all of it is built in electrum and sapphire and chalcedony, and it laths (are) gold, and its towers (are) one thousand, [... hund]red and [th]irty-two" (DiTommaso 2005: 92).

The description of a future Jerusalem bedecked with jewels will become commonplace in later midrashic sources. A possible predecessor to this *New Jerusalem* account is found near the end of Tobit. In a hymn of praise to God, Tobit effusively predicts: "The gates of Jerusalem will be built with sapphire and emerald, and all your walls with precious stones. The towers of Jerusalem will be built with gold, and their battlements with pure gold. The streets of Jerusalem will be paved with ruby and with stones of Ophir" (Tob. 13:16).⁴ Scholars generally date the narrative sections of Tobit much earlier than the sectarian writings, perhaps going back to the 4th century B. C. E., and fragments of the work were found in the Cave 4. It is, however, presumed that this hymn was appended much later, as it does not fit the style of the rest of Tobit. Accordingly, one cannot determine whether or not there was a dependence of one of these texts upon the other.

Although DiTommaso concurs with his colleagues that *New Jerusalem* is eschatological and therefore related to other Dead Sea works, such as the *War Scroll*, he is unequivocal in asserting that "the New Jerusalem of the *NJ* should not be understood as a heavenly Jerusalem and that to do so employs an understanding of the evolution of the topos which might be too influenced by the heavenly New Jerusalems of the New Testament" (DiTommaso 2005: 10). In a similar vein Florentino Martinez notes: "Despite the city's gigantic and clearly utopian dimensions and the precious quality of the materials used in the temple's construction, the city and the temple that are described in the *New Jerusalem* are not the heavenly ones, but comprise a blueprint of the celestial model in the hope that this will be constructed on the earth in the future" (Martinez 1999: 453). Not only are both DiTommaso and Martinez persuasive in claiming that

⁴ All translations from the Apocrypha and New Testament are taken from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, B. Metzger – R. Murphy (eds.), unless otherwise noted.

the city described in *New Jerusalem* is earthly, one must also emphasize that in this text there is no suggestion that it has a heavenly counterpart. This only reinforces a programmatic assertion made by R. Z. Werblowsky that "there is no intrinsic and necessary connection between eschatology and the concept of heavenly Jerusalem" (Werblowsky 1968: 173).

A final text that warrants mention at this point is the so-called *Animal Apocalypse*, found in *1 Enoch* 85-90. This highly symbolic work certainly predates the sectarian scroll writings and is likely from the mid-2nd century B. C. E., if not earlier. Several fragments of the *Animal Apocalypse* were found in Cave 4, but the specific passage that a number of scholars have cited in reference to heavenly Jerusalem, was not among them. In *1 En.* 90: 28-29, Enoch describes his vision of the transformation of the "ancient house." After all of its "pillars and all the columns were pulled out: and the ornaments of that house were packed and taken out...the Lord of the sheep brought about a new house, greater and loftier than the first one, and set it up in the first location" (Charlesworth 1983-1985, 1: 71). R. H. Charles, who published an English translation of this text in 1913, commented on it as follows: "A New Jerusalem descending from heaven is a familiar idea in Jewish Apocalypses" (Charles 1973 2: 259). Devorah Dimant partially concurs with Charles. The setting for this apocalypse is in heaven; "what is found in our vision is the building of a future Jerusalem by God Himself," and "this is the earliest testimony for this concept" (Dimant 1983: 190). Nevertheless, she does underscore:

At the outset it is appropriate to emphasize that we do not find in the *Animal Apocalypse* any mention of the concept that either the future Temple or Jerusalem were pre-existent and awaited in heaven or some secret place until the day of redemption to descend to earth. These concepts, whether in relation to the Temple or to Jerusalem, are only known to us from sources dating near the destruction of the Second Temple or later. (Dimant 1983: 190)

One could go further. It is debatable if this text is even referring to Jerusalem per se. As W. D. Davies aptly noted: "Usually it has been taken, without discussion, to refer to the new Jerusalem; but it might be interpreted as the new Temple" (Davies 1974: 144). The use of the term "house" and the explicit mention of dismantling its pillars and columns underscore that the referent is more likely the Temple and not the city. More importantly, it must be emphasized that as Charles indicated in his captioning and footnotes on the text, the entire *Apoc-*

apocalypse describes events occurring in human history, from Adam and Eve to the eschaton (Charles 1973, 2: 250-260). Thus the setting for this work is earth and not heaven. Even God is depicted as coming down from heaven to earth to destroy the enemies of Israel in chapter 90:18: "I kept seeing till the Lord of the sheep came unto them and took in his hand the rod of his wrath and smote the earth" (Charlesworth 1983-1985, 1: 70). Given that the earthly realm is the focus, even were one to accept the questionable interpretation that Jerusalem is the referent of the term "house," it is earthly Jerusalem that is being depicted as undergoing restoration. Why would there be the need to rebuild celestial Jerusalem? Accordingly, this text does not provide good evidence for the concept of heavenly Jerusalem.

The *Testament of Dan* 5:12 is also cited by some scholars in this context. It reads: "And the saints shall refresh themselves in Eden; the righteous shall rejoice in the New Jerusalem, which shall be eternally for the glorification of God" (Charlesworth 1983-1985, 1: 810). This work is part of a larger book known as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Given that some of the other sections of this corpus were found at Cave 4, including parts of the *Testament of Levi* and *Naphtali*, it is assumed that the *Testaments* as a whole were composed in the 2nd century B. C. E. It is worth noting that earlier in chapter 5:6 the author of the *Testament of Dan* refers to reading "the book of Enoch the Righteous." Like *1 Enoch*, this text offers an eschatological vision after God is victorious in His war against Beliar and the forces of evil. Similar to the *Animal Apocalypse*, the setting for the entire conflict and its resolution is clearly mundane and not celestial, as is underscored by verse 5:13, which immediately follows the "New Jerusalem" reference. "And Jerusalem shall no longer undergo desolation, nor shall Israel be led into captivity, because the Lord will be in her midst [living among human beings]" (Charlesworth 1983-1985, 1: 810). Thus the evocative phrase "New Jerusalem" does not refer to a heavenly entity, but rather to the restored earthly Jerusalem of the eschaton.

In sum, one would have expected the sectarian writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls to be replete with speculation about Jerusalem and its heavenly origins, stemming in part from the disillusionment of the authors with the contemporary Temple establishment.⁵ This sentiment would have been intensified by their assumption that Jerusalem and the Temple had been profaned and polluted,

⁵ Especially instructive in this regard is Rachel Elijor's discussion of the sectarians' self-perception as a heavenly ordained priesthood (Elijor 2004b: 227-231).

as evidenced especially in works like *Miqsat Ma'aseh ha-Torah* (MMT). Although arguments from silence are seldom convincing, the fact that the sectarian scrolls are silent on the topic of heavenly Jerusalem is quite surprising and could be adduced as support for the "minimalist" position that this concept was not prevalent at that time.

3. Philo, the Pilgrim Philosopher

Although we did not find solid evidence that any Second Temple writings composed in Israel discussed heavenly Jerusalem, one can see this idea in the work of Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 B. C. E.-50 C. E.). He provides our earliest, datable references to the notion of heavenly Jerusalem. At the outset it is worth emphasizing that most scholars have only cited one or two passages from Philo in this context. Philo's writings, however, offer a very rich and intricate tapestry of interconnections that warrant a more expansive examination to fully appreciate his original conceptualization of the topic. His reference to his own pilgrimage to Jerusalem in *On Providence* 2:64 is quite brief and occurs while describing the Mediterranean shoreline at Ashkelon: "at the time when I was on my journey towards the temple of my native land for the purpose of offering up prayers and sacrifices therein" (Yonge 1993: 755).

Philo's most important discussion related to the theme of heavenly Jerusalem is found in his treatise *On Dreams* 2: 246-253. Therein he offers a sustained philosophical inquiry into the significance of the biblical expression "God's city." It is also in that context that he presents his idiosyncratic etymology of the name Jerusalem. Philo begins by quoting Psalm 46:5:

'There is a river whose streams gladden God's city the holy dwelling-place of the Most High.' He asks: "What city? For the existing holy city, where the sacred temple also is, does not stand in the neighbourhood of rivers any more than of the sea. Thus it is clear that he writes to shew us allegorically something different from the obvious." (Colson 1958, 5: 553)

At the outset Philo refers to the earthly city of Jerusalem as "the existing holy city." Since Jerusalem is landlocked, as presumably Philo knew from his pilgrimage, the psalmist's description of a river associated with the city must be referring to another place, namely the celestial city of God.

Philo then explains the allegorical significance of the river, which he connects to the Divine Logos. For Philo the Logos or "word" represents the Divine Mind and the matrix of Platonic Ideas that mediates between the uncreated God and the created universe. "It is perfectly true that the impetuous rush of the divine word borne along (swiftly) and ceaselessly with its strong and ordered current does overflow and gladden the whole universe through and through" (Colson 1958, 5: 553-555).

He continues by suggesting that the term "God's city" is multivalent. In an effort to explain why the psalmist asserted that the river brings joy, Philo posits: "For God's city is the name in one sense for the world which has received the whole bowl, wherein the divine draught is mixed and feasted thereon and exultingly taken for its possession the gladness which remains for all time never to be removed or quenched" (Colson 1958, 5: 555). Thus, the universe, which has been infused with the Logos, is perpetually gladdened by the Divine spirit. A second association of the term "God's city" is with a philosopher's soul. "In another sense he uses this name for the soul of the Sage, in which God is said to walk as in a city" (Colson 1958, 5: 555). When this sage contemplates the Divine, he is thereby imbibing the Logos which is described as "the ambrosian drug" promoting constant delight (Colson 1958, 5: 555).

Having established that the city of God can be used in a variety of ways, each of which connotes an encounter with the Divine, via the Logos, Philo continues by identifying the city of God with Jerusalem itself.

Now the city of God is called in the Hebrew Jerusalem and its name when translated is "vision of peace." Therefore do not seek for the city of the Existent among the regions of the earth, since it is not wrought of wood or stone, but in a soul, in which there is no warring, whose sight is keen, which has set before it as its aim to live in contemplation and peace. For what grander or holier house could we find for God in the whole range of existence that the vision-seeking mind, the mind which is eager to see all things and never even in its dreams has a wish for faction or turmoil? ... Know then that God alone is the real veritable peace, free from all illusion, but the whole substance of things created only to perish is one constant war. (Colson 1958, 5: 555-557)

Herein we reach the crux of the matter. According to Philo there simultaneously exists two Jerusalems, the physical and the Divine. It is precisely for this reason that Jews call their holy city by the name Jerusalem. By naming it "vision of peace," Jews are thereby signaling what Philo conceives of as the ideal of human perfec-

tion, namely contemplation of the Divine, who embodies absolute peace.

Philo mistakenly presupposes that the first half of the name Jerusalem, i. e., *yeru*, stems from the Hebrew root *r'h*, to see.⁶ For Philo sight is the highest of the senses, and it is for this reason that light was the first of God's creations. In *On Creation* 10:53 he writes: "Knowing that light was the most excellent of things that exist, he produced it as an instrument for the most excellent of the senses, sight: for what the intellect is in the soul, this is what the eye is in the body; each of them sees, in the one case the objects of thought, in the other the objects of perception" (Runia 2001: 59).

Philo continues by asserting that the heavenly bodies were positioned as if in Temple.

"Using as his model that form of intelligible light which was discussed in connection with the incorporeal cosmos, he proceeded to create the sense-perceptible heavenly bodies, divine images of exceeding beauty. These he established in heaven, as in a temple made of the purest part of bodily substance" (Runia 2001: 60). David Runia aptly comments that, starting with Plato, one finds the notion of heaven as a shrine or temple for the everlasting gods. "For Philo the comparison has an extra dimension on account of the temple in Jerusalem. It of course housed no images whatsoever, but in Philo's eyes it is nevertheless a clear symbol of the universe in its totality" (Runia 2001: 204). Philo's assertion of an aniconic evocation of God in the Temple is found in his *Embassy to Gaius* 36:290: "My lord Gaius, this Temple has never from the beginning admitted any man-made image, because it is the dwelling-place of the true God" (Smallwood 1970: 126).⁷

In this context it is worth noting an additional association that Philo makes, connecting the Divine light with the Logos and the Israelites. Earlier, in his treatise *On Dreams* 1:117-118, he discussed a detail from the narrative of the plague of darkness in Egypt.

⁶ Philo was not alone in this respect. In *Genesis Rabbah* 56:10 the name Jerusalem is depicted as a combination of the name *yir'eh* (He will show), the name that Abraham assigned Mount Moriah in Genesis 22:14, and *Shalem*, i. e., the place from whence came King Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18 (Sperber 1982: 78). Evidently Bahya b. Asher in the early 14th century C. E. was the first to associate the dual ending of the Hebrew word for Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) with the doctrine of the two Jerusalems – earthly and heavenly Jerusalem; see his commentary on Num. 19:13 (Chavel 1972 3:140).

⁷ For an edifying overview of the role of the Temple in Jewish mystical literature, from Ezekiel's vision to Merkavah mysticism see Elijor 2004b:63-81. In the notes therein she makes a number of references to Philo's writings on the Temple.

"For the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings' (Ex. 10:23)... understand the allegory in this manner: the practiser of virtue met with the divine word, after the mortal and human light had set." (Yonge 1993: 375-376)

Connecting light and the Logos with the Israelites was not confined to this one biblical event. In the same way that Philo offers a fanciful etymology of Jerusalem based upon seeing, he ingeniously but erroneously associates the name Israel with the same Hebrew root for sight.⁸ In *On the Change of Names* 12:81 he writes: "Because the name Jacob means 'a supplanter,' but the name Israel signifies 'the man who sees God'" (Yonge 1993: 347). Similarly, "This race is called Israel in the Chaldean language, or, if the name is translated into Greek, 'seeing God'" (Smallwood 1970: 54).⁹ As E. Mary Smallwood notes, Philo is hereby suggesting that Jews are endowed with a superior intellectual capability: "although the Powers are beyond the grasp of the ordinary human intellect, they are the object of the vision of Israel, the race which 'sees God'" (Smallwood 1970: 156).

One can readily assume that when Philo connected Jerusalem with philosophical contemplation of the Divine he was also influenced by Plato's *Republic* 540. Therein Plato describes the ideal city-state or *polis* that is promoted by philosopher-statesmen who contemplate the Good and then implement appropriate public policies. "They must lift up the eye of the soul to gaze on that which sheds light on all things; and when they have seen the Good itself, take it as a pattern for the right ordering of the state and of the individual, themselves included" (Cornford [1967]: 262).

Philo takes this notion of the *polis* and uses it in intriguing ways, as both a *megalopolis*, i. e., a great city, and a *metropolis*, a mother city. In *On Creation* 4:19, wherein he discusses the first day of creation from Genesis, Philo suggests that the starting point for the Divine blueprint of the universe was the conceptualization of the *megalopolis*, "the great cosmic city." "The conception we have concerning God must be similar to this, namely that when he had decided to found the great cosmic city, he first conceived its outlines. Out of these he composed the intelligible cosmos, which served him as a model when he completed the sense-perceptible cosmos as well" (Runia

⁸ Philo would have also appreciated the start of *Midrash Konen*, which associates the word *torah* with the Greek *teoria* i. e. seeing or theory, "in the Greek language they call vision and appearance *toriah*...that is to say that she (i. e. the Torah) was hidden and afterwards appeared and was given to Israel, for she was sequestered in the upper realms prior to the creation of heaven and earth" (Jellinek [1967] 2: 23).

⁹ Smallwood (1970: 153) lists a dozen such references in Philo.

2001: 50). David Runia (2001: 142) has noted that this phrasing is "yet another *verbum Philonicum*... Outside Philo (and excluding patristic imitators) it is only attested for large cities, not for the cosmos."

Whereas Philo used *megalopolis* to refer to the Divine conception of the universe, on several occasions he refers specifically to Jerusalem as the *metropolis*, mother-city of the Jewish people. In *Flaccus* 46, a treatise addressed to the Roman governor of Alexandria, Philo writes that the Jews look "indeed upon the holy city as their metropolis in which is erected the sacred temple of the most high God" (Yonge 1993: 729). Commenting on this text, Sarah Pearce (2004: 19) suggests that Philo "appears to have been the first to state that the Jews think of Jerusalem as their *metropolis*, their 'mother-city.'" To be sure, later on she mentions that perhaps Philo was influenced by the formulation found in the Septuagint on Isaiah 1:26 (Pearce 2004: 33 and Seeligman 1957: 196), wherein the original Hebrew expression *kiryah ne'emanah* (faithful city) is expansively rendered: "a loyal metropolis, Zion" (Muraoka 2009: 461). Philo characterizes Jerusalem as the "mother-city" in his treatise *Embassy to Gaius* 36: 281. Therein he writes: "Concerning the holy city I must now say what is necessary. It, as I have already stated, is my native country, and the metropolis, not only of the one country of Judaea, but also of many by reason of the colonies which it has sent out from time to time into the bordering districts of Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria..." (Yonge 782). In this latter passage Philo explains that Jerusalem really is the "mother-city" of the Jewish people, in so far as it has engendered numerous Jewish colonies throughout the neighboring countries.¹⁰

Philo's use of the term *metropolis* in other contexts is also illuminating.¹¹ In *On Flight and Finding* 94 he writes: "Perhaps we may say that the most ancient and the strongest, and the most excellent metropolis, for I may not call it merely a city, is the divine word, to flee to which first is the most advantageous course of all" (Yonge 1993: 329). Herein Philo is connecting the term *metropolis* with the Divine Logos. Another significant use of the term *metropolis* is from

¹⁰ See also *Exodus Rabbah* 23:11 on *benot yerushalayim* (daughters of Jerusalem) from Songa 1:5: "Said R. Johanan: Jerusalem is destined to become a metropolis for all the countries, as it is written 'Ashdot with her daughter-towns (*benotehah*)' (Josh. 18:47)" (Sperber 1982: 109). Elsewhere, Jerusalem is portrayed as a universal *metropolis*. In *Midrash Psalms* 36.6, ed. Buber p. 251, we read: "Said R. Oshayah (Hoshayah) in the name of R. Pinhas: Jerusalem is destined in the future to become a *metropolin* for all the nations, as it is said: 'and the nations shall walk in thy light' (Isa. 60:3)" Sperber 1982: 109; see also Werblowsky 1968: 172, which is based upon a parallel statement in the Pesikta.

¹¹ See Pearce 2004: 34, n. 23.

On Dreams 1:181. Therein he discusses the journey of the soul from its heavenly origin to the earth and back again.

For the soul, having left the region of heaven...came to the body as a foreign country. Therefore the father who begot it promises that he will not permit it to be for ever held in bondage, but that he will have compassion on it, and will unloose its chains, and will conduct it in safety and freedom as far as the metropolis. (Yonge 381)

Accordingly, in both of these texts Philo associated the term *metropolis* with the supramundane realm, whether it be the Logos or the heavenly origins of the soul.

In summation, we can now reflect back upon Philo's seminal presentation of heavenly Jerusalem in *On Dreams* 2: 246-253. Initially he discussed "God's city" and its relationship to the Logos. He then asserted that it can also be construed as the soul of the sage. Finally, he related "God's city" to Jerusalem. All three, the Logos, the soul contemplating God, and Jerusalem, are therefore interconnected. Philo also associated each with the term *metropolis*. Additionally, these elements are each individually and collectively bound up with a second set of associations, namely light, vision, Israel, and the Temple. Together all of these disparate entities originated with the ultimate source, God. Thus by analyzing Philo's theory of heavenly Jerusalem one is lead into the very heart of his philosophically oriented corpus of biblical exegesis.

4. Paul, the Polemicist

Paul was the first New Testament writer to refer to celestial Jerusalem. As will be seen, the situational and interpersonal aspects of his life colored his perspective on Jerusalem, much more so than Philo. It is generally thought that he wrote Galatians around 54 C. E. Therein he refers to heavenly Jerusalem as "the Jerusalem above." "But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free and she is our mother" (Gal. 4:26). Many Pauline scholars contend that this reference to a celestial Jerusalem was a pervasive and well-known Jewish teaching at that time. Typical of this approach is Hans Dieter Betz's comment: "Assuming that the readers are familiar with it, Paul introduces without further explanation this famous Jewish concept" (Betz 1979: 246). As we have seen, there is simply no evidence to support this position. Unless we speculate that Paul had been exposed to Philo (which cannot be entirely ruled out, but is unlikely and has

yet to be established), it is more reasonable to assume that Paul conceived this idea independently.

In order to fully appreciate Paul's formulation, one must initially view it in context of Galatians, and then within the broader canvas of his entire literary oeuvre. The preceding verses in Galatians are instructive and shed light on Paul's thought process. He contrasts Abraham's two wives, "the free woman," i. e., Sarah, and "the slave woman," i. e., Hagar. He posits: "Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children" (Gal. 4:25-26).

Paul's approach, namely interpreting biblical characters allegorically, reflects his Hellenistic outlook and is methodologically similar to Philo's style of biblical exegesis. His conclusions, however, are so sardonic and derogatory that they contrast sharply with what one encounters in Philo. In a startling inversion of Jewish biblical history, Paul construes those Jews, living in Jerusalem and following the biblical commandments given at Mt. Sinai, as being descendents of the Egyptian slave woman Hagar. They are contrasted with the Galatian Gentiles to whom he is writing and who have become followers of Christ. According to Paul, these Gentiles are portrayed as the real descendents of Sarah, whose symbolic domicile is heavenly Jerusalem. (This is possibly the earliest formulation of the *Verus Israel* doctrine, a cornerstone of Christian antisemitism, whereby Jews are displaced by Gentiles as representing the "true Israel.")¹² It followed from the end of the previous chapter of Galatians: "And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

Second Corinthians is another letter by Paul, also composed around 55 C. E. Therein he likewise discusses his two-covenant theory. Paul focuses on Moses receiving tablets of stone, which are inert and inanimate. Just like Moses who came down from Mt. Sinai with a veil over his face "to keep the Israelites from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside" (2 Cor. 3:13-14). Earlier he is even more strident in asserting that "our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers

¹² Paul also pioneered another fundamental antisemitic proposition, namely that the Jews killed Jesus (1 Thess. 2:15).

of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:5-6). Accordingly, Paul associates the old covenant with death and the new one with life. His innovative labeling of "the old covenant" to describe the Mosaic Torah that the Jews read, in contradistinction to the "new covenant" initiated with Christ, will eventually become the primary identifier of Christianity, especially as it was translated into the Latin "novum testamentum" and hence "New Testament." Moreover, his reference to the fading glory of the Mosaic religion, which is replaced by the new dispensation mediated by Jesus, is the basis for the anti-Judaic doctrine of supersessionism. A more pointed formulation of this theory is found in the letter to the Hebrews, which is traditionally ascribed to Paul, but is considered to be a later work by contemporary scholars. "In speaking of 'a new covenant,' he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear" (Heb. 8:13).

As opposed to Philo, who construed heavenly Jerusalem in a positive context, as the celestial origin of earthly Jerusalem's significance, Paul's theory of heavenly Jerusalem is rooted in denigration and rejection. Ultimately, it stems from the inner dynamic of his polemic against an army of enemies. As we shall see, for Paul earthly Jerusalem represents manifold dangers to his ministry and even his life. In order to better understand this central aspect of Paul's thought, it is important to briefly highlight some important milestones in his life.

Jerusalem was central to Paul's life; it was even part of his bloodline. On several occasions he mentions that he was a Benjamite.¹³ This assertion is highly unusual for someone living at the end of the Second Temple period. Presumably, Paul was aware that Jerusalem was assigned to the small territory of the tribe Benjamin in Joshua 18:16, an assignment reinforced by prophetic statements such as: "Flee for refuge, O people of Benjamin, Out of the midst of Jerusalem!" (Jer. 6:1). Accordingly, one can speculate that by boasting of his Benjamite lineage Paul was underscoring his biological connection to Jerusalem.

Paul only offers general descriptions of his upbringing, such as: "I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors" (Gal. 1:14). Luke, in Acts, has Paul claim that he was educated in Jerusalem under the tutelage of the outstanding Judaic scholar of the period: "I am a Jew, born in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the

¹³ See Philippians 3:5 and Romans 11:1.

feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law" (Acts 22:3). As a self-styled zealous Pharisee, Paul acknowledges on several occasions that he persecuted Jewish followers of Jesus. Near the start of Galatians he writes: "I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it" (Gal. 1:13). Luke's famous account of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is repeated three times in Acts (9:1-22, 22:4-16 and 26:9-18). According to Luke, Paul "went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2). Paul's description of this activity, as quoted above, is not nearly as graphic or dramatic as Luke's account. What is interesting is his depiction of the aftermath of the Divine revelation and vocation to proclaim Christ to the Gentiles. Paul insists:

[N]or did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once to Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. (Gal. 1:17-18)

Paul's claim that he did not immediately return to Jerusalem after visiting Damascus contrasts with Luke's assertion in Acts 9:26, wherein as soon as Paul started to preach about Jesus in Damascus there was a conspiracy to kill him, and he had to flee to Jerusalem to save his life. Paul's claim that he went to Arabia from Damascus is also intriguing. Why Arabia? In light of his idiosyncratic assertion that we previously saw in Galatians 4:25, that Mt. Sinai is located in Arabia, one can speculate that Paul went there on a spiritual pilgrimage, perhaps in quest of another revelation from God.

It is easy to sense Paul's profound ambivalence to earthly Jerusalem throughout the letter to Galatians. Although it was his starting point, after he abandoned his zealous persecution of the Jesus' followers, and thereby became a traitor and a religious heretic, Jerusalem became a dangerous place that he had to avoid. It is worth noting that according to Acts 7:58, before Paul set out on his initial campaign, he was present at the execution of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, who was stoned in Jerusalem for preaching about Jesus. This scene would certainly have underscored Jerusalem's potential threat to Paul's life. Nevertheless, after several years elapsed, Paul was drawn back there, because Jerusalem was where the Jesus movement was headquartered. How could he legitimately claim to be an authentic apostle of Christ, if he was totally divorced from the move-

ment's leadership? When, according to his own account, he returned after a three year hiatus, he only stayed for two weeks and confined all of his interactions to conferring with the movement's two most senior members – Peter and James (Gal. 1:18-19).

The second chapter of Galatians begins with his assertion that the next time he returned to Jerusalem was fourteen years later! It continues with Paul's version of the key event in the movement, known as the "Council in Jerusalem," which occurred in 49/50 C. E. The parallel account is found in Acts 15. This gathering was pivotal, both in terms of the history of early Christianity, as well as in illuminating the relational dynamic between Paul and his contemporaries. It is therefore essential that a detailed examination of these two distinct accounts be undertaken, thereby disclosing Paul's predicament and shedding light upon his subsequent actions. Many of the elements of these two versions are so dissimilar that some scholars have questioned whether or not they are describing the same event.

According to Acts 15:1, the impetus for the Council was a controversy that erupted in Antioch revolving around how to deal with Gentiles who wished to become members of the movement. Unnamed individuals "from Judea" demanded that the Gentiles undergo circumcision and thereby convert to Judaism. There ensued a vociferous debate, and Paul was one of several delegates sent by the community in Antioch to ascertain from the leaders in Jerusalem what to do. According to Acts 15, Paul played a relatively minor role in the Council's proceedings, but his two major nemeses, Peter and James, were pivotal.

In Acts 15 three different positions were advocated at the Council. Initially "some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses'" (Acts 15:5). Peter spoke next: "My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers" (Acts 15:7). Peter was alluding to his experience with Cornelius, the Roman centurion, described in Acts 10. On that occasion, when Peter preached what could be described as a proto-Gospel to Cornelius and his Roman cohorts, immediately those Gentiles received "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:45) and began to speak in tongues, just like the disciples originally did on Pentecost, as described in Acts 2. "So he [i. e., Peter] ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48). Based upon his personal experience, Peter derived two fundamental lessons. Firstly, Gentiles need only to have faith, and need not

undergo conversion to Judaism to become followers; and secondly, Peter claimed the exclusive prerogative to proselytize Gentiles.

The third and final speaker at the Council was James. He began his presentation with the demand: "My brothers, listen to me" (Acts 15:13). After complimenting Peter on his work with Gentiles he continued: "Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:19-20). James was the indisputable leader of the community. He stated with unwavering authority "I have reached a decision" and his plan was unanimously adopted by the Council. His program requiring Gentiles to obey certain biblical commandments is a fore-runner to what will become the Noahide commandments in the Talmud. Moreover, according to Acts his stipulations were recorded in letters that were sent to Antioch and elsewhere, to be delivered by Paul and the other delegates.

Although Acts does not specify the source of James' authority, Paul refers to him in Galatians as "James the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:19). This is also confirmed in Mark 6:3 and Matthew 13:55, wherein James is positioned first in a listing of Jesus' siblings. Additional attestation of his unique role in the movement is the following excerpt from the *Gospel of Thomas*: "The disciples said to Jesus, 'We know that You will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?' Jesus said to them, 'Whoever you are, you are to go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being'" (Robinson 1977: 119).

Paul characterizes the events of the Council differently. "I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:2). Subsequently he identifies these key individuals as James, Peter, and John, and then proceeds to denigrate them. "And from those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders (what they actually were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) – those leaders contributed nothing to me" (Gal. 2:6). Paul's disparagement and total lack of respect for the movement's leadership is somewhat surprising; nevertheless, it is an attitude that permeates Galatians. He began his letter by identifying himself as "Paul an apostle – sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father" (Gal. 1:1). Through these interconnected statements he wants his readers to understand and appreciate his superiority. Whereas the movement's leaders derive their status from the opinion of mere

mortals, and are therefore inconsequential, Paul is divinely commissioned. As a result, the Gentiles that he is addressing should listen exclusively to him and to no one else.

It is important to realize that Paul lacked the tangible credentials of either James or Peter. James, as we saw, was Jesus' brother and head of the community. Peter was Jesus' principal disciple. According to John 1:42, Jesus changed his name to "rock" when he first met him. "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated as Peter)." Matthew 16:18 is more expansive: "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."

Paul on the other hand never met Jesus. In order to succeed, he felt that it was necessary to emphasize that he received his directives not from any human source, but exclusively by means of Divine authorization. Paul's lack of personal contact with Jesus may also explain one of the most startling features of his numerous letters. In all the writings that scholars confidently ascribe to him,¹⁴ Paul conveys virtually nothing about the life and teachings of Jesus! Surely Paul heard something of what Jesus did and taught on his visits to Jerusalem. The only sliver of information about Jesus' life that he offers is the brief description of the Last Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. His account, however, is so compressed and mechanical that Paul is clearly reciting a traditional Eucharistic formula. Even here Paul cannot acknowledge that he is merely transmitting something that had become ritualized within the movement; rather, he prefaces his remarks with another invocation of Divine revelation: "For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you" (1 Corinthians 11:23).

Returning to Paul's report of his visit to Jerusalem, he states that everyone agreed that "we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do" (Gal. 2:9-10). Note that Paul claims that there was a formal understanding that only he would preach to the Gentiles and that Peter and the others would confine themselves to Jews. He also ignores James' stipulations regarding gentile observance of basic biblical regulations, as this runs counter to his theory that faith alone suffices. Thus Paul transformed the Council into an enthusiastic endorsement by the movement's leadership for his personal proselytizing agenda. It is probably no coincidence that Paul began his literary activity around the time of the

Council and possibly immediately in its wake. If the account in Acts 15 is accurate, and the movement started to disseminate James' letter regarding biblically mandated requirements for Gentile followers, Paul would have had a special incentive to counter this initiative and promote his own agenda by means of his own letters.

An additional stratagem of Paul's is evident in the next few verses: "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy" (Gal. 2:11-13). The obvious target of this campaign of character assassination is directed at Peter, who is accused of being a hypocrite and unfit to minister to Gentiles. Even more subtle is the way in which he has also undermined James' status. Recall that in Acts 15, James did not support the demand for circumcision, yet now Paul is characterizing him as the leader of this very group.

In Philippians 3:17-20 we encounter a second reference that Paul makes to a celestial abode. It has been dated to 55 C. E., the approximate time of the composition of Galatians, and is likewise a polemic (Reumann 2008: 17). It reflects his self-perception as being under attack and needing a place where he can find shelter and a refuge to share with his true friends, his Gentile "brothers and sisters."

Imitators together of me, continue to become, brothers and sisters, and take note of those who live in this way, as you have us as example. For many live lives, about whom I have often spoken to you but now speak even with tears, as the enemies of the cross of Christ. Their final goal is destruction, their god, the belly, and their 'glory,' in what is shameful; those whose concern is earthly things. For our governing civic association exists in the heavens, from which indeed we eagerly await the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Reumann 2008: 566)

The key Greek term that Reumann renders "our governing civic association" is *politeuma*. After considering the suggestions of various scholars on how to properly render "this NT *hapax legomenon*," Reumann concludes that his translation "is awkward... but is truer to lexical findings: less than "the state," yet civic, with a place in the public world of the day; like an association or club with governance over members; it is in heaven, where its Lord is" (Reumann 2008: 576-577).

In the book of Acts there is another account about Paul in Jerusalem that is quite revealing. Luke writes about it from the perspective of an eyewitness who was travelling with Paul at the time. This certainly lends more credibility to the narrative. "The next day Paul

¹⁴ Namely 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philemon and Philippians; see Harris 2007: 469.

went with us to visit James; and all the elders were present" (Acts 21:18). Although they welcomed Paul, they admonished him owing to rumors that he was urging Jews living among Gentiles not to practice circumcision or to follow other Jewish customs. He was then commanded, evidently by James,¹⁵ to accompany four members of the movement who were about to complete their Nazirite period of abstinence. "So do what we tell you... Join these men, go through the rite of purification with them, and pay for the shaving of their heads" (Acts 21:23-24). Paul complied with this order.

There is an earlier, related episode. "At Cenchreae he had his hair cut, for he was under a vow" (Acts 18:18). Apparently, Paul on his own initiative undertook the obligations of a Nazirite. What is puzzling about this incident is that he ended his vow outside of Jerusalem and hence did not bring a sacrifice, as biblically required by Num. 6:13-17. If factual, these accounts illustrate an important point about Paul's life. Even though he portrays himself as entirely independent and autonomous, he is nonetheless subservient to the leaders of the movement, at least when he is in Jerusalem. This in itself would be motivation for Paul to spend as little time there as possible.

Paul is certainly aware of this predicament. In one of his most revealing comments he discusses his rather schizoid existence.

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law)... I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. (1 Cor. 9:19-22)

Thus Paul's *praxis* was completely situational. When in Jerusalem he was willing to go to the Temple and even participate in supererogatory acts, such as the Nazirite's vow. However, when he was with Gentiles he lived as they did, unencumbered by biblical/Judaic regulations. He saw himself as being enslaved in society. Presumably, that is why he continually associated the only truly authentic part of his existence as the liberating life of the spirit in "the Jeru-

¹⁵ Although in verse 20 the subject is "they," presumably referring to James and the elders, beginning with verse 23 the subject shifts to "we." In verse 25 mention is made that "we have sent a letter with our judgment" that Gentiles must follow the same regulations that were ascribed to James in Acts 15.

salem above."¹⁶ Whereas in the earthly Jerusalem Paul was a rather peripheral figure in the movement, in the heavenly Jerusalem, which he construed as a voluntary *politeuma* with his Gentile brothers and sisters, he was the divinely designated leader.

The final irony in Paul's troubled life is that he died at the hands of an unsuspected enemy – Gentiles in Rome. According to traditional Christian legendary accounts he died a martyr's death, in the early 60's C. E., as part of the anti-Christian persecutions initiated by Nero.¹⁷

5. Conclusion

The quest for the earliest references to heavenly Jerusalem has led us to Philo and Paul, both of whom were active not long before the destruction of the Second Temple. We did not find any explicit formulations of this doctrine in either the biblical canon or in post-biblical writings prior to the 1st century C. E. Even though Philo and especially Paul had personal connections to Jerusalem, and the land of Israel more generally, both wrote in the Diaspora. While not directly discussed above, it seems that the earliest references to heavenly Jerusalem in Jewish works composed in Israel are found in texts like *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* that were written soon after the destruction of the temple. If in fact this is the case, the motive of these apocalyptic writers would have been fundamentally different than either Philo or Paul, and it is unlikely that they were influenced by either of them. For Jewish writers after 70 C. E., the notion of heavenly Jerusalem offered considerable consolation.¹⁸ They could find comfort in the certainty that even though earthly Jerusalem no longer existed, there was a perpetual heavenly city that would one day rematerialize.

¹⁶ It should be noted that Paul's eschatology is also based on this idea of being "caught up" to heaven to meet the Lord, as is evidenced by 1 Thess. 4:13-18, thought by scholars to have been Paul's earliest letter. Additionally, his account of an ecstatic experience of being "caught up" to the third heaven and receiving a private revelation is found in 2 Cor. 12: 1-10.

¹⁷ See for example Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History* 2:25, who notes that Paul was beheaded in Rome and Peter was likewise crucified ([1959]: Vol. 1: 179).

¹⁸ The Jewish-Christian writings of Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 21:2 also explicitly mention heavenly Jerusalem. The former is more aligned with Paul's agenda, in that it too is polemical, but it lacks the personal angst of Paul's existentialist predicament and is entirely argumentative. There is no scholarly consensus on whether it was composed prior to or after the destruction of the Temple. Revelation, on the other hand, is generally assumed to post-date the Temple.

Philo discussed both Jerusalems as part of his larger philosophical exegesis of biblical texts. For Philo earthly Jerusalem was special; it was the mother-city of the Jewish nation. He appropriated the Hellenistic worldview in order to elevate Jerusalem's status and, by extension, that of Judaism itself. This was largely influenced by the theory of Platonic ideas, i. e., the notion that paralleling the mundane world is a non-corporeal celestial realm. Thus, earthly Jerusalem became the terrestrial manifestation of the transcendent holy city of God.

Paul, on the other hand, was primarily engaged in polemics when he referred to "the Jerusalem above." Although he wrote several decades after Philo, there is no evidence to suggest that he was influenced by (or had even been exposed to) Philo. Accordingly, it should be assumed that, like Philo, Paul developed his notion of heavenly Jerusalem independently, as an organic outgrowth of his thinking. Paul was under attack from various quarters and sought a safe haven. The notion of heavenly Jerusalem provided him with such an escape. Not only did it serve to free him from his earthly predicament; he was able to characterize earthly Jerusalem in such a negative fashion that it became a potent weapon with which to counterattack his enemies. The theory of two Jerusalems found explicit expression in both Philo and Paul. Despite sharing similar intellectual proclivities, they were worlds apart in their life experiences.

II. RITUAL