CHAPTER THREE

Christianity in Talmud and Midrash

Parallelomania or Parallelophobia?

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ומרבה שלום בין דתות ואומות

One of the best-known statements about identity from ancient times is doubtless that made by Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians 3:28 regarding the equality and cooperation among all those who believe in Jesus. Paul says: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."[1] This universal declaration is in striking contrast to an opposite Jewish expression. In the Morning Blessings, it states: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has not made me a Gentile . . . who has not made me a slave . . . who has not made me a woman." I would like to begin with these two positions regarding the question of identity as a way of introducing the issue of polemics. Is Jewish self-identity, which seems here to be formulated in a manner diametrically opposed to that of Paul, expressed in deliberate polemics with it, or was the Jewish formula already known to Paul, and was it he who turned it topsy-turvy?

The picture becomes more complex upon examining the history of the Jewish formula. Its present form is relatively late, its source being the Baby-

lonian Talmud.[2] In the tannaitic literature,[3] we find a somewhat different wording: instead of "who has not made me a slave," there is the phrase "who has not made me an ignoramus." Thus, that formula which precisely inverts Paul's words only appears in the later textual witnesses, strengthening the possibility that there alone was the blessing formulated in opposition to the Pauline formulation.

Texts similar to the Jewish declaration cited above also appear in ancient Greek literature.[4] Plutarch states that Plato gave thanks for three things: that he was born a human being and not an animal, a Greek and not a barbarian, and that he was born in the generation of Socrates.[5] The biographer of the Greek philosophers, Diogenes Laertius, mentions Hermippus, who attributes to Thales a statement attributed by others to Socrates: namely, that he gave thanks to fate that he was born a human and not beast, a man and not a woman, a Greek and not a barbarian.[6]

What is the relationship among the Greek, the Pauline, and the rabbinic statements?[7] At first glance, it seems most reasonable to assume that Paul's words relate to the Greek saying, against which they wish to present the opposite approach. In light of this, one might argue that the early Jewish blessing also echoes the ancient Greek saying, adapted to the particularly Jewish context. According to this hypothesis, the common Greek source explains the similarity between the two independent later versions, the Pauline and the rabbinic, leaving no basis to speak of a polemic between them. But even according to this assumption, it is possible that in its later development—i.e., as it took shape in the Morning Blessings of the Babylonian Talmud—the Jewish declaration acquired an additional function: namely, to confute the view of Paul; it was from this that the version that precisely inverts his words was born. If this is the case, one may state that, in reaction to the challenge posed by Pauline Christianity in the guise of a universal religion, Judaism established a sectarian outlook infused with consciousness of chosenness and distinctiveness. Whereas Paul based human salvation upon belief in Jesus and saw the execution of the laws of the Torah as an obligation whose time had passed, the definition of Jewish identity made the fulfillment of the commandments the exclusive condition for attaining salvation. These three blessings thus express a feeling of gratitude for the fact that one is not numbered among one of the three

groups that are exempt from the *mitzvot,* whether in a full or partial sense.[8] This being so, the debate with Paul regarding the Morning Blessings touches upon the fundaments of Jewish faith.

It is also possible to read the later development of the Jewish declaration as an internal Jewish development that did not at all know or take into consideration Paul's words. In this spirit one may also understand the substitution of the word "slave" for "ignoramus." The ignoramus also does not fulfill *mitzvot,* for "an ignoramus cannot be God-fearing,"[9] but he falls under the rubric of those who are obligated to perform them. It may be that the preference for "slave" was intended to create a category for those who not only fail to perform the commandments but who are also exempt from them. It may be for this reason that Rav Acha bar Yaakov asked his son to change the early tannaitic formula of "ignoramus" to "slave."[10]

Moreover, one may not exclude an even more far-reaching possibility, according to which Paul was already familiar with the earlier form of the Jewish declaration, such that his declaration ought to be seen not in opposition to the Greek outlook but rather as a rejection of the particularistic consciousness of Jewish election. According to this view, Paul felt the inherent contradiction between the monotheistic faith in one God who created the whole world, on the one hand, and a religion that champions a God who chooses for Himself one special people out of all the nations, on the other.

Indeed, the scales seem balanced so that the question of who influenced whom or who polemicized against whom remains open. This case exemplifies in an incisive manner the complexity of the possibilities even when confronting a rabbinic text that has such a clear parallel to Paul's words. In deciding this case, it would appear that the consideration of probability ought to be the decisive one, and that among the multitude of factors considered as reasonable one will find the historical outlook held by each scholar regarding his period. It is my position that the most likely possibility is that which assumes that the Jewish formulation, at least in its later development, sought to confute Paul and debate the validity of the Christian ecumenical approach. However, it is clear that for many researchers the question of probability may lead to entirely different conclusions.[11]

I have not begun this essay with the above example in order to decide matters one way or another, but rather to exemplify how the great scholars

approached this problem—and, in particular, the greatest Talmud scholar of the last generation, Saul Lieberman, who devoted a detailed discussion to this issue in his monumental work, *Tosefta ke-Peshuta.*[12] Like his distinguished predecessors—Luther and Schopenhauer—he also noted the similarity between the Jewish blessings and the Greek aphorism. But, in his words, "These ought not to be seen as betraying external influence, as the blessings themselves are concerned with the benefits that the Almighty bestows upon human beings, which it is the nature of every person to feel." Here that approach which emphasizes internal and "authentic" development, free of every kind of external "influence"—an approach particularly beloved by many scholars of the previous generation, and even by several major scholars in our own day—was victorious.[13]

What is interesting in Lieberman's words is not only what he says, but primarily what he does not say. Lieberman, a Talmudic scholar who seemingly saw and knew everything, does not so much as mention the famous words of Paul! His argument refuting "external influence" is directed toward the Greek statement alone, not to the Pauline one. We may reasonably assume that this silence was the result of a certain sense of disquiet that he felt about gathering Christian material for purposes of comparison with its Jewish-Talmudic counterpart. This position was shared by many Jewish scholars who discussed this issue and did not seriously weigh the possibility that the later Jewish blessing sought to confront that of Paul.

It seems to me that what we find here is a principled outlook in Jewish research, one that systematically ignores the possibility of points of contact between Christianity and Judaism.[14] In 1939 the then-young scholar Ephraim Elimelech Urbach published a strongly worded criticism against Yitzhak (Fritz) Baer,[15] who at the time was viewed in Jerusalem as the leading historian and as founder of historical studies at the Hebrew University. Urbach attacked Baer for the comparison he drew between the founder of medieval Ashkenazic Pietism, R. Judah he-Hasid, and St. Francis of Assisi.[16] Urbach dismissed the evidence of similarity between Ashkenazic Hasidism and Franciscanism with a single sentence that became a slogan for members of his generation: "Similar conditions produce similar results." That is, the comparison does not indicate any connections, but only a common *Zeitgeist.* This debate is reminiscent of the debates among scholars of Christianity regarding the relation between the origins of Christianity and

the pagan religions that precede it, in which the question raised was whether the parallel phenomena are to be seen as "analogies or genealogies."[17]

Baer himself, who did not hesitate to note the depth of the symbiosis between Jewish and Christian culture in the Middle Ages, was reluctant to do so once he began dealing with the rabbinic literature of late antiquity. In his studies written after 1950, he engaged in a move that "bypassed" Christianity, representing Second Temple Judaism as a kind of proto-Talmudic culture—all in order to bolster its "authenticity" and to argue that it predated Christianity.[18] By contrast, the influence of "Greek wisdom" upon Jewish culture did not bother him at all. On the contrary, he portrayed Second Temple Judaism as having undergone a decisive transformation from the biblical period, specifically due to Greco-Hellenistic influence. Baer is exceptional in the extremes represented by his solution, but in his approach to the Talmudic material he and most of the scholars of the previous generation shared the same qualms about Christianity. They preferred to relate the Talmud to Greek and Roman culture as opposed to the possibility that the Talmud was born in a cultural environment in which there was a striking Christian presence.[19] Notwithstanding Urbach's criticism of the comparison drawn by Baer between R. Judah he-Hasid and Francis of Assisi, he himself changed his tune when he came to discuss rabbinic literature. While he drew many comparisons between rabbinic literature and that of early Christianity, he nevertheless saw these resemblances as testimony to Christianity being influenced by Judaism, and not vice versa.[20]

Over the last generation the picture has changed somewhat. Today one hears more strongly the dialogical tendency to interpret parallels between rabbinic literature and Christian literature as testimony to the lively dialogue between the two religions, although there is much dispute regarding both its timing and its intensity.[21] There is also greater awareness that similarities between rabbinic literature and Christian literature derive, on more than one occasion, from Jewish absorption of Christian ideas. It also seems doubtless that the efforts of scholars in Israel, Europe, and America to find a Christian context for the world of the Talmud derives from, among other factors, adoption of the contemporary cultural ideal that tends to reduce the tensions between Judaism and Christianity, as well as from the multicultural trends that are today predominant. In Israel, there may also oper-

ate a hidden longing to "return" to Europe and its culture. The Talmud as seen through Christian lenses provides entry to a Western world with a Jewish "kosher" stamp.

But in spite of all this, the advocates of the "authenticist" tendency have not been silenced, and their voices have recently been joined by that of Alon Goshen-Gottstein.[22] The comparative and dialogic approaches to which Goshen-Gottstein refers using the term "polemomania"—a reworking of the term "parallelomania" coined by Samuel Sandmel—are intended to indicate the path of those scholars who are affected by a "pathological" quest for parallels and influences, even in those places where the parallels may be seen as the result of parallel internal development.[23]

For the sake of transparency, I must confess to being among those "afflicted by this disease." I would nevertheless argue that the alternative to parallelomania is likely to be parallelophobia. Parallelophobia with regard to Christianity is a deeply rooted cultural phenomenon within the Jewish tradition. It begins with the midrashic and Talmudic literature and continues down to our own day. Its expressions include a hidden desire to conceal the threatening, close presence of the sister religion.

There is a seemingly weighty claim in support of the parallelophobic position: namely, that rabbinic literature in general, and Palestinian literature in particular, makes very little mention of Christians and Christianity. How should this silence be interpreted? In order to answer this question, I would like to make use of James Scott's concept, "hidden transcripts,"[24] to argue that rabbinic Judaism created a closed, almost hermetically sealed language of a highly developed and sophisticated halakhic world, of halakhic texts with their own inner logic, of liturgical ceremonies and social taboos intended to create a separation between itself and its surroundings. But behind this wall a profound dialogue was being conducted with the community on the other side of the wall. Scott spoke of a hidden language used by those in a position of inferiority vis-à-vis the superior dominant force. Such was not the situation of the Sages in relation to the Christian religion, certainly not during the first centuries of the Common Era. I therefore prefer to use the term "hidden language" or "transcript" in a different sense, as implying the refusal to admit the very need for struggle, of one who denies the very existence of his opponent.

Regarding this point I am influenced by the theory of the Norwegian anthropologist, Fredrik Barth, who dealt with ethnic groups that live alongside and at times even within one another. In his opinion, the boundaries between different peoples or ethnic groups do not only signify the differences between them; the selfsame differences—in language, appearance, way of life—may also serve as a vehicle for mutual exchange of cultural influences. As a result, what initially may be perceived as particularism and as a barrier intended to preserve ethnic uniqueness may, in fact, serve as an intermediary that stimulates dialogue with the other culture.[25]

I would like to apply these distinctions to the relations between Jews and Christians during the formative period of the two religions. Just as certain modern Jewish scholars—including the best among them—feel uncomfortable openly discussing the possibility of Christian influence on Judaism, so too did the Sages of the Talmud and Midrash refrain from doing so. Christianity is absent from the explicit language of the Talmud and the Midrash not because the Sages made light of the threat it posed, but because they did not wish to openly admit the danger posed by it. Anyone traveling today in the remnants of the Jewish cities of Tiberias and Zippori (Sepphoris) in the Galilee cannot but be impressed by the massive penetration of Christianity in these areas during the first centuries CE. The only synagogue discovered to date in the archaeological excavations at Zippori, from the fifth century CE, is small in size and located near the wall of the city—that is, at its periphery. By contrast, in the center of the town, at the intersection of the *cardo* and the *decumanus,* two large and impressive churches were discovered. Above Jewish Tiberias on Mount Bereniki, a church of huge and even threatening dimensions was built during the first half of the sixth century.[26] Quite recently a fourth-century church has been discovered in the center of the city.[27] In the face of this massive penetration of Christianity into the centers of Jewish settlement, the Sages adopted a tactic of ignoring it. The polemic with Christianity that gradually came to dominate the Land of Israel was not conducted openly, but in a convoluted and allusive manner. The Talmuds and midrashim do not explicitly state the name of the rival with whom they are struggling, but the shadow of Christianity nevertheless looms in these rabbinic texts. One is reminded of the words of Karl Popper: "Every genuine test of a theory is an attempt

to falsify it or to refute it."[28] And long before Popper, the Talmud (*b. Sanhedrin* 78a) set forth this rule regarding laws of testimony: "Any testimony that cannot be confuted is not valid testimony." Indeed, I must admit that in terms of the laws of proof the parallelomaniacs are in the weaker position.

Nevertheless, historical plausibility works in its favor. Can we imagine the emergence of a rival religion that appropriated to itself all the components of Judaism's own identity without this arousing opposition? In the discussion that follows, I will present two specific cases to illustrate the advantages and drawbacks of the approach that wishes to uncover hidden polemic. I will begin with a vague, marginal, and almost unknown biblical figure: Doeg the Edomite, a figure who in rabbinic thought enjoyed the dramatic status of an arch-villain. I will attempt to illustrate that internal literary exegesis need not come at the expense of the comparative historical context.

Doeg the Edomite as a Type of Jesus

The mishnah in Sanhedrin chapter 10 begins with the sweeping declaration, "All Israel have a share in the World to Come." This declaration, evidently a late addition, is reminiscent of Paul's words in Romans 11:26, "All Israel shall be saved." On another occasion, I argued that this statement does not relate to Paul's original intention, whatever that might have been, but rather to the later exegesis given it by the Church, which reduced the concept "Israel" to "spiritual Israel," and delimited those who were to be saved by the well-known dictum, "extra Ecclesiam nulla salus est." The mishnah formulates a comparable rule, giving *carte blanche* to every Jew as such to enjoy the World to Come, thereby setting forth a position analogous but opposite to that of the Church's doctrine of salvation. Only those born as Jews, "carnal Israel," will merit the Life to Come. Further on, the mishnah enumerates several heretical views whose adherents are also denied a share in the World to Come: one who reads "external books," one who "whispers over a wound," and one who pronounces the Ineffable Divine Name (i.e., the Tetragrammaton) as written. My argument was that each of these three deviations were seen as characteristic, in the eyes of the Sages,

of Jewish Christians. According to this interpretation, this mishnah deals directly with Christians, without mentioning them by name.[29]

Here I wish to focus on the sequel to this mishnah which lists four biblical figures who have no share in the World to Come—Balaam, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi. I will concentrate on only one of these figures, Doeg. Why did he, of all people, receive this dubious distinction?

Doeg the Edomite was an officer in the court of King Saul.[30] While fleeing from Saul, David arrived together with his entourage at the priestly city of Nob. They were hungry, and in order to satisfy their hunger David begged the priest Ahimelech to give him and his lads some of the holy shewbread. The latter acceded to this request only after David assured him that the young men were ritually pure. The entire event was observed by Doeg the Edomite who, after David had fled to the land of the Philistines, denounced Ahimelech to the king. Saul ordered Doeg to kill Ahimelech along with the eighty-five priests who were with him at the time of this incident. A later echo of this story appears in Psalm 52, a chapter devoted to a description of Doeg's treachery, where he is presented as a base and deceitful person. Concerning his punishment, it is stated there that God would uproot him "from the land of the living." This expression was understood by the Rabbis as bearing an eschatological meaning, from which they reached the conclusion that he had no portion in the World to Come.

This chapter is familiar to everyone who reads the New Testament. Jesus' well-known permission to pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath in a pericope common to all three Synoptic gospels—in Mark 2, Luke 6, and Matthew 12—is based on this incident.[31] Jesus infers from the story of David that, just as his hunger and that of his entourage overrides the prohibition against eating the shewbread, so too did Jesus' distress and that of his disciples override the Shabbat. According to the Matthean account, Jesus also infers the permission to pluck grain on Shabbat from the practice in the Temple of offering sacrifices on the Sabbath. This latter proof of Matthew is superior to the former one in three respects: first, that it infers from one case relating to the Shabbat to another one, also dealing with the Shabbat; second, that it places the Temple and Jesus on the same level thus, just as the Shabbat is pushed aside for purposes of the Temple service, so too is it pushed aside for the needs of Jesus; third, whereas the former proof justifies

violation of the Shabbat only in order to save a life or in an emergency situation, the second homily presents a principled and sweeping permission.

Let us now turn to the figure of Doeg and to the surprising function that he plays in the following brief Talmudic story: "An incident involving Doeg son of Joseph, whose father [left him] as a small child to his mother. Every day his mother would weigh him on the scales and give his weight in gold to the Temple. When the enemies became stronger, she slaughtered him and ate him. And concerning this Jeremiah keened: *Should women eat their offspring, the children of their tender care?* [Lam. 2:20]. The Holy Spirit answered and said, *Should priest and prophet be slain in the Sanctuary of the Lord?* [Lam. 2:20]."[32]

As Avigdor Shinan has already shown, this little story is pregnant with meaning.[33] The name Doeg son of Joseph is an invention that has no basis in Scripture, where he is known simply as Doeg or Doeg the Edomite. According to the extant version, Doeg son of Joseph is the name of the son. His father died, leaving his mother alone to raise him. But according to the parallel version in *Lamentations Rabbah,* Doeg son of Joseph is the name of the father who died. Both versions portray the mother's intense love for her son and her great wealth. She would measure his weight every day and give that amount in gold to the Temple, presumably on the assumption that this would save her son's life. The midrash here makes a wordplay in Hebrew: the verse in Lamentations speaks of *'ollei tipuhim,* "lovingly reared children," but it sounds similar to *tefah,* the measure used by the mother to weigh the child as long as the Temple existed.

During the Roman War, the great wealth that existed prior to the Destruction of the Temple was transformed into terrible hunger and deprivation, and the loving mother literally consumed her own offspring's flesh. The author's homily is based on Lamentations 2:20: "Should women eat their offspring, the children of their tender care? Should priest and prophet be slain in the Sanctuary of the Lord?" According to the literal meaning of this verse, two complementary complaints are lodged against God: first, that mothers eat the flesh of their own children; second, that priest and prophet were murdered in the Temple. Our midrashic author transforms the two halves of the verse into a dialogue: "Should women eat their offspring, the children of their tender care?" is the complaint regarding the

grave punishment, to which this explanation comes in response: "Should priest and prophet be slain in the Sanctuary of the Lord?" That is, the punishment came about because of the grave sin of murdering priest and prophet in the Temple. The version found in the Babylonian Talmud does not elaborate on the nature of this sin. Here we are helped by the version in *Lamentations Rabbah:* "[T]his refers to Zechariah son of Jehoiada." The grave punishment of the destruction of Temple and city, which led mothers to eat their beloved children, was precipitated by the murder of the prophet Zechariah ben Jehoyada. But the verse speaks not only of the murder of the prophet, but also of that of the priest. Hence Doeg is introduced into the story to allude to the murder of the priests of Nob.

Again there is a familiar echo from the New Testament, from Matthew 23:29–35. The Jews are presented there as murderers of prophets, whose measure of guilt is about to overflow, causing them to be punished for all the murders from the past, from that of the innocent Abel down to that of the prophet Zechariah. The connection between the destruction of the Temple and the murder of Zechariah is thus common to both Matthew and *Lamentations Rabbah.* Both texts allude to what is related in 2 Chronicles 24:21–22 concerning the murder of the prophet Zechariah ben Jehoyada at the behest of King Joash. At the time of his death the prophet said: "May the Lord see and avenge!" This demand for vengeance was realized: according to the midrash, in the destruction of the First Temple; and according to Matthew, in the destruction of the Second Temple. There may thus be a connection between this reading of the story of Zechariah and the declaration placed in the mouth of the Jews by Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on us and on our children!"

I will not analyze here the dramatic midrashic texts that depict in bold colors the boiling blood of Zechariah, who refused to rest or to be quiet until Nebuzaradan—the destroyer of Jerusalem—killed more than one million people, including many women and children, in punishment for the murder of the prophet Zechariah. I have argued elsewhere that these midrashim are to be read as a hidden polemic against Matthew.[34] Matthew claims that in the future the crime of the murder of Zechariah will be combined with that of the murder of Jesus and his believers until the cup will overflow and heavy punishment will come—the destruction of the

Second Temple. By contrast, the midrash asserts that this sin was already atoned for by the Destruction of the First Temple and that the blood of Zechariah had already rested. A similar motif appears in the midrash concerning Doeg son of Joseph. Doeg dies at his mother's hand, atoning by his death for the murder of Zechariah. The name "son of Joseph" as well as the removal of the father from the story (according to one version) bring the figure of Doeg closer to that of Jesus, albeit with an opposite tendency: the death of the son is presented as a punishment that atones for the murder of the prophets.

Let us now turn to another image of Doeg, that in the Jerusalem Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 10.1 [29a]: "Doeg was a great Torah scholar. Israel came and asked David: Does the shewbread override the Shabbat? He said to them: Its arrangement overrides the Shabbat, but its kneading and its shaping do not override the Shabbat. Doeg was there and he said: Who is this that rules on halakhic matters in my presence? They told him: David son of Jesse. Immediately he went and took counsel with Saul king of Israel to kill Nob the city of priests. Of this it is written: *And the king said to the guard who stood about him, 'Turn and kill the priests of the Lord because their hand is also with David'* [1 Sam. 22:17]."

This story seeks to answer a simple question: Why did Doeg betray the priests of Nob into the vengeful hands of Saul? The answer given is derived directly from the mental world of the Sages, who transform King David and Doeg into two sages debating with one another over halakhic matters. Even though Doeg is the greater of the two, the people turn specifically to David with their halakhic question, thereby hurting Doeg's pride, who takes vengeance on them by denouncing them to Saul.

The question they asked David was: "Does the shewbread override the Shabbat?" This is a very strange question. From whence did the Rabbis get the idea of connecting the preparation of the shewbread in the Temple with the biblical story of David and the eating of the shewbread? In the biblical narrative, the halakhic difficulty regarding the eating of shewbread arises only in the context of ritual purity, not in connection with laws of Shabbat. And why should they ask specifically whether the shewbread overrides Shabbat? Do not all aspects of the Temple ritual override the Shabbat?

Interestingly, the only one to draw a connection between the permission to eat shewbread and the permission to override the Shabbat in the Temple is Matthew! True, in Matthew as well one is dealing with two separate responses, but it is he who, by presenting Jesus' two homilies in conjunction with one another, draws a connection between the eating of the shewbread and the overriding of the Shabbat. It therefore seems quite likely that the author of this passage in the Yerushalmi, who formulated this question, had this passage in Matthew in mind.

The Gospel of Matthew was known among Jews, whether in its Aramaic or Hebrew version, as may be seen from a quotation from it cited in the *Bavli*[35] as well as from the testimony of Epiphanius of Salamis in his *Panarion* (*Adversus Judaeus*).[36] The Jerusalem Talmud ascribes to David the opinion that the kneading of the shewbread does not override the Shabbat, from which one may infer that the plucking of grain is also forbidden—things that seem like polemics against Jesus, whose opinion coincides with that of David. The Yerushalmi does not state Doeg's position, but if we continue the train of thought that Doeg is a metonym for Jesus, it is clear that he permitted the plucking of corn on the Sabbath for purposes of the Temple service,[37] which would coincide with Jesus' position. Perhaps it is for this reason that he is called Doeg *son of Joseph*.

There is yet another expression of this surprising connection between eating the shewbread and the Shabbat. The late midrashic collection *Yalqut Shim'oni* contains a midrash that describes, in connection with the above biblical story, the dialogue between David and Ahimelech regarding the shewbread. David attempts to convince Ahimelech that his youths are pure and hence permitted to eat the bread. Suddenly the discussion changes direction: "And it was the Sabbath. And David saw that they were baking the shewbread on Shabbat, as Doeg had instructed them. He said to them: What are you doing? Its baking does not overrule the Shabbat, but only its arrangement, as is said, *on the Sabbath day they shall set it* [Lev. 24:8]. Since he found nothing there but the shewbread, David said to him: Give it to me, that we not die of starvation, for a doubt of saving life overrides the Shabbat."[38]

After David had convinced Ahimelech that his youths were pure, there was seemingly no obstacle to their partaking of the bread. The midrash nevertheless creates a halakhically problematic situation in which David is confronted with a new difficulty: it is Shabbat, and according to David it is

forbidden to bake the shewbread on Shabbat. How then can he eat bread that has been prepared in a forbidden manner? The midrash's solution is simple: it is a matter of saving life. David wishes to benefit from the Shabbat desecration so as not to die of starvation. This transformation of the halakhic dilemma from the prohibition against eating the shewbread by impure people to the question of whether saving a life overrides the Shabbat completely overlaps Jesus' teaching in the gospels, according to which he allowed his hungry disciples to violate the Shabbat. In the midrash this role is played by David, who relaxes the Shabbat prohibitions only in order to save life, whereas Doeg is represented as permitting the desecration of Shabbat.[39]

The possibility that the figure of Doeg is a concealed allusion to Jesus sheds light on another aspect of his inclusion in the mishnah in *Sanhedrin* among those who have no portion in the World to Come. It also explains why, according to another midrash, Doeg was thirty-four years old at the time of his death, an age very close to that of Jesus at his death.[40]

Why was Doeg specifically chosen to represent the archetypal figure of Jesus? There are several possible reasons. First, because Doeg was the enemy of David, from whose seed the Messiah was to spring. The tension between the two was already noted by the author of Psalm 52, which opens with the words "For the Choirmaster, a psalm of David," in which Doeg is presented as a liar who received his punishment. This tendency also finds expression in Pseudo-Philo, who likewise speaks of Doeg's punishment: "For days are coming, when a fiery worm will come on his tongue and make it melt," a description alluding to the eschatological punishment of the evildoers: "For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched" (Isa. 66:24).[41] The Sages' position, according to which Doeg has no portion in the World to Come, continues this tendency.

It would also seem that his name, Doeg *the Edomite,* further strengthened his negative image, as the Sages used Edom as a synonym for Rome and subsequently for Christianity. According to one midrash, his designation *ha-Edomi* expressed his jealousy of David, who was known as *admoni,* "the red one."[42] Other midrashim draw a connection between *edomi* and *dam,* "blood," as he was held accountable for spilling the blood of the priests or of David. Yet other midrashim draw a connection between *edomi* and *adom,* "red": "for he reddened the faces of all in halakhah," that is, he

embarrassed them.[43] A similar claim is articulated against Jesus in the work *Toldot Yeshu.*[44]

There may be another explanation for the connection between Doeg and Jesus, and the Gospel of Matthew may again prove helpful. The biblical Doeg was the first one to destroy the priestly city and temple. This was, as will be remembered, precisely the accusation placed in the Matthean Jesus' mouth: that the destruction of Jerusalem was punishment for the murder of the prophets including his own crucifixion (Matt. 23:37–24:2). This accusation may have elicited the desire of the Rabbis to invent a typological forebear of Jesus in the form of one who destroyed sanctuaries and murdered priests, whom they then adorned with several other qualities reminiscent of Jesus.

In this context, it is worth examining another midrash: "Slay them not, lest my people forget; make them totter by your power and bring them down, O Lord, our shield (Ps. 59:12). The Rabbis explained this verse as referring to Doeg and Ahithophel. David said: 'Slay not' Doeg or Ahithophel, 'lest' the following generations 'forget.' 'Make them totter' [i.e., go about from place to place] 'and bring them down'—bring them down from their greatness."[45]

Is this an attempt to take Augustine's well-known exposition of this verse, originally applied to the Jews,[46] and to turn it around to apply to Christians or to figures symbolically equivalent to Christians? *Bereshit Rabbah* is contemporary with Augustine, and we seem to have returned to our original point of departure: the inability to determine in a definitive way whether what we have here is analogy or genealogy. Here, too, the particular scholar's *a priori* viewpoint and the question of historical likelihood are decisive. It seems likely that, in light of the growing strength of Christianity and of the challenge and threat it presented to the continued existence of a distinctive Jewish identity, we have before us a defensive Jewish response which prefers to conceal the alternative with which it is engaged in dispute.

Competing Kisses: Esau and Judas

I wish to point out the advantage of the comparative, "parallelomania" approach by means of one additional example. To do so, I will turn to one

of the most dramatic scenes in the book of Genesis, namely that which concludes the story of Jacob and Esau. The biblical narrative describes the moving scene of the reunion of the two brothers following decades of separation and relations charged with mutual hatred and jealousy. Returning from Aram, Jacob is received by Esau at the head of a military brigade of four hundred men. The tension reaches its height just before the meeting—and then the text relates that Esau ran to meet Jacob "and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept" (Gen. 33:4). This is a moving moment by any account. It is difficult not to feel great affection and admiration for Esau.

But this is not how the Sages saw it. In the Masoretic text the word *vayishaqehu* ("and he kissed him") is marked with dots above each letter. In medieval manuscripts, such dots were used to indicate erasure. Esau's kiss of Jacob was seen by the Sages as something unsuitable, inappropriate, and therefore to be expunged. The midrashic explanation of these dots is as follows: "The entire word *vayishakehu* is marked with superscript dots, to indicate that he did not come to kiss him, but to bite him [a wordplay in Hebrew: נשק/נשך]. But Jacob's neck became like marble, and the teeth of that evil one [Esau] were blunted and melted like wax. And why does the text say, *and they wept* [that is, if they did not kiss, why did they weep]? This one wept for his neck, and that one wept for his teeth" (*Cant. Rab.* 7:1). A similar reading appears in *Midrash Proverbs* 26: "There is a dot on *vayishaqehu* to teach that this was not a true kiss of love, but of hatred." Thus the Rabbis changed Esau's kiss of brotherly love to one of deceit. This picture was taken from the Midrash into the traditional biblical commentaries beginning with Rashi, and there is no Jewish child educated in the traditional manner who does not know that Esau's kiss was really one of hatred.

How might we account for this interpretation? The simple explanation is that Jacob was the father of the Jewish people, while Esau was a metonymic figure for Rome and subsequently for Christendom, and the Rabbis did not like this closeness between the two brothers. But it is difficult not to hear an echo of another kiss here as well, equally famous and well known—namely, the kiss of Judas. Already in late antique Christianity, Judas Escariot's kiss of Jesus became an event that exemplified the perfidy of the Jews,[47] while in the Middle Ages it became a widely represented scene in painting, sculpture, and manuscript illumination. The midrash's response was to portray

the kiss of Esau, the archetypal father of Christendom, as a kiss of hatred, deceit, and hypocrisy. In opposition to the "Jew" Judas who kissed Jesus, the "Christian" Esau was presented kissing Jacob. The mockery implied in the midrash about Esau's weeping, "that one wept for his teeth," fits well with the previous image, "and he blunted the teeth of that evildoer." The blunting of teeth appears several times in the midrashic literature in the context of a decisive answer to the Christian. Particularly well known is the use of this expression in the Passover haggadah, where it serves as the answer ("and you shall blunt his teeth") to the wicked son who "removes himself from the collectivity and denied the basic principle"—presumably, one suspected of closeness to Christianity.

Conclusion

Do these two examples prove the existence of a hidden polemic against Christianity? Skeptics will continue to answer in the negative. And indeed, there is no proof in the text that Esau's treacherous kiss was a response to Judas' kiss in the gospel accounts of the New Testament. But such a possibility exists, and it passes the test of plausibility. In my opinion, this is sufficient reason to seriously consider the theory of a hidden polemic. The argument of the parallelophobes against the parallelomaniacs is that one does not need the Christian context in order to understand the Jewish sources. My response is that the Christian context gives them a deeper historical significance. The parallelomaniac grabs hold of historical plausibility in order to argue that only by means of it does the full meaning of the text become evident, while the parallelophobe argues that historical plausibility is "recruited" for this purpose—or, to quote Goshen-Gottstein, "One who comes equipped with polemical eyeglasses will find polemics wherever he seeks it."[48]

And indeed, at times it appears that the debate between the parallelomaniacs and the parallelophobes concerns the scope of the historical method. The parallelomaniacs' first priority is to consider what is historically plausible and only then to apply the literary method, whereas the parallelophobes tend to focus first on the textual reading and only later to

draw the historical conclusions. In rare cases they are so cautious that they avoid the historical perspective altogether. For example, Morton Smith concluded his 1945 philological dissertation, "Parallels between the Gospels and Tannaitic literature" (written in Hebrew), with the following extraordinary sentence: "I think that these places suffice to demonstrate that, in the Gospels, Jesus appears a number of times in the same position where, in tannaitic literature, God or the Torah appears. This is *the fact,* from which one may easily come to think that, in the *thoughts* of the Gospel authors, Jesus occupied the same place as that occupied by God or Torah in the *thoughts* of the tannaitic authors. But were we to say that, we would again be entering into the realm of historical doubt, because to move from similarity of words to similarity in ideas means: to move from the known world to a world *that cannot be known.*"[49]

Immediately after these words appears the phrase, "The End." Thus concludes a philological work by an outstanding scholar, at the beginning of his career, who deliberately refrained from deriving any conclusions pertaining to the history of ideas from the philological facts. In his eyes, history is a collection of "doubts," belonging to "a world that cannot be known."

A certain reservation concerning the predominance of the historical method has been recently raised by Moshe Idel. In his essay entitled, "The Ascent and Decline of the Historical Jew," Idel writes: "Historians are capable of creating myths no less than any Kabbalist or preacher. . . . Heinrich Graetz invented a meeting between Abraham Abulafia and the pope, and even knew exactly what Abulafia said to his interlocutor! Closer to our time, other historians have invented a wonderful new myth, whose slogan serves as the title of a new book: *The Ways that Never Parted.* This myth seeks to create the impression that over the course of centuries mutual relations between Judaism and Christianity existed continually."[50]

Idel's position is based on his intuition that the routine of religious life fulfills a more important function than great historical expectations. He therefore downplays the centrality of the ideas of exile and redemption as a formative feature in Jewish religious consciousness: "Most human beings live within what is called history. . . . They are far less troubled by historical exile and redemption in some distant age at the end of the world many centuries after their own death. For such people, the concrete reality of a

great bodily or spiritual experience is far greater than the influence of external changes, political subjugation, or national catastrophe."[51] In Idel's eyes, Baer and Scholem greatly exaggerated in positing exile and redemption as a formative force with a fixed and central presence in Jewish religious consciousness. By doing so, Baer and Scholem, like Buber and Baron, created the construct that Idel dubs "the historical Jew"—that is to say, one who sees in history and historical consciousness a unifying reality that creates Jewish identity.

In light of Idel's words concerning the marginality of the Jewish-Christian encounter during the first centuries CE, it is no surprise that he conducts his discussion of the centrality or marginality of the experience of exile in Jewish religious consciousness without mentioning Christianity at all. Yet it is clear that the exile burned into the consciousness a sense of religious inferiority vis-à-vis the rival religion to such a degree that confrontation with the option of redemption did not merely pertain to an event that was to occur "in some distant age at the end of the world" many centuries in the future, but rather fulfilled a vital apologetic function in the everyday encounter—in the street, in the courtyard, in the marketplace—in the Christian "other." The alternative that Christianity offered to the Jewish exile dealt a fatal blow to Jewish self-consciousness such that, rather than seeing itself as a congregation chosen and beloved by God, it was seen as rejected, expelled, and accursed. The initial assumptions thus determined the consequences. When one excludes Christianity *ab initio* from discussion of the role of exile and redemption in Jewish consciousness, it should not be surprising that the points of contact between the religions appear like "myths" and an invention of historians.

And indeed, "the historical Jew" is in a state of decline. The comparative moves made by Scholem, Baer, Baron, and many others have multiplied greatly over the last two decades in the works of—among others—Idel himself. And indeed, comparative historical criticism has not revealed the inner face of and the hidden forces within Jewish history as Baer and Scholem had hoped, but rather its eclecticism, its flexibility, its ability to absorb external ideas and to map various options of acculturation. From the high priests of the tribe appointed over its innermost secrets, the historians have became "double agents" acting in the general service of the broad culture.

Their narrative has ceased to be tribal and internal and has been persistent in portraying a fluid Judaism—albeit one that constantly requires a redefinition of its identity in light of its lack of distinct boundaries.

In my opinion, this is the reason for the decline in the status of history as a defining factor in Jewish cultural experience. It derives from the difficulty in accepting a polyphonic and complex cultural narrative. As long as historians provided the fodder for shaping a national collective identity, they were beloved and accepted. But during the last generation history has undergone a process of privatization and no longer serves the general public consciousness. It tends rather to break down and threaten the collective identity, and it is gradually being replaced by inner phenomenological reflections that emphasize the literary, religious, and philosophical significance of the sources.

In a fine chapter on the place of comparison within the study of religions, Jonathan Smith writes: "Comparison does not necessarily tell us how things are. Comparison tells us how things might be conceived."[52] Those of us afflicted with parallelomania may easily identify with these words. The parallelophobic approach views culture as a closed entity that develops specifically under circumstances of separation and isolation from neighboring cultures. But cultural identities never develop wholly internally, but through a dialogical process in which one culture consciously separates itself from another culture to which it is sufficiently close. This is a dynamic process in which there is no rest for even a moment and in which, to return to the formula of Fredrik Barth, ethnic identities do not develop in a situation of lack of mobility, communication, and information concerning their environs, but specifically through ongoing processes of rejection and absorption. Polemics and dialogue are thus intrinsically interwoven.

Notes

1. A similar formulation can be found in Col. 3:11: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all."
2. *Babylonian Talmud Menahot* 43b–44a.
3. *Tossefta Berakhot* 6.18 (Saul Lieberman edition, New York 1955, p. 38).

4. David Kaufmann, "Das Alter der drei Benedictionen von Israel, vom Freien und von Mann," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 37 (1892): 14–18.

5. Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: The Life of Marius,* 46; Lactantius attributes a similar version of this statement to Plato: Lactantius, *Divine Institutes,* 3.19.17.

6. Diogenes Laertius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers: Life of Thales,* 7.

7. This question has been discussed considerably in recent literature, including: Yoel H. Kahn, "The Three Morning Blessings 'Who did not Make Me': A Historical Study of a Jewish Liturgical Text," Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1999; Joseph Tabory, *Kenishta: Studies in the Synagogue World* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2001), 107–38 ("The Benedictions of Self-Identity and the Changing Status of Women and of Orthodoxy"); and Dalia Sara Marx, "The Early Morning Ritual in Jewish Liturgy: Textual, Historical, and Theological Discussion in *Birkhot Hashakhar* (the Morning Blessings) and an Examination of Their Performative Aspects" [Hebrew], Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005, 111–25, 144–48.

8. Marx, "The Early Morning Ritual," 111–16.

9. *Mishnah Avot* 2.5.

10. *Babylonian Talmud Menahot* 43b–44a.

11. Tabory, *Kenishta,* n. 26, discusses the possibility of such Jewish confrontation with Paul, but rejects it as "unlikely," his claim being that "Christianity was not a major concern of the Jews in Babylon and there is very little reaction to Christianity, if any, to be found in this Talmud." He thereby enters into a circular argument, in which claim and proofs are used indiscriminately, without distinguishing between cause and effect. The "assumption" that the [Babylonian] Talmud relates to Christianity is rejected out of hand as unlikely on the basis of the "fact" that it does not relate to Christianity. One need not add that this statement is incorrect.

12. *Seder Zera'im,* Pt. I (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955), 119–21.

13. A typical representative of this viewpoint is Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993), 78. He writes there that a further "parallel" to these blessings appears in the Persian prayer to Ormuzd, "Who created the worshippers as Iranian and members of a good religion, as free men and not slaves, as men and not women." He also sees Paul's words as "parallel" and, after providing a parallel presentation of the Jewish source opposite the Christian one, adds that the parallel derives from the fact that Paul's statement "comes from a Jewish source," though he provides no reference or proof of this claim. The assumption that we have here a parallel is also accepted by Naphtali Wieder, *The Formation of Jewish Liturgy in the East and the West* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mekhon Ben-Tsevi le-heker kehilot Yisrael ba-Mizrah,

Yad Yitshak Ben-Tsevi, and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1998), 199–218. Dalia Marx also followed this path ("The Early Morning Ritual," 144–48). Her point of departure is that "it is not necessary to prove a shared common genetic source" among the various Jewish, Greek and Christian blessings—that is, it is possible to speak of influence through necessity alone.

14. On the fear of cultural influence as a widespread phenomenon, see Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

15. This criticism appeared in the original version of Urbach's introduction to his edition of *Sefer Arugat ha-Bosem* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1939), 12–13, n. 1, but was deleted from subsequent editions. See Yaacov Sussmann, "The Scholarly Oeuvre of Professor Ephraim Elimelech Urbach" [Hebrew], in *Ephraim E. Urbach: A Bibliography,* Supplement to *Jewish Studies* 1 (1993): 29–30, 60–61, 118. See also Oded Irshai, "Ephraim E. Urbach and the Study of Judeo-Christian Dialogue in Late Antiquity: Some Preliminary Observations," in *How Should Rabbinic Literature Be Read in the Modern World?* ed. Matthew Kraus (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006), 173–76, 188–97. At a later date, and in the wake of the Holocaust, Baer retreated from his willingness to admit the great influence of Christianity upon Judaism (see below, n. 18).

16. J. F. Baer, "The Religious-Social Tendency of *Sepher Hassidim*" [Hebrew], in *Zion* 3 (1937–38): 1–50. For an abridged English translation, see "The Socio-Religious Orientation of *Sefer Hasidim*" in *Binah: Jewish Civilization University Series,* ed. Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, Everyman's University, Israel, 1985).

17. Jonathan Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 47–50.

18. Israel Yuval, "Yitzhak Baer and the Search for Authentic Judaism," in *The Jewish Past Revisited: Reflections on Modern Jewish Historians,* ed. David N. Myers and David B. Ruderman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 77–87, here 81.

19. Here one should quote the words of Yaakov Sussman: "And in truth, it would seem the spiritual world of the Sages needs to be examined against the background of their natural milieu environs, the culture of the East, [rather] than against the background of Western culture, and not only in Persian Babylonia but also in Palestine. . . . Seeing the world of the Sages in terms of Western (Greco-Roman) culture has been accepted by modern scholarship at least since the beginning of the nineteenth century, coupled with almost completely ignoring the natural Oriental surrounding in which they lived and were active" (Yaakov Sussmann, "Torah shebealpe" [Hebrew], in *Mehqerei Talmud: Talmudic Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Prof. Ephraim E. Urbach* [Hebrew], ed. Y. Sussman and D. Rosenthal [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2005], 209–384, here 351 n. 93).

20. Oded Irshai, "Ephraim E. Urbach," esp. 178–80.

21. According to Neusner, the Sages responded to Christianity only from the beginning of the fourth century CE; see Jacob Neusner, *Judaism and Christianity in the Age of Constantine: History, Messiah, Israel, and the Initial Confrontation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). A similar view is held by Marc Hirshman, *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in Late Antiquity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 16. Martin Goodman asserts that the Sages did not display interest in pagan religions in general and in Gentile Christianity in particular. Thus, even such an event as the christianization of the Roman Empire was not of interest to the Sages. See Martin Goodman, "Palestinian Rabbis and the Conversion of Constantine to Christianity," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture,* ed. Peter Schäfer and Catherine Hezser (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 1–9. Keith Hopkins (in "Christian Number and Its Implications," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 [1998]: 185–226, esp. 216) maintains that according to the conventional figures, by which the total number of Christians prior to 175 CE was three percent of the overall Jewish population of the Roman Empire (i.e., 100,000 Christians out of a total of 3 million Jews), one may conclude that the majority of the Jews remained faithful to their religion, and Christianity remained a marginal phenomena in the eyes of the Jews. Hopkins thinks that until the year 300 CE the Jewish apathy toward Christianity did not change, based upon the absence of explicit references to Christianity in rabbinic literature. By this, he abandons the numerical basis that guides him throughout his study and returns to impressions based on literary silence. But this silence continued also after 300 CE, when the number of Christians in the empire grew steeply, from 6 million in 300 CE to 30 million in 350 CE—half the total population of the Roman Empire. Thus, we cannot learn anything from the quantitative data regarding religion and cultural competition.

22. Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Polemomania: Methodological Reflections on the Study of the Judeo-Christian Controversy between the Talmudic Sages and Origen over the Interpretation of the Song of Songs" [Hebrew], *Jewish Studies* 42 (2003–4): 119–90. In a similar manner, Adiel Schremer sought to diminish the weight of the dispute with Christianity and to emphasize the confrontation with the pagan Roman empire; see Adiel Schremer, "Midrash and History: God's Power, the Roman Empire, and Hopes for Redemption in Tannaitic Literature" [Hebrew], *Zion* 72 (2006–7): 5–36. Menahem Kister recently presented as a "test case" the rabbinic exegesis of *tohu va-vohu* ("without form and void," Gen. 1:2) compared with the Christian exegesis of the same verse and concluded that, at least in this case, one may not speak of mutual influence, but rather only of "a shared tradition" whose source underlies the Jewish literature of the Second Temple period. See Menahem Kister, "*Tohu wa-Bohu:* Primordial Elements and *Creatio ex Nihilo,*" *Jewish Studies Quar-*

terly 14 (2007): 229–56. It is clear that not every similarity between the Sages and the Church fathers indicates direct influence. The question under consideration pertains to the basic assumptions of the researcher, whether in the absence of an unequivocal proof one way or another his own inclinations draw him toward the comparative-dialogical interpretation or more toward a "joint tradition" having inner authenticity.

23. Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81 (1962): 1–13.

24. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

25. Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little Brown, 1987).

26. Yizhar Hirschfeld, *Excavations at Tiberias, 1989–1994* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004), 220: "The church on the mountaintop symbolized the triumph of Christianity, since the structure was visible from the entire area around the Sea of Galilee."

27. Published by the Israel Antiquities Authority (www.antiquities.org.il) on August 7, 2007. I thank my friend Professor Ze'ev Weiss for this reference.

28. Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 33–39.

29. Israel J. Yuval, "All Israel Have a Portion in the World to Come," in *Redefining First-Century Jewish and Christian Identities: Essays in Honor of Ed Parish Sanders,* ed. Fabian E. Udoh, Susannah Heschel, Mark A. Chancey, and Gregory Tatum (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 114–38.

30. 1 Sam. 22.

31. Menahem Kister, "Plucking on the Sabbath and Christian-Jewish Polemic," *Immanuel* 24 (1990): 35–51; originally published in Hebrew as: "Plucking of Grain on the Sabbath and the Jewish-Christian Debate," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 3:3 (1983–84), 349–66.

32. *Babylonian Talmud Yoma* 38b; for a similar version, see *Lamentations Rabba* 1.

33. Avigdor Shinan, "The Unfolding of a Rabbinic Legend: The Story of Doeg ben Yosef's Son" [Hebrew], *Mahanayim* 7 (1994): 70–75.

34. Israel J. Yuval, "God Will See the Blood: Sin, Punishment, and Atonement in the Jewish-Christian Discourse," in *Jewish Blood: Reality and Metaphor in History, Religion, and Culture,* ed. Mitchell B. Hart (London: Routledge, 2009), 83–98.

35. *Babylonian Talmud Shabbat* 116a–b.

36. See *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis,* Bk. I, sect. 2, no. 10, 3.7–3.8.

37. R. Travers Herford, in his *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (New York: Ktav, 1903), 71, presents the theory that Doeg was identified specifically with Judas

Escariot, who betrayed Jesus. However, he admits that this identification raises great difficulty, as one might have expected the Sages to identify Judas with a sympathetic character rather than with a negative one such as Doeg.

38. *Yalqut Shim ʻoni,* §131.

39. *Babylonian Talmud Yebamot* 7a.

40. *Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin* 106b.

41. Yair Zakovitch, *David: From Shepherd to Messiah* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 1995), 155–56.

42. *Midrash Tehillim (Shoher Tov)* §52; *Yalqut Shim'oni,* §131.

43. *Midrash Tehillim (Shoher Tov)* §52; *Yalqut Shim'oni,* §131.

44. Samuel Kraus, *Das Leben Jesu nach jüdischen Quellen* (Berlin, 1902), 66.

45. *Genesis Rabba* 38.11.

46. See Augustine, *Expositiones in Psalmos,* 59:12; *De civitate Dei* 18.46. See Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 33.

47. An explicit identification between Judas Iscariot and the Jews generally may already be found in the fourth century in, for example, the writings of St. Jerome and of John Chrysostom. See *The Homilies of Saint Jerome,* vol. 1: *On the Psalms,* trans. Roy J. Deferrari, Hermigild Dressler, et al. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1981), 255–59; John Chrysostom, *In proditione Judae homiliae 1–2* (PG 49.373–92). Chaim Maccoby, *Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish Evil* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 81, 101, claims that the discerning reader will already find clear hints of this in the New Testament itself.

48. Goshen-Gottstein, "Polemomania," 188.

49. Morton Smith, "Parallels between the Gospels and the Tannaitic Literature," Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1945, 159 (emphases mine).

50. Moshe Idel, "The Ascent and Decline of the Historical Jew" [Hebrew], in *The Past and Beyond: Studies in History and Philosophy Presented to Elazar Weinryb,* ed. Amir Horowitz, Ram Ben-Shalom, Ora Limor, and Avriel Bar-Levav (Tel Aviv: Open University of Israel Press, 2006), 171–207, here 205.

51. Idel, "The Ascent and Decline," 194–95.

52. Smith, *Drudgery Divine,* 52.

TRANSFORMING RELATIONS

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IN HONOR OF MICHAEL A. SIGNER

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