MATTHIAS HENZE

Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel

Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
142

Mohr Siebeck

Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism

Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum

Edited by

142

Matthias Henze

Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel

Reading *Second Baruch* in Context

Mohr Siebeck

Matthias Henze, born 1965; studied in Bethel, Heidelberg, and Jerusalem; 1997 Ph. D. Harvard University; holds the Watt J. and Lilly G. Jackson Chair in Biblical Studies, Rice University, USA.

e-ISBN PDF 978-3-16-151475-3
ISBN 978-3-16-150859-2
ISSN 0721-8753 (Text and Studies in Ancient Judaism)

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at *http://dnb.d-nb.de*.

The book was typeset by Alexey Tubolcev in Berlin using Times typeface, printed by Gulde-Druck in Tübingen on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Spinner in Ottersweier.

Printed in Germany

Table of Contents

Preface

Soon after I began to work on the *Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch* some years ago, it became clear to me that it would be best to present my thinking on this intriguing, albeit poorly studied early Jewish apocalypse in the form of two interrelated books. This monograph is the first of these two volumes. The second will be a critical commentary, to appear in the Commentaries in Early Jewish Literature (CEJL) series. The purpose of the present book is to develop my argument about *Syriac Baruch* in broad terms, to expose its main themes, to explain the apocalyptic program it develops and advocates, and to locate its place in the rugged terrain of post-70 CE Jewish literature and thought. The commentary to follow, which includes a new translation of the entire apocalypse together with detailed textual notes, is more technical in nature and will provide additional data for the argument.

My research on *Syriac Baruch* began in earnest during a Sabbatical in the spring of 2006. Two years later, in the spring of 2008, I received a teaching release fellowship from the Humanities Research Center (HRC) at Rice University, my academic home. I am indebted to the School of Humanities and to the HRC for their continuous support of my work. In particular I would like to thank my current dean, Nicolas Shumway, and Theresa Grasso Munisteri, my copy editor at Rice. I also wish to thank my two research assistants, Roger Sharp and Daewoong Kim, for their reliable and very prompt help in securing research materials.

Of the colleagues and friends who kindly read parts of the manuscript in its various stages or otherwise provided helpful criticism, I am indebted to Werner Kelber, Liv Lied, Michael Maas, Judith Newman, George Nickelsburg, Martin Rösel, and Michael Stone. I presented portions of chapter 5, "Speaking Publicly," in 2007 at a conference at Durham University, organized by George Brooke, Hindy Najman, and Loren Stuckenbruck. Material from chapter 4, "An Argument among Unequals," was delivered at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2008 in Boston, with George Nickelsburg and Patrick Tiller as respondents.

I have enjoyed the hospitality of colleagues and friends at several universities who kindly invited me to talk about *Syriac Baruch*: Kelley Coblentz Bautch and Richard Bautch at St. Edward's University, Lutz Doering at Durham University, Jacques van Ruiten at the University of Groningen, Jürgen Zangenberg

at Leiden University, and Christfried Böttrich at the University of Greifswald. I am grateful to them and to their colleagues for their interest in my work on *Syriac Baruch* and for the opportunity to test some of my thoughts in these fine intellectual communities. For all mistakes and wrongheadedness that inevitably remain I alone bear full responsibility.

The better portion of this book was written during the academic year 2009/10 while I was a Fellow in Residence at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS) in the Humanities and Social Sciences in Wassenaar, the Netherlands. No scholar can hope for a more conducive environment in which to live, read, discuss, think, and write. The institute, with its tranquil setting in the beautiful dunes of Wassenaar and its intellectually stimulating atmosphere, provides ideal working conditions that are the envy of every scholar. In particular I am grateful to NIAS's director at the time, Wim Blockmans; the formidable staff, among them Jos Hooghuis, Saskia van der Holst-Pels, and Willem van der Wal; and the fabulous librarians, Dindy van Maanen and Erwin Nolet.

I thank my editors, Annette Yoshiko Reed and Azzan Yadin, for their interest in my work on *Syriac Baruch* long before this book reached its final form and for accepting the manuscript into the series. My greatest debt is to my wife, Karin Liebster, who, as always, has been unfailing in her support – intellectual, emotional, logistical. It is with a sense of profound gratitude that I dedicate this volume to Reinhard Oppermann – *requiescat in pace* – and Hanne Oppermann, who, twenty years ago, made it possible for me to move to America. Über allem aber steht, *Deo gratias*.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. In the Beginning: *Damnatio Memoriae*

The *Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, or simply *Second Baruch* (henceforth *2Bar*), is a book that is often quoted but rarely read. Since Antonio Maria Ceriani (1828–1907) re/discovered this intriguing apocalypse in the second half of the nineteenth century in the famed Ambrosian Library in Milan, *2Bar* has mostly been used as a literary quarry by scholars who find in it cross-references to various things apocalyptic. For others, most importantly the pioneers who worked on this text in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, *2Bar* has been a valuable book because of the light it sheds on the Jewish background of the New Testament. Yet, overall interest in *2Bar* has been moderate. Over its century-and-a-half-long history of reading, only a few studies have appeared that are devoted exclusively to *2Bar* or an aspect thereof, and only one commentary has come out on this apocalypse: Pierre Maurice Bogaert's important two-volume *L'Apocalypse syriaque de Baruch*, published in 1969.[1]

This relative lack of interest may come as a surprise, given the undisputed significance of the time and place of *2Bar*'s composition for our understanding of rabbinic origins and nascent Christianity: the land of Israel in the late first century CE – but it is not entirely accidental. The fact that *2Bar*'s most important textual witness is in Syriac may not have helped its popularity, and neither has the fact that English translations of the work are still not readily available to the non-specialist. But the true reasons for the relative sparseness of interest run much deeper than linguistic barriers or possible difficulties in accessing English translations and speak directly to the way in which biblical scholarship since the Renaissance has categorized and partitioned early Jewish texts into carefully demarcated libraries. To use a quintessentially American metaphor, *2Bar* has always had, and continues to have, three strikes against it, and so it simply strikes out.

Strike number one: *Second Baruch* is a pseudepigraphon. Scholars conventionally count *2Bar* among an ill-defined and ever growing collection of ancient writings generally called the "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha," or books "falsely attributed" to a biblical (pre-exilic) figure of renown – not exactly a flattering

[1] Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque* (1969).

designation, to denigrate the content of these books as forgeries and to categorize them in negative terms. And yet, the pejorative label seems tragically appropriate, given that these books are typically considered third-class writings, after in first place the canonical books of the Jewish Bible, followed in second place by the so-called Apocrypha, those writings, that is, that are preserved in the Greek and Latin versions of the Bible but not in the Hebrew.

Johann Albert Fabricius (1668–1736), a fabulously prolific scholar, great connoisseur of Greek and Latin literature, collector of ancient manuscripts, and an expert compiler of numerous anthologies, published one of the first collections of the *Pseudepigrapha*, by far the most comprehensive compilation at the time. His two-volume work, titled *Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*, first appeared in 1713.[2] Unlike many scholars today, Fabricius had no qualms about the term Pseudepigrapha but chose it purposefully, along with such terms as *fabula* and *fraudes*, precisely to depreciate the texts he himself had collected. In his prefatory comments to the reader, Fabricius is at pains to point out that he has compiled the materials "not because I am attracted to tales (*fabula*) of this sort, or approve these forgeries (*fraudes*)" but rather to expose them to the "contempt of everyone (*contemptui omnium*)."[3] Furthermore he writes,

Sunt etiam nonnulla in his, sub falsis licet jactata nominibus, veri tamen stricturas quasdam ex veteri Judaorum traditione servantia, sicut vetus dictum est "non omnia fingere Cretes," illa vero dignoscere ut labor, ita non minor voluptas aut utilitas. Atque usum habet in aliis ipsa etiam inutilitatis vanitatisque demostratio, quemadmodum Clemens Alexandrius de falsa Sophistarum Philosophia vere scripsit, licet fructum ipsamet non afferat, tamen utile esse hoc ipsum confirmare, quod utilitate destituatur.[4]

[There are also some among these, although displayed under false names, yet preserving certain strictures from the old tradition of the Jews, as the old saying is, "Cretans don't make up everything," as it is a labor to distinguish those in fact, so it is no less pleasure and utility. And the very demonstration even of uselessness and pointlessness has in other matters a use, as Clement of Alexandria truly wrote in *Concerning the False Philosophy of the Sophists*: "Although it itself does not bring profit, yet it is useful to confirm this very thing, that it is without utility".]

---

[2] Fabricius, *Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*, 1713; the second edition appeared in 1722–23. By 1703 Fabricius had published his three-volume *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, which, as Fabricius explains in his preface, the *Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti* was intended to supplement. Fabricius's *Codicis Pseudepigraphi Veteris Testamenti. Volumen Alterum: accedit Josephi Veteris Christiani scriptoris Hypomnesticon* appeared in 1723.

Unlike the Jewish Bible and the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha do not constitute a fixed collection of Jewish writings, even though anthologies such as that of Fabricius, followed by Kautzsch, *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments* (1900), Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (1913), and Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (1983), create the impression of a quasi-canonical corpus.

[3] Quoted from Reed, "Modern Invention" (2009), 425–26.

[4] Fabricius, *Codex Pseudepigraphus* (1713), 3–4. All translations are mine, unless noted otherwise.

Wandering through the halls of the Pseudepigrapha, readers find themselves in the company of the Cretans, stereotyped in ancient times as liars. And yet, just as they "don't make up everything," as Fabricius reassuringly quotes the old saying, so the Pseudepigrapha have preserved at least some noble traditions, even though it is a laborious task to distinguish fact from forgery. Fabricius, the pioneer compiler of the Pseudepigrapha, goes on to describe the very texts he collects as "useless" (*inutilis*) and "pointless" (*vanitatis*) and in the end settles for a comparison with Clement's statement about the Sophists – the primary utility of studying the Pseudepigrapha is to demonstrate their lack of utility! During the centuries since Fabricius, the fate of the Pseudepigrapha has not improved much, even though this is now beginning to change. In recent decades the study of early Jewish literature has matured to become an academic field in its own right. There are several reasons for this shift in perception, among them the appearance of new critical editions of, and modern commentaries on, pseudepigraphic texts and, of course, the explosion of interest, scholarly and public, in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[5]

We have already noted the unfortunate connotations of the term "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha." Fabricius's derogatory remarks about the Pseudepigrapha immediately reveal the true motivation that led to the invention of the category in the first place: the impulse to safeguard the biblical writings from the forgeries by compiling the extra-canonical writings under a distinct category. The segregation is, of course, based on the canonical decisions of the sages and church fathers that well postdate the composition of most of the Pseudepigrapha. These decisions were subsequently adopted into modern biblical scholarship – with astonishingly little critical scrutiny – and have colored our perception. Ever since, the academic interpretation of early Jewish literature has largely operated under the influence of what Robert Kraft has aptly called "the tyranny of canonical assumptions."[6] The partition of the ancient texts into a "canonical" and a "pseudepigraphic" group suggests, as Fabricius makes sufficiently clear, that the latter writings are somehow considered arbitrary and unfortunate.[7] Moreover, it implies a division of these books that says much about their earliest compilers yet little about the texts themselves. Today such divisions are difficult to overcome, as they are reinforced by our academic structures that privilege the canon and curtail the study of non-canonical literature. My point is not to call into question the legitimacy of the biblical canon. To recognize the value of one group of ancient writings does not mean to disparage

[5] Scholarly attention to the relationship between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha has focused largely on those pseudepigraphic texts that were discovered in and around Qumran, chief among them *1 Enoch* and the book of *Jubilees*. Stone, "Categorization and Classification" (1986), and "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha" (1996).

[6] Kraft, "Para-mania" (2007), 10–18.

[7] Reed, "Modern Invention" (2009), 434.

the other – even though the very existence of the Pseudepigrapha has often been perceived as "a threat to the antiquity or authority of the canonized scriptures of European Christendom."[8] Rather, the point is to realize that the Pseudepigrapha have been the subject of considerable polemics at least since the time of Fabricius. There is something puzzling about the fact that we happily embrace one set of pseudepigraphic writings – the book of Deuteronomy, for example, or Proverbs, Daniel, or the Davidic Psalms – only to reject another set of Pseudepigrapha, largely on the basis that these writings are, well, Pseudepigrapha.[9] And then there is the historical significance of the Pseudepigrapha and the wealth of information they provide, an aspect that will be particularly important for our study of *2Bar*. We will only understand the complex processes that led to the emergence of Rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity if we study *all* the Jewish literature available to us from the turn of the Common Era.

Strike number two: *Second Baruch* is an apocalypse. One of the most tenacious and widespread clichés among biblical scholars is the conviction that early Jewish apocalypses by definition reflect the struggle for survival of a particular religious minority that feels excluded and oppressed. The apocalypse is a pièce de résistance, the literary product of a marginalized group of eschatological enthusiasts who yearn for the disempowerment of the imperial force, and who, being powerless themselves, resort to apocalyptic violence while projecting their utopian hopes into the far-fetched *eschaton*. For some interpreters, ancient and modern alike, this makes apocalyptic literature rather suspect. Particularly those for whom the apocalyptic announcement, "See, I am making all things new!" (Rev 21.5), is a threat rather than a promise will be inclined to find in the apocalyptic imagination a subversive ideology, a tendency to uproot rather than to stabilize, an ideology that is counter-cultural, antinomian, and hence less than appealing. In his classic essay "Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism," Gershom Scholem speaks eloquently of the anarchic element of Messianic utopianism: "From the point of view of the *Halakhah*, to be sure, Judaism

[8] Ibid. Reed goes on to write, "As we have seen, the concept and category of 'the Old Testament pseudepigrapha' are certainly fascinating as a window onto changes in European literary cultures from medieval to modern times. Increasingly, however, the growth of scholarly interest in these very works has helped to foster awareness of the many other literary cultures (Christian and otherwise) in which the reception, collection, and production of materials associated with biblical figures took each their own path. If dominant modern scholarly categories had been constituted in Ethiopia, for instance, our configuration of corpora, disciplines, and subfields might look very different today. So too if Armenian, Syriac, or Slavonic literature had been privileged, instead of Latin and Greek, as the measure of the scholarly definition of what constitutes 'Christianity'" (435–36).

[9] Stuckenbruck, "Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha" (2010), 153, "Indeed, several books in the Hebrew Bible are arguably pseudepigrapha (e.g., Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Qoheleth, Daniel, and the Davidic Psalms), while the same may be said regarding "apocrypha" such as 1 Baruch, Epistle of Jeremiah, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151 (and Syriac Psalms 154–155), Wisdom of Solomon, and 4 Ezra."

appears as a well-ordered house, and it is a profound truth that a well-ordered house is a dangerous thing. Something of messianic apocalypticism penetrates into this house; perhaps I can best describe it as a kind of anarchic breeze. A window is open through which the winds blow in, and it is not quite certain just what they bring in with them."[10]

It is still widely held that apocalyptic authors by definition were renegades, outsiders who felt excluded and hence withdrew from the centers of Judaism. As an expression of their perceived powerlessness, they constructed what is often described as a highly idiosyncratic, alternative universe of meaning, intended primarily to counter the predominant worldview, which the apocalyptically inclined vehemently reject. Their belief system is emphatically utopian – *utopian* here connotes the unworldly and the naïve – and projects whatever hope the frustrated end-timers have left in them into the eschatological future.

According to this model, which tends to think of early Judaism in binary terms, apocalyptic groups have broken away from "normative" Judaism and now polemicize against it. One group is subversive, esoteric, antiestablishment, and deeply skeptical of the status quo, while the other is constructive, exoteric, and concerned with establishing and maintaining permanent structures of institutionalized religion. One is preoccupied with otherworldly affairs and the distant end; the other shows compassion for Israel's current well-being and is concerned about social ethics. One group consists of visionaries, self-proclaimed latter-day prophets, who derive their authority from fanciful and entirely idiosyncratic claims to revelation; the other is made up of highly educated, textually grounded scholars who base their authority on the tradition as it was received by Moses on Mount Sinai and was subsequently handed down in an unbroken "apostolic succession" from generation to generation.[11] One is sectarian and heretical; the other normative and orthodox. One is organized in religious conventicles of socially marginal figures, cleverly disguised as authorities from the biblical past, the other consists of religious authorities who identify themselves by their proper names and who are the organizers of traditional, recognizable and respectable schools of thought. One left us with "a collection of concepts and motifs which is highly eclectic in nature and characterized by the esoteric, the bizarre, and the arcane,"[12] a body of literature that is so elusive that one can hardly be surprised that these texts were soon considered heretical and ceased to be transmitted by Jewish scribes; the other composed books that, from the end of the second century CE onward, became foundational for Judaism and remain so to this day. In short, apocalyptic literature has always been, and continues to be, the *enfant terrible* of early Jewish literature, in spite of the recent

[10] Scholem, *Messianic Idea in Judaism* (1971), 21.
[11] Boyarin, *Border Lines* (2004), 30.
[12] Hanson, "Apocalypticism" (1976), 30.

wave of excitement over the Dead Sea fragments. Perhaps it is no great loss after all that *2Bar* and its companion literature has largely gone unnoticed.

And yet, the argument that all apocalypses were composed by powerless visionaries has feet of clay. The simple bifurcation of Jewish society into the "normative" and the marginalized during the centuries before and after the turn of the era remains unsubstantiated, a phantom that obscures more than it illumines our reading. Equally problematic is the one-size-fits-all categorization of early Jewish apocalyptic literature. That some apocalypses stem from circles who opposed the religious establishment around the Jerusalem temple can hardly be doubted. But this does not mean that *all* apocalypses were written by social outcasts or religious revolutionaries. A closer look at *2Bar* shows that there is nothing to suggest that it was written by a dissident figure. There is an obvious danger in applying broad categories to early Jewish literature – "Pseudepigrapha," "apocalypses" – and then describing the exceedingly diverse writings subsumed under these umbrella terms in general and often predominantly negative terms, as if they were all the same. Such labels run the risk of implying uniformity where there is variety. What is more, these labels tend to erect boundaries, for example, between apocalyptic and non-apocalyptic texts, and imply elemental divisions that tend to be imposed rather than real and that have little if any bearing on the texts themselves. It is one of the basic theses of this study that the author of *2Bar* was not a dissident figure and that he intended his book's religious program to prevail and to apply to post-70 Judaism in general.

Strike number three: since its rediscovery, *2Bar* has stood in the shadow of *4 Ezra*. *Second Baruch* has always been considered the lesser of the apocalyptic twin sisters. A quick look at the publication record of modern exegetes who have made significant contributions to our understanding of *2Bar* reveals that the majority of them first worked on *4 Ezra* and then broadened their inquiry to include *2Bar* as well. With only a few exceptions, modern exegetes have taken their cues from *4 Ezra*, which routinely functions as the interpretative template when reading *2Bar*. As a result, scholarship on *2Bar* at times has a certain hand-me-down quality.

The general mood among modern interpreters working on *2Bar* and *4 Ezra* is expressed eloquently by Hermann Gunkel, premier exegete of biblical and early Jewish literature, whose psychological analysis of *4 Ezra* was ground-breaking when he first proposed it and a century later continues to be very well received. Gunkel's comparison of the two apocalypses, presented in his annotated translation of *4 Ezra* with characteristic rhetorical gusto, is indicative of a much broader perception among students of both texts. It is worth quoting in full.

Die Frage nach der Priorität beider Schriften ist, wie mir scheint, aus dem Stile zu beantworten. Dieselben Gedanken, die IV Esra in wohlüberlegter Ordnung, in schöner, aus der Sache folgender Steigerung giebt, findet man in der Baruchapokalypse wirr und kraus durcheinander. So beklagt der Verfasser dieser Apokalypse schon 14,12 ff. die Sünder, weil

sie die zukünftige Welt nicht erwerben, aber erst in K. 41 wirft er die Frage auf, wer denn jener Welt teilhaftig werde. Schon in 19,5 ist ihm die Nähe des Endes offenbart worden, aber im unmittelbar Folgenden bringt er noch ein dringendes Gebet, Gott möge das Ende bald heraufführen (21,19 ff.); in beiden Fällen hätte die Natur der Gedanken die umgekehrte Anordnung verlangt. Auch im Einzelnen ist die Baruchapokalypse oft ziemlich konfus; man vergleiche K. 48,1–24 und bes. K. 14, wo der Verfasser eine ganze Menge verschiedenartiger Gedanken zusammenstellt. Diese schlechte Anordnung beweist, daß der Verfasser nicht Herr und Schöpfer seiner Gedanken ist. Wie wenig tief er die Fragen genommen hat, erkennt man an Beispielen wie 14,8 ff. 15. 48,46b, wo Baruch selber aus eigenen Kräften die Antwort giebt, die bei IV Esra nur ein Engel geben kann: woran sich IV Esra zermartert, das giebt die Baruchapokalypse als Binsenweiheit. So zweifele ich nicht, daß der Verfasser des IV Esra ein selbständiger Denker ist, der seine Gedanken nicht aus einer tief unter ihm stehenden Schrift zu borgen braucht, während mir die Baruchapokalypse als Typus eines Schriftsteller erscheint, der den Empfang eines guten Buchs dadurch quittiert, daß er eine mäßige Nachahmung hinzuliefert. … Dem Geiste nach erscheint die Baruchapokalypse trivialer; viel schärfer treten darin hervor die Gesetzlichkeit und der Durst nach Rache an dem verderblichen Rom.[13]

[The question about the priority of both texts has to be answered, it seems to me, based on their style. Concepts, which *4 Ezra* presents in a well-considered order and progression, are confused and in utter disarray in the Apocalypse of Baruch. The author of this apocalypse laments in 14:12ff. over the sinners because they do not acquire the world to come, but it is not until chapter 41 that he poses the question of who will partake in that world. In 19:5 the proximity of the end has been revealed to him, but immediately following this he prays urgently that God will soon bring about the end (21:19ff.); in both cases the nature of the concepts in Baruch require the reverse order. In its details, too, the Apocalypse of Baruch is often rather confused; one may compare 48:1–24 especially with chapter 14, where the author brings together many diverse concepts. This poor arrangement suggests that the author is not in command of his thoughts. Examples such as 14:8ff., 15; 48:46b, where Baruch provides the answer that only the angel can give in *4 Ezra*, show a superficiality in his treatment of the questions: the same issues that torment *4 Ezra* are presented by the Apocalypse of Baruch as platitudes. I have therefore no doubt that the author of *4 Ezra* is an independent thinker, who does not have to borrow his concepts from an inferior text, whereas the author of the Apocalypse of Baruch appears to be one who expresses his appreciation of a good book by adding a mediocre imitation of it. … The spirit of the Apocalypse of Baruch appears to be a more trivial text with a more pronounced legalism and thirst for revenge on corruptive Rome.]

The complex interrelationship of *2Bar* and *4 Ezra*, one of the remaining enigmas in pseudepigraphic studies, is of central importance for any interpretation of *2Bar* and will figure prominently in our study as well. Suffice it to say at this point that Gunkel's remarks above, while indicative of a broader sentiment among students of both apocalypses, are deeply problematic. For one, his urge to play off one text against the other, with *4 Ezra* emerging as the superior composition in just about any respect, is not particularly conducive. All too often arguments over "quality" turn out to be highly subjective and render such value

[13] Gunkel, "Das vierte Buch Esra" (1900), 351 (my translation).

statements parochial.[14] A more useful approach may be to leave aside subjective judgment calls and to concentrate on the points of correspondence or incongruity between the two texts. Moreover, by making *4 Ezra* the preferred sibling, exegetes routinely import interpretive categories from *4 Ezra* and assume that they must apply to *2Bar* as well. A good example is *4 Ezra*'s structure in seven parts; while there is absolutely nothing in *2Bar* to suggest that it, too, is divided into seven parts, virtually all interpreters find a heptadic structure in it somewhere, with predictably little agreement among the various reconstructions and precise demarcations.

These, then, are the main reasons why *2Bar* has received little attention in modern scholarship. It fared even worse in antiquity after its composition. The author of *2Bar* wrote his book in the hope that it would prevail and its apocalyptic program would become normative. But his vision was not realized. Judged on its reception history, *2Bar* and the apocalyptic program it advocates must be considered a failure. Shortly after its composition the work suffered a fate every writer dreads, the cruelest curse of them all – the apocalypse was condemned to *damnatio memoriae*. The religious authorities refrained from referring to it, instructors banned it from their curricula, scribes ceased to copy it, and, as a result, *2Bar* soon sank into oblivion. Not a single Jewish manuscript of the text survives, and there are no undisputed references to or quotations of it in the literature of antiquity.[15] As a result, *2Bar* was entirely forgotten for almost two millennia – until it was rediscovered in the nineteenth century in a single oriental Christian biblical manuscript. The author of *2Bar* can justifiably be called a "historical loser," a creative author whose ingenious work faded from view soon after it was composed and hence failed to make the impact for which it was intended.[16]

2. An Initial Sketch of the Argument

The argument I develop in this book can be summarized as follows. Once *2Bar* is freed from the debilitating labels that have impeded its modern reading, a picture

[14] Writing only four years prior to Hermann Gunkel, Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (1896), lxxi, came to the opposite, and equally unhelpful, conclusion regarding the "quality" of *4 Ezra*: "Thus on various grounds we see that whereas Baruch is a pure product of the Judaism of the time, 4 Ezra is the result of two influences at work, first and mainly a Jewish, and secondly a Christian. It was no doubt owing to this Christian element in the latter that it won and preserved a high position in the Christian Church. It constitutes, in fact, a confession of the failure of Judaism."

[15] On the question of possible quotations, see our discussion in chapter 2, "Prolegomena."

[16] Even though I speak here of the author of *2Bar* as an individual, we will see in chapter 4, "An Argument among Unequals," that the apocalypse as we have it today is not the product of a single hand. *Second Baruch* went through a process of textual formation during which text transmission and composition, as well as oral performance and literary composition, were intertwined.

emerges of a text that is sophisticated, highly original, and intellectually viable. *Second Baruch* is a Jewish composition, written a generation or two after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, during a period of cognitive reorientation and religious reconstruction. Its author was an active participant in the Jewish debate after 70 CE over "how Judaism was to be lived and how that way of life was to be articulated in order to ensure the survival of the Jewish community without the temple and its related political institutions."[17] *Second Baruch* should be read along with other Jewish post-destruction literature, such as *4 Ezra*, the Gospel of Matthew (I reckon, with Saldarini and others, that Matthew is essentially a Jewish text), Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the Apocalypse of Abraham, and some early Tannaitic compilations. The author of *2Bar* was driven by the desire to understand why God allowed a Gentile nation to destroy the Holy City, demolish its central religious symbols, and strip Israel of land and autonomy. At the same time he wanted to re/envision Judaism in new ways, ever mindful of the disastrous outcome of the failed Jewish revolt against the Romans, and to propose a course of action for the Jewish community to move forward. The result of his reflections is an ingenious apocalyptic program for post-war Judaism. The purpose of the present monograph is to analyze this apocalyptic program, to expose its contours, and to determine its place in the rugged terrain of early Jewish thought and literature.

The program that underlies *2Bar* rests mainly on two main pillars. The first is the call on the faithful to follow the Mosaic Torah. Much like the sages, the author of *2Bar* is a strong advocate of a Torah-centered form of post-70 Judaism. He calls the members of the community back to the Torah and, like Moses, urges them to choose life over death. The second pillar is the apocalyptic belief that a full recovery from Roman aggression within the boundaries of history as we know it may be too much to hope for, that the restoration of Israel is only possible in the eschatological end time, which is thought to be imminent. These two impulses, the imperative to live one's life in compliance with the Mosaic Torah and the apocalyptic yearning for the other, redemptive side of history, both have deep roots in the Jewish Bible and in the literature of the Second Temple period to which our author is heir. And yet, they would seem to cancel each other out, if only because those who show fidelity to the Torah are traditionally promised a long and prosperous life in this world, whereas the apocalyptic promise is predicated on the assumption that this world is broken beyond repair, that it has run its course, and that it is soon to give way to a new reality. It has to be considered one of the principal accomplishments of the author of *2Bar* to have integrated these two strands of early Jewish belief into his apocalyptic program,

[17] The quote is from Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (1994), 4, whose eloquent description of the place of the Gospel of Matthew in the Jewish debate after 70 CE could equally apply to *2Bar*.

even though traditionally they have been kept in segregation: the *Deuteronomic promise* of a long and prosperous life and the *apocalyptic promise* of a new life in the world to come. According to *2Bar*'s apocalyptic program, to follow the Torah while hoping for the end time is no longer a contradiction in terms.

It may already be evident from my remarks that the interpretation of *2Bar* I wish to present in this study is based on three axioms. Still, it will be helpful here to be more explicit about them and to reflect briefly on my reading.

a. Second Baruch is a Jewish text composed in response to the Roman sacking of Jerusalem in 70 CE

We are better informed about when *2Bar* was written and what prompted its composition than we are in the case of most other apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings. Scholars almost unanimously agree that *2Bar* is a Jewish text, composed during the half-century in between the two failed uprisings, the great Jewish War against Rome (68–73 CE) and the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–35 CE). There is also widespread agreement that *2Bar*'s composition was triggered by the Roman sacking of Jerusalem, to which it directly responds. This already provides us with some important clues about what kind of writing *2Bar* is – or what it is not. *Second Baruch* is not an abstract theological tractate of sorts, the philosophical treatise of a Jewish intellectual who, with no particular crisis in mind, reminisced in broad and systematic terms about the existential questions in life, including defeat and theodicy.[18] Clearly, our author was in no mood to ruminate on metaphors, to address the concerns of his time in the abstract, unaffected, as it were, by the needs of the community to come to terms with the new life circumstances – these are the privileges that are reserved for the modern student of apocalyptic literature. To the contrary, *2Bar* is an elegy written in the heat of the moment by an author who, a few decades after the fact, is still deeply affected by loss and devastation. His is a text dense with emotions of loss, pain, and grief, at times unhinged and, it appears, unplanned. In such a situation we do not expect an exquisite rhetorical performance, a dazzling systematic reflection filled with detached thoughts and abstractions. What we expect are outcry and protest, lamentations and the plea for the heavens to tear open, and this is indeed what we get. As a consequence, my reading of *2Bar* is first of all historical-critical. I seek to understand *2Bar* above all against the background of its time. *Second Baruch* is a Jewish response to the lost war, a text that has captured well the Zeitgeist of its time.

[18] Theodicy in particular has been popular among modern students who look for the central message of *2Bar*. There is a real danger in reducing a complex work such as *2Bar* to one core theme or even to a handful of central topics, when, in fact, the apocalypse by definition is much less focused. The reader is well advised to honor *2Bar* for its complexity and to resist the temptation to read it as if it were a systematic, well-ordered treatise on a specific topic.

b. Second Baruch was composed during the "time between the canons."

To locate *2Bar* in the half-century after the Great Jewish War raises the larger and highly complex question of how we are to understand the caesura caused by the year 70 CE. There is no doubt that the Roman aggression was real and that it caused enormous suffering. The lost war brought much of Israel's religious and political life to an abrupt end: in 68 CE the Qumran community was destroyed; two years later Jerusalem, Israel's religious center and the sacred *axis mundi*, was burned to the ground, the sacrificial cult ceased to exist, the physical symbols of God's protective presence were destroyed, sovereignty and land were lost, and a horrific number of people were enslaved or simply massacred. Death and devastation are not the cultural construct of later times. And yet, since Judaism obviously continued to exist, albeit in new forms, we need to wonder to what extent the failed rebellion against Rome was a moment of discontinuity in early Judaism. Did the destruction of Jerusalem mean the end of the intellectual vibrancy that characterized Judaism of the late Second Temple period in all its diversity? In other words, did the violent and abrupt *physical discontinuity* in Israel lead to an equally abrupt *intellectual discontinuity* as reflected in Israel's literature? And did the varieties of early Jewish thought collapse together with the temple, as is often assumed, and then quickly become homogeneous with the rise of the rabbinic movement?

The Great Jewish War created both the necessity and the space for something genuinely new to arise. In his landmark essay *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn asserts that paradigmatic transitions have both negative and positive implications; he calls these the "destructive–constructive paradigm changes."[19] Kuhn even goes so far as to argue that crises are a necessary precondition for the emergence of novel theories. The creative mind (and here Kuhn thinks of artists and scientists alike) must be able to live in a world out of joint. For Kuhn this is "the essential tension" that propels the human mind forward.

Eventually the events of the war led to a paradigm shift in Judaism, and Judaism never looked the same again. But this shift took centuries to evolve. The disaster of the failed Jewish revolt was initially followed by what Kuhn calls a period of an "essential tension," a time that generated an enormous potential for creativity. We might refer to this moment in Israel's history as "the time between the canons" – *canon* here understood broadly: the biblical period had come to a sudden end, and the rabbinic movements and their new canons were only beginning to evolve.[20] There is now considerable agreement among scholars that

[19] Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1955), esp. "Crisis and the Emergence of Scientific Theories," 66, 79.

[20] Since canons are by definition established at a time that well postdates the writing of the canonized (or rejected) works, authors cannot know the relation of their historical reality to the canon, which will only be determined generations later. In that sense, the expression "the

it took some time for rabbinic influence and ideas to become paramount. In the words of Martin Goodman, "It seems likely that the acceptance of rabbinic authority by Jews in Palestine was gradual and perhaps not even far advanced by A.D. 132 when the outbreak of revolt seems to have had no connection with the rabbinic leadership."[21] *Second Baruch* is the literary product of this window of time *in between*, a period of great intellectual potential that saw the composition of several texts.[22]

At every turn in the book, the author of *2Bar* exhibits his familiarity with Jewish traditions that preceded him. *Second Baruch* is closely connected to the biblical writings, to the literature of the Second Temple period, and particularly to earlier Jewish apocalypses, including many of the ideas we also find expressed in the literature from Qumran. There is no sign here of discontinuity, no sense of disillusion with the (apocalyptic) ideas of his intellectual forebearers that would have led him to consider their ideas obsolete and hence to reject them. To the contrary, we find in *2Bar* much continuity in thought and expression with pre-70 Jewish literature. At the same time, the composition of *2Bar* coincides with the end of a period in early Judaism during which Jewish writers wrote apocalyptic literature. That period began in the third century BCE with the first Enochic apocalypses and had a last apocalyptic renaissance in post-war times in the late first century CE with the composition of *2Bar* and *4 Ezra*. *Second Baruch* thus stands among the last "historical" apocalypses that appeared before this type of writing disappeared for centuries.[23]

The implication of these two observations – the continuity with pre-70 literature and the end of "historical" apocalypses with *2Bar* and *4 Ezra* – is that the break imposed by the Roman aggression was not absolute, at least not in intellectual terms. This raises the much broader question with respect to the year 70 CE about continuity versus discontinuity, a question I cannot address in this

---

time between the canons" may seem anachronistic. I use it here to capture the sense of transition from the biblical to the rabbinic era, the time in between. *2Bar*, like many other pseudepigraphic writings, forms a bridge between the Bible and rabbinic Judaism.

[21] Goodman, "Judea" (2000), 668. See also Reed, *Fallen Angels* (2005), 125, who speaks of a broad "continuum of biblically based religiosity in the second and third centuries CE. … Neither the Rabbinic movement nor proto-orthodox Christianity held the authority to speak for an entire 'religion,' and both took form against a cultural landscape that continued to be characterized by multiple varieties of Judaism." And Boyarin, "Tale of Two Synods" (2000); Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society* (2001), 110–28.

[22] The texts discussed by George Nickelsburg in "Revolt – Destruction – Reconstruction," *Jewish Literature* (2005), 263–99, are Pseudo–Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, *4 Ezra*, *2Bar*, the Apocalypse of Abraham, and the writings of Flavius Josephus. As mentioned above, I would add to these the Gospel of Matthew, another Jewish composition from the end of the first century.

[23] John Collins, "From Prophecy" (1998), 157: "In general, the 'historical' type of apocalypse fades from view in the second century C.E., both in Judaism and in Christianity, although it would reemerge in the Byzantine period and in the Middle Ages."

work. It is clear, however, that *2Bar* stands in direct continuity with the literature of the Second Temple period. In my reading of *2Bar* I will pay particular attention to the numerous lines of continuity that reach from the literature of the Second Temple period beyond the abyss of the Great Jewish War to *2Bar* and that have contributed in significant ways to its composition. *Second Baruch* stands at the end of a roughly four-hundred-year-old apocalyptic tradition that was highly influential during the late Second Temple period. All the while, its emphasis on Torah observance and community anticipate the rise of the rabbinic movement.

c. Second Baruch is a text with several intersecting contexts

Like only a few other Jewish Pseudepigrapha – the Enochic *Book of Parables* in *1 Enoch* 37–71 comes to mind, or the book of Tobit – *2Bar* is an amalgam of diverse traditions that are here woven together into the fabric of the text. Standing at the crossroad of numerous intellectual strands, the author of *2Bar* felt at ease integrating into his apocalyptic program a dizzying array of ideas and theological traditions. *Second Baruch* is a text with many intersecting contexts. The first and most obvious of them is the Hebrew Bible. The choice of Baruch as the book's pseudonymous author and *2Bar*'s fictitious setting in the sixth century BCE firmly anchor the text in the biblical past, particularly in the tradition of Jeremiah. A second context is the literature and thought world of the apocalypse. The author of *2Bar* positioned his work in the tradition of early Jewish apocalyptic literature and made use of many of its conventional themes and genres, while composing a new text that is highly creative and pushes the boundaries of the genre. A third context is the literature of the late Second Temple period, including the Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. The author of *2Bar* shows great familiarity with a wealth of motifs and *theologumena* we know from a wide range of extra-canonical writings, but he tends to use them sparingly, at times alluding to them only in passing, as they fit his apocalyptic agenda. Fourth, *2Bar* has multiple affinities with early rabbinic literature. The author of *2Bar* was a contemporary of the Tannaitic sages, and so it is not surprising that we find numerous parallels with their writings, some of them obvious, such as the persistent emphasis on the centrality of the Torah, and some more subtle and reflected in a single literary motif or exegetical vignette. A fifth context, finally, is the literature of early Christianity. *Second Baruch* is closely related to several early writings now collected in the New Testament, particularly to some of the Epistles of Paul and the Gospel of Matthew.

The intellectual force and genesis of *2Bar*'s apocalyptic program can only be fully appreciated when it is read with this complex web of intertextual affiliations in mind. The author was in constant conversation with these interlocutors,

with those who lived before him and whose writings he had studied and with those who were his contemporaries. He interacts with all of them in multiple ways through the medium of his text.

3. Plan of the Present Monograph

I have structured the present monograph roughly to follow the structure of *2Bar*. Specifically, I was guided by the observation that the author of this apocalypse made use of several sub/genres in different parts of the apocalypse to advance different aspects of his apocalyptic program. The five most important genres in *2Bar* are the prose *narrative*, the revelatory *dialogue* between God and Baruch (including Baruch's prayers), the public *speech*, the symbolic dream *vision*, and the *epistle*. Following my general introduction to *2Bar* in chapter 2 of the monograph, I have devoted one chapter to each of these genres. Each chapter begins with a select reading of the relevant passages in the primary text and then continues to discuss a thematic issue of broader interest as it relates to the passages just analyzed: our analysis of the prose narrative leads to a discussion about the use of the Hebrew Bible in *2Bar*; the revelatory dialogue focuses on the oral registers of textual composition and transmission; the public speeches raise the question of *2Bar*'s place in post-70 Judaism; the dream visions are part of *2Bar*'s eschatology; and the epistle brings up the issue of apocalyptic epistolography and the concern for the Diaspora.

Chapter 2, titled "Prolegomena," is an introduction to *2Bar*. In its first part I discuss the most pertinent introductory matters concerning *2Bar*. This will lay the foundation for my own reading of *2Bar* throughout the book. In the latter half of the chapter I provide an overview of the modern history of scholarship on the apocalypse since its rediscovery in the 1860s. In chapter 3, "Inhabiting the Biblical Space: *Second Baruch* and the Jewish Bible," I turn to the text of *2Bar* itself and discuss its narrative frame, or *Rahmenerzählung*. I begin with a close reading of *2Bar*'s narrative prologue and then retrace the literary history of the Baruch legend, from the book of Jeremiah through the apocryphal book of Baruch to *2Bar*. This leads directly to a broader reflection on the use of the Jewish Bible in *2Bar*, including its effective use of pseudepigraphy, which I interpret here as a form of cultural memory. Chapter 4, "An Argument among Unequals: God in Dialogue with Baruch," looks at the use of the dialogue as a form of apocalyptic discourse. As an oral form of communication, the revelatory dialogue, the preferred subgenre of our author, points to the importance of oral performance in *2Bar*. This chapter consists of two parts: it begins with an analysis of the dialogue itself and then moves to a discussion of the interrelationship of the apocalyptic twin sisters, *2Bar* and *4 Ezra*, an unsolved conundrum in Pseudepigrapha studies. The chapter as a whole draws

on recent studies of performative literature and oral composition. These studies not only help to explain aspects in *2Bar* that otherwise would go unnoticed; they also provide the key to unlocking the riddle of the relationship of *2Bar* and *4 Ezra*. In chapter 5, "Speaking Publicly: The Place of *Second Baruch* in post-70 CE Judaism," I turn to a topic central to the scholarly debate on *2Bar*, its place in post-war Jewish literature. As usual, I begin with a close reading of the text, in this case of Baruch's three public speeches. The speeches combine traditional, Deuteronomic theology with apocalyptic thought, which raises the question of the nature and function of the Mosaic Torah in this apocalyptic context. Next I argue that, in spite of frequent claims to the contrary, *2Bar* is not a dissident document. It is a document written about three decades after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem by an intellectual who hoped that this Torah-centered, apocalyptic program for post-70 Judaism would prevail for the whole Jewish community. The chapter ends with a discussion of *2Bar*'s relationship with other post-70 Jewish literature. Chapter 6, "Time Made Visible: *Second Baruch*'s Eschatology," analyzes *2Bar*'s ingenious conceptualization of time. It consists of two parts: it begins with a look at Baruch's two dream visions, which are among the longest pericopes in *2Bar*. From there I move to an analysis of *2Bar*'s eschatology in more general terms and analyze it under three aspects: the consummation of time, including a section on the language of time, *2Bar*'s messianic expectations, and the hope for the resurrection of the dead. The chapter is followed by an excursus in which I compare *2Bar* and the writings of two authors from the New Testament, Paul and Matthew. The close affinities in thought and language that exist between them raise the broader question of the relationship between Jewish and Christian writings in the first century and whether such a distinction between "Jewish" and "Christian" as fixed religious categories is not an imposition that obscures more than it illumines. Chapter 7, finally, "Apocalyptic Epistolography," is devoted to the epistle of Baruch, the last text unit in *2Bar*. Here I argue that the epistle is an integral part of the apocalypse and that it should be understood as the paraenetic summation of some of its main themes. It forms an extension to Baruch's public speeches and reaffirms the author's concern for Israel at large, including the Diaspora.

Chapter 2

Prolegomena

Since Antonio Maria Ceriani re/discovered the *Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch* a century and a half ago in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, the book has proven somewhat unruly. In spite of some considerable efforts invested by some of the finest interpreters of early Jewish apocalypses, modern students have failed to reach a consensus on many fundamental matters, including *2Bar*'s original language, its date of composition, and its literary structure – a testimony of the complex nature of *2Bar* and the obvious challenges involved in reading it.

The present chapter consists of two parts. In its first part I discuss *2Bar*'s chief introductory questions. The purpose of my discussion is twofold: first, to bring some clarity to the complex problems of interpreting *2Bar*, problems that have defied an easy solution, and second, to lay the interpretive groundwork for the exegesis that follows in the remainder of the book. The second part of the chapter provides a brief summary of the modern history of reading *2Bar*. The overview will allow me to situate my own work on *2Bar* within the modern history of its interpretation and, to a lesser extent, within the history of scholarship on early Jewish apocalyptic literature more broadly.[1]

1. Introducing *Second Baruch*

a. Text and Transmission

The oldest complete and most reliable text witness to *2Bar* is a manuscript written in Syriac from the Ambrosian Library, the famed Bibliotheca Ambrosiana B 21 Inf. (7a1), fols. 257a–265b. It forms the basis for all modern translations of *2Bar*.

[1] See the short introductions to *2Bar* by Renan, "L'Apocalypse de Baruch" (1877); Dillmann, "Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament" (1891), 1965; Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (1896), vii-lxxxiv, and "II Baruch" (1913), 470–80; Ginzberg, "Apocalypse of Baruch (Syriac)" (1902); Schürer, *History of the Jewish People* III,2 (1911 [1987]), 750–56; Violet, *Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch* (1924), lvi-xcvi; Plöger, "Baruchschriften, apokryphe" (1957); Eissfeldt, *Old Testament: An Introduction* (1965), 627–30; Schmid/Speyer, "Baruch" (1974); Klijn, "Syrische Baruch-Apokalypse" (1976), 107–22, and "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch" (1983), 615–20; Davila, *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha* (2005), 126–31; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible* (1981), 281–87, and (2005), 277–85; Murphy, "Syrische Baruchapokalypse" (1989); Charlesworth, "Baruch, Book of 2 (Syriac)" (1992);

The manuscript, the oldest biblical manuscript in Syriac known to exist, dates from the sixth or seventh century CE. The order of books in the relevant section of the manuscript is as follows:[2]

1–2 Chronicles
2 Baruch
4 Ezra
Ezra/Nehemiah
1–4 Maccabees
Josephus, *War* 6

In 1866, Antonio M. Ceriani, curator of the library in Milan, produced a Latin translation of the apocalypse, which was reproduced five years later by Otto Fridolin Fritzsche.[3] In 1871 Ceriani published the Syriac text of *2Bar*.[4] From 1876 through 1881, Ceriani produced a photolithographic reproduction of the entire manuscript.[5] The Syriac text was then published again in 1907 by Kmoskó in the *Patrologia syriaca*.[6]

The first English annotated translations were prepared by Robert Henry Charles, the first in 1896 and then, with only a few corrections and some additional textual emendations, in 1913, the latter as part of his two-volume *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*.[7] At the same time, two German translations appeared, in 1900 by Victor Ryssel in Emil Kautzsch's *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments* and in 1924 by Bruno Violet, together with a translation of *4* Ezra.[8] Violet's translation includes detailed an-

---

Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination* (1998), 212–25; Wright, "Baruch, Books of" (2000); Brock, "L'Apocalypse Syriaque" (2000), and Henze, "2 (Syriac) Baruch" (2010).

[2] See Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque* (1969), 1:33–56, for a detailed description of *2Bar*'s manuscript tradition. No other Syriac biblical manuscript contains *2Bar*.

As holds true for Jewish Pseudepigrapha in general, *2Bar* has been preserved and copied exclusively by Christian scribes, and not a single Jewish manuscript of the text survives. The Christian transmission of Jewish texts has recently been the topic of several studies: Kraft, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity" (1994), and "Pseudepigrapha and Christianity" (2001); Knibb, "Christian Adoption and Transmission" (2001); Davila, "(How) Can We Tell" (2005) and *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha* (2005), 2–9. Robert Kraft's methodological proposal to begin with the Christian manuscript evidence and to consider a pseudepigraphon Christian unless it can be proven to be Jewish has been adopted by several scholars, including David Satran, *Biblical Prophets* (1995), and Marinus de Jonge, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (2003). The Syriac text of *2Bar* in the Ambrosian manuscript shows no unambiguous signs of Christian interpolations or reworkings.

[3] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch" (1866); Fritzsche, *Libri apocryphi Veteris Testamenti* (1871), 654–79.

[4] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch syriacae" (1871).

[5] Ceriani, *Translatio Syra Pescitto Veteris Testamenti ex codice Ambrosiano* (1876–81).

[6] Kmoskó, "Liber Apocalypseos Baruch filii Neriae" (1907).

[7] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (1896), reviewed by Schulthess, "The Apocalypse of Baruch" (1897). And Charles, "II Baruch" (1913).

[8] Ryssel, "Die syrische Baruchapokalypse" (1900); and Violet, *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt* (1924).

notations and is followed by a list of textual notes by Hugo Greßmann ("Textvorschläge für Esra und Baruch").[9] In 1969 Pierre Maurice Bogaert wrote a critical commentary on *2Bar* – the only complete commentary on *2Bar* to date – which includes a detailed introduction and the first French translation.[10]

Whereas *2Bar* as a whole survives in Syriac in a single manuscript only, the Epistle of Baruch (*2Bar* 78–87) was transmitted independently and is attested in thirty-eight manuscripts.[11] In 1973 Sven Dedering produced a critical edition of chapters 1–77 as part of the *Leiden Peshiṭta* edition. To Dedering's edition Willem Baars added the *Conspectus emendationum*, a list of suggested emendations.[12] Because of the significant differences in the manuscript tradition, Dedering decided to leave the epistle for a later date; that edition still awaits publication. The epistle was first edited by Robert Henry Charles in 1896 as part of his initial English rendering of *2Bar*. Charles based his translation on Ceriani's edition of the Syriac text but for his critical edition of the epistle made use of several additional manuscripts. His Syriac edition of the epistle was reproduced in 1907 by Mihály Kmoskó in the *Patrologia syriaca*.[13] A Syriac edition of the epistle is also found in the edition of the Arabic text of *2Bar* (see below).[14] Recently, Daniel Gurtner prepared a critical edition of the entire Syriac text of *2Bar*, including the Epistle. Gurtner's book also includes concordances of the Syriac and Greek versions.[15]

The Greek version of *2Bar* is attested in a single fragment only. *Second Baruch* 12.1–13.2 (verso) and 13.11–14.3 (recto) survive on both sides of Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 403. The papyrus dates from the late fourth or fifth century

---

[9] Greßmann, "Zur Baruch-Apokalypse," (1924), 344–50.

[10] Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque* (1969), 2 vols; reviewed by Grant, "Review of Pierre Bogaert" (1970); and Strugnell, review of Bogaert (1970). Bogaert used new textual evidence from two of the three newly discovered West Syrian lectionaries from the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. The manuscripts are British Museum MS Add. 14,686 (dated 1255), with the Syriac text of *2Bar* 44.9–15; MS Add. 14,687 (dated 1256), with 72.1–73.2; and MS 77 in the A. Konath Library in Kerala, India (dated 1423), with 44.9–15 and 72.1–73.2. See Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch" (1973), iii; and Lied, *Other Lands of Israel* (2008), 22.

[11] Peshiṭta Institute, *List of Old Testament Peshiṭta Manuscripts* (1961), 99; Baars, "Neue Textzeugen" (1963); Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch* (2003), 1–33; Gurtner, *Second Baruch* (2009), 9–10.

[12] Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch" (1973), i-iv and 1–50; Baars, "Conspectus emendationum," 46–50.

[13] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (1896), 124–67; Kmoskó, "Liber Apocalypseos Baruch filii Neriae" (1907).

[14] Leemhuis, Klijn, and van Gelder, *Arabic Text of the Apocalypse of Baruch* (1986), 116–37. The editors explain, "In the case of chapters 78–87 the Syriac text of the final Epistle of the Milan Manuscript has been added in a fourth column (pp. 116ff.). The footnotes to these chapters contain also the variant readings of this text compared with all the others (*ceteri*) which, of course, have been compared with the Arabic text" (4). That Syriac text differs significantly from Charles's edition.

[15] Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text* (2009). See also his on-line critical edition at http://ocp.acadiau.ca/index.html?Mois.

and was first published in 1903.[16] The text includes *2Bar* 13.1, which mentions Baruch by name. Bogaert included a new edition of the Greek fragment in his 1969 commentary.[17] The fragment confirms the notice in the superscription of the Ambrosian manuscript that the Syriac is a translation of the Greek.

In 1986, Frerich Leemhuis, Albertus Klijn, and Geert van Gelder published an Arabic version of *2Bar*.[18] Willem Baars had discovered this tenth- or eleventh-century Arabic manuscript in 1974 in the library of the St. Catherine Monastery at Mount Sinai. According to its editors, the manuscript, which includes chapters 3–87 of *2Bar*, is "a translation of a Syriac version closely related to the existing Syriac text."[19]

In addition, there are three contested quotations of, or perhaps better allusions to, *2Bar*, two in Greek and one in Latin.[20] The two Greek quotations are found in the *Epistle of Barnabas*, a quote of *2Bar* 61.7 in *Barn*. 11.9, and of *2Bar* 32.4 in *Barn*. 16.6. The texts in question read as follows.[21]

2Bar 61.7	And the land, which found mercy at that time because its inhabitants did not sin, more than all the countries was praised. And the city Zion then ruled over all countries and places.[22]
Barn. 11.9	Καὶ πάλιν ἕτερος προφήτης λέγει. Καὶ ἦν ἡ γῆ τοῦ ᾽Ιακὼβ ἐπαινουμένη παρὰ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν. [And again another prophet said, "And the land of Jacob was praised above the whole earth."]
2Bar 32.4	And after this it [Zion] must be renewed in glory and perfected forever.[23]
Barn.16.6	Ζητήσωμεν δέ, εἰ ἔστιν ναὸς θεοῦ; ἔστιν, ὅπου αὐτὸς λέγει ποεῖν καὶ καταρτίζειν. Γέγραπται γάρ. Καὶ ἔσται, τῆς ἑβδομάδος συντελουμένης οἰκοδομηθήσεται ναὸς θεοῦ ἐνδόξως ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου. Εὑρίσκω οὖν, ὅτι ἔστιν ναός.

[16] Grenfell and Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (1903), 3–7. The Greek is reproduced by Violet, *Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch* (1924), 219–23; Denis, *Fragmenta Pseudepigraphorum* (1970), 118–20; Denis, *Concordance grecque des Pseudépigraphes d'Ancien Testament* (1987), 905. See also Aland, *Repertorium der griechischen Christlichen Papyri* (1976), 367.

[17] Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque* (1969), 1:41–43. Note Bogaert's approving remark about the work of the two original editors, Grenfell and Hunt: "Aussi leur transcription mérite-t-elle d'être reproduite ici sans changement, car il se peut que le texte qu'ils lisaient ait été moins mutilé qu'il ne l'est aujourd'hui, en particulier sur les bords" (40).

[18] Leemhuis, Klijn, and van Gelder, *Arabic Text of the Apocalypse of Baruch* (1986).

[19] Ibid., vii. More studies on the Arabic version have since appeared: Koningsveld, "An Arabic Manuscript of the Apocalypse of Baruch" (1975); Leemhuis, "Arabic Version of the Apocalypse" (1989); Drint, "Some Notes on the Arabic Versions" (1999); and Klijn, "Character of the Arabic Version" (2002).

[20] Already Schürer, *History of the Jewish People* III,2 (1911 [1987]), 753–54.

[21] The Greek text is taken from Prigent, *Épître de Barnabé* (1971), 164, 190–94.

[22] .ܡܢܝܚܬ ܗܘ ܒܗ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܕܫܪܝܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܕܚܛܝ ܠܐ ܗܘ ܒܗ ܒܙܒܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܕܫܪܝ ܥܠ ܟܠ ܐܪܥܐ ܘܐܬܪ ܨܝܘܢ ܗܝ ܕܫܪܝ ܥܠ ܟܠ ܐܪܥܐ ܘܥܠ ܟܠ ܐܬܪ ܘܐܬܪ.

[23] .ܡܬܚܕܬ ܗܝ ܘܡܬܬܩܢ ܒܫܘܒܚܐ ܘܒܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܕܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ.