

Use, Authority and Exegesis of Mikra in the Writings of Josephus

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Josephus' Biblical Text

Second only perhaps to his significance as a historian' is Josephus' importance for our knowledge of the text and interpretation of the Bible in the first century. The question as to which biblical text or texts he had before him is complex, however, since there seems good reason to believe that he had access to three texts, one in Hebrew, one in Greek, and one in Aramaic; and his use of one or more of these texts appears to have varied from book to book in his paraphrase of the Bible in the first half of the *Antiquities*. The fact, moreover, that in Rome, where Josephus composed his *Antiquities*, Jews had settled in large numbers from all over the Roman Empire meant that Josephus, if he had any contact at all with these Jews, was brought in touch with various texts, at least in Greek, and diverse periphrases of these texts.

Strangely, despite Josephus' importance for the biblical text, no systematic study of Josephus' biblical *Vorlage* has been made, with the exception of Mez's study for Joshua, Judges, and Samuel. Assertions range from the statement of Tachauer that Josephus employed only a Hebrew text to that of Schalit² that Josephus used only the Greek Bible. The overwhelming majority of scholars,³ however, have taken an intermediate position, suggesting that Josephus used both, in addition to, perhaps, an Aramaic *targum*. What complicates the matter is that apparently at the time of Josephus there were a number of divergent Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible; and the presence of proto-Lucianic readings in the Dead Sea fragments of Samuel, in Josephus, and in his presumed contemporary Pseudo-Philo, would seem to confirm this situation.

The only published attempt to study this question for even a portion of the Pentateuch is Shutt's examination⁴ of the biblical names in Josephus' version of Genesis. He notes that in four cases Josephus' names follow the Hebrew text

¹ See Attridge, 'Josephus and His Works' 185-232.

² Mez, *Die Bibel*; Tachauer, *Verhältniss*; Schalit, *Namenwörterbuch*, 108. S. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*, 36, n. 45, concludes that of the twenty proofs cited by Schalit, 'Introduction', xxvii-xxxv, for Josephus' use of the Septuagint, only four are more than conjecture.

³ E.g., H. Bloch, *Quellen*; Schürer, *Geschichte* 1, 80; Rahlfs, *Septuagintastudien*, 3, 80; Thackeray, *Josephus*, 81.

⁴ Shutt, 'Biblical Names', 167-82.

rather than the Septuagint, in twenty-five cases he follows the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew, in six cases his discussions or interpretations of names follow the Hebrew rather than the Septuagint, in fourteen cases his discussions follow the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew, in twenty cases **Josephus** is independent of both, and in sixteen other cases he is apparently independent. This would hardly support the conclusion of **Schalit**⁵ that **Josephus** used only the Greek Bible. Moreover, **Shutt** inexplicably does not consider systematically the various manuscripts of the Septuagint or the possibility that the gap between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text may not, to judge from the Dead Sea fragments, have been so great in **Josephus**' day as in our own. Furthermore, we may suggest that a Greek form in proper names may reflect the fact that **Josephus** is writing in Greek or that he or his alleged literary assistants Hellenized the form of Hebrew proper names. Just as the Latin **Josephus**, despite the fact that it is approximately half a millennium older than our earliest extant Greek manuscript, is virtually valueless for names, as **Rahlfs**⁶ has correctly noted, since it often adopts forms in current usage, so the choice of proper names as a litmus paper test of the text employed by **Josephus** is particularly unfortunate; such names, as we may see in the text of **Philo** as well, have often been modified by later copyists in order to conform with their own text of the Septuagint.

KNOWLEDGE OF A HEBREW TEXT

One would assume that since **Josephus** was born and brought up in Jerusalem (Life 7-8) and since at an early age he made such great progress in his education (Life 8) that he far excelled his compatriots in Jewish learning (which was presumably centered on knowledge of the Tora in Hebrew; cf. *Ant.* 20:263), he knew well the Hebrew text, which he regarded as having been fixed unalterably (*Ag.Ap.* 1:42) long before. The fact, however, that the *Letter of Aristeas* (30) seems to refer to corrupt Hebrew manuscripts of the Pentateuch and that the Dead Sea fragments from the Pentateuch do not seldom disagree with the so-called Masoretic Text may indicate that the Hebrew text available to **Josephus** was different from ours. Be that as it may, according to **Josephus** (*Ag.Ap.* 2:178), any Jew – and this obviously included **Josephus** himself –, if asked about the laws, would repeat them all more readily than his own name. Every week, he says (*Ag.Ap.* 2: 175), Jews – and this again must have included **Josephus** – assemble to listen to a portion of the Law. Moreover, **Josephus** received from Titus (Life 418) a gift of sacred books, presumably a Tora scroll; and he may have had this with him in Rome when he wrote the *Antiquities*. Hence **Josephus** would have had an advantage over Paul, who often cites the Bible but with no manuscript at hand (cf. 2 Tim 4:13). It is hard, however, to prove at any given point what text **Josephus** is relying upon, inasmuch as he is

⁵ Cf. **Schalit**, *Namenwörterbuch*.

⁶ **Rahlfs**, *Septuagintastudien* 3. Y 1, n. 1.

usually paraphrasing rather than translating and since he is elaborating as well.' We must not discount the possibility that **Josephus** is perhaps following a Jewish tradition independent of both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint, as we may infer from his agreement with **Pseudo-Philo** even in some places where their views are found neither in the Masoretic Text nor in the Septuagint.

USE OF A GREEK TEXT

As to the likelihood that **Josephus** would use a Greek text of the Bible, there would naturally be an attraction in doing so because he is writing in Greek; but one would expect, *a priori*, that **Josephus** would shy away from employing the Septuagint because, despite **Pseudo-Longinus**' compliment in his *On the Sublime* (9:9), it is stylistically inferior to the classical authors whom **Josephus** quite obviously preferred and because it would be readily understood only by those who already were acquainted with the Bible in its original language. Indeed, **Kennedy** has remarked that **Josephus** is more persisent than any other writer of Hellenistic Greek in his use of classical Greek words, particularly from **Herodotus**, the tragedians, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and, above all, **Thucydides**, even to the extent of using rare words employed by these authors. The very fact, we may add, that **Josephus** sought assistants (*Ag.Ap.* 1:50) to help him with his Greek style and that he declares (*Ant.* 20:263) that he laboured strenuously to partake of the realm of Greek prose and poetry, would make him hesitant to use the Septuagint as a source, especially since he was trying, quite obviously, in his *Antiquities* to reach a cultured Greek audience and to render the biblical narrative respectable in their eyes. Moreover, the very fact that he is paraphrasing the Bible in Greek would seem to indicate that he hoped to improve on that rendering; otherwise there would hardly have been much point in a new version. Hence, it is only where the style of the Septuagint is more polished, as in the additions to Esther or in 1 Esdras, that one would expect him to adhere to its text.

And yet, the very fact that **Josephus** cites the Septuagint (*Ant.* 1:10-12) as a precedent (it really was not a very good precedent, inasmuch as it had been done upon demand of a head of state rather than for non-Jews generally) for presenting the history of the Jews to the non-Jewish Greek world and that he devotes so much space (*Ant.* 12:11-118) to his paraphrase of the account in the *Letter of Aristeas* pertaining to the Septuagint would indicate its importance to him, especially since one would hardly have expected, *a priori*, that **Josephus**, in a work emphasizing the political and military history of the Jews, would give

⁷ Thus, for **Ginzberg**, *Legends* 6,130, n. 764, to assert that he has proof that **Josephus** was definitely relying upon a Hebrew text because **Josephus** declares (*Ant.* 4:125) that Balaam fell upon his face (πεσὼν δ' ἐπὶ στόμα), where the Hebrew of Num 24:4 and 16 has *nofel* ('falling'), whereas the Septuagint on these passages speaks of Balaam as having a vision of God in his sleep, is unwarranted, since it is not clear that **Josephus** is, in fact, here expounding this verse.

⁸ **Kennedy**, *Sources*, 56-57.

so much attention to a subject which, strictly speaking, belongs in cultural and religious history. And yet, if he had ignored the Septuagint it would have been viewed as an indication that he was trying to hide something because of the tremendous regard in which that version was held. However, even when Josephus agrees with the Septuagint, there is no guarantee that this is because he had the text of the Septuagint before him, since such an agreement might well be due to an exegetical tradition which he happened to know and which had been incorporated earlier by the translators of the Septuagint. Moreover, of the thirteen changes listed by the rabbis (B. *T. Megilla* 9a, *Soferim* 1:8) as having been made deliberately by the translators when they rendered the text into Greek, only four can be found in any current manuscript of the Septuagint. This would seem to imply that **Josephus** might well have had a text different from any of the two thousand manuscripts of the Septuagint that we now have. Finally, the biblical texts discovered at Qumran indicate that the differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text were not as great as we had previously supposed, even in sectarian circles. It is **generally** difficult, we may add, because **Josephus** is usually not translating but paraphrasing, to discover which manuscript tradition of the Septuagint he is following. **Thackeray**⁹ has noted that of the thirteen instances where we can determine which manuscript he followed, he adheres to the Alexandrinus ten times and the Vaticanus three times; this, we may comment, would seem to indicate that the manuscript before him was the direct ancestor of neither but rather belonged to a still different tradition.

USE OF AN ARAMAIC TARGUM

A third possible source for Josephus's paraphrase was the Aramaic **targum**. Aramaic was, after all, Josephus' primary language, as it was for the Jews generally in Palestine at his time. While it is true that the earliest extant **targum** for the Pentateuch, that of Onkelos, dates from the second century C.E., there can be little doubt that the practice of translating the Bible into the Aramaic vernacular in the synagogue is much older; and the fact that its origin is attributed to Ezra (fifth century B.C.E.) by Rav (third century C.E., B. *T. Megilla* 3a) meant that it had the sanctity and authority associated with the great name of Ezra. Indeed, if we may judge from **Philo** (*Life of Moses* 2:5, 26), the Septuagint was translated from 'Chaldean', that is Aramaic (though admittedly most scholars understand this to refer to Hebrew); and it is thus that Azariah dei Rossi, in his sixteenth-century masterwork *Me'or 'Einayim*, explains the 'errors' of the Septuagint. The very fact, moreover, that the targumim permit themselves considerable latitude in paraphrasing and expounding the text must have attracted them to **Josephus** in his task of rephrasing the Bible for his Greek audience. If, indeed, as N. Cohen¹⁰ has remarked, **Josephus** is much freer in

⁹ Thackeray, 'Josephus', 461-73.

¹⁰ N. Cohen, 'Josephus and Scripture', 31 1-32.

vocabulary, style, order, and content in his rendering of biblical material in the first five books of the *Antiquities* as against Books 6-11, it may well be that a reason for this is the availability of targumim for these earlier books. The same phenomenon of greater freedom in paraphrasing and commenting on the Tora may be remarked in **Philo** and in rabbinic literature, presumably because it was the Tora which was read and expounded each week in the synagogue. Indeed, R. Bloch¹¹ has even gone so far as to declare that the aggadic source for Josephus' paraphrase of the Bible was an Aramaic translation; but we may object that this theory will hardly account for such vast expansions of the biblical material as Josephus' account of Moses' campaign in Ethiopia (*Ant.* 2:238-253).

The examples cited by those who postulate the use of a **targum** by Josephus usually center on names and **etymologies**.¹² Thus, for the name Reuben Josephus has 'Ρουβήλος,¹³ reflecting the spelling of the Syriac (which is closely akin to Aramaic). Such a coincidence is admittedly not likely to be due to the fact that **Josephus** spoke Aramaic, because if so, we may ask, why is it so relatively rare? Moreover, the spelling 'Ρουβήλος may be due simply to a scribal error, with *lambda* substituted for *nu*, which in uncials has only one extra stroke. As to etymologies, they were probably popular lore and well known and hence of no real significance, or they may be derived from the kind of **onomasticon** such as **Rokeah**¹⁴ believes was the source of **Philo's** etymologies. As to Aramaic transliterations, such as σάββατα (*Ant.* 1:33), πάσχα (*Ant.* 2:313), and ἄσαρθά (*Ant.* 3:252), these are merely indications that **Josephus** spoke Aramaic. Moreover, despite the importance of geography for Josephus' work, he seems to have been unaware, as **Epstein**¹⁵ has noted, of the extensive geographical knowledge embodied in the **Targum** of Pseudo-Yonatan, which, to be sure, though written down later, was probably extant, at least in part, in oral form at a much earlier period.

There are a number of individual passages which seem to point to a targumic source:

- 1) the change, for example, from 'spirit of God' (Gen 1:2) to 'a breath from above' (*Ant.* 1:27), presumably to avoid the anthropomorphism;
- 2) the delay in Cain's punishment (Gen 4:13) as a reward for his sacrifice and prayer (*Ant.* 1:58);
- 3) the insertion of the phrase 'at the beginning' (*Ant.* 1:110) parallel to **Targum Onkelos** on Gen 11:2;

¹¹ R. Bloch, 'Note méthodologique', 194-227.

¹² See **Thackeray**, *Josephus*, 81-82, Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xxi-xxiv; and Schalit, 'Introduction' xxxi-xxxii.

¹³ See **Thackeray**, *Josephus*, 78; and N. Cohen, *Jewish Names*, 89-94.

¹⁴ Rokeah, 'A New Onomasticon Fragment', 70-82. Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 240, notes that Jerome, in his *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, speaks of a Greek predecessor (which he ascribes to **Philo**) in his preface.

¹⁵ See Epstein, 'Les Chamites', 82-98.

- 4) the identification of Iscah with Sarai (Targum Pseudo-Yonatan on Gen 11:29; *Ant.* 1:151;
- 5) the placement of the king of Elam at the head of the coalition in first rather than in third place (*Genesis Apocryphon* 21:23; *Ant.* 1: 171-72);
- 6) the stress on Isaac's merit and on his voluntary self-sacrifice (*Ant.* 1:222-36);
- 7) the immediate information (*Ant.* 2:2 and Targum Pseudo-Yonatan and Neofiti), rather than its postponement, (Gen 25:34) that Jacob was preparing a dish of lentils;
- 8) the chronology of the death of Rebecca (*Ant.* 1:345; Targum Pseudo-Yonatan on Gen 35:8);
- 9) the comparison of the children of Jacob to the stars of heaven (*Ant.* 4:115-17; Fragmentary Targum on Num 23:10);¹⁶
- 10) the description of the manna as being 'sent down' (*Ant.* 3:26, 31, 32; Targum Pseudo-Yonatan on Exod 16:13ff.) and the complaint of the Israelites about the manna (*Ant.* 3:296; Targum Pseudo-Yonatan on Num 11:7);
- 11) King Ahab's going with bare feet (*Ant.* 8:362; targum on 1 Kgs 21:27); and
- 12) Jehu's quiet driving (*Ant.* 9:117; targum on 2 Kgs 9:20).¹⁸

The number of such instances is not great, however, and may reflect a Greek version which is now lost to us, parallel to that alluded to by the rabbis (B. *T. Megilla* 9a, *Soferim* 1:8).¹⁹

JOSEPHUS' SOURCES FOR THE VARIOUS BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

If we now turn to the evidence for Josephus' biblical text for the various books of the Bible, there seems to be strong evidence that Josephus' main source for the Pentateuch was a Hebrew text and/or a targumic paraphrase in **Aramaic**.²⁰ This is what we would expect in view of the fact that in the synagogue Josephus would have heard the Hebrew text with, in all probability, an accompanying targum. There is, however, a greater degree of agreement between the Hebrew and Greek texts for the Pentateuch than for other books of the Bible, on the one hand, while Josephus himself is freer in his paraphrase of the Pentateuch than he is of the later books of the Bible, on the other hand; and hence it is difficult to be sure whether he is using a Hebrew or a Greek text at any given point. While it is true that in Genesis there appear to be more instances where Josephus seems to be following the Septuagint rather than a Hebrew text, in some cases these are proper names, where, as we have noted, corruption could most readily have

¹⁶ See Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 147.

¹⁷ See Malina, *Palestinian Manna Tradition*, 54-55.

¹⁸ Thackeray, *Josephus*, 82.

¹⁹ Gaster, *Asatir*, 61-80. As Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xi, n. 3, has pointed out, many of the alleged parallels are far-fetched, and some of them are also to be found in rabbinic midrashim.

²⁰ For a different position, see Attridge, 'Josephus and His Works', 211.

taken place, in view of the well-known tendency of copyists to bring the text into consonance with the Septuagint.²¹ Alternatively, he may actually be adopting the language of Philo, as we see in his paraphrase of the creation chapter, where he closely follows Philo's *On the Creation*, which, to be sure, is clearly indebted to the Septuagint;²² or he may be indebted to a *glossary of terms*, such as we know from papyri existed; or he may be reflecting a Palestinian tradition which the translators, who allegedly came from Palestine, had incorporated into their version and which Josephus knew independently; or he may have independently adopted some incorrect translation of a Hebrew term;²³ or, he may have arrived at a given translation into Greek because the Greek word was really the best way to render a given term;²⁴ or the apparent dependence may be due to a scribal error.²⁵ On the other hand, when he seems to be following the Hebrew, the renderings may simply be synonyms for the Septuagint's words (and Josephus, as we can see from his paraphrase of the *Letter of Aristeas*, is almost pathological about avoiding the usage of the same word as that found in his source); or he may be using words that are more classical. In any case, that Josephus is not following the Septuagint (or, at least, our Septuagint) blindly is clear from the fact that where (*Ant.* 4:274) he renders Deut 22:1, he definitely disagrees with the Septuagint's version that declares that a domesticated animal which is found wandering on the road is considered a lost object, whereas Josephus and the Mishna (*Bava Metsia* 2:9) assert that it is not.

Rajak's collection²⁶ of the instances for the book of Exodus (*Ant.* 2:206-3:207) where we can apparently see whether Josephus used a Hebrew or a

²¹ Hence, the finding of Shutt, 'Biblical Names', 169, that in four instances Josephus follows the Masoretic Text, whereas in twenty-five cases he follows the Septuagint for names is of questionable significance, especially when we consider that in twenty cases his spelling of the names is independent of both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint. Similarly, the fact that in six cases Josephus appears to follow the Masoretic Text in his statements and interpretations of names, whereas in fourteen instances he is following the Septuagint, has doubtful significance, since there are sixteen cases where his statements are independent of both. In any case, the fact that Josephus is writing in Greek and that he generally hellenizes proper names may account for some of these.

²² Hence, the fact that Josephus (*Ant.* 1:27) writes, *ἐν ἀρχῇ ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν*, which seems to be derived from the Septuagint's version of Gen 1: 1, may actually, in view of the obvious debt of Josephus to this tractate of Philo for his account of creation, be derived from Philo, *Op.* 26.

²³ Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 232, cites as an example the rendering of *sar ha-tuba&m* (Gen 39: 1) as *ἀρχιμαγειρος* ('chief cook') by the Septuagint and *ἐπὶ τῶν . . . μαγειρῶν* ('chief of the cooks') by Josephus (*Ant.* 2:39) as an instance when both may have independently rendered the original Hebrew in an incorrect, though literal, interpretation, a mistake also made by the Samaritan version.

²⁴ Cf. Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 237. S. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*, 36, notes that Hölscher, 'Josephus', in his collection, cols. 1953-54, of verbal coincidences between the first book of the *Antiquities* and the Septuagint is remarkable for the paucity and insignificance of the list.

²⁵ E.g., as noted by Franxman, *Genesis*, 87, n. 45, Josephus' *θαλλὸν ἐλαίας*, 'branch of olive' (*Ant.* 1:92), which seems to be dependent upon the Septuagint's *φύλλον ἐλαίας κάρφος*, 'a leaf of olive, a twig', against the Masoretic Text's 'olive leaf' (Gen 8: 11), may actually be due to a scribal error of *θαλλόν* for *φύλλον*.

²⁶ Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 238, and her Appendix V.

Greek *Vorlage* yields similarly inconclusive results. If we compare, as I²⁷ have done, the names and the order of the stones on the breastplate of the high priest (Exod 28:17-20) with Josephus' two versions (*War* 5:234 and *Ant.* 3:168), we find that the two versions agree with the names in the Hebrew in nine or possibly ten out of twelve instances, and with the Septuagint in all twelve instances; and when it comes to the order of the stones, **Josephus** agrees with the Masoretic Text in only four instances in the *War* and in only five or possibly six cases in the *Antiquities*, whereas he agrees with the Septuagint's order in five instances in the *War* and in five or six cases in the *Antiquities*. What is, however, most significant is that **Josephus** disagrees with both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint in the order of five of the stones. Hence, Josephus, who was himself a priest, may well have had a text different from both, or he may have used a glossary, or he may be writing from memory, or he may be paraphrasing freely.²⁸ Again, as in *Ant.* 3: 102, where his interpretation of *shittim* (Exod 25:5) coincides with the Septuagint's ἄσηπτα ('not liable to decay'), the explanation may be that he had access to a glossary or that he knew a tradition that this was the meaning of the term; or he may have asked one of the rabbis who constantly visited Rome to ask favours of the **Emperor**.²⁹

Whereas for Joshua **Josephus** seems to be closer to the Masoretic Text, in Judges and Ruth he is quite free in his rendering of the biblical text, perhaps, as Thackeray and others³⁰ have suggested, because he was using a *targum*. In Samuel, according to Mez and Thackeray,³¹ he is generally aligned with the Septuagint in the *proto-Lucianic* version, against the Masoretic Text, though Thackeray³² also postulates that he employed a Semitic text as a collateral source, as one can see, for example, in Josephus' rendering (*Ant.* 6:330) of **Endor** (1 Sam 28:7) as the city of Dor, a reading apparently due to a text that mistakenly had 'irdōr for 'endōr,³³ and in Josephus' εἰς 'Ρεγάν (*Ant.* 6:325) for the Hebrew *Yisra'el*, which was presumably corrupted into IECPAEΛAN and then into EIC PAEAAAN and finally into EIC ΠΕΓΑΝ, as **Rajak**³⁴ has suggest-

²⁷ Feldman, 'Prolegomenon', cxii-cxiv.

²⁸ It is perhaps significant, as I, 'Prolegomenon', cxiii-cxiv, note, that in the one place where **Pseudo-Philo** (26:10-11) in his list of stones does not agree with the Septuagint in the order of the stones, he is in agreement with Josephus' *Antiquities*, which is a later version than the list in the *War*, and presumably a correction. Hence, this may reflect the Hebrew or Greek biblical text available to both **Josephus** and **Pseudo-Philo**, a text which differed from both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint as we have them.

²⁹ It has been conjectured that the nameless philosopher whom four great Sages visited in Rome toward the end of Domitian's reign was Josephus, since he was the one Jew who continued to have influence during Domitian's reign. See Feldman, *Josephus*, 77-78.

³⁰ Thackeray, *Josephus*, 81; Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xxi-xxiv; Schalit, 'Introduction', xxxi-xxxii.

³¹ Mez, *Die Bibel*; Thackeray, *Josephus*, 83-89.

³² Thackeray, 'Note', ix.

³³ Thackeray, *Josephus*, 82.

³⁴ Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 250.

ed. Rahlfs, Moore, Brock, and Rajak" have contested the thesis of Mez and Thackeray; and Brock has argued that of the mere thirty examples adduced by Mez in support of his theory, only nine are actually valid, noting that in many places where **Josephus** supposedly agrees with Lucian against the Septuagint this is simply due to his attempt to make better sense. The fact, we may add, that most of Mez's evidence is from Josephus' spelling of proper names and from the numbers that he cites weakens his case immeasurably, because it is precisely in such details that copyists are most likely to make corrections to bring a text into accord with their preconceived data. Mez conveniently does not note the degree to which **Josephus** disagrees with Lucian or agrees with the Masoretic Text or is unique in agreeing with no text, though we must admit that **Schalit**³⁵ has hardly established a case for Josephus' use of a Hebrew text for Samuel, inasmuch as his chief arguments are that there are a number of instances where **Josephus** is not paralleled by the Greek text and that in the names of Solomon's provincial governors – an instance where, as we have noted, corruption is most likely to take place – **Josephus** (*Ant.* 8:35-38) is closer to the Masoretic Text (1 Kgs 4:7-19) than to the *Septuagint*.³⁷ **Kahle**,³⁸ while ready to grant that **Josephus**' text does agree with Lucian, explains this phenomenon as due to Christian copyists, just as Katz contends that **Philo**'s quotations from the Bible, which so often do not agree with our text of the Septuagint, represent corrections reflecting a late recension of the Septuagint inspired by Aquila's version.

Ulrich³⁹ offers a number of examples to prove that **Josephus** used a Greek rather than a Hebrew text for 1 and 2 Samuel, the most convincing of which⁴⁰ are 2 Sam 6:8 (*Ant.* 7:82) and 2 Sam 6:19 (*Ant.* 7:86), where the Greek words are very rare in the Septuagint.⁴¹ He has gone so far as to conclude that **Josephus** used only a Greek text for Samuel, and that this Greek text, as **Cross**⁴² has

³⁵ Rahlfs, *Septuagintastudien*, 3, 92-111; Moore, 'Antiochian Recension'; Brock, *Recensions*, 207-21; Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 232. Rahlfs, we may note, after making a study of biblical quotations in early Church Fathers, through the end of the third century, concludes that it is not possible to isolate 'Lucianic' texts as such, since we may find 'Lucianic' readings scattered everywhere and often combined with non-Lucianic readings. Brock argues that agreements between **Josephus** and Lucian may often be due to Josephus' desire to make sense of a given context.

³⁶ Schalit, 'Introduction', xxvii-xxxi.

³⁷ We may suggest that one reason why **Josephus** is closer here to the Hebrew text is that this passage is part of the Haftara (2 Kgs 4:1-37, or 23 in the Sephardic rite) that is read in the synagogue after the Tora portion of *Wayera* (Gen 18:1-22:24), and that **Josephus** may well have heard it therefore in the synagogue year after year.

³⁸ Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, 233-34.

³⁹ **Ulrich**, *Qumran Text*. Howard, 'Kaige Readings', theorizes that **Josephus** relied upon two types of the Greek Bible, a *proto-Lucianic* text (manuscripts *boc₂e₂*), identified by Barthlemy, *Devanciers*, with the old Septuagint, and a *kuige* recension, which is the basis of Aquila's version. One may just as easily, however, postulate that Josephus' two texts were a Greek text of the *boc₂e₂* type and a Hebrew text which was the basis of Aquila's version.

⁴⁰ See Tov, 'Textual Affiliations'.

⁴¹ See Ulrich, *Qumran Text*, 210 and 211.

⁴² Cross, 'History'; 'Contribution'; and 'Evolution'.

suggested, was revised so as to conform to the Hebrew text as found in the Dead Sea fragments, resulting in a 'Palestinian' text as found in the Chronicler, Josephus, Pseudo-Philo,⁴³ Lucian, and the sixth column of Origen's *Hexapla*.⁴⁴ The Rylands Greek Papyrus 458, our oldest extant papyrus of the Greek Bible, indicates that, at least for the portions of Deut 23-28 that we have, Lucianic readings appear already in the second century B.C.E.

It does seem hard, however, to believe that **Josephus** would have ceased to consult the Hebrew text so suddenly and so utterly, especially since he must have heard portions from Samuel (seven selections from which are included in the Annual Cycle) in the synagogue on Sabbaths and holy days during readings of the *haftarot*. Moreover, in an instance such as 2 Sam 11:3, where **Josephus** (*Ant.* 7:131) agrees with the Dead Sea manuscript *4QSam^a* in calling Uriah Joab's armor-bearer, this does not prove that **Josephus** was dependent upon a Greek *Vorluge*, since we have no Greek manuscript which has this reading. In addition, Muraoka has indicated at least one case (2 Sam 11:8) where **Josephus** (*Ant.* 7:132) is not dependent upon the Greek text.⁴⁵

For the period of Ezra, **Josephus'** chief source, to judge from verbal similarities, & was, it would seem, the apocryphal Greek book of Esdras (1 or 3 Esdras), rather than the Hebrew or the Septuagintal text, apparently because he was attracted by its superior Greek style,⁴⁷ its elimination of some chronological difficulties, and, perhaps most of all, the highlighting of romantic interest in the debate, so reminiscent of Herodotus (*Historiae* 3:80-84), as to whether wine, the king, or a woman is the most powerful. And yet, there is reason to think that here, too, as in his version of other books of the Bible, **Josephus** was aware of both a Hebrew text and the Septuagint. The fact that he diverges so widely from the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and the Apocryphal text is for

⁴³ Harrington, 'Biblical Text', 1-17, has shown that Pseudo-Philo's biblical text generally agrees with that of **Josephus** as against the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint, and that especially in 1 Samuel his readings agree with the Lucianic text.

⁴⁴ There is no basis for the assertion of Jellioce, 'Occasion', 144-50, that the presence of proto-Lucianic readings in **Josephus** and at Qumran shows that there was recensional activity at Leontopolis.

⁴⁵ Muraoka, 'Greek Text'. N. Cohen, 'Josephus and Scripture', 311-32, does, however, note evidence of a remarkable shift in diction between the first five books of the *Antiquities* covering the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, and Books 6-11, covering the rest of his paraphrase of the Bible. For example, she remarks that the word *ἐκατονάρχης* (*ἐκατόναρχος*), 'captain of a hundred', does not appear at all in the first five books of **Josephus**, despite the fact that it is found in the Septuagint seven times, but that it is used nine times, all of them paralleled by the Septuagint, in the next five books. This would seem to show that **Josephus** used the Hebrew text for his first five books and the Septuagint for the next five; but the matter must remain sub *judice* since there is some reason to believe that **Josephus'** Hebrew text, starting with the books of Samuel, was closer to our present Greek (or proto-Lucianic) text.

⁴⁶ See H. Bloch, *Quellen*, 69-77, for a list of these parallels.

⁴⁷ Jellioce, *Septuagint*, 294, has remarked that **Josephus'** decision to follow the Greek Esdras was determined chiefly by its style, especially if it is true that the Atticizing reaction against the *koinē* Greek actually began not in the second century in the age of Lucian but a century earlier.

Rudolph⁴⁸ evidence of the validity of Hölscher's thesis,⁴⁹ that for the *Antiquities* **Josephus** employed neither a Hebrew nor a Greek biblical text but rather a paraphrase written by a Jewish Hellenist. Ararat⁵⁰ postulates a 'Comprehensive Chronicle' as the source of the Hebrew and Greek Ezra, the Apocryphal 1 Esdras, **Josephus'** account of Ezra, and the legends in rabbinic literature pertaining to this era. There is not a single fragment in existence, however, from the work postulated by either Hölscher or Ararat; and it seems most reasonable to assume that **Josephus** proceeded here as apparently elsewhere with the three texts before him that are before us.⁵¹

For the book of Esther **Josephus** clearly used a Greek text, presumably because he found it to be stylistically on a more polished level than the rest of the Greek Bible. Motzo⁵² notes evidence in **Josephus'** text of kinship (though not identity) with the major groups of manuscripts of the Septuagint. There can be no doubt that for the additions to the Book of Esther **Josephus** used a Greek version, since his paraphrase of four of the six additions is often very close, presumably because he found the romantic spirit of such a passage as Addition D very much to his liking. One would assume, however, that although the third-century rabbis Rav and Samuel grudgingly permitted the Book of Esther to be read in Greek on Purim (B. *T. Megilla* 18a), **Josephus**, as one who knew Hebrew, would have heard it twice each year in the original Hebrew. Bickerman,⁵³ noting evidence that seems to point to **Josephus'** access to various texts now extant, prefers to postulate that **Josephus** is following a particular recension of the Greek Esther, namely the one that was popular among the Jews of Rome, but that this version is now lost. Such a theory can hardly be proven, inasmuch as this version is no longer to be found. Faced with this problem, Hölscher⁵⁴ postulates a single source for **Josephus**, namely Alexander Polyhistor's *On the Jews*; but inasmuch as we have not a single fragment of Alexander's work that deals with the story of Esther, it is difficult to accept such a hypothesis. Another possibility is that **Josephus** may have had access to an Aramaic targum; but Seyberlich, who notes that the second edict of King Ahasuerus is found only in **Josephus** (*Ant.* 11:273-83) and in the Targum Sheni 8:12,⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Rudolph, *Esra und Nehemia*, xvii and 107.

⁴⁹ Hölscher, 'Josephus', 1955-60.

⁵⁰ Ararat, *Ezra*.

⁵¹ The same propensity for using both a Hebrew original and a Greek translation may be seen in **Josephus'** version of 1 Maccabees, as Melamed, 'Josephus and Maccabees I', 122-30, has shown through a comparison of nineteen passages.

⁵² Motzo, '11 testo di Ester', 84-105.

⁵³ Bickerman, 'Notes', 104.

⁵⁴ Hölscher, *Die Quellen*, 52.

⁵⁵ Seyberlich, 'Esther', 363-66. Rajak, *Flavius Josephus*, 228, noting the presence of many Greek words in *Targum Sheni*, suggests that **Josephus** may have consulted in a Greek version the material which is there embodied; but we may note that on this basis one might postulate a Greek source for the rabbinic midrashim generally, which contain such a high percentage of Greek words that some have spoken of its Aramaic as a kind of Graeco-Aramaic.

dismisses this theory as improbable because Josephus had been living in Rome for twenty years at the time of the completion of the *Antiquities* and had presumably lost contact with targumim; instead she postulates that Josephus had recalled some details of Pharisaic midrashim that he had heard in his earlier years. We may, however, comment that it seems likely that a large portion of the Roman Jewish community had originated from Palestine and presumably was Aramaic-speaking, at least in the generation when Josephus was living in Rome; and contacts between the Jewish communities of Palestine and Rome continued to be close throughout this period. In any case, if Josephus had lost contact with his Aramaic mother tongue, it seems even more far-fetched that he would remember midrashim that he had heard decades before. We may not go so far as Torrey,⁵⁶ who postulates that Josephus used only the Aramaic version in a Greek translation and did not know the Hebrew text of Esther, which he regards as an abbreviated translation of an Aramaic original, but it seems likely that for Esther, too, as elsewhere, Josephus availed himself of his trilingual competence in consulting the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic versions.

Josephus' Promise Not to Modify the Scriptures

In the introduction to his *Antiquities* (*Ant.* 1:5) Josephus proclaims that his work (or, at any rate, the portion dealing with the biblical period) will embrace the entire ancient history (ἀρχαιολογίαν) and political constitution (&&a- &v τοῦ πολιτεύματος) of the Jews, translated from Hebrew records (ἐκ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν μεθηρμηνευμένην γραμμάτων). Josephus promises his readers (*Ant.* 1:17) that he will throughout his work set forth the precise details of the Scriptures (τὰ μὲν οὖν ἀκριβῆ τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀναγραφαῖς), each in its place (κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν τάξιν), neither adding nor omitting anything (οὐδὲν προσθεῖς οὐδ' αὐ παραλιπών). At the conclusion of his history (*Ant.* 20:260) Josephus notes that he has told the whole story of the Jewish people in full and accurate detail, reminding the reader (*Ant.* 20:261) that this is what he had promised to do at the beginning of his history. He declares (*Ag. Ap.* 1:42), moreover, that not only he but no one else has for long ages past ventured to add or to remove or to alter a syllable (προσθεῖναι τις οὐδὲν οὔτε ἀφελεῖν αὐτῶν οὐτε μεταθεῖναι) of the Scriptures. And yet, as we shall note, Josephus has added numerous details and even whole episodes, while omitting such passages as the cunning of Jacob in connection with Jacob's flock (Gen 30:37-38), the Judah-Tamar episode (Gen 38), Moses' slaying of the Egyptian (Exod 2:12), the building of the golden calf (Exod 32), the grumbling and doubting before the second miraculous feast of quails (Num 11: 11-23), Miriam's leprosy (Num 12), the story of Moses' striking the rock to bring forth water which speaks of Moses' disgrace (Num 20: 10-12), and the story of the brazen serpent (Num 21:4-9) whereby Moses cured those who had been bitten by the fiery

⁵⁶ Torrey, 'Older Book of Esther', 1-40.

serpents, the account of Gideon's smashing of the Baal altar (Judg 6:25-32), and the story of Micah and his idolatry (Judg 17-18).

A number of attempts have been made to resolve the apparent failure of Josephus to live up to his promise. One approach is to declare⁵⁷ that Josephus depends upon the ignorance of his readers, knowing full well how difficult it was for most of them to acquire a manuscript, let alone to look up a particular passage without benefit of an index. But to this we may counter that Josephus was certainly not the only Jew in Palestine who knew Greek, and that his rival, Justus of Tiberias, at the very least, was in a position to read – and criticize – Josephus' work, especially since we know (Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 33, p. 6b23-7a5 = Jacoby, *FGH* 734 T2) that Justus composed *A Chronicle of the Jewish Kings*, which apparently covered the period from Moses until the death of Agrippa II, thus more or less duplicating the coverage of Josephus' *Antiquities*, even if Photius describes it as 'very scanty in detail'. Moreover, there were surely many Jews in the Diaspora who were in a position to check on his statements through consulting the Septuagint. Indeed, Pseudo-Longinus' (*De Sublimitate* 9:9) highly laudatory paraphrase of Gen 1:3, 9, 10, in a work of literary criticism dating presumably from the first century C.E. shows that the Septuagint was well known.

A second approach taken by a number of scholars⁵⁸ is to remark that the phrase 'neither adding nor omitting anything' is a stock and essentially meaningless formula for affirming one's accuracy, as may be seen by its use in the first century B.C.E. Greek Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Thucydides* 5 and 8, in the second century C.E. Lucian's *Quomodo Historia Conscribenda Sit* 47, and in the Roman pseudo-Cornelius Nepos (allegedly first century B.C.E.) in the introduction of *Dares Phrygius*. As S. Cohen⁵⁹ has remarked, it was customary for the writer to insist that his account was merely a translation from sacred texts; and such a statement will be found in the works of other Hellenized Orientals, similar to Josephus, such as Berossus (ca. 300 B.C.E.), Manetho (third century B.C.E.), and Philo of Byblus (first-second century C.E.), as well as in the works of such Greeks as Ctesias (fifth-fourth century B.C.E.) (up. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. Hist.* 2:32.4) and Hecataeus of Abdera (ca. 300 B.C.E.) (ap. Diodorus, *Bibl. Hist.* 1:69.7). That Josephus' phrase is not necessarily to be taken literally would seem to be indicated by the fact that Matthew (5:17-18) uses similar language: 'Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill them. For truly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all be accomplished'. It would seem that portions, at least, of the law were abolished by Jesus' disciples in his own lifetime (for example, with regard to the Sabbath and the dietary laws); and the apparent inconsistency was pointed out

⁵⁷ Siegfried, 'Die hebräischen Worterklärungen', 32-33, n. 3.

⁵⁸ Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift*; Attridge, *Interpretation*; and S. Cohen, *Josephus*, 25-28.

⁵⁹ S. Cohen, *Josephus*, 27.

to a judge (or philosopher) who, according to the Talmud (B. *T. Shabbat* 116b) had quoted from a nameless book, presumably a Gospel, 'I came not to destroy the Law of Moses nor to add to the Law of Moses'.

Moreover, there would seem to be a precedent for modifying the sacred text, namely the very work, the Septuagint, which Josephus cites (*Ant.* 1:10) as justifying his presentation of biblical history to Gentiles. The Septuagint, despite the fact that the translation was apparently divinely inspired (Letter of *Aristeas* 306), and though the work of translation had been carried on with the greatest of accuracy, inasmuch as a curse was pronounced upon anyone who ventured to add or transpose or remove anything (προστιθείς ἢ μεταφέρων τι . . . ἢ ποιούμενος ἀφαίρεισιν), yet contains numerous modifications of the original. In fact, the rabbis, who (B. *T. Megilla* 9a), with obvious approval, refer to the miraculous manner in which the seventy-two translators had been placed in seventy-two separate rooms and yet had emerged with identical translations because of Divine inspiration, mention, nevertheless, certain deliberate changes which they had all made in the process of translating the sacred text. The fact that, despite the ban on any modification of the Septuagint, three major recensions had emerged by the time of Jerome,^{59a} shows that the curse was not taken too seriously. The fact is, moreover, that the rabbis themselves sanctioned (B. *T. Megilla* 25a-b) the omission of the translation of certain biblical passages when they read the Bible in the synagogue, presumably because of the embarrassment involved.⁶⁰

When we examine the words which Josephus uses for 'translate', we shall find that they are all ambiguous and seem to include paraphrasing and amplifying. When he declares (*Ant.* 1:5) that his work has been translated from the Hebrew records he employs the verb μεθερμηνεύω for 'translate'. Josephus uses the same verb (*Ant.* 12:20 and 48) in speaking of the 'translation' of the Pentateuch known as the Septuagint; but inasmuch as this was hardly a literal translation, as we have noted, and indeed took considerable liberties, it will hardly buttress the meaning of 'translate', but rather seems to signify 'interpret'. Indeed, in one of these passages we hear that the translators of the Pentateuch not merely translated (μεταγράψαι 'transcribe') but also interpreted (μεθερμηνεύσαι) the Law for Ptolemy's pleasure. There would hardly be much point in transcribing the Law for Ptolemy; there would be a point in translating and elucidating it, and it would be this latter act that would bring pleasure to Ptolemy; hence the word μεθερμηνεύω seems to imply much more than mere translation. Elsewhere (*Ant.* 1:52 and 8:142) it seems to refer not to the translation but to the etymology of words. There are at least two instances (*War* 5:151 and *Ag. Ap.* 1:167) where the meaning is not 'to translate' but rather 'to signify'. In one important passage (*Ag. Ap.* 1:54) Josephus remarks that he has, in his *Antiquities*, given a translation (or interpretation, μεθηρμηνευσα) of the Bible, being

^{59a} Preface to the Book of Chronicles, in Migne, *PL*, 28, 1324-25.

⁶⁰ The list does not completely coincide with Josephus'. See my 'Hellenizations in Josephus' Portrayal of Man's Decline', 337-38.

(γεγονώς) a priest and of priestly ancestry and being well versed (μετεσχηκώς) in the philosophy (φιλοσοφίας) of those writings. Since the participles used show that the clauses are directly connected with the first part of the sentence, it would appear that Josephus' qualifications as a 'translator' were enhanced by the fact that he was a priest and by his knowledge of the philosophy, that is, scientific, systematic, and methodical study of the Bible. Clearly, to be a good 'translator' required more than the mechanical knowledge of language. In fact, there is only one passage (*War* 4: 11) of the nine occurrences of this verb in Josephus where the meaning is unambiguously 'to translate'.

As to the uncompounded verb, ἐρμηνεύω, its meaning (*War* 5:182, 5:393, 7:455; *Ant.* 6:230) seems to be 'describe', 'explain', 'render', 'express'; and only once (*Ant.* 6: 156) does it unequivocally mean 'to translate'. In particular, in the statement (*Ant.* 20:264) that Jews 'give credit for wisdom to those alone who have an exact knowledge of the law and who are capable of interpreting (ἐρμηνεύσαι) the meaning of the Holy Scriptures', the meaning is not to 'translate', since that would be too mechanical an art to ascribe wisdom to its practitioners.

With regard to other words that are used with reference to the translation known as the Septuagint, whether the word μεταβάλλω (*Ant.* 1:10, 12:14, 12: 15, 12: 107) means 'translate' in the narrow sense or includes interpretation in the broader sense is not apparent from the context; but Thackeray⁶¹ makes an interesting point when he remarks that the word must have been used loosely, since Josephus (*War* 1:3) employs it with reference to his own translation of the *War* from its original Aramaic into Greek; and that translation was hardly literal, inasmuch as our version of the *War* shows no trace of Semitic parentage (but this may be due to the assistants who aided him in the composition of that work). Hence, we may conclude that since Josephus viewed himself as carrying on the tradition of the Septuagint in rendering the Bible for Gentiles, he conceived of his task as not merely translating but as also interpreting the Scriptures, and therefore he did not conceive himself as adding or subtracting anything if he continued their tradition of liberal clarification.

Another possibility is that Josephus understood the phrase 'neither adding nor omitting anything' as referring to the commandment (Deut 4:2 and 13:1) that one may not add to or subtract from the commandments of the Tora, since the Septuagint, indeed, does render this clause in a way (οὐ προσθήσετε, οὐκ ἀφελείτε) that combines the language of *Ant.* 1:5 and *Ag. Ap.* 1:42. Hence, the meaning may be that one is not permitted to alter Jewish law by adding to or subtracting from the commandments, whereas Josephus' changes are, at least primarily, in the realm of aggadic material.

Albrektson⁶² interprets Josephus' statement (*Ag. Ap.* 1:42) that for long ages past no one has ventured either to add to or subtract from the Bible to mean that

⁶¹ Thackeray, *Josephus*, 34.

⁶² Albrektson, 'Josefus', 201-15.

it is prohibited to add to the content of the Bible but that it is not forbidden to modify the actual consonantal text. But if so, this would make it difficult to understand the statement in the Letter of Aristaeas (30) that the Tora had been committed to writing somewhat carelessly (*ἀμελέστερον*) and would certainly go against the very stringent laws embodied in the **talmudic** literature pertaining to the writing of a Tora scroll. The fact that there were proofreaders in Jerusalem who were paid from Temple funds during the period of the Second Temple (B.T. *Ketubbot* 106a) again indicates the premium placed upon the exact spelling of words in the Tora.

Finally, when **Josephus** says that he has set forth the precise details of the Scriptures (*ἀναγραφαῖς*), he may mean not only the written Bible but also Jewish tradition generally. If the objection is offered that aggadic material had not been reduced to writing by the time of Josephus, the answer is that we do have midrashim embodied in such Hellenistic Jewish writers as Artapanus, Eupolemus, Ezekiel the tragedian, and **Philo**, as well as in such Palestinian writings as the Genesis *Apocryphon* and Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*. In fact, as R. Bloch⁶³ brilliantly pointed out, the origins of **midrash** are to be found in the Bible itself. The fact that **Josephus** (*Ag. Ap.* 1:43) declares that Jews do not utter a single word against the laws (*νόμους*) and the allied writings (*τὰς μετὰ τούτων ἀναγραφάς*) indicates, despite S. Cohen,⁶⁴ that he perceives a distinction between the laws (*νόμοι*) and the Scriptures (*ἀναγραφαί*), the latter of which presumably included more than written law.

Josephus as an Interpreter of Biblical Narrative

JOSEPHUS' AUDIENCE

To understand what **Josephus** has done with the biblical narrative in the *Antiquities* we must first ask for whom the work is intended. It would seem that **Josephus** actually had two audiences in mind. On the one hand, the very fact that in his prooemium he cites (*Ant.* 1:10) as a precedent for his work the translation of the Tora into Greek for King Ptolemy Philadelphus is clearly designed as a justification for his directing his work to Gentiles with apologetic intent, inasmuch as he apparently realized that normally it is prohibited to teach the Tora to Gentiles (*B. T. Hagiga* 13a, *B.T. Sunhedrin* 59a). Indeed, he inquires (*Ant.* 1:9) whether Jews have been willing to communicate such information to Gentiles. The fact that he asks (*Ant.* 1:9) whether any of the Greeks have been curious to learn 'our' history and that he specifically declares (*Ant.* 1:5) that his work was undertaken in the belief that the whole Greek world would find it worthy of attention indicates that he was directing the

Antiquities to pagans. Again, the fact that at the end of the work (*Ant.* 20:262) he boasts that no one else would have been equal to the task of issuing so accurate a treatise for the Greeks (*εἰς Ἑλληνας*) indicates that he directed the work to the non-Jewish world, since the term 'Greeks' for **Josephus** is used in contrast to Jews.

That, however, **Josephus** is also directing his work to Jews seems clear from the statement (*Ant.* 1:14) that 'the main lesson to be learnt from this history by those who care to peruse it' is that God rewards those who obey His laws and punishes those who do not. **Josephus**, of course, realized that Gentiles are obligated to obey only the seven Noachian commandments, whereas Jews are required to obey 613 commandments; and it would seem that his statement is here directed to his fellow-Jews, since he gives no indication that when he speaks of 'laws' he is distinguishing between Noachian and other commandments. Moreover, his highlighting of certain episodes, notably the incident of Israel's sin with the Midianite women (*Num* 25:1-9; *Ant.* 4:131-55; **Josephus** expands it from nine verses to twenty-five paragraphs) and Samson's relations with alien women (*Judg* 14:1-16.31; *Ant.* 5:286-317), is directed, apparently, to those Jews who sought assimilation with **Gentiles**.⁶⁵ **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:150-51) vehemently condemns **Zambrias** (Zimri) and bestows exalted praise upon **Phinehas**, 'a man superior in every way to the rest of the youth' (*Ant.* 4:152), who, after all, might well have been condemned for taking the law into his own hands in putting **Zambrias** to death without a trial. He likewise condemns **Samson** (*Ant.* 5:306) for transgressing the laws of his forefathers and debasing (*παρεχάρασεν*, used with reference to coins) his own rule of life by imitation of foreign usages, which, he says, proved the beginning of his disaster. Moreover, we may note, **Josephus** makes a point of stressing that the fortunes of **Anilaus** and **Asinaeus**, the robber-barons who established an independent Jewish state in Mesopotamia, began to deteriorate at the very peak of their success because **Anilaus** plunged into lawlessness (*Ant.* 18:340) 'in violation of the Jewish code at the bidding of lust and self-indulgence'.

That, however, Jews were not **Josephus**' main audience seems evident from his remark (*Ant.* 4:197) that he has deemed it necessary to state that he has merely reclassified the laws without actually modifying them at all, 'lest perchance any of my countrymen who chance upon (*ἐντυγχανόντων*) this work should reproach me at all for having gone astray'. Evidently he expected that his fellow-Jews would read his book only by chance.

JOSEPHUS' SOURCES

We may next consider what **Josephus**' sources – midrashic, Hellenistic Jewish,

⁶³ R. Bloch, 'Midrash'.

⁶⁴ S. Cohen, *Josephus*, 24-25.

⁶⁵ Cf. Van Unnik, 'Josephus' Account', 259: 'It is hardly conceivable that the words of this remarkable speech [**Zambrias**' defense of his apostasy: *Ant.* 4:145-49] arose out of **Josephus**' own imagination. They are the expression of what was thought by his contemporaries who broke away from the ancestral religion and gave these reasons for doing so'.

and personal – were for the changes that he introduces into the biblical narrative. In the first place, there was the Jewish midrashic tradition, which, though it had not yet been written down for the most part, contained many of the aggadic traditions found in Josephus.⁶⁶ **Schalit**⁶⁷ has even gone so far as to suggest that while he was living in Rome **Josephus** had an opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the Jewish tradition; but this seems unlikely in view of the fact that he was looked upon with disdain and bitterness by the Jewish community generally because of what they regarded as his traitorous behaviour in the war against the Romans, unless some of the rabbis, in their constant visits to Rome, chose to see him (though there is no reference to him in the entire **talmudic corpus**) in the hope of gaining his intercession with the Roman Emperor, the infamous Domitian, with whom he, almost alone, remained on good terms.⁶⁸

There has been much debate as to whether **Josephus** depended primarily upon written or upon oral sources for midrashic traditions. **Schalit**⁶⁹ believes that details which involve exposition of specific verses derive from oral traditions, since this is the midrashic style as it was eventually recorded, whereas longer additions, such as the account of Moses' campaign against the Ethiopians, are taken from written sources. Since the overwhelming majority of **Josephus'** changes are, indeed, minor modifications of individual verses, this would indicate the paramount importance of oral sources. Rappaport,⁷⁰ on the other hand, believes that **Josephus** was dependent upon written sources exclusively. The fact, we may add, that there are numerous details which **Josephus** shares with his presumed contemporary, **Pseudo-Philo**,⁷¹ would seem to indicate a common source. It is impossible to identify this or any other midrashic source, though it is perfectly possible that **Josephus** did have access to written midrashic sources akin to the **Genesis Apocryphon**. The important point to be discerned is **Josephus'** choice of certain midrashic details from whatever source and his reasons for such a choice.

We may guess that **Josephus'** propensity for giving specific names or other such data for vague biblical references—for example, the name of the man who inspired the building of the Tower of Babel, Nimrod (**Ant.** 1:113); the name of Pharaoh's daughter who adopted Moses, Thermuthis (**Ant.** 2:224); the name of the prophet who rebuked Ahab for releasing Ben-hadad, Micaiah (**Ant.** 8:389)

⁶⁶ Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xx-xxiii, concludes that **Josephus** had a written source for aggadic traditions.

⁶⁷ Schalit, 'Introduction', xxxv.

⁶⁸ See Feldman, *Josephus*, 127.

⁶⁹ Schalit, 'Introduction', xxxix-xli.

⁷⁰ Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xv.

⁷¹ See Feldman, 'Prolegomenon', lviii-lxvi, and 'Epilogomenon', 306-07. I have noted thirty parallels between **Josephus** and **Pseudo-Philo** (**Zeron**, 'Erwägungen', 45, n. 43, has added another) that are to be found in no other work that has come down to us and fifteen cases where **Josephus** is not alone in agreeing with **Pseudo-Philo** but where both may reflect a common tradition. That, however, the relationship between **Josephus** and **Pseudo-Philo** is not a simple matter may be deduced from the fact that I have noted thirty-six instances where they disagree.

– is due to rabbinic midrashim. But the fact that such details are found in such pseudepigraphic works as **Jubilees**⁷² or in **Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities** or in sectarian works such as the Dead Sea Scrolls' **Genesis Apocryphon** or in the Samaritan **Asatir**⁷³ would seem to indicate that we are dealing with a Palestinian and not merely rabbinic tradition.

A second source that **Josephus** might have employed is the Hellenistic Jewish tradition. In particular, the Hellenistic Jewish writers might have provided him with an excellent precedent and a stylistic model. This would have been especially true of **Philo**, who writes such excellent Greek. The fact, however, that **Josephus** mentions **Philo** on only one occasion (**Ant.** 18:259-60), that he refers to other Hellenistic Jewish writers on only one other occasion (**Ag.Ap.** 1:218), that he there speaks of them as if they are pagan (he notes their inability to follow accurately the meaning of 'our' records), and that he confuses Demetrius the historian with Demetrius of Phalerum would indicate that he made minimal use of them.⁷⁴ Evidence that **Josephus** could not have read Eupolemus very closely may be deduced from the fact that he declares (**Ag.Ap.** 1:218) that Eupolemus did not deviate far from the truth, when, in fact, Eupolemus commits such 'howlers' as his statements that David was Saul's son (**up. Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica** 9:30,3) that Eli was the high priest at the time when Solomon became king (**up. Eusebius, Pruepurutio Evangelica** 9:30,8), and (unless this is part of the work of Pseudo-Eupolemus) that **Enoch** is to be identified with the Greek mythical Atlas (**up. Eusebius, Pruepurutio Evangelica** 9:17,9). We may also suggest that if, indeed, **Josephus** had used these Hellenistic Jewish historians he would have cited them as a precedent for his own work, whereas in the preface to the **Antiquities** (1:9-12), he seems to be groping for a justification for presenting his paraphrase of the Bible to a non-Jewish audience, and he is able to cite only the Septuagint as such a precedent. **Hölscher**,⁷⁵ as we have noted above, presents a hypothesis that **Josephus'** source was a Hellenistic Jewish midrash, but he has no trace at all of such a work. **Wacholder**⁷⁶ has theorized that **Josephus** might have derived his extra-biblical material from the **Chronicle of the Jewish Kings** of his rival, the Jewish historian **Justus** of

⁷² For parallels between **Josephus** and **Jubilees** (particularly in geographical details) see Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese*, xix-xx; Thackeray, *Josephus*, 92; and Franxman, *Genesis*, 98. One of these parallels is in the name of Pharaoh's daughter, Thermuthis, which is also found in **Jubilees** 47:5 as Tharmuth. That **Josephus** did not derive this extended addition from Artapanus would seem to be indicated by the fact that in Artapanus (**ap. Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica**, 9:27, 3) her name is Merris.

⁷³ For parallels between **Josephus** and **Asatir** see Gaster, *Asatir*, 65-79, who has, however, stretched the evidence.

⁷⁴ Freudenthal, *Hellenistische Studien*, asserts that **Josephus** knew these Hellenistic Jewish writers primarily through the work *On the Jews* by the pagan Alexander Polyhistor, who wrote in the middle of the first century B.C.E. and who is later quoted by Eusebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*, Book 9. Cf. van der Horst, below, pp. 519-20.

⁷⁵ Hölscher, 'Josephus', 1955-60.

⁷⁶ Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 56-57.

Tiberias; but in view of Photius' remark which we have noted above, that it was 'very scanty in detail', this seems unlikely. Sprödowsky⁷⁷ has suggested that for the story of Joseph in Egypt Josephus has drawn upon an Alexandrian-Jewish tradition; and Rajak⁷⁸ has similarly argued that the story of Moses' campaign on behalf of the Egyptian pharaoh against the Ethiopians must have arisen in Egypt, presumably in Alexandria, for the same reason, namely, that the setting indicates that it would have been of particular interest to Egyptians. But Rajak herself is forced to admit that Josephus has a number of details which are not found in Artapanus' version of the Moses story; and she, like Freudenthal and Gaster,⁷⁹ concludes that they both drew upon a common source. As to Ezekiel the tragedian, Jacobson⁸⁰ has argued that the absence of Ezekiel from the list of Hellenistic writers mentioned by Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 1:218) does not prove that Josephus did not know Ezekiel's work, and that Josephus' account of the crossing of the Red Sea, particularly the depiction of the Egyptians as lacking weapons (*Ant.* 2:321, 326; Ezekiel, 210), Moses' striking of the sea with his staff (*Ant.* 2:338; Ezekiel, 227), the postponement of battle by the Egyptians (*Ant.* 2:334; Ezekiel, 218), the energetic entry of the Israelites into the sea (*Ant.* 2:340; Ezekiel, 228-29), and the darkness which overcame the Egyptians (*Ant.* 2:344; Ezekiel, 237), indicates such knowledge.

Furthermore, there seems good reason to believe that Josephus drew upon the work of Philo, particularly for the preface to the *Antiquities* (compare *Ant.* 1:21 and Philo's *On the Creation* 1-3 on the question as to why the Tora begins with creation rather than with a statement of the laws), for the close correspondence⁸¹ in phraseology between Philo (*On Abraham* 40:233-34) and Josephus (*Ant.* 1:177) in their description of Abraham's attack upon the Assyrians, for similar interpretations of the names Abel (*Ant.* 1:52; Philo, *On the Migration of Abraham* 13:74) and Ishmael (*Ant.* 1: 190; Philo, *On the Change of Names* 37:202) (though this may be due to mutual dependence upon onomastica such as have been found on papyri in Egypt), and for the allegorical method, particularly the symbolism of the tabernacle and the clothing of the high priest (*Ant.* 3:179-87; cf. Philo, *Life of Moses* 2:18, 88; 2:21, 101-2:24, 126, *On the Special Laws* 1:172, *Who Is the Heir* 45-46, *Questions and Answers on Exodus* 2:73, 75, 85, 112-14, 117-20).⁸² We may comment that though there are some

⁷⁷ Sprödowsky, *Hellenisierung*.

⁷⁸ Rajak, 'Moses in Ethiopia', 114. Most recently Runnalls, 'Moses' Ethiopian Campaign', has argued that Josephus' version of Moses' campaign against the Ethiopians is a polemic written against the Hellenistic version of Artapanus and that the core of the story probably dates from the Persian era. See also Attridge, 'Historiography', 166-67.

⁷⁹ Freudenthal, *Hellenist&he Studien*, 170; Gaster, *Asatir*, 72.

⁸⁰ Jacobson, *Exagoge*, 37-39.

⁸¹ Sandmel, *Philo's Place*, 64, has, however, noted differences in detail.

⁸² For further parallels see Schalit, 'Introduction', xli-xliii. On the whole question of Josephus' dependence upon Philo see my *Josephus*, 410-18. For Genesis the most systematic comparison is that of Franxman, *Genesis*. For a differing view see Attridge, *Interpretation*, 36 and 'Josephus and His Works', 211.

striking points of agreement, the details in which they disagree are also so numerous that we must postulate an additional or a common source. As to the symbolism, the fact that similar interpretations are to be found in rabbinic midrashim indicates that it is not personal but widely current. Moreover, such a conception, shared by Philo and Josephus, as that the whole cosmos is the robe of God (*Ant.* 3:184; Philo *Life of Moses* 2:24, 117) is at least as much Platonic or Stoic as it is distinctively Jewish.

Finally, we must not exclude the possibility that Josephus introduced details of his own, particularly for apologetic reasons. The very fact that his portraits of biblical personalities are consistent in emphasizing the cardinal virtues, as well as dramatic and erotic elements, and in de-emphasizing theological and magical elements, is indicative of a personal imprint, rather than, as Vermes⁸³ has suggested, that Josephus represents a stage in the historical development of the midrashic tradition. Furthermore, in language and in style there are important links between the *War* and the *Antiquities*. In view of his slow rate of composition (about ten lines of Greek a day)⁸⁴ we would, indeed, expect not only a careful and consistent work but also one which carries Josephus' personal imprint.

In particular, we may note the influence of contemporary events, especially those of Josephus' own life, upon his biblical interpretation. Thus, his elaboration of the sacrifice of Isaac was perhaps influenced by later events, namely by the martyrdom in the days of the Maccabees and by the mass suicides at Jotapata and at Masada in Josephus' own day. Inasmuch as he himself had declined to allow his life to be taken at Jotapata, Josephus had to be careful to explain how God could have commanded the sacrifice of Isaac's life. Daube⁸⁵ has suggested that Josephus identified himself, in particular, with Joseph, who likewise was accused falsely; with Jeremiah, who was a prophet (as Josephus conceived himself because of his accurate prediction that Vespasian would become emperor) and who likewise suffered at the hands of his fellow-Jews; Daniel, who likewise suffered for his convictions; Esther and Mordecai, who suffered gladly in order to help their people.⁸⁶ To this list we may add Josephus' identification with Saul, whom he viewed as a martyred general like himself. In addition, as van Unnik⁸⁷ remarks, the very fact that Josephus omits the name of Shittim (Num 25:1) and Ba'al Pe'or (Num 25:3) means that the story of Israel's sin with the Midianite women is no longer dated but takes on a universal

⁸³ Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*.

⁸⁴ Feldman, 'Josephus' Portrait of Saul', 97.

⁸⁵ Daube, 'Typology', 18-31. For a similar theme, that Josephus' aggadic remarks are based on his personal background, see also Heller, 'Grundzüge', 237-46, 363.

⁸⁶ Daube, 'Typology', 18-31, remarks that Josephus probably saw the scene of Esther before Ahasuerus as a prefigurement of his own experience before Vespasian. In particular, he suggests that the picture of Ahasuerus as attended by bodyguards with axes is not based on the Bible or on the Apocryphal additions to Esther but rather on the fact that Vespasian had such guards.

⁸⁷ Van Unnik, 'Josephus' Account of the Story of Israel's Sin', 241-61.

flavour, with contemporary warning to Jewish youth who may be tempted to succumb to sensual temptations.⁸⁸

STYLISTIC CHANGES

In view of his intended audience, **Josephus** sought both to impose upon the style of his source⁸⁹ and to highlight certain subject matter which he felt would answer the charges of anti-Semites. As to the first, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:17) stresses that he proposes to set forth the details in accordance with their proper order (*κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν τάξιν*), using the military term *τάξις* (arrangement or order of troops, battle array or order of battle), as if he were in literature the general that he was in the field during the war against the Romans. Similarly, at the end of his summary of the laws, he declares (*Ant.* 4: 197) apologetically that he has added nothing for the sake of embellishment but that his one innovation has been to classify (*τάξαι*) the subjects; again the verb which he uses has military connotations, signifying drawing up troops in order of battle. The very fact that **Josephus** uses the word *τάξις* and its related verb *τάττω* indicates that he conceived of his task as being the careful marshalling of his data. In a revealing remark, he states (*Ant.* 4: 197) that Moses left his writings in disarray (*σκορὰδην*, scattered like seed), just as he had received them from God. He thus rearranged the biblical material in accordance with the 'thematic' school followed by a number of Hellenistic historians, as remarked by Avenarius and Cohen,⁹⁰ whereby he brings into juxtaposition those items which belong together on the basis of subject, regardless of chronology or source. Thus, whereas the Bible first has the story of Noah's drunkenness and his cursing of Canaan, the son of Ham (Gen 9:20-25), and then has the detailed genealogies of all of Noah's sons, **Josephus** presents in juxtaposition the genealogy of Ham's sons, including Canaan (*Ant.* 1:130-39), and the account of Noah's curse upon Canaan (*Ant.* 1: 140-42).

Moreover, in his recasting of the narrative, **Josephus** seeks to resolve theological problems and contradictions in the text. Thus he substitutes (*Ant.* 1:27) the verb *ἐκτίσεν*, 'founded', for the Septuagint's *ἐποίησεν*, 'made', his purpose being, presumably, to avoid the inference that God had created the world out of pre-existing matter, since that would be implied in the use of the verb *ποιέω*. That this is a deliberate change seems clear, since **Josephus**' language, including

word order, is exactly the same as it is in the Septuagint (and Philo)—except for this one word. Again, there is a genuine theological problem (Gen 1:26) in the use of the plural 'Let us make man in our image', as if God had collaborators in His creation of man or as if God were Himself a plurality of forces, such as a Trinity. Indeed, according to the rabbis (B. *T. Megilla* 9a), the translators of the Tora into Greek changed the verse to read 'I shall make man'. **Josephus** himself (*Ag. Ap.* 2: 192) —perhaps in answer to Plato (*Timaeus* 41C, 42E) and Philo (On the Creation 72), who had asserted that God had employed collaborators —specifically stresses that God performed his creation 'not with assistants, of whom He had no need'. **Josephus**, in his paraphrase of Genesis, resolves this problem by asserting (*Ant.* 1:32) merely that 'on this day also He formed man', omitting also the troublesome phrase 'in His image', presumably because it raised problems of anthropomorphism. Again, the Bible (Gen 2:17) declares that God told Adam that he would die on the day that he would eat from the tree of knowledge. The fact, of course, is that not only did Adam not die but he lived until the age of 930. **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:40) resolves the problem by omitting the phrase 'on the day' and by generalizing that if they touched the tree it would prove the destruction of Adam and of Eve.

Another reason for recasting the narrative is to remove chronological difficulties. Thus, in dealing with the problem of the unusual longevity of the patriarchs, **Josephus** has a three-fold approach. In the first place, he cites (*Ant.* 1:107-08) the evidence of Greek poets and historians, from the revered Hesiod down to the learned Nicolaus of Damascus, that the ancients had a lifespan of up to a thousand years, just as did the patriarchs; and he also cites a number of non-Greek historians to a similar effect. In the second place, **Josephus** tries to rationalize by noting (*Ant.* 1:106) four factors that help to explain their longevity: they were dear to God, they had a diet (*τροφάς*), presumably because they were vegetarians more suitable for long life, they possessed merit (*ἀρετήν*), and they had to live long lives in order to promote the utility of their discoveries in astronomy and geometry, since they could not have predicted anything with certainty if they had not lived for six hundred years.⁹¹ Finally, **Josephus** closes with his familiar formula (*Ant.* 1:108): 'On these matters let everyone decide according to his fancy'.

Sometimes **Josephus** in his paraphrase seeks to avoid unflattering anthropomorphisms. Thus in Gen 1:2 there is an anthropomorphism implied in the word *מרחפת*, which indicates not merely hovering but also brooding, as over a world-egg, a concept familiar from the Orphic theogony. The Septuagint partly avoids this problem by asserting that 'the spirit of God was borne' above the water, but even this does not completely avoid the anthropomorphism. **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:27) resolves the difficulty by asserting that 'a breath from above sped', thus referring to something distinct from God Himself. Similarly, to speak of God,

⁸⁸ Gafni, 'Use of I Maccabees', 81-95, notes that **Josephus**, as compared with his source, I Maccabees, stresses the virtue of martyrdom for the cause of religious freedom rather than engaging in active resistance, again reflecting **Josephus**' own view in the war against the Romans, in which he had participated, that the aims and behaviour of the Zealots were not justified.

⁸⁹ Downing, 'Redaction Criticism', 46-65, has noted that **Josephus**' reworking of the Bible is similar to the method adopted by the authors of the Gospels, notably Luke, in removing discrepancies, duplications, interruptions, miracles, magic, inappropriate theology, and the apologetically awkward, and in adding harmony and continuity, providence and prophecy, piety and moral uplift, interest and clarity, and apologetics.

⁹⁰ Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift*, 119-27; S. Cohen, *Josephus*, 39-42.

⁹¹ One is reminded of the discussion of diet as the factor responsible for the length of the lives of the Ethiopians (Herodotus, *Historiae* 3:23).

as does Gen 2:7, as breathing the breath of life into man's nostrils must have seemed a grotesque anthropomorphism to Josephus, and so he says simply that God instilled (ἐνέγκεν) into man spirit and soul.

Besides, Josephus seeks in his paraphrase *to provide better motivation and to increase the plausibility of events*. Thus, whereas Manoah's desire in the Bible (Judg 13:8) to recall the angel is not well motivated, Josephus' elaboration (Ant. 5:280) makes it more plausible, for he has Manoah's wife entreat God to send the angel again so that her husband may see him and thus allay the suspicions arising from his jealousy of the angel. Similarly, in order to remove the implausibility of the narrative, Delilah in Josephus (Ant. 5:310), full of feminine wiles, uses Samson's love for her as a weapon against him: thus she keeps saying to him that she takes it ill that he has so little confidence in her affection for him as to withhold from her what she desired to know, 'as though', she adds, with typical strategy, 'she would not conceal what she knew must in his interests not be divulged'. Again, the reader of the biblical narrative might well ask how Mordecai was able to discover the conspiracy of Bigthan and Teresh against King Ahasuerus (Esther 2:22). Josephus (Ant. 11:207) has a plausible explanation which is found in no other source, namely, that the plot was discovered by a certain Jew, Bamabazos, the servant of one of the eunuchs, who, in turn, revealed it to Mordecai. Furthermore, the reader might well ask how Harbonah was able to learn (Esther 7:9) about the gallows which Haman had prepared for Mordecai. Josephus (Ant. 11:261 and 266) explains this by noting that he had learned this from one of Haman's servants when Harbonah had gone to summon him to Esther's second banquet.

Furthermore, Josephus seeks to *clear up an obscurity in the text*. Thus it is by no means clear what God means when He says (Gen 1:6), 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters'. Josephus (Ant. 1:30) clarifies the matter by noting that what God did was to set the heaven above the universe and to congeal ice around it, thus explaining, as the Bible does not, the origin of rain. Another obscurity which Josephus clarifies is the 'strange' fire (Lev 10:1) which Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered and on account of which they suffered death. The rabbis (Lev. Rabba 20:8-9, pp. 461-64), noting the juxtaposition in the Bible of the warning to priests not to partake of wine and strong drink before entering the sanctuary (Lev 10:9), suggest that they were intoxicated when they offered the fire. Josephus is unique in presenting the rationalization that they brought on the altar not the incense which Moses had commanded but what they had used previously.⁹²

Another goal of Josephus in his adaptation of the biblical narrative was *to have his work appeal to those who appreciated Hellenistic rhetoric*. Indeed, as I⁹³ have noted, Abraham's speech to Isaac (Ant. 1:228-31) is an example of a

progymnastic (preparatory) exercise called *ethopoeia*. Cicero (De Legibus 1:5) had already noted that history is an *opus... unum oratorium maxime*;⁹⁴ and the rhetorician Theon⁹⁵ (apparently a younger contemporary of Josephus) had remarked on the utility of rhetorical exercises for the writing of history.

In his rewriting of his source, Josephus, like the rhetorician, is constantly concerned with how his work will sound to the ear. Thus he declares (Ant. 2: 176-77) that he is inclined to omit, because of their strangeness to a Greek ear, the names of the seventy descendants of Jacob who went down to Egypt; but he inserts the names only to refute those anti-Semites who had contended that the Jews were of Egyptian rather than of Mesopotamian origin. On the other hand, he omits (Ant. 11:68) the names of the families that returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity, the names of those Jews who sent away their foreign wives at the request of Ezra (Ant. 11: 152), and the names of King Ahasuerus' seven chamberlains (Esther 1:10), of his seven counsellors (Esther 1: 14), and of Haman's ten sons (Ant. 11:289; Esther 9:7-9).

In any case, to judge from Josephus' method of paraphrasing the *Letter of Aristeeas* (Ant. 12:12-118),⁹⁶ aside from a single broken sequence of twelve words and another of ten words, Josephus has deliberately varied the language of his source, even going so far as to substitute synonyms for individual words, altering the prefixes in his verbs, and varying the syntax, though he sticks to the sequence of events in the original. In this avoidance of copying the language of his source, Josephus, as Cohen⁹⁷ has remarked, is following in the footsteps of Aeschines (2:172-76) in his paraphrase of Andocides (3:3-12), as well as of Livy's paraphrase (7:9,6-10,14) of Claudius Quadrigarius, Livy's version of Polybius, Diodorus' version of Agatharchides, and Plutarch's paraphrase (in his life of Coriolanus) of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Apparently there was always the fear of the dreaded accusation of plagiarism.

Another factor in Josephus' rewriting of the Bible is his desire to *enhance the sense of drama*. Thus, for example, the drama of Saul's selection by God is increased because it is at night (Ant. 6:37-40) and not during the day (1 Sam 9:15) and while Samuel is tossing with sleeplessness that God instructs him to choose the king whom He will point out. This dramatic element is augmented still more by the fact that on the day before Saul's arrival God had declared that at precisely that hour on the following day Saul would arrive, whereas the Hebrew does not indicate the precise hour but merely declares that it will be 'tomorrow about this time', and the Septuagint does not mention the hour at all.

Still another factor in Josephus' mind is *to increase the irony*. Thus, the fact that Josephus in the brief pericope in which he paraphrases Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac (Ant. 1:222-36) on five occasions uses a word for happiness, stresses on the one hand how much happiness meant to Abraham,

⁹⁴ See Feldman, *Cicero's Conception of Historiography*, 149-69.

⁹⁵ See Feldman, 'Aqedah', n. 74.

⁹⁶ Pelletier, *Flavius Josephus*.

⁹⁷ S. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*, 29-31.

⁹² See Shinan, 'Sins', 201-14.

⁹³ Feldman, 'Aqedah', n. 74.

and on the other hand how ready he was to forego that happiness because of his faith in God. In particular, the irony is increased by Josephus' statement (*Ant.* 1:223) that Abraham sought to leave his son ἀπαθῆ, a word which has two very different meanings, both of which are here applicable: 'unscathed', in the sense that in the end Isaac will be unharmed, and 'emotionless', in the sense that Isaac will actually welcome his being sacrificed. Likewise, **Josephus** increases the irony in his version of the Esther narrative by introducing God's ironic laughter at **Haman's** hopes just before the περιπέτεια. Again, whereas in the Bible (Esther 6:6) Ahasuerus asks **Haman** what should be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor, Josephus' Ahasuerus (*Ant.* 11:252) adds to the irony by declaring that he knows that **Haman** is the only friend loyal to him. Furthermore, the irony is increased, for whereas the Bible (Esther 6:11) declares that **Haman** took the apparel and the horse and arrayed Mordecai, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 11:256) stresses the contrast between Mordecai clothed in sackcloth and the new purple robe which he is now told by **Haman** to put on. Finally, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 11:267-68) stresses the supreme irony in the fact that **Haman** was hanged on the very same gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai: he thus marvels at God's wisdom and justice in bringing about the result, and adds to the drama of the scene by having Queen Esther show the king the letter which **Haman** had written in which he had ordered the destruction of all the Jews.

One device which **Josephus** resorts to only rarely (perhaps in reaction against **Philo**) in solving difficulties is the use of *allegory*, though he admits (*Ant.* 1:24) that one of the methods of the Tora is solemn allegorizing, and though this pattern had been employed by Stoics in interpreting Homer's and Hesiod's references to the obscurities of the gods.⁹⁸ Indeed, **Josephus** (*Ag.Ap.* 2:255) speaks sneeringly of the 'frigid subterfuges (ψυχρὰς προφάσεις) of the allegorists. Nonetheless, **Josephus** does resort to allegory in explaining the tabernacle as symbolic of the earth and the sea (*Ant.* 3:181), the twelve loaves upon the table as the twelve months, the candelabrum with its seven lamps as the seven planets, the tapestries of four materials denoting the four elements, and the high priest's garments signifying the parts of the universe.* Thus the Jews' seemingly irrational rules with regard to the Temple and its cult would seem to accord with the nature of the cosmos.

In addition, **Josephus** gave added coherence to his narrative by subscribing to the 'great-man' theory of history and by thus *focussing upon certain key personalities* in his narrative. Thus, as I¹⁰⁰ have suggested, **Josephus** presents a coherent portrait of Abraham as a typical national hero such as was popular in Hellenistic times, with emphasis on his qualities as a philosopher-king, scien-

tist, rhetorician-logician, and romantic hero. Indeed, despite the contention of Sandmel¹⁰¹ that Josephus' account of Abraham, at any rate, lacks any striking, unified, and coherent conception, and that of Cohen,¹⁰² who even goes so far as to accuse **Josephus** of sloppiness, inconsistency, and capriciousness, Attridge¹⁰³ has remarked on Josephus' internal consistency; Holladay¹⁰⁴ has commented on the strikingly uniform mold into which **Josephus** has cast his major heroes – Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, and Solomon –, transforming them into a reflection of the Hellenistic ideal of the virtuous wise man, especially as seen in the popular ethics of the first-century Graeco-Roman world; Franxman¹⁰⁵ has noted that beneath the surface lies a careful author; and I¹⁰⁶ have remarked on the unity in his portrait of Saul, noting that we should expect a careful product from a gifted historian who spent at least a dozen years writing the *Antiquities*, while living on an imperial pension and without any additional duties, composing no more than an average of about ten lines of Greek per day.

JOSEPHUS' AIMS: APOLOGETICS

HELLENIZATIONS IN JOSEPHUS. Two major goals have been presented as motivating Josephus' modifications, to defend the Jewish people against anti-Semitic attacks and to present a religious interpretation of history. I¹⁰⁷ have stressed the apologetic aim of Josephus, which may be seen in the Hellenization of his narrative, both in language and in ideas, so as to appeal to his Greek-educated readers and in the glorification of his heroes.

As to the Hellenization of his account, the very fact that **Josephus** mentions by name no fewer than fifty-five Greek authors, even if many of these names may simply be copied from second-hand sources,¹⁰⁸ is an indication that he was out to impress his readers with his knowledge of Greek literature. In particular, we may note his debt to Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plato.

Josephus himself (*Ag.Ap.* 1:50) admits that, despite the fact that he had every material (πραγματείας, 'treatment', 'treatise') at his disposal, he employed assistants (συνεργοίς) for the sake of the Greek language (πρὸς τὴν

⁹⁸ See Wolfson, *Philo* 1, 132-33.

⁹⁹ Josephus' allegory bears a number of similarities to that of **Philo**, Moses 2: 18, 88 and 2:24, 117-27; but inasmuch as these allegories are also, to some degree, paralleled in rabbinic midrashim, the most likely explanation is that both **Philo** and the rabbis in their allegorization go back to a common tradition. See Holladay, *Theios Aner*, 83-86.

¹⁰⁰ Feldman, 'Abraham', 143-56.

¹⁰¹ Sandmel, *Philo's Place in Judaism*, 75.

¹⁰² S. Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome*, 38-39.

¹⁰³ Attridge, *Interpretation*, 182.

¹⁰⁴ Holladay, *Theios Aner*, 67-78.

¹⁰⁵ Franxman, *Genesis*, 285-89.

¹⁰⁶ Feldman, 'Josephus' Portrait of Saul', 97-99.

¹⁰⁷ Feldman, 'Josephus' Commentary on Genesis', 121-31; 'Hellenizations in Josephus' Portrayal of Man's Decline', 336-53; 'Abraham' 143-56; 'Aqedah', 45-99; 'Solomon', 69-98; 'Esther', 143-70.

¹⁰⁸ As I, *Josephus*, 177, have remarked, the fact that on two occasions (*Ant.* 10:219-28 and *Ag.Ap.* 1:134-44) **Josephus** cites the same passage about Nebuchadnezzar from Berossus, together with precisely the same confirmatory references from Philostratus and Megasthenes would indicate that there, at least, he was using a handbook.

Ἑλληνίδα φωνήν) when he composed his account of the *Jewish War*. Whether, however, Josephus had assistants to help him with the Greek when he wrote the *Antiquities* during the next dozen years has been debated. There are those, such as Thackeray,¹⁰⁹ who devised a kind of documentary hypothesis for the later books of the *Antiquities*, indicating, on the basis of a close study of Josephus' vocabulary and style, that he had for Books 15 and 16 an assistant who had a particular love of Greek poetry, especially Sophocles, and that for Books 17 through 19 he had an assistant who was particularly fond of Thucydides. But, as I¹¹⁰ have noted, it is ironic that Thackeray cannot pinpoint the nature and extent of the help of the assistants for the *War*, where Josephus admits he had assistants, whereas for the *Antiquities*, about which Josephus says nothing concerning assistants, Thackeray claims that there is evidence. Moreover, there are Sophoclean elements not only in Books 15 and 16 but also in the earlier books of the *Antiquities*, as Thackeray¹¹¹ himself admits. In addition, many of the Sophoclean and Thucydidean phrases occur in other Greek works of the period, particularly Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and hence may have come to Josephus through such sources. Finally, inasmuch as Josephus completed his *Antiquities* in Rome after a twenty years' stay (while working at nothing else so far as we know), it seems hardly likely that he would have needed as much assistance as he did for the *War*, which he wrote relatively early in his career.

Josephus' Hellenization of the Bible may be seen most readily in his adoption of distinctive phraseology and concepts from classical Greek authors. Thus, to give a few illustrations, as we follow the order of Josephus' narrative, the phrase (*Ant.* 1:14) ἀπορα μὲν γίνεται τὰ πόριμα ('the practicable things become impracticable') is clearly reminiscent of the very reverse in the choral passage in Aeschylus (*Prometheus Bound* 904): ἀπορα πόριμος ('making possible the impossible'), the only other extant author who has these two words thus in paradoxical juxtaposition. Again, as I¹¹² have noted, Josephus (*Ant.* 1:46), in his developed picture of the original bliss of mankind, which has no parallel in the Bible, is following a tradition which appears in many pagan authors from Hesiod on. In particular, the idea (*Ant.* 1:46, 48, 54) of food arising spontaneously, which appears in Josephus' description of the Golden Age, is also found in Homer's description of the Cyclopes (*Odyssey* 9: 109). Likewise, his condemnation (*Ant.* 1:61) of Cain for putting an end to the guileless and generous simplicity and ignorance in which men had previously lived and converting them to a life of knavery is in line with classical portrayals of the primitive age of

simplicity in Homer, Plato, Virgil, and Ovid. Again the idea of a periodic destruction of the earth by fire and water alternately (*Ant.* 1:70-71), while it is, to be sure, to be found also in the Pseudepigraphic *Vita Adae et Evae* 49:3-50:2, would be recognized by the reader of Josephus as being parallel to the statement in Plato (*Timaeus* 22C) that there have been many and diverse destructions of mankind, the greatest by fire and water.¹¹³

Despite the fact that Josephus assures the reader in his proem (*Ant.* 1:15) that Moses has kept his remarks about God pure of that shameless mythology (ἀσχήμονος μυθολογίας) found among others, he does occasionally make such comparisons, as, for example (*Ant.* 1:73), when he compares the deeds of the sons of the angels of God (*Gen* 6:4) to the exploits ascribed to the Giants of Greek mythology. Similarly, there is an implied comparison between Noah's flood and that of Deucalion, for Josephus (*Ant.* 1:76) declares that God put into Noah's mind (ὑποθεμένου) the means of salvation, using language very similar to that of Apollodorus (1:7, 2), who states that Deucalion constructed his boat upon the advice (ὑποθεμένου) of Prometheus. The very fact that the word which Josephus uses for Noah's ark is λάρναξ (*Ant.* 1:77), precisely the word used for Deucalion's ark by Apollodorus and apparently adopted by Nicolaus of Damascus, whom he later quotes (*Ant.* 1:94-95), rather than the Septuagint's word, κιβωτός, would seem to corroborate this implied comparison.

Again, in describing Ishmael's dying state, Josephus (*Ant.* 1:218) employs the same rare word for expiring, ψυχορραγούν, literally 'letting the soul break loose', which Euripides uses (*Alcestis* 20 and *Hercules Furens* 123, 324, the latter in precisely this form). In fact, as I have tried to indicate,¹¹⁴ there are several striking parallels between Isaac and Iphigenia, notably in the enthusiasm with which they both approach the sacrifice, and, in particular, in such a

¹⁰⁹ Thackeray, *Josephus*, 107-18.

¹¹⁰ Feldman, *Josephus*, 828-29.

¹¹¹ Thackeray, trans. of Josephus, vol. 4, p. xv, cites, as examples of passages that reveal the style of the Sophoclean assistant, Josephus' proem (*Ant.* 1:1-26), the wooing of Rebecca (*Ant.* 1:242-55), the temptation of Joseph by Potiphar's wife (*Ant.* 2:39-59), the exodus and the passage of the Red Sea (*Am.* 2:315-49), the rebellion of Korah (*Ant.* 4:11-66), the story of Balaam (*Ant.* 4:102-30), and the death of Moses (*Ant.* 4:323-31).

¹¹² Feldman, 'Hellenizations in Josephus' Portrayal of Man's Decline', 341.

¹¹³ Josephus shows knowledge of Plato in a number of places: 1) He borrows (*Ag.Ap.* 1:7), without specifically mentioning it, from the *Timaeus* (22B-C) the idea that 'in the Greek world everything will be found to be modern and dating, so to speak, from yesterday or the day before'; 2) he correctly remarks (*Ag.Ap.* 2:168-69) that the philosophy of Plato is addressed only to the few, whereas the *Tora's* teachings are intended for the many; 3) he deliberately (*Ag.Ap.* 2:192), as we have noted above, combats the idea that God had collaborators in the work of creation, a view held by Plato and by Philo; 4) he cites Plato by name (*Ag.Ap.* 2:223) as one admired by the Greeks for his dignity of character and persuasive eloquence but who is ridiculed by self-styled expert statesmen; 5) he remarks (*Ag.Ap.* 2:224) that if one examines Plato's laws, they will be found frequently easier than the Jewish code and more closely approximating the practice of the masses; 6) he remarks (*ibid.*) that Plato himself (*Timaeus* 28C) has admitted that it is not safe to express the true opinion about God to the ignorant masses; 7) he cites the opinion (*Ag.Ap.* 2:225) of those who regard Plato's discourses as brilliant but empty; 8) he is aware (*Ag.Ap.* 2:256) that Plato banishes the poets, including Homer, from the ideal state in order to prevent them from obscuring with their fables the correct doctrine about God; 9) he declares (*Ag.Ap.* 2:257) that Plato followed Moses in prescribing that the citizens must all study the laws and learn them verbatim, and that foreigners must not be permitted to mix at random with the citizens; 10) there is evidence of the influence of Plato upon the speeches of Eleazar ben Jair at Masada (*War* 7:323-36, 341-88), as noted by Ladouceur, 'Masada', 250-51. For further indications of Josephus' indebtedness to Plato see Brune, *Flavius Josephus*, 194-98.

¹¹⁴ Feldman, 'Aqedah'.

statement as Isaac's (*Ant.* 1:232) that he could not even consider rejecting the decision of God and Iphigenia's (*Iphigenia at Aulis* 396) that she, a mortal woman, could not stand in the way of the goddess. We may also note the pathetic irony of the fact that Abraham seeks happiness only through his son, who paradoxically, is about to be sacrificed, just as there is irony in the chorus' ode (*Iphigenia at Aulis* 590-91). that begins, 'Oh! oh! great happiness of the great!' One may also note the remarkable addition (*Ant.* 1:233) to the biblical narrative in which God declares that He gave His order to Abraham 'from no craving for human blood', which is clearly in contrast to the statement of Artemis (*Zphigeniu at Aulis* 1524-25), who rejoices in human sacrifices.¹¹⁵

Likewise, **Josephus** uses a phrase clearly reminiscent of Homer when he declares (*Ant.* 1:222) that Isaac was born on the threshold of old age (ἐπὶ γῆρας οὐδῶ) of Abraham. The fact that this phrase occurs in the *Iliad* (22:60) in connection with Priam, who addresses his son Hector before the latter goes off to his last fateful battle with Achilles makes its use in the context of the Akeda all the more poignant and pathetic because of the parallels between the aged fathers, Abraham and Priam, and between the promising sons, who are apparently about to die in the flower of youth.¹¹⁶ Indeed, as I have tried to indicate, "**Josephus** has Hellenized the biblical narrative of the Akeda so that it acquires precisely those qualities that are missing in the Bible: clarity, uniform illumination, and lack of suspense. By eliminating the direct command of God to Abraham, as well as Abraham's laconic response, 'Here I am', and by putting the whole scene in indirect discourse, **Josephus** removes the suspense and indicates that Abraham took all this in his stride.

Josephus shows his indebtedness to **Herodotus**¹¹⁸ in numerous places, particularly in his description of Moses' march during his campaign against the Ethiopians, where he gives details about the winged serpents which he put to flight with ibises, a passage which would remind the reader of Herodotus' story (*Historiae* 2:75) of the winged snakes which comes flying every spring from Arabia towards Egypt and are stopped by ibises, which destroy them all. Indeed, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 2:247) would seem to be alluding to the passage when

¹¹⁵ For other indications of **Josephus**' debt to Euripides see my 'Aqedah'.

¹¹⁶ **Josephus** shows knowledge of Homer in several other places: 1) he (*Ag. Ap.* 1:12) mentions Homer as an oral poet, noting his numerous inconsistencies; 2) he (*Ag. Ap.* 2:155) realizes that Homer nowhere employs the word νόμος ('law', 'custom'); 3) he quotes (*Ant.* 19:92) Homer's *Iliad* (14:90-91) when discussing the conspiracy to assassinate **Caligula**; 4) he shows a fondness for epithets which are distinctively associated with Homer, in particular πολύτροπος ('manifold', 'versatile') (*War* 1:347, 7:272, 7:451; *Ant.* 1:8, 2:303, 10:142, 15:179, 15:416, 17:125); 5) he shows a fondness for other Homeric expressions, for example, ἀνέτη ('endured') (*Ant.* 19:321; cf. *Odyssey* 3:104, 10:327, 14:47), τλημονεστάτη ('most wretched') (*War* 5:19; cf. *Iliad* 10:231, 10:498, 21:430, normally used only in poetry in later Greek literature) and χώρος ('place') (*War* 5:19; cf. *Iliad* 3:315, 3:344, 8:491, 10:520, 13:474; *Odyssey* 11:94, 14:2, normally used only in poetry).

¹¹⁷ Feldman, 'Aqedah'.

¹¹⁸ On **Josephus**' indebtedness to **Herodotus** see Brünce, *Flavius Josephus*, 164-68, and my 'Aqedah', n. 38.

he remarks that he will refrain from saying more about the ibises and snakes, 'for Greeks are not unacquainted with the nature of the ibis'.

Josephus' debt to Sophocles is seen particularly in his account of Solomon,¹¹⁹ where he exaggerates Solomon's wisdom by stating (*Ant.* 8:30) that when no one could see what judgement to give, but all were mentally blinded (τῇ διανοίᾳ τετυφλωμένων), as by a riddle (αἰνίγματι), in finding a solution, the king alone devised a plan to discover the real mother in the dispute of the two harlots about the infants (1 Kgs 3:16). The addition about the mental blindness would remind the reader of the ironic fact that in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* it is Oedipus who is mentally blinded but has physical sight at the beginning of the play, while the reverse is true for Teiresias the prophet, whereas at the end of the play the roles are reversed. The riddle would, of course, remind the reader of the fact that whereas others had failed to solve the riddle of the Sphinx, it was Oedipus who had succeeded in doing so.

THE QUALITIES OF BIBLICAL HEROES. The very fact that **Josephus** centers his narrative around great heroes, such as Abraham, Moses, Saul, David and Solomon, would defend the Jews against the charge (*Ag. Ap.* 2:135) that they had failed to produce marvelous (θαυμαστούς) men, such as inventors of the arts or outstandingly wise men. Hence, **Josephus** determined to follow the Peripatetic tradition¹²⁰ (his chief source for the last half of the *Antiquities* was, it appears, Nicolaus of Damascus, a well-known Peripatetic) and to stress the role of great men in history; and in his great apologetic work, *Against Apion* (2: 136), he refers the reader to this goal of the *Antiquities* when he declares that 'our own famous men are deserving of winning no less praise than the Greek wise men and are familiar to readers of our *Antiquities*'. Indeed, the chief questions in his history are designed to ascertain the human motives of his heroes, whereas Scripture more often stresses the role of God as directing human actions.¹²¹

We may note, furthermore, that this same tendency to build up Jewish biblical heroes, notably Moses, is to be found in such Hellenistic Jewish writers as Aristeeas (in his Letter), Artapanus, Ezekiel the tragedian, **Philo** the Elder, and **Philo** the philosopher. If we ask why a figure such as Ruth is not built up, the answer would seem to be that she was hardly a major historical figure and hence hardly a model for the range of virtues to be emulated by **Josephus**' Greek readers, and that she, as a woman, was subject to **Josephus**' patent misogyny, as seen, for example, in his snide remark (*War* 7:399) about the woman at Masada who was 'superior in sagacity and training to most of her sex'. On the other hand, it is interesting to note, as I¹²² have remarked, that **Josephus** devotes approximately three times as much space to his encomium of Saul (*Ant.* 6:343-50) as to his eulogy of Moses (*Ant.* 4:328-31), or David (*Ant.* 7:390-91),

¹¹⁹ See my 'Solomon', 82-84, 88-89.

¹²⁰ See my 'Saul', 46-48.

¹²¹ See Heinemann, 'Josephus' Method', 185; and Lowy, *Principles*, 482.

¹²² Feldman, 'Saul', 52.

four times as much as to his encomium of Samuel (*Ant.* 6:292-94), and approximately ten times as much as to his encomia of Isaac (*Ant.* 1:346), Jacob (*Ant.* 2:196), Joseph (*Ant.* 2:198), Joshua (*Ant.* 5:118), Samson (*Ant.* 5:317), and Solomon (*Ant.* 8:211). From this we may deduce that **Josephus** identified himself with Saul, who, like him, was a general, and looked upon him as a foremost paradigm in expressing the goals of his work, in terms of his specific apologetic aims.

If we examine such key figures in Josephus' narrative as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samson, Saul, David, Solomon, and Esther, we shall see that stress is generally placed on the external qualities of good birth and handsome stature, the four cardinal virtues of character – wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice – and the spiritual attribute of **piety**.¹²³ The Jewish hero must be, in effect, a Platonic-like philosopher-king, a high priest, and a prophet, all in one. The recitation of his virtues is a veritable aretology, such as was popular in Hellenistic times.

(a) *Genealogy and Handsomeness*

With regard to genealogy, the first of the thirty-six stages, according to the Greek rhetorician **Theon**, when praising a person, was to laud his ancestry. Thus, in the case of Abraham, **Josephus** tells us that Abraham was the tenth generation after Noah (Scripture simply enumerates his ancestors), and adds to his antiquity by remarking (*Ant.* 1:148) that he was born 992 years after the flood, thus increasing by some 701 years the interval between the flood and the birth of Abraham. **Josephus** would thus seem to be answering such anti-Semites as Apollonius Molon (*ap.* Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9:19, 2-3), who had declared that Abraham was born only three generations after Noah. In this connection, one recalls the remark (Plato, *Timaeus*, 22B) of the aged Egyptian priest to Solon, 'You Greeks are always children; in Greece there is no such thing as an old man'. In particular, the Egyptian sneers (*Timaeus*, 23B) at the genealogies of the Greeks, which, he says, are little better than nursery tales. As to Joseph, **Josephus**, in explaining why Jacob loved him more than his brothers, adds the extra-biblical explanation (*Ant.* 2:9) that he did so because of the beauty of person that he owed not only to his excellence of character but also to his good birth (*εὐγένειαν*), that is, the fact that his mother Rachel was exceptionally beautiful. Again, **Amram**, Moses' father, is described (*Ant.* 2:210) as of noble birth (*εὐγενότων*), whereas the Bible (Exod 2:1) simply describes him as 'a man from the house of Levi'.

In addition, the great leader must be precocious as a child and unusually handsome. Thus **Josephus** (*Ant.* 2:230) remarks that Moses' growth in understanding (*σύνεσις*) far outstripped his physical growth, and that even in his

¹²³ See my 'Saul', 59-93. We may note that King David is praised for the same virtues (*Ant.* 7:390-91): wisdom (*σώφρων*), courage (*ἀνδρείος*), temperance (*ἐπιεικής*), and justice (*δίκαιος*), to which the quality of piety (*εὐσέβεια*) is also added (*Ant.* 6:160).

games he displayed his superiority (*περιουσίαν*), **so** that his achievements even at that tender age gave promise of greater deeds yet to come.¹²⁴ Such a picture is reminiscent of that of the ten-year-old future Persian king Cyrus, whose parentage was discovered through an incident which occurred while he was playing with the village boys, during which he ordered one of them to be beaten because he had disobeyed his command.

That the hero must be handsome may be perceived in the description of Jacobs' sons (*Ant.* 2:98), of whom **Josephus** says that it was impossible for any commoner to have reared any such with figures (*μορφάς*) so distinguished when even kings found it hard to raise the like. The same quality is stressed by Pharaoh's daughter Therrnuthis when she first beholds (*Ant.* 2:224) the infant Moses and is enchanted by his size (*μεγέθους*) and beauty (*κάλλους*). Likewise, she speaks (*Ant.* 2:232) of both his divine beauty (*μορφῇ τε θεῖον*) and outstanding intellect (*φρονήματι γενναῖον*), the very nouns which are used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1:79, 10) in indicating the excellence of Romulus and Remus. **Josephus** (*Ant.* 2:230) adds that when Moses was three years old, God gave wondrous increase to his stature,¹²⁵ so that passers-by could not avoid being amazed at his beauty of form (*εὐμορφίας*) when they beheld him. Indeed, we are told (*Ant.* 2:231) that it often happened that persons meeting him as he was borne along the road turned (*ἐπιστρέφειν*), being attracted by the appearance of the child, and neglected their serious affairs in order to give their time to gazing at him, so that he held his beholders spellbound with his bountiful and undiluted childish charm (*χάρις ἡ παιδικὴ πολλὴ καὶ ἄκρατος*).¹²⁶ Again, this seems to be a stock remark about the future great man, as we see, for example, in the statement of Apollonius-Iamblichus (10, p. 11, lines 6-7; cf. Apuleius, *Florida*) that everyone turned (*ἐπέστρεφε*) to look at the small Pythagoras; indeed, the verb which he uses for those who gazed is the same as that employed by **Josephus**.¹²⁷ Moreover, **Josephus**' version (*Ant.* 6:45) of 1 Sam 9:2 adds considerably to the picture of Saul, for he is not only young and tall but also best in shape (*μορφὴν ἄριστος*). Similarly, **Josephus** stresses (*Ant.* 6:164) David's handsomeness, particularly his ruddy colour and his piercing eyes. Furthermore, **Josephus** emphasizes (*Ant.* 7: 189) Absalom's handsomeness when he adds that 'he had not suffered any loss of beauty

¹²⁴ To be sure, Moses' precocity is also recognized by **Philo** (*Moses* 1:5, 20), who notes that the young Moses did not engage in fun, frolic, and sport like an infant, even though his guardians were utterly lenient, but 'applied himself to learning and seeing what was sure to perfect the soul'. This precocity is also recognized in rabbinic literature (Cant. *Rabba* 1:26).

¹²⁵ The rabbinic tradition (*Yalkut Shimoni*, *Shemot*, 1:166) remarks that at the age of five Moses appeared grown both in stature and intelligence. On Moses' extraordinary growth see *Tanhuma Shemot* 9, *B. T. Berakhot* 54b, and *B. T. Bekhorot* 44a, the last of which notes that Moses grew to be ten cubits (about fifteen feet) tall.

¹²⁶ **Philo** (*Moses* 2:70) similarly notes Moses' effect upon onlookers after his descent from Mount Sinai: 'He descended with a countenance far more beautiful than when he ascended, so that those who saw him were filled with awe and amazement'.

¹²⁷ Cited by **Lévy**, *Légende de Pythagore*, 141.

through sorrow or lack of care proper to a king's son, but was still remarkable and distinguished among all for his looks and bodily stature, and surpassed even those who lived in great luxury'. This stress on the importance of physical beauty reminds one of Plato's remark (*Republic* 7:535 A11-12) that the philosopher-kings should be, so far as possible, the most handsome (εὐειδεστάτους) persons. indeed, in the very earliest of biographies, Isocrates' *Evagoras* (22-23), we find the qualities of beauty and bodily strength as the *sine qua non* for the hero.

(b) *The Cardinal Virtues*

The great hero, as we see particularly in the portraits of **Abraham**,¹²⁸ Moses, Saul, and David, must, like Plato's philosopher-king, possess the four cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, plus the virtue of piety, which Plato (*Protagoras* 349B) already counts as the fifth of the virtues. Again, like Thucydides' ideal statesman (2:60-65), he must excel in ability to persuade, must be beyond corruption, and must put the nation above his own needs.

As to **wisdom**, Abraham is portrayed as a philosopher whose logic is impeccable (*Ant.* 1:154), who is clever in understanding (*Ant.* 1:154) (δαινός ὧν συνίεναι, a phrase reminiscent of Oedipus, φρονεῖν... δεινόν, Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 316), who is able to arrive at an original and unique proof of the existence of God (*Ant.* 1:156)¹²⁹ from the irregularity of heavenly phenomena, in a form promulgated by the Greek philosophical schools, notably the Stoics. Indeed, his hearers are termed ἀκροαμένοις (*Ant.* 1:154), a word used especially of those who listen to lectures in the philosophical schools. Likewise, Isaac is praised (*Ant.* 1:261) for the reasonable calculation (εὐγνώμονι λογισμῷ) which he exhibited in settling the dispute over wells with Abimelech's shepherds. Jacob exercises wisdom (σοφίας) and intelligence (διανοία) in understanding the meaning of Joseph's dreams (*Ant.* 2:15). In turn, Josephus' tremendous understanding (σύνεσιν ἰκανώτατος, *Ant.* 2:80) recommends him to Pharaoh; and, in view of his incredible intelligence (πρὸς τὸ παράδοξον τῆς συνέσεως *Ant.* 2:91), he is given a name by Pharaoh signifying, 'Discoverer of Secrets'. Moses (*Ant.* 4:328) likewise is eulogized as having surpassed in understanding (συνέσει) all men who have ever lived. The fact that: **Josephus** uses the term 'lawgiver' (νομοθέτης) sixteen times in the first four books with regard to Moses, referring to him usually merely as 'the lawgiver', without explicitly naming him as Moses (just as Pseudo-Longinus 9:9 refers to him as θεσμοθέτης 'lawgiver', without deeming it necessary to name him), is an indication that to **Josephus** Moses is **the** wise man *par excellence*, to be bracketed with the Spartan Lycurgus, the Athenian Solon, and the Roman Numa Pompilius, even though,

¹²⁸ In connection with Abraham, in particular, **Josephus** seems to be trying to answer the charge, reported and refuted by Philo (On **Abraham** 33:178), that Abraham did not do anything unique or remarkable.

¹²⁹ See my 'Abraham', 145-50.

strictly speaking, it is God alone Who is the lawgiver. "His wisdom as a legislator is to be seen in the fact, noted by **Josephus** (*Ant.* 3:317), that although it is possible for violators to escape detection, there is no Jew who does not obey his ordinances, as if he were present to punish any breach of discipline.

Even in the case of Samson, where many commentators have remarked that he appears rather foolish, since he could not reasonably have expected anyone to solve his riddle (Judg 14:22), inasmuch as it was based on an incident which no one had witnessed, in **Josephus** (*Ant.* 5:290) Samson's reputation for wisdom is not damaged, since **Josephus** converts the riddle into a story (λόγον), which is exactly what it is. Moreover, by introducing the non-biblical statement that the Philistines at the wedding feast at Timnah were ambitious to win renown for sagacity (συνέσεως) in explaining his story, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 5:290) stresses Samson's own sagacity.

Likewise, as **Satran**¹³¹ has pointed out, the disciplined pursuit of purification has brought Daniel in **Josephus** to the supreme achievement of the Graeco-Roman sage, of the type found in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, the movement from human to divine wisdom.

Connected with the virtue of wisdom is **excellence in the** sciences, a field which had become increasingly important in the Hellenistic period. Thus **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:106) explains the longevity of the early patriarchs by declaring that God rewarded them with long life not only for their virtue (ἀρετήν) but also in order to promote the utility of their discoveries in astronomy and geometry. Again, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:167) adds to the biblical narrative that Abraham graciously taught (χαρίζεται) the Egyptians arithmetic (the study of which had been stressed by both Plato and Isocrates, the founders of the two leading schools of education in the fourth century B.C.E.) and astronomy (which was to become the most popular of the four branches of mathematics in Hellenistic times),¹³² two sciences, according to **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:168), of which the Egyptians had previously been ignorant.¹³³

Moreover, the true scientist must show his open-mindedness by being willing to change his mind if honestly convinced by others.¹³⁴ Such a quality is exhibited by Abraham (*Ant.* 1:161), who visits Egypt, not merely, as indicated in the

¹³⁰ On **Josephus**' portrait of Moses, particularly as the virtuous lawgiver, see **Graf**, *Hellenization*, 131-44.

¹³¹ **Satran**, 'Daniel', 33-48.

¹³² **Marrou**, *History*, 182.

¹³³ We may note that whereas Artapanus, the Hellenistic Jewish historian (ca. 100 B.C.E.) says (*ap. Eusebius*, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9:18, 1) that Abraham taught astrology to the Egyptian pharaoh. **Josephus** elevates Abraham by declaring that he consorted with the most learned of the Egyptians. Cf. Attridge, 'Historiography', 165-67.

¹³⁴ Cf. Apollonius, **Josephus**' contemporary, who similarly visits the Magi, the Indians, and the Egyptians (*ap. Philostratus*, *Vita Apollonii*, 1:26, 3:16ff., 6:10ff.). **Josephus** himself (*Ag. Ap.* 1:176-82) tells of a learned Jew who visited Aristotle to converse with him and to test his learning but who, in the end, imparted to Aristotle something of his own.

Bible (Gen 12: 10), in order to obtain food because of the famine in Canaan, but also to hear what the famed Egyptian priests said about their gods, with the intention, characteristic of true wise men, either of adopting their views if he found them more excellent than his own or of converting **them** if his views should prove superior. The picture, as I¹³⁵ have suggested, is reminiscent of Solon the wise Athenian (Plato, *Timaeus* 22A), who discovered, when he visited Egypt, that neither he nor any other Greek had any knowledge of antiquity worth speaking of, and of the **pre-Socratic** philosophers, such as Pythagoras, who allegedly visited Egypt to become acquainted with **the science** and the other esoteric lore of the Egyptians.

Another attribute connected with wisdom, as we may see in **Thucydides'** (2:60) portrait of the ideal statesman, is **the ability to persuade the people**. Thus **Josephus** remarks (*Ant.* 1:154) that Abraham was persuasive (**πιθανός**) with his hearers (**ἀκροωμένοις**, a word used especially of students who listen to lectures in the philosophical **schools**)¹³⁶ and was not mistaken in his inferences. His power of persuasion is seen particularly in his ability to convince the Egyptians (*Ant.* 1:167) on any subject which he undertook to teach. As to Moses, it is nothing short of amazing that **Josephus** is able to praise his extraordinary ability in addressing a crowd (*Ant.* 3:13, 4:328), despite the fact that the Bible declares that he had a speech impediment (Exod 6: 12). Likewise, Joshua is termed highly gifted in speech (*Ant.* 3:49) and supremely skilled in expounding his ideas clearly to the multitude (*Ant.* 5:118). Again, Nehemiah, before approaching the king for permission to go to Jerusalem, prays (*Ant.* 11:165) to God to give his words some measure of grace and persuasion (**πειθώ**).

The second of the cardinal virtues, courage **and skill in battle**, is stressed by **Josephus** in a number of additions to the biblical narrative, especially since the Jews had been reproached with cowardice by such anti-Semites as **Apollonius Molon** (*Ag.Ap.* 2: 148). Moreover, **Josephus** himself had been subjected to such a charge (*War* 3:358). Thus, whereas the rabbis (B. *T. Sunhedrin* 96a) stress the miraculous help which Abraham received from an angel named Night in attacking the Assyrians, **Josephus** adds a number of details to enhance Abraham's military prowess, notably that the battle was a stubborn contest (*Ant.* 1:172), that Abraham (*Ant.* 1:177) determined to help the Sodomites without delay, that he surprised them before they had time to arm, and that he slew some in their beds, while others who were drunk took to flight. This military tradition is continued, according to **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:240-41), who quotes a certain **Cleodemus-Malchus**, by two of Abraham's sons of Keturah, who joined Heracles, the most famous of the Greek legendary heroes, in his campaign against Libya and

Antaeus, the giant son of Earth. **Josephus**, who normally, as we shall see, inveighs bitterly against intermarriage, here seems to record proudly the fact that Heracles married the daughter of one of them. Moreover, Jacobs' sons are described (*Ant.* 2:7) as courageous for much **labour** and endurance of toil (**πρὸς ἔργα χειρῶν καὶ πόνων ὑπομονὴν ἦσαν εὐψυχοί**).

The supreme example of military acumen and courage is Moses, who (*Ant.* 2:238-51), is depicted as the conqueror of Ethiopia, a land that had successfully resisted invasion by generals of the caliber of Cambyses (Herodotus, *Historiae* 3:17-25) and Alexander the Great. As **Holladay**¹³⁷ has noted, Moses is never called **στρατηγός** or even **ἡγεμών** in the Septuagint, whereas in **Josephus** these are frequently used, particularly to describe Moses' role in the wilderness, where he is the model general, unperturbed despite great difficulties, unconcerned about his own safety despite grave threats to his life, always encouraging his troops, and admired by his father-in-law Raguel (*Ant.* 3:65) for his gallantry (**ἀνδραγαθίας**) which he had devoted to the salvation of his friends. Moses (*Ant.* 3:42) shows his ability in his excellent strategy in attacking the Amalekites before they were too strong, in exhorting his men (*Ant.* 3:47), in his preparations for the battle (*Ant.* 3:5), and even in his ability to lead a retreat (*Ant.* 4:9). Indeed, in summarizing his career (*Ant.* 4:329), **Josephus** selects two traits in which Moses particularly excelled, his ability as a general, where he had few to equal him, and his role as a prophet, where he was **unique**.¹³⁸ Again, one of the principal factors leading to Moses' choice of Joshua (*Ant.* 3:49) to lead his army is that he is extremely courageous (**ἀνδρείοτατον**) and valiant in enduring toil (**πόνους ὑποστῆναι γενναῖον**). Joshua is later (*Ant.* 5:118) eulogized as stout-hearted (**εὐψυχος**) and greatly daring (**μεγαλότολμος**).

Moreover, **Josephus** omits details that would detract from the heroic stature of his biblical personalities. Hence, since the Greeks generally had contempt for menial **labour**, and since the toil of working at the mill was a common and much-dreaded punishment of slaves often referred to in the comic poets, **Josephus** is careful to omit the fact (Judg 16:21) that Samson 'did grind in the prison house'.

Likewise, in his long appreciation of Saul's character, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 6:347) declares categorically that the terms 'stout-hearted' (**εὐψυχος**), 'greatly daring' (**μεγαλότολμος**), and 'contemptuous of danger' (**τῶν δεινῶν καταφρονητής**) can be justly applied only to such as have emulated Saul, since he engaged in his exploits knowing beforehand that he was destined to die.¹³⁹

The third of the cardinal virtues, temperance, is likewise a recurring theme in **Josephus**, who identifies it (*Ant.* 6:63) with **modesty**. Just as the Greeks had to

¹³⁵ Feldman, 'Abraham', 151-52.

¹³⁶ Cf. Xenophon, *Symposium* 3:6

¹³⁷ Holladay, *Theios Aner*, 69.

¹³⁸ **Josephus** (*Ant.* 3:265-68) also replies to the charge (for example, by Manetho, *ap. Ag.Ap.* 1:279) that Moses was a leper by declaring that this could hardly have been so in view of the laws that he promulgated on leprosy.

¹³⁹ On the build-up of Saul's quality of courage by **Josephus** see my 'Saul', 66-79.

be constantly reminded of this virtue through the motto at Delphi, μηδὲν ἄγαν, so the Israelites had to be exhorted (*Ant.* 4: 189) by Moses before his death to learn moderation (σωφρονήσκειν); and he notes that he himself had refrained from wrath at the moment that he felt most aggrieved by them. Moses' own modesty is shown (*Ant.* 3:74) by the fact that he was willing to take advice from his father-in-law and that he acknowledged this assistance. Likewise (*Ant.* 4:157), Moses modestly recorded the prophecies of Balaam, though he could easily have appropriated them for himself, since there was no witness to convict him. Thus Moses was not guilty of the sin of plagiarism so frequently practiced in antiquity.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, in his final encomium of Moses, *Josephus* (*Ant.* 4:328) singles out his thorough command (αὐτοκράτωρ), a term indicating that he was commander-in-chief, so to speak, of the passions. Similarly, Samson shows the quality of humility in acknowledging (*Ant.* 5:302), after he had been seized by a mighty thirst, that human virtue (ἀρετή) is nothing, since all is attributable to God.

The fourth of the cardinal virtues, *justice*, is displayed by Abraham (*Ant.* 1:158), who is termed a just (δίκαιος) man in a passage which *Josephus* quotes from the Babylonian historian Berosus. We read (*Ant.* 3:66) that everyone came to Moses, thinking that only thus would they obtain justice (τοῦ δικαίου), so that (*Ant.* 3:67) even those who lost their cases were convinced that it was justice (δικαιοσύνην) rather than cupidity that determined their fate. To parallel the embezzlement charge against Pericles (Plato, *Gorgias* 516A), *Josephus* elaborates (*Ant.* 4:46) the point that Moses did not accept a present from a single Hebrew to pervert justice, so that we see that Moses possesses one of the qualities of the ideal statesman, who, according to Thucydides (2:60, 5) must be able to resist a bribe. Again, when the people demand that Samuel name a king for them, he (*Ant.* 6:36) is sorely aggrieved because of his innate sense of justice; and in his eulogy of him *Josephus* (*Ant.* 6:294) describes him as a just (δίκαιος) and kindly man. Similarly, when Jonathan (*Ant.* 6:212) appeals to Saul, *Josephus* declares that thus a just cause (δίκαιος λόγος) prevailed over anger and fear. Again, one of the qualities which God declares (*Ant.* 6:160) that Samuel is to look for when he is about to select David as king is justice. Indeed, when David spares Saul's life, the latter compliments him (*Ant.* 6:290) for having shown the righteousness (δικαιοσύνην) of the ancients. *Josephus* likewise editorializes (*Ant.* 7:110) in declaring that David was just (δίκαιος) by nature and that he looked only toward the truth in giving judgment; and in his final eulogy one of his qualities singled out for praise (*Ant.* 7:391) is that he was just. Solomon, *Josephus* (*Ant.* 8:21) declares, was not hindered by his youth from dispensing justice (δικαιοσύνην); and God, in His turn, promises to

¹⁴⁰ For examples of plagiarism see Aristophanes' accusation of Eupolis (*Clouds* 553-54) and Eupolis' of Aristophanes (frag. 78 Kock). Plato was accused of deriving the idea of the *Republic* from the Sophist Protagoras. In Hellenistic Alexandria investigations of plagiarism were apparently frequent.

preserve the kingdom for his descendants if he continues to be righteous (δίκαιος)

Connected with the virtue of justice is the enormous responsibility to tell the truth. That the Greeks realized its importance is to be seen in the fact that Herodotus quite obviously admires the fact that Persian sons are carefully instructed to speak the truth (*Historiae* 1: 136) and that they regard it as the most disgraceful thing in the world to tell a lie (*Historiae* 1: 139), this in contrast to the reputation that the Greeks themselves had, from the figure of Odysseus on down, for cleverness in lying. Hence, *Josephus* takes pains and explains (*Ant.* 1:162, 1:207) why Abraham has to devise a lying scheme when he comes to Egypt and to Abimelech with his wife Sarah; and he omits (*Ant.* 1:209) the passage (Gen 20:9) in which Abimelech rebukes Abraham for his deceit. Moreover, he describes Moses (*Ant.* 4:303) as one who had in no respect deviated from the truth. Likewise, *Josephus* (*Ant.* 7:110) remarks that David was of just nature and that when he gave judgment he considered only the truth. Again, Mephibosheth declares his confidence that no calumny enters David's mind, 'for it is just and loves the truth' (*Ant.* 7:269).

Likewise, coupled with justice is the virtue of humanity (φιανθρωπία), as we see in Philo,¹⁴¹ just as its Latin equivalent, *humanitas*, is likewise connected with the virtue of justice.¹⁴² In particular, Reuben, in his speech to Joseph (*Ant.* 2:101), declares his confidence in his humanity (φιανθρωπίαν). Moreover, in his final eulogy of David's character, *Josephus* (*Ant.* 7:391) stresses, among other qualities, that he was just and humane (φιάνθρωπος), 'qualities which are especially applicable to kings'. Here again *Josephus* seems to be answering such anti-Semites as Apollonius Molon and Lysimachus (*Ag.Ap.* 2:145), who had charged the Jews with hatred of mankind, as repeated somewhat later also in *Tacitus* *Historiae* 5:5.1, who refers to the Jews' hatred of the human race (*adversus omnes alios hostile odium*), whereas, in fact, says *Josephus* (*Ag.Ap.* 2:146), humanity is one of the qualities especially fostered by the law code of the Jews.

Finally, that *piety*¹⁴³ is coupled with the other virtues is clear from *Josephus'* statement (*Ant.* 1:6) that it was under the great lawgiver Moses that the Israelites were trained in piety (εὐσέβειαν) and the exercise of the other virtues. Furthermore, he indicates the importance of piety when he declares (*Ant.* 1:21) that when once Moses had won the obedience of the Israelites to the dictates of piety he had no further difficulty in persuading them of all the remaining virtues. Indeed, it is the piety of Abraham and Isaac that *Josephus* stresses in his account of the readiness of Abraham to sacrifice his son (*Ant.*

¹⁴¹ Philo, *On the Change of Names* 40:225; *Moses* 2:2, 9; *On the Decalogue* 30: 164. See the discussion by Wolfson, *Philo*, 2:218-20.

¹⁴² Cf. Macrobius on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* 1:8, cited by Wolfson, *Philo* 2. 220, n. 146.

¹⁴³ Cf. Aristotle, *De Virtutibus et Vitiis* 5, 1250b22-23, who defines piety as either a part of justice or an accompaniment of it.

1:222-36).¹⁴⁴ Again, in his one-sentence eulogy of Jacob (*Ant.* 2:190), the sole virtue which he mentions is his piety, in which quality he is said to have been second to none of the forefathers. Furthermore, when describing (*Ant.* 3:491) the qualities of Joshua, he notes the singular piety which he had learned from his mentor Moses. Again, in singling out the qualities which Samuel is to look for in a king, God first mentions (*Ant.* 6:160) piety (εὐσεβεία) and only then mentions the virtues of justice, bravery, and obedience, declaring that these are the qualities of which beauty of soul consists. As to Saul's piety, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 6:124) stresses his respect for an oath, a matter which was so important to the Romans, as we see in Cicero (*De Officiis* 1:7, 1, 10); and, indeed, when Jonathan faces death at the hands of his father because of his vow, he declares that he would be very glad to undergo death for the sake of his piety (εὐσεβείας, *Ant.* 6:127). Even when the Bible (1 Sam 13:8-14) exhibits Saul's lack of piety in offering a sacrifice before waiting for Samuel, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 6:103) offers an excuse, namely that he did so out of necessity because of the desertion of his frightened troops.¹⁴⁵ Similar attributions of piety are to be found in the case of David (*Ant.* 6:160, 7:130, 8:196, 8:315), Solomon (*Ant.* 8:13, 9:22), and the later kings, notably Hezekiah (*Ant.* 9:260, 9:276) and Josiah (*Ant.* 10:50, 10:51, 10:56).¹⁴⁶

ANSWERS TO ANTI-SEMITIC CHARGES. In addition to answering the anti-Semitic contention that the Jews had produced no great men, **Josephus** seeks to answer other charges. Living in Rome during the period from 70 to the end of the century, **Josephus** may have had contact with the writings,¹⁴⁷ or at least the ideas, of such vicious anti-Semites as Quintilian and Martial, and perhaps **Tacitus** and **Juvenal**. As to the charge of misanthropy, even **Hecataeus** (up. **Diodorus**, *Bibl. Hist.* 40:3, 4), who is otherwise well disposed toward the Jews, describes the Jewish way of life as 'somewhat unsocial' (ἀπάνθρωπὸν τινα) and hostile to foreigners (μισόξενον). The Alexandrian **Lysimachus** (probably first century B.C.E.) reflects such a charge when he says (up. **Josephus**, *Ag. Ap.* 1:309) that Moses instructed the Israelites 'to show goodwill to no man, to offer

¹⁴⁴ The striking omission from **Josephus'** account of the word which the rabbis regarded as the single most important word in it, 'aqad, 'bound', (Gen 22:9) and its replacement by a homily delivered by Abraham to Isaac is due, it would seem, to the fact that the physical binding of Isaac would probably have been too much for a Greek audience and would have been incriminating toward Abraham, as well as toward Isaac (since it would have implied that it was necessary thus to prevent him from trying to escape). **Josephus** deliberately heightens the heroic faith of Isaac in depicting him as rushing (*Ant.* 1:232) upon the altar.

¹⁴⁵ On Saul's piety see my 'Saul', 83-93.

¹⁴⁶ **Attridge**, *Interpretation* 183 denies that the Hellenistic historians stressed the importance of the specifically religious response (εὐσεβεία) to the facts of providence. But, we may note, **Dionysius of Halicarnassus** (4:778) praises **Xenophon** for displaying, first of all, the virtue of piety. Moreover, **Diodorus** (1:22), in his prologue, likewise stresses piety and justice as the two virtues which historians extol in their heroes.

¹⁴⁷ On the question of **Josephus'** knowledge of Latin see **Thackeray**, *Josephus*, 119-20; **Daube**, 'Three Legal Notes', 191-94; and my comments thereon, *Josephus*, 836.

not the best but the worst advice and to overthrow any temples and altars of gods which they found'. **Tacitus** (*Histories* 5: 1) remarks that while the Jews are extremely loyal to one another and always ready to show compassion to compatriots alone, they feel only hate and enmity toward all other peoples. **Juvenal** (*Satires* 14:103-104) goes so far as to attack the Jews for not showing the way or a fountain spring to any but fellow-Jews. **Haman**, we may note, according to **Josephus** (*Ant.* 11:212) charges that the Jews refuse to mingle with others (ἄμικτον, a term used of the Centaurs in **Sophocles**, *Trachiniae* 1095, and of the Cyclopes in **Euripides**, *Cyclops* 429), are unsocial (ἀσύμφυλον, 'not akin', 'incompatible', 'unsuitable'), and are in customs and practices the enemy both of the Persians and, indeed, of all mankind.

In answer to such charges, and particularly of the Alexandrian anti-Semites, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:166) declares, in his narrative of Abraham's visit to Egypt, that it is the Egyptians who disparaged one another's practices and were consequently at enmity with one another, in contrast to Abraham, who patiently conferred with each party and pointed out the flaws in their arguments. In addition, Abraham is depicted (*Ant.* 1:181) as graciously reciprocating **Melchizedek's** lavish hospitality with a more gracious offer of a tithe of all the spoil which he had taken in the campaign against the Syrians, whereas in the Bible (*Gen* 14:20) it is not clear whether Abraham gave a tithe or received it. Moreover, it is in answer to such a charge as that repeated by **Tacitus** that Jews were devoid of pity for anyone who was not of their religion that **Josephus'** Abraham (*Ant.* 1:199) shows pity for his friends the **Sodomites**.¹⁴⁸ The fact, we may add, that the **Sodomites** are depicted in even blacker colours in **Josephus** than in the Bible glorifies still more the figure of Abraham for showing pity toward them and for praying in their behalf. Moreover, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:200) remarks that Lot had acquired the lesson of hospitality from Abraham; but the rabbis speak in general terms, whereas **Josephus** declares that Lot learned to be φιλόανθρωπος, thus answering those critics who claimed that the Jews were misanthropes. Likewise, Abraham (*Ant.* 1:211) shows devotion and kindness to **Abimelech** in order to demonstrate that he was in no way responsible for the king's illness but eager for his recovery. Furthermore, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:218) completely omits the pathetic scene (*Gen* 21:16) in which **Hagar** weeps when cast out into the wilderness by **Sarah**, since this might cast an unfavourable reflection upon Abraham as pitiless.

Again, whereas the Jews had been accused of a blood libel by **Apion** (up. **Josephus**, *Ag. Ap.* 2:91-96) and by **Damocritus** (up. **Suidas**, s.v.), **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:233) stresses, as we have noted,¹⁴⁹ the contrast between the sacrifice of Isaac, which was not consummated, and that of **Iphigenia**, which was actually carried out. In particular, he puts a speech (*Ant.* 1:233-36) into the mouth of

¹⁴⁸ We may remark that it is only in the *Zohar* (1: 112b), which was codified in the thirteenth century, that we hear of Abraham's friendship with the **Sodomites**.

¹⁴⁹ **Feldman**, 'Aqedah'.

God, rather than of an **angel** as in Gen 22:11, that He does not crave human blood and that He is not capricious in taking away what He has given. This is, as we have noted, in direct contrast to Artemis, who (Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1524-25) 'rejoices in human sacrifices'.

David (*Ant.* 7:391), far from being a misanthrope, is described as φιλόανθρωπος, 'humane', the very opposite of ἀπάνθρωπος. Josephus, moreover, in the spirit of tolerance, follows the Septuagint (Exod 22:28) in declaring that the Jews are forbidden to blaspheme the gods of others (*Ant.* 4:207 and Ag.Ap. 2:237) out of respect for the very word 'god'. Likewise, for the same reason, presumably, he omits (*Ant.* 9:138) the conversion of the temple of **Baal** into a latrine (2 Kgs 10:27). Moreover, significantly, though he generally follows closely the Apocryphal Addition C, which contains Esther's prayer to God, **Josephus** omits the detestation of non-Jews expressed by Esther (C26-27). Likewise, though Additions A and F were available to **Josephus**,¹⁵⁰ he omits them, presumably because in them the struggle between **Haman** and Mordecai is viewed not as a personal one but as part of the eternal conflict between Jew and non-Jew. In answer to the same charge of misanthropy, Josephus' King Solomon (*Ant.* 8:117), in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, specifically denies that the Jews are inhuman (ἀπάνθρωποι) by nature or unfriendly to non-Jews, and expresses the wish that all men equally may receive aid from God and enjoy His blessings.

APPEAL TO POLITICAL, MILITARY AND GEOGRAPHIC INTERESTS. To further appeal to the non-Jews and secularly educated Jews in his audience, **Josephus** catered to their political, military and geographic interests.

Thus, in his prooemium, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:5) sets forth as the goal of his work that it should embrace not only the entire ancient history of the Jews but also an evaluation of their *political constitution* (διάταξιν τοῦ πολιτεύματος). He appeals to his politically-minded audience by stressing the theme of civil strife (στάσις) so familiar to readers of Thucydides' description (3:82-84) of revolution at Corcyra. Thus he portrays (*Ant.* 1:117) the punishment inflicted by God upon the builders of the Tower of Babel as discord (στάσις, a word not found in the Septuagint version, Gen 11:9), created by having them speak various languages. Again, according to Josephus' addition (*Ant.* 1:164), God thwarted Pharaoh's unjust passion toward Sarah by bringing about an outbreak of disease and of political strife (στάσει τῶν πραγμάτων). Similarly, in his treatment of the rebellion of Korah, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:12) remarks that it was a sedition (στάσις) 'for which we know of no parallel, whether among Greeks or barbarians', clearly implying that information about seditions was familiar to his readers. Likewise, in discussing the consequences of the seduction of the Hebrew youth by the Midianite women, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:140) remarks that the whole army was soon permeated by a sedition far worse than that of Korah.

¹⁵⁰ See Feldman, 'Esther', 164

Indeed, a good portion of Book 4 (11-66, 141-55) of the *Antiquities* is devoted to accounts that illustrated the degree to which στάσις is the mortal enemy of political states, a subject particularly stressed by **Josephus** as a comment on the warring factions among his contemporary Jews during the war against the Romans.

Josephus' acquaintance with the terminology of politics is especially manifest in his graphic description (*Ant.* 5:132-35) of the results of the peace which the Israelites established with the Canaanites after their initial entry into Canaan. The sequence of luxury (τροφῆς)¹⁵¹ and voluptuousness (ἡδονῆς) and pleasure of lucre (ἡδονῇ τοῦ κερδαίνειν) and gross recklessness (ἄδειαν, 'lack of scruple', 'lack of restraint'), leading to disdain for the order (κόσμου) of the constitution (πολιτείας) and for the laws (νόμων) and to grave sedition (στάσις . . . δεινή), thus corrupting the aristocracy (ἀριστοκρατίαν), is familiar to readers of the Greek and Roman orators and historians.¹⁵² Furthermore, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:297) declares, in a passage imitating Thucydides (6:72), that divided control (πολυαρχία) makes prompt governmental action impossible and thus injures those who practice it. There is a further purpose in such a discussion in that one of the charges made by the anti-Semite Apion (*Ag.Ap.* 2:68) is that of fomenting sedition (seditionis) in Alexandria; and **Josephus** stresses throughout that the Israelites are conspicuously well aware of the dangers of such strife, and that it is the enemies of the Jews (namely the Egyptians) who are the real promoters of sedition, whereas the Jews are noted for their concord.

Josephus also appealed to his educated readers by his interest in the question of the ideal form of government. Like Plato, with whom, as we have seen, he was clearly acquainted, he was filled with contempt for the masses. Thus he adds a snide remark (*Ant.* 3:5), directed against the rabble (ὄχλος) of women and children, who, he says, were responsible for vitiating the nobler instincts of the Israelites in the desert. He describes (*Ant.* 4:36-37) the rebellious Israelite assembly in terms familiar from Plato (*Laws*, 2:671A), as a tumultuous (θορυβώδη) mass (ὄμιλος), with its innate delight in decrying those in authority and ready to be swayed by what anyone said. He returns to the theme of the fickleness of the mob when he speaks sneeringly (*Ant.* 6:81) of 'all that a crowd, elated by success, is wont to utter against those who were of late disparaging the authors of it'. Indeed, in his summary (*Ant.* 4:223) of the Mosaic Code, **Josephus** declares that aristocracy is the best form of government; and, in fact,

¹⁵¹ A similar condemnation of luxury (τροφῆν) and lack of exertion (ἀπόνως) is to be found in Moses' condemnation (*Ant.* 4:167) of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh for requesting the recently won Amorite land for their flocks. Likewise, Samuel's sons are condemned (*Ant.* 6:34) for abandoning themselves to luxury (τροφῆν), thereby acting in defiance of God. On the contrary, when David (*Ant.* 7:96) refuses to succumb to idleness or slackness (μηδὲν ἀργὸν μηδὲ ὀκθυμὸν) this leads to victory over the Philistines and his other enemies.

¹⁵² Cf. Polybius, *Historiae* 6:57, and Livy, *Praefatio*, for the political effects of prosperity and luxury.

when the Israelites demand a king, Samuel expresses (*Ant.* 6:36) his keen preference for an aristocratic government, 'accounting it divine and productive of bliss to those who adopted it'.

On the other hand, the worst form of government, as in Plato (*Republic* 566C-580B) is tyranny. Thus **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:114) declares that the rebel Nimrod gradually transformed his state into a tyranny, completely dependent upon his own power. Again, when Zambrias (**Zimri**) attacks Moses (*Ant.* 4:146) it is for acting tyrannically (**τυραννικῶς**) under pretext of laws but actually robbing the Israelites of the sweet things of life and of self-determination (**αὐτεξούσιον**).¹⁵³ Moreover, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 5:234) attacks Abimelech for transforming the government into a tyranny, acting in defiance of the laws and of the principles of justice. Likewise, the behaviour of the sons of the high priest Eli (*Ant.* 5:339) is said to differ not at all from a tyranny in their violation of all the laws.

Josephus' highlighting of the *military context* of the Bible is to be expected in view of his own experience as a general. This is particularly to be seen in his paraphrase of the story of Balaam, where **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:100) has inserted the extra-biblical theme of the Israelites' desire for war and has connected the episode of the war against Sihon and Og with the Balaam incident that follows. Furthermore, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 4:156) looks upon the **Balaam** episode as the preliminary to the war against the Midianites.

As to *geography*, the advances in scientific geography made by figures such as Eratosthenes during the Hellenistic period led to renewed interest on the part of historians such as Polybius and Strabo in descriptive geography. In line with this trend, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 1:38) introduces the conception, well known to his Greek audience, of a stream encircling the entire earth. In particular, he expands very considerably (*Ant.* 1:122-47) the biblical account of the table of nations descended from Noah's sons (*Gen* 10), as well as of Abraham's sons by Keturah (*Ant.* 1:238-41) and of the sons of Esau (*Ant.* 2:4-6). He is particularly interested in identifying the various peoples mentioned by the Bible.

APPEAL TO PHILOSOPHIC INTEREST. The very fact that **Josephus** compares the religious groupings of the Jews to the Greek philosophical schools, asserting (*Life* 12) that the Pharisees are a sect very similar to the Stoic school (implying that the **Sadducees** are comparable to the Epicureans, and that the Essenes [*Ant.* 15:371] follow the Pythagorean way of life), is an indication of the philosophical interests that he expected his audience to have, especially since such comparisons would hardly appear to be central to one who viewed the religious dimensions of these groups. Inasmuch as Stoicism was the favourite

¹⁵³ Cf. Van Unnik, 'Josephus' Account', 255-56, who notes the philosophic+ethical context in which this word occurs in Epictetus (*Diss.* 4:1, 62 and 4:1, 68), Diogenianus Epic. (*frag.* 3, *ap.* Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 6:8, 36) and Clement of Alexandria (*Quis Dives Salvetur* 10: 1). On the other hand, Moses is praised (*Ag.Ap.* 2:173) for leaving nothing, however insignificant, to the individual discretion (**αὐτεξούσιον**).

philosophy of Hellenistic intellectuals,¹⁵⁴ it is not surprising that he should attempt to appeal particularly to them in his recasting of the biblical narrative. Indeed, at the very beginning of his account, **Josephus** employs Stoic terminology in his extra-biblical statement (*Ant.* 1:46) that God had decreed for Adam and Eve a life of happiness unmolested (**ἀπαθῆ**) by all ill. We should note that the term **ἀπαθῆς**, as well as the corresponding noun **ἀπάθεια** (freedom from emotional disturbance), is a common Stoic term with reference to freedom from **emotion**.¹⁵⁵ That Stoic influence is at work here is indicated by the fact that **Josephus** does not in either passage employ the synonymous word **ἀβλαβής**, which means 'unharmful' and which he uses on six occasions in the first half of the *Antiquities*.

Another Stoic term, **πρόνοια**, appears no fewer than seventy-four times in the first half of the *Antiquities*. Thus, in the primitive utopia (*Ant.* 1:461), all things that contribute to enjoyment are said to spring up spontaneously through God's providence (**πρόνοιαν**). Likewise, as I¹⁵⁶ have endeavoured to show, Abraham's teleological proof for the existence of God (*Ant.* 1:156) from the irregularities of the heavenly bodies is in the form of the proofs promulgated by the Greek philosophical schools, notably the Stoics, as we can see from several favourite Stoic words (**προνοῆσαι, εὐταξία, τοῦ κελεύοντος**). It is, moreover, significant that in the very next sentence after this proof, **Josephus** refers to the Chaldeans, to whom, as Wolfson¹⁵⁷ has astutely remarked, **Philo** (*On the Migration of Abraham* 32: 179) imputes certain conceptions of God which are definitely Stoic. Likewise, in his version of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son Isaac, **Josephus**, realizing that to present Abraham as being motivated by mere blind faith would have proven unsatisfactory to his cultured Greek readers, depicts him (*Ant.* 1:225) in the guise of a kind of Stoic philosopher, reasoning that 'all that befell His favoured ones' was ordained by His providence (**προνοίας**). Likewise, Moses is presented (*Ant.* 2:229) as a Stoic sage, remarkable for his contempt for toils (**πόνων καταφρονήσει**), a typically Stoic phrase. Furthermore, as Holladay¹⁵⁸ has remarked, Moses' emphasis on Law (**νόμος**) is in accord with the Stoic view that regarded **νόμος** as the expression of the **cosmos** and that viewed man as a **κοσμοπολίτης** who must arrange his life in accordance with universal law; hence, by allegorically imputing cosmic significance (*Ant.* 3:181-87) to the tabernacle, the twelve loaves, the candelabrum, the tapestries, and the high priest's garments, **Josephus** was appealing to the Stoic view that law must have a cosmic dimension. Furthermore, **Josephus** (*Ant.* 10:278) goes out of his way in his paraphrase of the book of Daniel to note how mistaken are the Epicureans who exclude Providence (**πρόνοιαν**) from

¹⁵⁴ See Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilisation*, 325; Martin, 'Josephus' Use of *Heimarmene*', 127-37.

¹⁵⁵ See Feldman, 'Aqedah', notes 30 and 36.

¹⁵⁶ Feldman, 'Abraham', 146-50.

¹⁵⁷ Wolfson, *Philo* 1, 176-77 and 2, 78.

¹⁵⁸ Holladay, *Theios Aner*, 102.