Psalm 22 in Pesiqta Rabbati: The Suffering of the Jewish Messiah and Jesus

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Psalm 22 is cited in several critical New Testament passages; by comparison, Psalm 22 is rarely cited in rabbinic literature. In particular, Psalm 22 is used as an expression of personal suffering by the New Testament writers in the crucifixion scenes that recount the suffering of Jesus. In rabbinic literature, Psalm 22 is also cited as relating to the afflictions of a Jewish Messiah. The major rabbinic passage addressing the subject of a suffering Messiah is found in Pesiqta Rabbati, a rabbinic homiletic work that contains numerous messianic passages, as well as four entire homilies that present apocalyptic messianic visions, which mainly focus upon Messiah Ephraim (Pesiqta Rabbati 34, 35, 36, 37). The major premise of this chapter is that the unique character of these passages in Pesiqta Rabbati is based upon an ideological inversion of Jesus. This depiction in Pesiqta Rabbati responds to the Christian view that Jesus was the only messianic figure who suffered and died in pain while bringing salvation to the righteous. This rabbinic text demonstrates that there will be a Jewish Messiah who fulfills the same paradigm.

In the Hebrew Bible, Psalm 22 is a Psalm of lament in the first person singular that voices this persona's claim of being abandoned by God while seeking a divine response.[1] This Psalm is a composition that dramatizes the speaker's suffering.[2] The speaker, who is understood to be King David, expresses his feelings of abandonment as he recounts the times that God has listened and intervened on behalf of his ancestors; he is grieved that God is not listening to him or to Israel. The individual cited in this Psalm has been identified in several different

ways and this transformation and its rereferencing opens the lemmata in the Psalm to personal, communal, and liturgical usage.[3] Psalm 22 may be divided into several sections: addressing God directly (2-3); recalling previous deliverances (4-6, 10-11); the depiction of adversarial behavior (7-9, 13-14, 17-19); description of extreme pain (15-16, 18); and prayers appealing for help (12, 20-22). Additional sections include God's kingship being recognized by the nations. All of these sections provide language for messianic and apocalyptic narratives. The semiotic feature of this open and widely applicable text has enabled midrashic texts to proffer different savior figures that occupy the position of King David. Furthermore, the sections of this Psalm provide a script for a hagiography or historical salvation narrative.

Psalm 22 is rarely cited or referred to in Jewish literature of the Second Temple period. A few traces that may have utilized Psalm 22 in regard to a salvific figure are found in the pseudepigraphic texts of *Joseph and Aseneth,* particularly in some of the manuscripts, and in *Wisdom of Solomon*.[4] In the confession of Aseneth (*Joseph and Aseneth* 12:9-11), a lion is mentioned, which is thought to be similar to Psalm 22:14.[5] In my opinion it is more significant that Aseneth refers to her ascetic behavior by invoking the dryness of her mouth and a potsherd, which derives from Psalm 22:16:

> And lo, for seven days and seven nights I have neither eaten bread nor drunk water; and my mouth is dry like a drum and my tongue like horn, and my lips like a potsherd, and my face is shrunken, and my eyes are failing as a result of my incessant tears. (JosAs 12:8)

Psalm 22:16 is referenced as Scriptural proof of suffering, which reappears in the Christian and Jewish sources discussed below. This interpretation of Psalm 22 is not found in extant Jewish texts before the era of Christianity.[6] The interpretation of Psalm 22 was augmented in rabbinic literature after Christian interpretation made it applicable to Jesus. Another pseudepigraphic text, *Wisdom of Solomon*, may have some affinities with Psalm 22:9 and Psalm 22:20. The texts from the Dead Sea also contain Psalm 22, especially certain lemmata in the *Hodayot*, genres of praise or teaching. Heike Omerzu states that primarily the lament portion of Psalm 22 is found when the Psalm serves as a possible hypotext.[7] This occurrence is significant, since both New Testament and rabbinic literature also focus upon the lament section.

Two fragments[8] containing Psalm 22:17, "For dogs surround me; the assembly of the wicked encircle me; they seize my hands and my feet like a lion," were discovered among the documents from the Dead Sea. In the first fragment (4Q88=4QPs^{f}), the word translated as "like a lion" is not preserved. In the second fragment (5/6HevPs), the last letter of the term appears to be a somewhat elongated letter י (*yod*), almost appearing like the letter ו (*vav*). Thus, the reading of this word would be either כארי (*ka'ari*) or כארו (*ka'aru*), respectively. These two renditions of the term[9] have been the focus of much controversy, because Chris-

tians understand the key word as "pierced" and apply it to Jesus on the cross.[10] The word *ka'aru* has been construed to read ורכ (*karu*), which has the meaning "[they] dug" (e.g., Gen. 26:25) or "they pierced." However, this verb is never used in the context of "piercing" in the Hebrew Bible. A comparison of the versions reveals a major discrepancy in the renditions of the term in different hypo-biblical texts.[11] The lemma, "they seize my hands and my feet like a lion," Psalm 22:17 (Christian numbering: 22:16), has been translated as "they pierced my hands and my feet," one of the verses most frequently referenced by Christians when claiming that the crucifixion of Jesus was foretold.

The different renditions in the above texts may have compelled the initial creators of rabbinic texts to base their arguments on one reading convention, "like a lion," which then became crystallized in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. Christians, beginning with some Church Fathers,[12] selected "they pierced" from among the Greek traditions and versions of the biblical text in order to create a consistent text base, which was utilized in their fulfillment interpretations. This reliance upon divergent texts in the Christian and Jewish traditions, the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, or a mixture of both, greatly contributed to the schism of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism.

Psalm 22 is rarely cited in tannaitic literature, and this avoidance may suggest a reaction against the Christian use of this Psalm. Some of the traditions of Pesiqta Rabbati, later discussed at length, reflect tannaitic strata, which would render them approximately contemporaneous to New Testament texts. In particular, a messianic passage in Pesiqta Rabbati 36:9[13] utilizes the term "the rabbis taught," which may refer to a tannaitic teaching.[14]

Prior to the attestation in the New Testament, there is no evidence of Psalm 22 being used in a Jewish messianic context. This Psalm became the preferred focus of Christian fulfillment interpretation in regard to the dying Christian Messiah, while in Judaism single lemmata from the Psalm began to be viewed as having salvific potential, culminating in describing the affliction of a Jewish Messiah.

Since the Hebrew Bible ascribes Psalm 22 to King David, this Psalm is applicable to the messianic figure that according to Jewish tradition is a descendant of King David. Jewish interpretations of the Psalm identify the individual in the Psalm with a royal figure, alternatively interpreted as King David, King Hezekiah, or Queen Esther. In Christianity, the savior figure in Psalm 22 is Jesus. This usage shows a correlation of this Psalm with prayers by other individuals, who are either royal or messianic or both. The personal pronoun "I" referring to David in the Psalm is thus understood to be uttered by another figure.

Additionally, Psalm 22 was transformed by the Church Fathers from a text indicating the affliction of an individual into a messianic Psalm. The early Church Fathers were contemporaneous to tannaitic literature.[15] Justin Martyr (ca. 100-165 CE) *Apol.* 35[16] writes:

> And again in other words, through another prophet, He says, "They pierced My hands and My feet [Ps. 22:17], and for My vesture they cast lots." [Ps. 22:19]. And indeed David, the king and prophet, who uttered these things, suffered none of them; but Jesus Christ stretched forth His hands, being crucified by the Jews speaking against Him, and denying that He was the Christ. And as the prophet spoke, they tormented Him, and set Him on the judgment-seat, and said, Judge us. And the expression, "They pierced my hands and my feet," [Ps. 22:17] was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were fixed in His hands and feet. And after He was crucified they cast lots upon His vesture [Ps. 22:19], and they that crucified Him parted it among them.

Judith Lieu makes a convincing case that Justin Martyr was probably the first to claim that this entire Psalm referred to Jesus (*Dial*. 99).[17] The purpose of Justin's interpretation was to demonstrate that Jesus asked to be saved from death and that he became a human being in his suffering, as well as to identify Jesus' adversaries. Justin's Jesus was aware of the suffering that he would incur; Justin furthermore identified the adversaries of Jesus as Jews, thus lending additional personae to the unfolding drama in Psalm 22 from a Christian polemical perspective.[18] In Justin, we probably have the first traceable Christological interpretation of Psalm 22, as applied to Jesus in the New Testament.[19]

Animal Imagery in Psalm 22

Psalm 22 refers to numerous animals that serve as salient metaphors[20] for the suffering or the endangerment of King David. Most of the animals mentioned refer to a world filled with dangerous adversaries: *For dogs surround me; the assembly of the wicked encircle me; they seize my hands and my feet like a lion* (Ps. 22:17). The lemma "assembly," translated as "synagogé" in the Septuagint, made the verse applicable to "synagogue", that is, the wicked Jews encircled Jesus in the polemic mind of the early Christians. Christians needed to dissociate themselves as a distinct group from Judaism. Furthermore, "For dogs surround me" is cited in all the Gospel narratives relating to the suffering Jesus.

The dog motif is also referred to in midrashic interpretation. Since animals in apocalyptic and other texts often refer to kingdoms or nations, this could be the case in midrash. In Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 15b, King Ahasuerus of Persia is interpreted as the "dog" in Psalm 22:21; this identification occurs in the prayer of Esther. Furthermore, the hosts of Ahasuerus are called "bulls" (Ps. 22:13), and the sons or descendants of Haman are described as "strong bulls of Bashan" (Ps. 22:13). When Esther is raped by Ahasuerus, she refers to him as a "lion" (Ps. 22:14), as in the following text:

> Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 15b: *And stood in the inner court of the king's house* (Esther 5:1f.) R. Levi said: When she reached the chamber of the idols,

> the Divine Presence left her. *She said, My* God*, My* God*, why have You forsaken me.* (Ps. 22:2) Is it possible that You punish the inadvertent sin like the presumptuous one, or one done under compulsion like one committed willingly? Or is it because I called [Ahasuerus] "dog," as it says *Save my soul from the sword, my only one from the power of the dog?* (Ps. 22:21) She immediately retracted and called him "lion," as it says. *Save me from the lion's mouth* (Ps. 22:22).

Queen Esther occupies the paradigmatic position of a savior figure who pronounces lemmata from Psalm 22 to invoke God's help in her personal plight as well as in the rescue of the entire Jewish population. In an interpretation by R. Judah (2nd century) of the term *ka'ari* (Ps. 22:17) found in Midrash Tehillim 22, Esther claims that she was made to appear repulsive. However, R. Nehemia derives *ka'ari* from a Greek loan-word χαρά ("gladness"); thus, Esther in this understanding is joyful. Explaining a critical term by referring to a similar sounding word in another language is a common midrashic technique. Lemmata from Psalm 22 are also utilized to describe actions of Israel's enemies. The lion as an adversary is also found in 1 Peter 5:8, which refers to the devil. The dog motif does not only show the mortal threat to the body, but also a threat of idolatry. While in the New Testament dogs are Jesus' adversaries, in rabbinic texts "dogs" in Psalm 22 are endangering the continuation of Judaism. This exemplifies the divergent focus in interpretations of Psalm 22.

The interpretation of the verse *Save my soul from the sword, yehidati [my only one] from the power of the dog* (Ps. 22:21) does not only focus upon the lemma "dog," but also upon "my only one." Genesis Rabbah 46:7 (see Sifre Deuteronomy 313) contains an interpretation relating this Psalm to the *Aqedah*, the sacrifice of Isaac. Rabbinic hermeneutics situate Psalm 22:21 in the context of sacrificing a son. *Your only son* (Gen. 22:12) is implied and juxtaposed to *my only one* (Ps. 22:21); the text states God said to Abraham: "I give merit to you, as if I had asked you to sacrifice yourself and you did not refuse it." *My only one* in this case would indicate that God recognized Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son. In another midrash, Numbers Rabbah 17:2, a lemma from Genesis *Your only son*, referring to Isaac, is changed to "your soul," proof-text is Psalm 22:21. The ram sacrificed saves not only Isaac, but also Abraham. These passages show a nexus between Psalm 22:21 and Isaac, the "only son" of Abraham. The problematic passage in Genesis which ignores Abraham's other son, Ishmael, is clarified through this interpretation of Psalm 22:21. The second part of the verse containing the dog motif is implied. The dog motif could refer to the biblical Moloch who required child sacrifice,[21] which rendered child sacrifice as an idolatrous practice.

Whereas the lion is a symbol of strength and royalty, and the dog a symbol of meanness and idolatry, the worm is viewed as the humblest of creatures in ancient texts. Israel is considered humble before God; there is a connection

between the abundant love of God and the humility of the Jewish people. The reference to a worm as a metaphor for people is also found in Isaiah who compares the Jewish people to a worm.[22] In Psalms 22:7 King David uses this metaphor as he writes about the plight of his people. Babylonian Talmud, Hullin 89a, states that God said to Israel that He loved them because even when He bestowed greatness upon them, they humbled themselves before Him. One example of a humble person cited is King David; the proof-text is "But I am a worm, and not a man" (Ps. 22:7). In contrast to the positive quality of humility, this metaphor illustrates the humiliation of the dehumanized body as the sufferer endures great pain. In a messianic context, the final moments of a Messiah are indicated by this animalistic state of suffering like a worm. Clement of Rome[23] cited the lemma from Psalm 22:7 as having been spoken by Jesus:

> *First Epistle to the Corinthians* 16: And again He saith, "I am a worm, and no man; [Ps. 22:7] a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All that see Me have derided Me; they have spoken with their lips; they have wagged their head [Ps. 22:8], [saying] He hoped in God, let Him deliver Him, let Him save Him, since He delighteth in Him [Ps. 22:9]."

However, this lowly status is reversed and the Messiah is transformed into a godlike or royal position, when he is elevated to lead Israel.

Psalm 22 (LXX Ψ 21)[24] and the Crucifixion of Jesus

The explicit use of Psalm 22:2 in the Gospels is found in the crucifixion scene, Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34.[25] Matthew and Mark describe Jesus' agonizing plea from the cross:

> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli/Eloi, Eli/Eloi, lama sabachthani?" (Ηλι ηλι λαμα σαβαχθανι) which means, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"

The beginning words of Psalm 22:2 appear in a transcription of the Hebrew-Aramaic before being translated into Greek. Jesus speaking in Hebrew-Aramaic lends authenticity to the rendition of his last words; the utterance of last words is comparable to numerous deathbed scenes in postbiblical literature.[26] Matthew and Mark situate this citation at the climactic moment just before Jesus' death. In the Greek rendition Matthew is closer to the Hebrew version, whereas the Greek translation of this lemma from Psalm 22:2 found in the Gospels differs from the Septuagint translation of the same verse. The Gospel version of the lemmata of Psalm 22:2 is closest to the Targum of Psalms.[27] The New Testament has *sabachthani* in the sentence spoken by Jesus instead of *azavtani* in the Hebrew Bible. The problem has long been recognized whether *sabachthani* has the same meaning as *azavtani.* The verb *azavtani* derives from *azav* (to abandon, forsake, leave), whereas the word *sabachthani* of the Gospels is not extant

in early Jewish texts. The closest Hebrew-Aramaic term would be the artificial construct *zevahtani*. The term *sabachthani* could possibly be derived from *zavah* (to sacrifice, slaughter [a sacrificial animal]), which is found in the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature,[28] but not in the form indicated by the Gospel passage (*zevahtani*). This artificial construct is not found in ancient Jewish texts; no sacrificial animal speaks about itself. Based upon the association with *zavah,* the phrase could be rendered as "My God, my God, why have You sacrificed me?" If this rendition is correct, one could speculate that using *sabachthani* in the two Gospels was designed ostensibly to depict the scene of the Passion as a sacrificial offering,[29] relating it to the Passover sacrifice. Utilizing the lemma from Psalm 22:2 as "sacrificed or slaughtered" in the Christian Scriptures would connect the term to Isaiah 53:7, which has been applied to the death of Jesus. The "suffering servant" in Deutero-Isaiah would be slaughtered in the future as a sacrifice: *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth* (Isa. 53:7).

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34) is attributed to David in Psalm 22:2. The writers of the Gospels understood that David's words concerning his own situation applied to Jesus' suffering and were an expression of abandonment. In a rabbinic text that may be tannaitic this crucial lemma of the Psalm is used in entreating the mercy of God. Mekhilta, Shirata 3**:** *My* God*, my* God *why have You forsaken me* (Ps. 22:2) explains the lemma "My God (*eli*)" as signifying the measure of mercy (*middat ha-rahamim*) of God. This text in the Mekhilta is consistent with rabbinic typological interpretation: whenever God is referred to as "El" it signifies God's compassionate nature, judging people by God's measure of mercy.[30] For example, Psalm 22:2 appears as Esther's prayer in her attempt to save the Jews of Persia from destruction.[31] The affliction voiced in the Psalm is utilized to evoke the suffering of the Jews in Persia. This suffering is reversed by divine intervention in response to Esther's prayer.

Midrash Tehillim 22 contains the most extensive treatment of Psalm 22 and the savior figure Queen Esther. Among other scenes of the history of the Jewish people, this midrashic text depicts Moses and the Israelites during the exodus at the Red Sea, as well as King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah during the siege of Jerusalem. The midrashic interpretation of the first two verses of Psalm 22 emphasizes the salvation of the Jewish people. The lemma in Psalm 22:16 "my strength יחכ" is read as "my palate, throat" (through metathesis rendering יכח). Psalm 22:16 is applied to Queen Esther in this midrash, when it states Esther has a dry "throat" due to a severe fast, and secondly, when it is interpreted that she was coerced to renounce the Oral and the Written Torah. This passage weaves together the question of who would offer praises to God, if Israel were to be destroyed. The lemma *My* God*, my* God*, why have You forsaken me?* is subjected to deconstruction, whereby each segment is related to different human experiences during the process of fasting. The verse is mapped upon the three different days

of Esther's fast. Her piety is expressed in self-inflicted suffering, similar to the fasting of Aseneth (JosAs 12:8). Whereas the pain of fasting and the dry throat is self-inflicted in Judaism, in the Christian context the lemma from Psalm 22 is used to express the pain inflicted by the Roman government.

Additional Significant Lemmata from Psalm 22 in New Testamental and Rabbinic Interpretation

In addition to direct quotations of Psalm 22, there are numerous allusions to this Psalm in the New Testament.[32] For example: *All those who see me mock me; they move the lip, they shake their head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would save him; let Him save him, seeing He delights in him* (Ps. 22:8-9). Matthew, Mark, and Luke utilize the identical theme to describe the actions of Jesus' enemies in their Passion narratives: mocking him, shaking their heads at him, and telling him to save himself, since he claimed to be the son of God (Matt. 27:39-44; Mark 15:29-32; Luke 23:35-39). This adaptation of biblical lemmata is an illustration of midrashic writing with Scripture in the New Testament. In particular, Origen, *De Principii, Anima* 8:1[33] views this entire Psalm as a Passion narrative:

> And in the twenty-second Psalm, regarding Christ—for it is certain, as the Gospel bears witness, that this Psalm is spoken of Him . . . .

In all four Gospels—Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34, and John 19:23-24—the casting of lots and the division of Jesus' garments correspond to verse 19 of the Psalm:

> Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also [his] coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which says, *They divide my garments among themselves and cast lots for my raiment.* These things therefore the soldiers did (John 19:23-25).

The Gospel of John claims this verse was a prophetic passage and was fulfilled by the soldiers dividing Jesus' clothes into four parts and casting lots for his tunic; John cited the Psalm from the Septuagint as a proof-text for the narrative. This is another example illustrating how Christianity has adapted David's words to be applicable to Jesus, Psalm 22:19: *They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.* The Gospels develop the metaphors and scenes concerning Jesus' garments at the crucifixion by contextualizing the Psalm in the passion.

Justin Martyr, First Apology. 38, expanded the narrative before the canonized New Testament came into existence:

> And again, when He says, "They cast lots upon My vesture, and pierced My hands and My feet [Ps. 22:19, 17]. And I lay down and slept, and rose again, because the Lord sustained Me." And again, when He says, "They spake with their lips, they wagged the head [Ps. 22:8], saying, Let Him deliver Himself." [Ps. 22:9] And that all these things happened to Christ at the hands of the Jews, you can ascertain. For when He was crucified, they did shoot out the lip, and wagged their heads [Ps. 22:8], saying, "Let Him who raised the dead save Himself."

The previous verse, Psalm 22:18, is critical to understanding the co-text of Psalm 22:19. The person whose clothes were being divided is described as counting his bones, while those who are taking his garments are staring at him. This starving man is so emaciated that his bones are visible. The "voice" here is still King David, as it is throughout the Psalm, and he uses the act of taking and dividing his garments as a metaphorical reference to the desires of his enemies to take away his mantle of royalty and make it their own. In Christianity, the savior figure that is substituted for King David in Psalm 22 is Jesus.

Psalm 22:19 has a very different connotation in rabbinic texts; the garments are the possessions of God that are divided among the nations. Esther Rabbah 1:13 states that Israel was punished and her sovereignty was taken away and given to the nations of the world. In the future, when Israel repents, God will take the kingship away from the nations and restore it to Israel; the proof-text is Obadiah 1:21: *Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, And the kingdom shall be the Lord's.* As commented upon earlier, Psalm 22 has the semiotic feature of an open text, which leads to multiple identities of its metaphors and personae and the actions described in the Psalm can have multiple applications. In midrashic texts, different savior figures may be substituted; in the corresponding exegetical move a hagiography or historical salvation narrative is construed.

Liturgical Usage

Liturgically, Psalm 22 is part of the commemorative service of Purim in Judaism[34] and is part of the Good Friday liturgy in Christianity. Traces of a liturgical usage of Psalm 22 and its interpretations presenting a salvific figure are found in rabbinic homiletical texts, such as the Esther Midrash in the Babylonian Talmud, Midrash Tehillim, and Pesiqta Rabbati. This liturgical usage should be viewed as occurring within the cultural transfer and the cultural migration of ideas between Judaism and Christianity. The application of critical lemmata of Psalm 22 to Esther and Messiah Ephraim in homiletical texts is possibly a critical, post-New Testament reaction to its Christian application to Jesus. With regard to liturgical usages of Psalm 22, it is significant that the Psalm is part of Esther's prayer, as well as the prayer of a righteous man (Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 29a).

In these two instances the prayer setting involves an individual under enormous stress. Several midrashic passages interpreting Psalm 22 may have been reflective of the liturgy of the synagogue. Menn[35] notes that the opening passages, *petihot* (proems) in Midrash Tehillim are homiletic introductions to Scriptural passages read liturgically in the synagogue service. Psalm 22:1-2 serve as introductory verses, so-called *petiha-verses*, in most of these proems. For example, Esther is the "deer of the dawn," the midrashic transposition of the Hebrew letters change "deer" (תלייא) into Esther's "strength" (יתוליא) (Ps. 22:20). There may have been liturgical occasions for the use of Pesiqta Rabbati,[36] which contains scripted homilies as well as blessings (for example, Pesiqta Rabbati 37:9).

Pesiqta Rabbati

The Pesiqta Rabbati homilies contain numerous midrashic reinterpretations of messiahs that rely upon the messianic passages in the Hebrew Bible, which are key passages in the Christian "fulfillment theology," as evident in Justin Martyr:

> *First Apology.* 38: And that these things did happen, you can ascertain from the Acts of Pontius Pilate. And we will cite the prophetic utterances of another prophet, Zephaniah [recte: Zech.], to the effect that He was foretold expressly as to sit upon the foal of an ass and to enter Jerusalem. The words are these: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." [Zech. 9:9][37]

Zechariah 9:9 is applied to the Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati 34,[38] a homiletic midrash that describes the messianic age. It is based upon the Haftarah reading of the fifth Sabbath of Consolation after the Ninth of Av, Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey."

> Pesiqta Rabbati 34:8
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> *Just and redeemed is He* (Zech. 9:9)—[this is] the Messiah who justifies [the] judgment [received by] him for the sake of Israel while sitting in the house of affliction [prison]. And if he is called "just" [*tsaddiq*], why is he called "redeemed [saved]"? Because he justified the judgment [received by] him because of them. He said to them: You are all doomed, nevertheless, you will all be redeemed [saved] through the compassion of the Holy One, Blessed be He.
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> *Afflicted and riding on a donkey* (Zech. 9:9)—that is the Messiah, why is he called "afflicted"? Because he was afflicted during all those years in prison and because the transgressors of Israel laughed at him [Ps. 22:8].

> *Riding on a donkey* (Zech. 9:9)—because of the transgressors. The one who does not have any merit will go and receive the merit of the Fathers in God's presence. The Holy One, Blessed be He, will shield them through the merit of the Messiah in a straight way, and He saves you, as it is written: *They shall come weeping, and with supplications will I lead them; I will make them walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, where they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim, he is My firstborn* (Jer. 31:9).

The above homily is the first in a succession of messianic homilies in Pesiqta Rabbati. This section establishes that verses utilized by Christians in respect to Jesus, were used by Jews regarding the fulfillment of the verse by a Messiah named Ephraim. What is particularly troubling in the above text is the implication that Ephraim, the firstborn of God, is used in a messianic rabbinic context, although it is clear in the Hebrew Bible that Ephraim refers to Israel. The messianic interpretation of Psalm 22 transpires in Pesiqta Rabbati 36 and 37.[39] In Pesiqta Rabbati 36 this Psalm is cited in a homily based upon *Arise, shine for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you* (Isa. 60:1). This is a Haftarah reading for the sixth Sabbath of consolation after *Tisha` b'Av* (the Ninth of Av).

Pesiqta Rabbati, like other rabbinic texts, connects the personal distress of the individual in Psalm 22 with a specific figure. This is made possible by the rich metaphoric language of the Psalm that, from a linguistic perspective, enables its application to other figures. In this homily, Pesiqta Rabbat 36, it is claimed that King David composed Psalm 22 on behalf of the "son of David," the Messiah who would suffer for the sins of others. This narrative includes the dynamics of the critical relationship between the individual savior and the righteous ones. The Messiah's future triumph is recounted in Pesiqta Rabbati 36:3, which cites Psalm 89:23, 24, 26. The midrashic passage furthermore follows the inscribed narrative of Psalm 22, a progression of abandonment, threat, suffering, and divinely initiated restoration. The Psalm, therefore, provides the matrix of the messianic narrative in this rabbinic homily; similar to the New Testament Passion, the rabbinic Messiah narrative is anchored in Scripture.

> Pesiqta Rabbati 36:4
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> [God] began to talk about the terms with him [Ephraim], saying to him: In the future the sins of those that have been hidden with you will bring you under an iron yoke. They make you like a calf whose eyes grow dim; and they will choke your spirit with [your] yoke; and because of their sins your tongue will stick to the roof of your mouth (Ps. 22:16) Are you willing [to endure] this?
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> The Messiah said in [God's] Presence: Will this suffering [last] for many years?

> The Holy One said to him: By your life and the life of My head! I have decreed for you a week [seven years]. If your soul is saddened, I will immediately banish them [the sinful souls hidden with you].
>
> [The Messiah] said in His presence: Master of the universe, I will take this upon myself with a joyful soul and a glad heart, provided that not one [person] in Israel perish; [that] not only those who are alive should be saved in my days, but that also those who are dead, who have died since [the days] of the first human being up until now should be saved [at the time of salvation] in my days {ed. pr.: but also the aborted ones};[40] [including] those who You thought to create, but who were not created. Such [are the things] I desire, and for this I am ready to take [all this] upon myself. {ed. pr.: At the same time, the Holy One blessed be He, will appoint for the Messiah the four creatures who will carry the Messiah's throne of glory.}

The above text commences with: "In the future the sins of those that have been hidden with you will bring you under an iron yoke." Thus, the Messiah Ephraim will suffer for the sins of others. Also, all "souls" will be saved. As an aside, it should be noted that Ephraim is also known as the son of Joseph in other texts; it is not coincidental that the Jewish Messiah is called the son of Joseph, since Jesus on one level was "a son of Joseph." In Pesiqta Rabbati 36 Ephraim is referred to as the true Messiah, which connects him to the concept of triumph over the nations. It is obvious that there can only be one true Messiah and this passage can be viewed as a reaction to the concept of a Christian Messiah. The inequities of humanity will cause Ephraim's tongue to cleave to the roof of his mouth based upon Psalm 22:16.[41] Christian authors understood this lemma as referring to Jesus' silence at his trial or his thirst while being crucified.[42] This "thirst," as noted above, may be a trajectory of Aseneth's fast. In Pesiqta Rabbati God predicts a period of suffering of a "week," which is apocalyptic language referring to a seven-year period. After this period the Messiah will scream and implore God to end his suffering, since his flesh and his spirit cannot endure it any longer. The following passage also describes the suffering of the Messiah Ephraim.

> Pesiqta Rabbati 36:6
>
> During the week [seven year period] when [Ephraim][43] comes, they will bring iron beams[44] and they will put them on his neck until the Messiah's body is bent. He will scream and weep and his voice will rise up to the height [of heaven]. He will say in His presence: Master of the universe, how much can my limbs endure? How much my spirit? Am I not but flesh and blood? It was this moment that David lamented, saying: *My strength is dried up like a potsherd* (Ps. 22:16). In that hour the Holy One says to them {ed. pr.: him}: Ephraim, My righteous Messiah, You have already accepted [this suffering] since the six days of Creation. Now your suffering is like My suffering, since

> the day on which wicked Nebuchadnezzar destroyed My Temple and burnt My sanctuary, and exiled My children among the nations of the world, by your life and by the life of My head! I have not sat on My Throne. And if you do not believe, see the dew that is upon My head, *My head is filled with dew, [My locks with the drops of the night]* (Cant. 5:2). In that hour, [the Messiah] will say in His presence: Master of the universe, now my mind is at rest, for it is sufficient for the servant to be like his Master.
>
> Rabbi Levi said: In that hour when the Holy One says to the congregation of Israel: *Arise, shine for your light is come* (Isa. 60:1), [Israel will] say: Master of the universe, in the future You lead us. At that hour the Holy One will turn around and acknowledge [it] and say to her [Israel]: My daughter, you spoke well, as it is said: *My beloved speaks and says to me,* [*Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away*] (Cant. 2:10).

The above passage emphasizes the suffering of Ephraim; his suffering was determined at the time of creation. Psalm 22:16 is used as a proof-text when the Messiah complains about his suffering; he is comforted by God. The passage relies upon tropes describing God, who suffered because His Temple was destroyed. This passage is set forth within the larger interpretation of Psalm 36:10: *You are the fountain of life*, which was understood as God being the source of resurrection. Cant. 5:2 mentions "dew" on God's head, which in rabbinic texts indicates resurrection.[45] This messianic portrait presents the Messiah as God's light; this light is hidden until the end of time when it will shine for Israel.[46] This narrative in Pesiqta Rabbati evolves as a tale told by the *darshan* (the composer of the homily) about the Messiah; the ideas about the Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati 36 define the Messiah's suffering and the tasks he will fulfill at the end of time. When the Messiah will reveal himself as a king, every Israelite will have multiple disciples from the nations.

The earliest medieval rabbinic text that appears to cite this Pesiqta Rabbati material is found in Moshe Narbonni (eleventh century), also referred to as Moshe Ha-Darshan (the preacher). Narbonni presents a dialogue in which the Messiah is asked by God, if he accepts his suffering:

> Midrash Bereshit Rabbati, Gen. 1:3: Your eyes will not see light, but your ears will hear the great reprimand of the nations of the world. . . your tongue will cleave to the roof of your mouth [Ps. 22:16], your skin will stick to your bones [Ps. 22:18], and your body will be worn out from distress and moaning.

Narbonni's passage appears as a commentary on Genesis 1:3; he focuses upon the lemma "light." He alludes to Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53, the Suffering Servant passage, cited as proof that the Messiah will suffer.

Another medieval rabbinic work is Yalqut Shim`oni; in Tehillim 686, which is one of the few late passages describing a suffering Messiah, Shimon Ha-

Darshan refers to a suffering son of a king. The king is understood to be God; and the entire passage is a commentary on Psalm 60:1-3, which mentions a victory of King David. The passage is probably purposefully elliptical. The term "commit" may also be translated as "rolling something" [to God] or "to throw a burden" [onto God].[47]

> *He trusted [gol] on the Lord*] [Ps. 22:9] through a parable of a king's son: They made him carry the heavy end of the beam [cross-beam]. His father looked and saw him. He said to them: Let me have anything you wish and I will carry it. Thus said the Holy One, Blessed be He, throw *[gol]* your sins onto Me and I will carry them.

Some medieval rabbinic passages, as well as citations in the Christian work Pugio Fidei (by Raimundus Martinus, c. 1280), reflect the idea of a suffering Messiah, who is carrying the sins of Israel. Arnold Goldberg[48] and Michael Fishbane[49] relying upon Goldberg, contend that Pugio Fidei[50] contains excerpted passages from Pesiqta Rabbati 36. In my opinion, they are only partially correct, since a close look at the section under discussion in Pugio Fidei reveals a conflated text based upon both Pesiqta Rabbati 36 and 37, as well as the above cited text by Narbonni.

> Pugio Fidei, 598: Those who are hidden with you, their sins will bend (bring) you under a heavy yoke; your eyes will not see light, your ears will hear great taunts from the nations of the world [Ps. 22:7-8], your nose will smell stench, your mouth will taste bitterness, your tongue will stick to the roof of your mouth [Ps. 22:16], your skin will shrink on your bones [Ps. 22:18], your soul will expire with lamentation and sighs.

Azariah de Rossi (sixteenth century), in Me'or Enayim , chapter 19,[51] suggested the passages of the suffering Messiah were added to Pesiqta Rabbati under Christian influence in the Middle Ages. It is indeterminate as to when this engagement with Christianity transpired, since Pesiqta Rabbati has material from the first, third and fifth centuries and was subsequently edited in the Middle Ages.

The editio princeps of Pesiqta Rabbati (Prague, 1653 or 1657) has the most extensive quotations from Psalm 22; as discussed earlier, this Psalm had been critical in early Christian fulfillment theology. The earlier Parma Manuscript (MS 3122, thirteenth century) cites Psalm 22:16 and may allude to other lemmata from Psalm 22; however, it quotes verses mainly from Lamentations to provide Scriptural proof for the Messiah. Nevertheless, the verses from Lamentations support the arguments made by the text, because they are very similar to Psalm 22. We could have a case of Scriptural referentiality or unmarked intertextuality in the Parma manuscript of Pesiqta Rabbati. This is typical of midrash which often follows the sequence of events in a biblical text without citing the entire passage. Regarding the Christian references or their inversion in Pesiqta

Rabbati's suffering Messiah narrative, we find that this rabbinic text interacts with references and allusions from the cultural sphere. Vernon Robbins noted that a text interacts "with traditions that are 'cultural' possessions that anyone who knows a particular culture may use."[52]

The hidden Jewish Messiah relates to a preexistent heavenly being, resplendent, majestic, and sitting on the Throne of Glory. Similarly, the Christian description of Jesus, occasionally referred to as the "Word" (John 1:1, 14), claims the Christian Messiah was with God at the beginning of creation. The concept of the hidden Messiah continues in mystical midrashic literature, such as Midrash Konen, depicting a concealed Messiah residing in the Garden of Eden.[53]

In these sections of Pesiqta Rabbati we find reinterpretations of Christian tropes reflecting the transformation from a heavenly Messiah to an earthly Messiah, who eventually will return at the end of time. The Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati 36 combines elements of apocalypticism and this-worldliness. After victory in an apocalyptic battle, the Messiah is depicted as standing on the roof of the Temple (Pesiqta Rabbati 36:9).[54] This is one of the most difficult messianic passages in Pesiqta Rabbati; it is indeterminate whether this passage reflects thoughts existing prior to the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE by the Romans) or implying the destroyed Temple will be rebuilt when the Messiah comes. However, I think it is significant this passage is presented as tannaitic, which would place it in close temporal proximity to early Christianity, when the Jerusalem Temple was still standing.

The task of Ephraim in Pesiqta Rabbati is to redeem Israel; his deeds are anchored in biblical lemmata, which he fulfills. In rabbinic hermeneutics this fulfillment amounts to an actualization of lemmata. The text contains dialogues between God and satan, and between God and the angels of the nations. Ultimately, the Messiah triumphs over satan. The nations ask a series of questions regarding the Messiah. This construction of responding to the questions of gentiles allows the *darshan* to present his version of the Jewish Messiah in response to the Christian Messiah. The question and response format probably points to ongoing polemic between the two groups.

The epithet וניקדצ חישמ (Pesiqta Rabbati 36 and 37) can be understood in two ways: "our true Messiah" or "Messiah of righteousness;" this epithet also appears in the *siddur*, the prayer book. Since a similar phrase concerning the Messiah is found in Revelation 3:14 and 19:11, "faithful and true," we may have a rhetoric of redemption here; both traditions claim their Messiah as the "True One." As Reuven Kimelman has shown, there was such rhetoric in the *Amidah* (the Eighteen Benedictions).[55]

Pesiqta Rabbati 37 continues the interpretation of Isaiah commenced in Pesiqta Rabbati 36; this serialized interpretation may be due to the consecutive utilization of the two homilies on different Sabbaths of Consolation. Pesiqta Rabbati 37, based upon the lemma *Rejoicing I will rejoice* (Isa. 61:10) שישא שוש, contains repetitive, serialized, almost liturgical benedictions. Messiah Ephraim is

represented as the son of God. Pesiqta Rabbati 37 describes the Messiah sitting in prison and the nations of the world attacking him and offering him nothing but contempt. Messiah Ephraim is prepared for his mission and dressed in special garments by God. In contrast to Jesus, Ephraim›s garments are not stolen or divided. Several lemmata of Psalm 22 are applied to the Messiah and the battles at the end of days; we find Psalm 22:7-8, 22:14-15 and 22:16, 18 cited as prooftexts, as well as numerous allusions to this Psalm. In the following three consecutive passages the Messiah is recognized by the resurrected Patriarchs of Israel:[56]

> Pesiqta Rabbati 37:2: This teaches that in the future, in the month of Nisan, the Fathers of the World [Patriarchs] will arise and say to him: Ephraim, our righteous [true] Messiah, even though we are your fathers, you are greater than we are, because you suffered [for] the iniquities of our children and terrible ordeals came upon you, such as did not come upon earlier [generations] or later ones. For the sake of Israel you [experienced] anguish, derision, and mockery among the nations of the world [Ps. 22:7-8]. *You sat in darkness* (Micah 7:8) and gloominess, and your eyes saw no light, and your skin cleaved to your bones [Ps. 22:18], and your body was as dry as a piece of wood; and your eyes did not see light, and *your skin is shriveled on your bones* (Lam. 4:8) [Ps. 22:18], and your body was dried up like wood and your eyes grew dim from fasting—your *strength is dried up like a potsherd* (Ps. 22:16)—all these [afflictions happened] on account of the iniquities of our children. It is your will [to benefit] your children through that goodness, which the Holy One will bestow upon Israel. It may be because of the utmost anguish, which you did suffer on their account in prison, that your mind is displeased with them. He said to them: Fathers of the World, all that I have done I have done only for your sake and for the sake of your children and for your honor and the honor of your children that they will benefit from the goodness which the Holy One will bestow upon Israel. They said: Ephraim, our righteous Messiah, may your mind be at rest, since you put to rest the mind of your Creator and our minds.
>
> Pesiqta Rabbati 37:3: R. Simeon b. Pazzi[57] said: In that hour the Holy One will raise the Messiah up to the heaven of heavens, and will shroud him in [something] of His splendor because of the nations of the world, because of the wicked Persians. He [God] said to him: Ephraim, My true Messiah, be the judge of these and do with them as your soul desires, for the nations would long have been destroyed by you in an instant had not My mercies been exceedingly mighty on your behalf, as it is said: *Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a darling child? [For whenever I speak of him, I earnestly remember him still; therefore My inward parts are troubled for him; in mercy I will have mercy upon him, says the Lord]* (Jer. 31:20).

> Pesiqta Rabbati 37:4: [Why does the verse mention] twice mercy: *In mercy I will have mercy upon him* (Jer. 31:20)? One mercy refers to the hour when he is in prison, since the nations of the world will gnash their teeth, wink their eyes, nod their heads, open their lips, as is said: *All those who see me mock me; they move the lip, they shake their head* (Ps. 22:8); {ed. pr.: *My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and you lay me down in the dust of death* (Ps. 22:16).} They roar at him like lions and fancy devouring him [Ps. 22:14], as it is said: *All our enemies have opened their mouths against us*. (Lam. 3:46).{ed. pr.: *A predatory and roaring lion* (Ezek. 22:25) *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels* (Ps. 22:15). And they roar at him like lions and fancy devouring him [Ps. 22:14], as it is said, *All our enemies have opened their mouths against us. Fear and the pit have come upon us, desolation and destruction* (Lam. 3:46-47)}. *In mercy will I have mercy upon him* (Jer. 31:20)—[referring to] the hour when he [Ephraim] leaves the prison, since the nations of the world will despise him. There is not one kingdom or two or three kingdoms that will come upon him, but one hundred and forty kingdoms will encompass him. The Holy One will say to him: Ephraim, Messiah of my righteousness do not be afraid of them, because all of them will die from the breath of your mouth, as it is said: *and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked* (Isa. 11:4).[58]

The date mentioned in the above narrative is Nisan; this is the month during which Passover occurs, the feast of redemption from Egypt. Elijah is expected to announce the arrival of the Messiah in Nisan. The 14th day of Nisan is the biblical Passover, when the Israelites slaughtered a lamb and used its blood for protection. They left Egypt the following evening, the 15th of Nisan, to begin the Exodus. As a memorial to this event, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on this day and is celebrated for seven days, suggestive of the seven days of God's master plan. According to John 19:14, Jesus was crucified the day before the Passover celebration, precisely when the lambs were slaughtered. In Jesus' day, by tradition of the elders (John 18:28), the Passover meal was observed on the 15th of Nisan. According to Mark 14:12-16, Jesus had the Passover meal with his disciples and was put on the cross the next morning, the day of Passover. It is speculation that the month of Nisan appears in these messianic passages in Pesiqta Rabbati in response to the death of Jesus. According to Rabbi Joshua, the world was created in Nisan and the Patriarchs were born in Nisan.[59] Pesiqta Rabbati connects the idea of creation to the final redemption and resurrection, independent of any Christological references.

Conclusion

A Psalm of suffering (Psalm 22) is applied to the Messiah Ephraim in Pesiqta Rabbati and a narrative of salvation is created. The explication of biblical lemmata as narrative is a hermeneutic approach of some midrashic texts; this is often the case in homiletic works that create a narrative for the listeners. Pesiqta Rabbati contains the rabbinic crystallization of creating a descriptive narrative of a Jewish Messiah through Psalm 22 and its metaphors of distress. Allusions to this Psalm are deeply embedded in the Pesiqta Rabbati narrative. This narrative is part of a hagiography,[60] slightly resembling other narratives of martyrs in rabbinic texts. Additionally, the messianic narrative is somewhat similar in construction to the Jesus narrative in the Gospels and the extra-testamental writings of the Church Fathers. Pesiqta Rabbati applies Psalm 22 to support the concept of Messiah Ephraim's suffering for humanity; in the New Testament, lemmata from this Psalm are applied to the Passion.[61] The Psalm provides biblical language and the dramatic script for the description of suffering for the Jewish and Christian Messiah. In Pesiqta Rabbati a remarkable interpretation emerges: the Messiah suffers for the sins of Israel and of the world; God makes an agreement with the Messiah to be afflicted for the sake of the sinners.

After a period of suffering, followed by his humiliation and the final eschatological battle, the Messiah is involved in the Final Judgment and the resurrection of the righteous. Other rabbinic texts interpret lemmata in order to combine Psalm 22 and the *Aqedah*, the Sacrifice of Isaac.

While the direct influence of the Christian interpretation of Psalm 22, referring to the suffering Jesus on the cross, upon the Jewish interpretation in Pesiqta Rabbati is an open question, the midrashic interpretation may be a polemic reaction to the Christian interpretation. The evidence for the Christian connection between Psalm 22 with Jesus on the cross predates this Psalm's association with the Messiah in Judaism. In both traditions, the Psalm is identified with a central figure bringing about final salvation at the end of days. Psalm 22 is critical to the Christian fulfillment theory, culminating in the Christological interpretation of that Psalm. The Jewish response to a suffering Messiah inverts the Christian interpretation by making Psalm 22 applicable to a future Messiah, Ephraim.

Psalm 22 became critical to early Christians, possibly because it provided the narrative structure for an unfolding drama of a suffering person who is saved. Certain aspects of the Psalm connect it to traditions concerning a son of God, an heir of David, a servant of the Lord, a prophet, a righteous person; these aspects provided the potential conduit for Psalm 22 to become essential among early Christians. Psalm 22 was hermeneutically constructed by early Christian Bible interpretation to claim this Psalm should be read as a prophetic text about a Davidic heir, namely Jesus. In contrast, the rabbinic interpretation in Pesiqta Rabbati applies the suffering of King David in Psalm 22 to the future Messiah Ephraim (son of Joseph), who is not viewed as a descendant of King David.

Discussion Questions

1. What particular terms in Psalm 22 had radically different trajectories in Jewish and Christian interpretations?
2. How could Queen Esther fulfill the suffering savior figure in Psalm 22?
3. In what ways is interfaith dialogue inspired or hampered by divergent interpretations of the same biblical text?

Notes

1. Psalm 22 (based upon the Masoretic Text):
   1. To the chief Musician, according to "Deer of Dawn," a Psalm of David.
   2. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from helping me, from the words of my loud complaint?
   3. O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; and in the night, and I have no rest.
   4. But You are holy, O You who are enthroned on the praises of Israel.
   5. Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You saved them.
   6. They cried to You, and were saved; they trusted in You, and were not disappointed.
   7. But I am a worm, and not a man; scorned by men, and despised by the people.
   8. All those who see me mock me; they move the lip, they shake their head, saying,
   9. He trusted on the Lord that he would save him; let Him save him, seeing He delights in him.
   10. But You are He who took me out of the womb; You made me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.
   11. I was cast upon You from the womb; You are my God from my mother's belly.
   12. Do not be far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.
   13. Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me.
   14. They open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and a roaring lion.
   15. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.
   16. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and You lay me down in the dust of death.
   17. For dogs surround me; the assembly of the wicked encircle me; they seize my hands and my feet like a lion.
   18. I can count all my bones; they look and stare at me.
   19. They divide my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing.
   20. But You, O Lord, be not far from me; O my strength, hasten to my help.
   21. Save my soul from the sword; my only one from the power of the dog.
   22. Save me from the lion's mouth; for you have answered me from the horns of the wild oxen.
   23. I will declare Your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation will I praise you.
   24. You who fear the Lord, praise him; all you the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all you the seed of Israel.
   25. For he has not despised nor loathed the affliction of the afflicted; nor has he hidden his face from him; but when he cried to him, he heard.

26. My praise shall be of You in the great congregation; I will pay my vows before those who fear Him.
27. The humble shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him shall praise the Lord. May Your heart live for ever!
28. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before You.
29. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and He is ruler over the nations.
30. All the fat ones of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust, and he who cannot keep alive his own soul, shall bow before Him.
31. Their seed shall serve Him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation.
32. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness to a people that shall be born, that He has done this.

2. Theodor Lescow, "Psalm 22 und Psalm 88: Komposition und Dramaturgie," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 117 (2005): 217-31.
3. Fritz Stolz, "Psalm 22: Alttestamentliches Reden vom Menschen und neutestamentliches Reden von Jesus," 77 *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* (1980): 129-48, 137.
4. See Heike Omerzu, "Die Rezeption von Psalm 22 im Judentum zur Zeit des Zweiten Tempels," in Dieter Sänger, ed., *Psalm 22 und die Passionsgeschichten der Evangelien* (Neukirchen Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2007), 33-76. The date of *Joseph and Aseneth* is disputed, it derives probably from the first century CE (see John Collins, "Joseph and Aseneth: Jewish or Christian?" *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 14 (2005): 97-112, who confirms that this work originated in Egyptian Judaism, before the revolt under Trajan.
5. I disagree with this premise because the "lion" in this passage has definite Egyptian connotations.
6. Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman, *Psalm 22 and the Crucifixion of Jesus* (PhD diss., Yale University, 1996), 320, expresses a similar idea. Catherine Brown Tkacz, "Esther, Jesus, and Psalm 22," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 70 (2008), 709-28; 714, n. 27 refers to the literature that contends that Psalm 22 was first applied to Esther and then later to Jesus.
7. Omerzu, "Die Rezeption," 58.
8. James Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 [11QPs^a]* (DJD 4) (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965).
9. Kristin Swenson, "Psalm 22:17 Circling around the Problem Again," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 637-48. The Greek translation "they dug my hands and feet" led to the Christian interpretation "they have pierced my hands and feet" (638); Swenson concludes that the consonantal text "proffered by the Masoretes" is the best. James R. Linville, "Psalm 22:17B: A New Guess," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 733-44; 739, suggests "picked clean," since the ancient versions presuppose a verb in this passage.
10. Gregory Vall, "Psalm 22:17B: The Old Guess," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116 (1997): 45-56. Michael Barré, "The Crux of Psalm 22:17c: Solved Long Last?" in Bernard F. Batto and Kathryn Roberts, eds., *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J.J.M. Roberts* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 287-306; 305 views 17b and 18a as interconnected and based upon cognate languages; he suggests the reading: "hands go lame" and "bones intone a funeral lament," which would preserve the chiastic structure of the Psalm.

11. See the appendices in Hoffman and the table in Conrad R. Gren, "Piercing the Ambiguities of Psalm 22:16 and the Messiah's Mission," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 283-99, 292.
12. A treatise concerning the early Christian interpretation is found in Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Tryphon* 103.8; 99-107.
13. In this essay I cite from Rivka Ulmer, *A Synoptic Edition Of Pesiqta Rabbati Based Upon All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts And The Editio Princeps*, vol. 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997);vol. 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999);vol. 3 and index (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002); repr. vols. 1-3, 2009. All English translations are by Rivka Ulmer. The symbol [] indicates additions by the editor or allusions to verses; the symbol {} indicates textual variants.
14. The problem of fictitious baraitot was recognized by Louis Jacobs, "Are there Fictitious Baraitot in the Babylonian Talmud?" *HUCA* 42 (1971): 186-96.
15. Judith M. Lieu, "Justin Martyr and the Transformation of Psalm 22," in Charlotte Hempel and Judith M. Lieu, eds., *Biblical Traditions in Transmission*, Supplement Journal for the Study of Judaism (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 195-211.
16. Phillip Schaff, *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 174-75.
17. Lieu, "Justin Martyr," 197.
18. Naomi Koltun-Fromm researched this development in "Psalm 22's Christological Interpretive Tradition in Light of Anti-Jewish Polemic," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (1998): 37-57, 55.
19. Lieu, "Justin Martyr," 209.
20. Philip Nel, "Animal Imagery in Psalm 22," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 31 (2005): 75-88, 81.
21. See 2 Kings 3:21-27; 2 Kings 16:1-4; 2 Kings 21:1-8; 23:4-11.
22. *Fear not, O worm of Jacob, the number of Israel; "I have helped you," says the Lord, and your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel* (Isa. 41:14); Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job's friends, utilizes the same comparison: *How much less, man, who is a worm, and the son of man, who is a maggot!* (Job 25:6).
23. Philip Schaff, *The Apostolic Fathers* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 9.
24. It should be noted that the numbering of Psalms is slightly deviant in the Septuagint; for example, superscriptions are not part of the numbering in the LXX.
25. Stolz, "Psalm 22, " 146, lists the distribution of the lemmata of Psalm 22 in Mark.
26. The Testaments in the Pseudepigrapha.
27. For further details, see Esther Menn, "Nor Ordinary Lament: Relecture and the Identity of the Distressed in Psalm 22," *Harvard Theological Review* 93 (2000): 301-41, 330.
28. Among the multitude of examples, see Mekhilta, Pisha, 4; Mishnah, Menahot 7:6; Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 70b.
29. *Targum Yonathan* has *Eli, Eli, m^{e}tul mah sh^{e}vaqtani*. The verb *sh^{e}vaqtani* derives from the Aramaic *sh^{e}vaq* [leave, forsake]. The Greek text is not precise or consistent in its transliteration from Aramaic; it is therefore remotely possible that the Aramaic *sh^{e}vaqtani* could have become *sabachthani* in the process of transliteration.
30. For example, Midrash Sekhel Tov, Shemot 15, cites Psalm 22:2; see also Yalqut Shim`oni Beshallah, 244.
31. Menn summarized some of the rabbinic interpretations of single lemmata from Psalm 22 in the rabbinic corpus; see also Brown Tkacz, who views Queen Esther as a female messiah, 710-11.

32. A table of the passages is found in Hoffman, 392.
33. Philip Schaff, *Fathers of the Third Century: Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 287.
34. Ismar Elbogen (tr. Raymond Scheindlin), *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 110-11.
35. Menn, "Nor Ordinary Lament," 318.
36. Ulmer, *A Synoptic Edition,* xix-xxii.
37. Phillip Schaff, *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 1 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 174-75.
38. Cited in Yalqut Shim'oni, Zephaniah 567.
39. Pesiqta Rabbati 36 is partially cited in Yalqut Shim'oni, Isaiah 494, 499 and Pesiqta Rabbati 37 in Yalqut Shim'oni Jeremiah 515.
40. Ed. pr. (editio princeps) refers to the first printed edition.
41. Hoffman, *Psalm 22,* 165, draws attention to the variant readings in early biblical translations, including throat, larynx, and jaws.
42. Hoffman, *Psalm 22,* 360.
43. The text has "ben David," although it continues with Messiah Ephraim. This may indicate the conflation of messianic ideas in Pesiqta Rabbati; alternatively, it may be due to one of the numerous scribal errors in the Parma manuscript.
44. In Rev. 19:15 the messianic figure returns to rule with "an iron rod;" this term is symbolic of power. Pesiqta Rabbati applies the term to the power of the government. In Psalms of Solomon the messianic figure is a king in the image of David (Ps. Sol. 17:21); he will smash the gentile oppressors of Jerusalem with an iron rod.
45. See Rivka Ulmer, "Consistency and Change in Rabbinic Literature as Reflected in the Terms 'Rain' and 'Dew,'" *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 26 (1995): 55-75.
46. The Messiah as the light of the world is found in Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 116b; similar in Genesis Rabbah 2:4.
47. Dörte Bester, *Körperbilder in den Psalmen*, FAT, 2, 54; (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2007), 57.
48. Arnold Goldberg**,** *Erlösung durch Leiden: Drei rabbinische Homilien über die Trauernden Zions und den leidenden Messias Efraim (Pesiqta Rabbati 34.36.37)*, Frankfurter Judaistische Studien, 4 (Frankfurt am Main, 1978), 261; and *Ich komme und wohne in deiner Mitte: Eine rabbinische Homilie zu Sacharja 2,14 (Pesiqta Rabbati 35)*, Frankfurter Judaistische Studien, 3 (Frankfurt am Main, 1977).
49. Michael A. Fishbane, "Midrash and Messianism: Some Theologies of Suffering and Salvation," in Peter Schäfer and Mark Cohen,eds., *Toward the Millenium: Expectations from the Bible to Waco* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 57-71, 69.
50. Benedikt Carpzov, ed., *Raimundus Martinus, Pugio Fidei* (Leipzig: Johannis Wittegau, 1687, facsimile repr. Farnborough: Gregg Press, 1967), 416.
51. *Me'or Enayim* (Vilna, 1863-66, repr. Jerusalem: Maqor, 1970), 250; Joanna Weinberg, ed., *Azariah de' Rossi Meor Eynaim: The Light of the Eyes. Translated from the Hebrew* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). This work may be a partial response to Christian polemics against rabbinic ideas.
52. Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-rhetorical Interpretation* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press), 58. For example, a diegetic allusion is mentioned in Luke 1:1.
53. "The fifth chamber: [this is where] Messiah ben David, Elijah and the Messiah Ephraim dwell. Elijah holds his head and allows it to rest on his chest. He encour-

ages him and says to him: Bear the torment and judgment of your Lord while He punishes you for the sin of Israel, for Scripture says: *He is pierced for our rebellions, crushed for our transgressions* (Isa. 53:5) until the time when the end arrives. Every Monday, Thursday, Shabbat, and festival day the ancient Patriarchs, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, the entire royal line, the prophets and the pious ones come to greet him [the Messiah] and to weep together with him. They express gratitude to him and say to him: Bear the judgment of your Lord, *for the end has almost arrived, and the chains which are on your neck will be broken off* and you will go forth in freedom." Jellinek, *BHM*, 2:29.20-33 (trans. Rivka Ulmer), similar in 2:50.5-9. Here Isa. 53:5 is applied to the Jewish Messiah.

54. In Matt. 4:5, it is the devil who placed Jesus on the pinnacle of the Temple; Pesiqta Rabbati 36:9 may reflect a process in which an element of another culture is incorporated, but changed, which then results in an inverted response to the apocalyptic forces of evil in its reference to the Messiah on the roof of the Temple.
55. Reuven Kimelman, "The Literary Structure of the Amidah and the Rhetoric of Redemption," in Dever, W.G. and Wright, J.E., eds., *The Echoes of Many Texts: Reflections on Jewish and Christian Traditions. Essays in Honor of Lou H. Silberman*, BJSt 313 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 171-218.
56. The dialogue between the Fathers and the Messiah is cited in Pirqe Mashiah (*BHM* 3:73, based upon Pesiqta Rabbati).
57. Third-century Babylonia.
58. See Yalqut Shim`oni, Isaiah 56: "This is the light of the Messiah, as is written in Psalm (36:10): *In Your light, we see light*."
59. Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Ha-Shanah 11a.
60. Rivka Ulmer, "The Contours of the Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati," Paper presented at the Association for Jewish Studies Conference, Los Angeles, December 21, 2009.
61. The opening words are cited in Matt. 27:46 and Mark 15:34.