CATRIN H. WILLIAMS

I am He

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Mohr Siebeck

Catrin H. Williams analyses the use of the Hebrew expression *'ani hû'* in biblical and ancient Jewish texts and considers the possible significance of this phrase for the interpretation of the words *egô eimi* in Synoptic and Johannine traditions.

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The Interpretation of *'Anî Hû'* in Jewish and Early Christian Literature

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For my parents,
Cynwil and Carol Williams

Gyda diolch am bopeth

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St. David's Day, 2000

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Abbreviations

The system of abbreviations used in this study follows that compiled in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107, 1988, 583-96, with the following additions and exceptions:

ARA	Alphabet of Rabbi Aqiba
ARNA	Abot de Rabbi Nathan, Version A
ARNB	Abot de Rabbi Nathan, Version B
BHM	Bet ha-Midrasch, ed. A. Jellinek
BM	Batei Midrashot, ed. S.A. Wertheimer
CG	Fragments of Palestinian Targumim from the Cairo Genizah
FJS	Frankfurter Judaistische Studien
FT	Fragmentary Targumim
FT-B	Ms. Or. 10794, British Library
FT-J	Ms. Jewish Theological Seminary 605
FT-L	Ms. Leipzig-Universität BH
FT-N	Ms. Nürnberg-Stadtbibliothek Solger 2.2^0
FT-P	Ms. Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Hébr. 110
FT-V	Ms. Vatican Ebr. 440
LeqT	Leqah Tob
MBR	Midrash Bereshit Rabbati
Mek	Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael
MHG	Midrash ha-Gadol
MRS	Mekhilta de Rabbi Shim'on ben Yohai
MidTann	Midrash Tannaim
MidTeh	Midrash Tehillim
N	Codex Neofiti I
Ngl	Marginal glosses of Codex Neofiti I
N(I)	Interlinear glosses of Codex Neofiti I
O	Onqelos
Pesh	Peshitta
PesK	Pesiqta de Rab Kahana
PesR	Pesiqta Rabbati
PRE	Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer
PsJ	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
PTgs	Palestinian Targumim
Reuch	Codex Reuchlinianus
SamPent	Samaritan Pentateuch
SamT	Samaritan Targum
SekT	Sekhel Tob
SER	Seder Eliyahu Rabbah
SEZ	Seder Eliyahu Zutta
SifDeut	Sifre Deuteronomy
SifNum	Sifre Numbers

Tan	Midrash Tanhuma
TanB	Midrash Tanhuma, ed. S. Buber
TIsa	Targum of Isaiah
YS	Yalqut Shim'oni

Introduction

The Hebrew expression אני הוא has long been regarded as providing the key to a proper understanding of the absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Fourth Gospel. F.A. Lampe, commenting on John 8:24 in 1726, drew attention to both Isa. 48:12 and Deut. 32:39 as possible sources,[1] while over a century later the significance of these biblical statements was more confidently asserted:

> Diesem אֲנִי הוּא des Gottes Israel's entspricht nun im neuen Testamente das ἐγώ εἰμι, welches Jesus den Juden zuruft, daß sie es glauben sollen.[2]

A number of past and present scholars have adopted this view,[3] and it forms the basis of several articles which seek to analyse the background and meaning of the expression ἐγώ εἰμι.[4] Detailed research on this subject is, nevertheless, primarily associated with a handful of studies published during the last forty years, and it is to their findings that the majority of later discussions of the Johannine pronouncements have turned, particularly in the case of those commentaries which pause only briefly to consider the absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Fourth Gospel.

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[1] *Commentarius in Evangelium Joannis,* 405.

[2] Hofmann, *Der Schriftbeweis: Ein theologischer Versuch,* I:61.

[3] For example, Schlatter, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament,* 178; Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie,* II:411; Büchsel, 'εἰμί, ὁ ὤν', *ThWNT* 2, 396-98; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 93f., 350; Wikenhauser, *Johannes,* 173; Lindars, *The Gospel of John,* 320, 455; Fossum, 'In the Beginning Was the Name', 127; Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament,* 55f.

[4] See, for example, Beveridge, '"I Am" in the Fourth Gospel', 418-25; Feuillet, 'Les *ego eimi* christologiques du quatrième évangile', 5-22, 213-40; Klein, 'Vorgeschichte und Verständnis der johanneischen Ich-bin-Worte', 124f.; Simmons, 'A Christology of the "I Am" Sayings in the Gospel of John', 94-103; Thyen, 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt', 24-32; *idem,* 'Ich-Bin-Worte', 174-76. See also the extended discussions of ἐγώ εἰμι statements in the commentaries of Brown, *The Gospel according to John,* 533-38, and Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium,* II:59-70.

1. The Theophanic אני הוא and its Liturgical Context

The view that אני הוא forms the relevant background to the absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι in the New Testament has figured prominently in the various publications of E. Stauffer, who, above all others, has sought to establish the theological importance of אני הוא on the basis of its usage in biblical and ancient Jewish traditions. His initial views on ἐγώ εἰμι were recorded in an article published in 1935,[5] followed by a cluster of short studies about twenty years later,[6] and culminating in a survey of the use and meaning of the expression in *Jesus: Gestalt und Geschichte* (1957).[7]

In his article on ἐγώ Stauffer seeks to trace the origin of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι by noting the occurrences of אני הוא as a solemn divine pronouncement (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 48:12), and he claims that this emphatic statement has already been prepared by the formula אהיה אשר אהיה (Exod. 3:14). This biblical background, together with the I-style of gods and saviour figures in ancient oriental literature, form 'eine doppelte Wurzel' leading to the formulation of new 'I' declarations in Jewish apocalyptic texts (cf. *Apocalypse of Abraham* 8:3; 9:3). Stauffer thus proposes: 'Die alttestamentlichen und altorientalischen Traditionen begegnen sich in der jüdischen Apokalyptik und wirken in dieser Vereinigung auf die Umwelt Jesu und der Evangelien'.[8] The phrase ἐγώ εἰμι, despite its emphatic overtones, is used in an ordinary sense in Mark 6:50 (and John 6:20; 9:9; 18:5, 6, 8), and it expresses Jesus' affirmation of his messianic status in Mark 14:62. The fact that no clear predicate can be supplied for ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 13:6 does, nevertheless, point to its function in the eschatological discourse as a technical formula for Jesus' self-revelation as the Christ whose complete manifestation will occur in the future. This, in turn, prepares the way for the distinctive usage of the expression in certain Johannine passages (8:24, 28, 58; 13:19) to convey Jesus' unique identity as 'das handelnde Subjekt der Gottesgeschichte'.[9]

Stauffer's approach does, however, change considerably during the next

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[5] 'ἐγώ', *ThWNT* 2, 350-52.

[6] Stauffer includes an analysis of Mark 14:62 in 'Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung', 50-52. See also *idem*, 'Geschichte Jesu', 156-58, 171-73; 'Probleme der Priestertradition', 147f.; 'Messias oder Menschensohn?', 87f., 92, 102.

[7] *Jesus*, 130-46, 167-72. See further *idem*, 'Neue Wege der Jesusforschung', 173f.; *Jesus, Paulus und wir*, 22; *Jesus war ganz anders*, 148, 180-84; 'Jesus, Geschichte und Verkündigung', 12 n.67, 37, 82f., 109.

[8] 'ἐγώ', 352.

[9] *Ibid.*, 351.

twenty years. All notions of a double origin, biblical and oriental, for the divine 'I' formulations now disappear, Exod. 3:14 is no longer regarded as relevant to the discussion, and the focus shifts to Deutero-Isaianic divine speeches, particularly Isa. 43. Indeed, Stauffer's new point of departure is the recitation of certain scriptural portions in pre-exilic temple worship, and he proposes that the combination of the divine אנכי (Deut. 5:6; Ps. 46:11; 50:7; 81:11) and the divine הוא (Ps. 115:9-11) within a liturgical context, especially during the feast of Tabernacles, led to Deutero-Isaiah's formulation of the theophanic אני הוא, later adopted in Deut. 32:39.[10] The multiplication of 'I' formulae in the LXX and Targumim,[11] and the use of the emphatic הואה in Qumran texts (cf. 1QS 8:13), are regarded as attesting the ongoing influence of אני הוא in ancient Jewish circles. Even God's emphatic pronouncement in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* 8:3 ('I am he') and his words of consolation in 9:3 ('Fear not, for I am before the world') are now interpreted by Stauffer as directly linked to the Deutero-Isaianic occurrences of אני הוא (46:4; TIsa 43:10-13).[12]

It is also proposed that the earlier liturgical use of אנכי and אני הוא accounts for אני declarations recorded in Tannaitic traditions associated with the Tabernacles feast, particularly the saying attributed to Hillel in which אני signifies God's presence (b.Suk 53a) and a tradition about the recitation of the words [א]אני והו in the Temple liturgy (m.Suk 4:5).[13] These traditions, together with one example of אני הוא in the Passover Haggadah, lead Stauffer to claim that 'es [das prädikatlose ἐγώ εἰμι] stammt aus den kultischen Theophaniereden des AT (ANI HU) und lebt in der jüdischen Festliturgie des neutestamentlichen Zeitalters fort (Passah und Laubhütten)'.[14]

Stauffer's ultimate aim is to highlight the affinities between אני הוא and Jesus' pronouncement of the words ἐγώ εἰμι, particularly during the feasts of Passover (Mark 6:50; 13:6; 14:62; John 6:20; 13:19) and Tabernacles (8:24, 28, 58).[15] His earlier assessment of ἐγώ εἰμι as a phrase that can be used as an

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[10] *Jesus,* 130-32.

[11] *Ibid.,* 133, 168 n.59.

[12] *Ibid.,* 169 n.63.

[13] See 'Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung', 50 n.65; 'Geschichte Jesu', 157; *Jesus,* 134f.

[14] 'Probleme der Priestertradition', 148. See also *idem,* 'Geschichte Jesu', 171; *Jesus,* 73, 94, 136f.

[15] See especially *Jesus,* 141: 'Das liturgische ANI HU hat im antiken Palästinajudentum einen doppelten Sitz im Leben: Das Tempelritual des Laubhüttenfestes und die Privatliturgie des Passahabends. Ganz analog erscheint diese Formel im Munde Jesu zur Laubhüttenzeit als exoterisches, zur Passahzeit als esoterisches Ichwort'.

everyday form of speech (Mark 6:50; 14:62),[16] even as an emphatic claim to messiahship (13:6), is now replaced by the view that it functions as an *Offenbarungsformel* imbued with the theophanic force of אני הוא to form 'die echteste, kühnste und tiefste Selbstprädikation Jesu'.[17] Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι does not constitute a Markan or Johannine invention, but can be traced back to his appropriation of a formula traditionally associated with the feast of Tabernacles. Independent evidence for this solemn usage of ἐγώ εἰμι by the historical Jesus can be found, according to Stauffer, in non-canonical Christian texts and polemical Jewish traditions.[18] Particular interest is shown in a saying attributed to Rabbi Abbahu, 'if a man says to you, "I am God" (אל אני) he is a liar' (j.Taan 2:1 [65b]),[19] to be interpreted as an authentic Jewish record of Jesus' pronouncement of the theophanic אני הוא during his trial before the Sanhedrin.[20] When Jesus adopted this formula as the vehicle for his self-testimony, he used it to express his conviction that 'sich in seinem Leben die geschichtliche Epiphanie Gottes vollzieht'.[21]

2. The Various Functions of אני הוא and ἐγώ εἰμι

A year before the publication of *Jesus: Gestalt und Geschichte,* J. Richter completed a doctoral dissertation under Stauffer's supervision, entitled *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi.* Die Offenbarungsformel "Ich bin es" im Alten und Neuen Testament' (1956). The study bears close resemblance to the work produced by Stauffer, particularly his 1935 article, but Richter's analysis offers a more comprehensive treatment of certain issues and he occasionally deviates from his teacher's proposals.

It is significant that Richter, having briefly discussed the divine אני formulas

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16 'ἐγώ', 350.

17 *Jesus,* 130, 136f., 140.

18 In 'Geschichte Jesu', 158, and *Jesus,* 138f., Stauffer draws attention to the *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:6, which depicts Beliar-Nero as speaking 'like the Beloved': 'I am God and before me there was no one'. It is claimed that this passage can be dated to the beginning of 68 CE and that its author was acquainted with independent I-sayings in which Jesus spoke of himself with the aid of Deutero-Isaianic language. See further Chapter 7 §2 below.

19 'Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung', 50-52; 'Probleme der Priestertradition', 148 n.71; *Jesus,* 142f.; 'Neue Wege', 174. See further Chapter 5 §2.2 below.

20 'Geschichte Jesu', 171; *Jesus,* 94; 'Neue Wege, 173f.; *Jesus war ganz anders,* 181.

21 *Jesus,* 144.

of the Hebrew Bible, examines the use of אני הוא by beings other than God,[22] a phenomenon not even mentioned by Stauffer. Although the expression אני הוא occurs only once within a non-divine context, in an emphatic statement attributed to David (I Chron. 21:17: ואני הוא אשר חטאתי), attention is drawn to other similarly formulated statements, such as ...אתה הוא (Jer. 49:12; Ezek. 38:17), זה הוא (I Sam. 16:12) and מי הוא (Jer. 30:21; Job 4:7). According to Richter, these examples of everyday usage clarify the role of the divine pronouncement of אני הוא as an emphatic and contrastive statement which highlights the fundamental differences between Yahweh and other gods (Deut. 32:37-39; Isa. 43:10) and even as an expression of self-identification (Isa. 41:2, 4; 46:4; 51:12). The distinctiveness of אני הוא as encountered in divine speeches lies in its role as an *Offenbarungsformel* to emphasize God's power in creation and history, his relationship with Israel, his exclusiveness and eternal presence. Richter's study of other אני declarations, especially אני יהוה,[23] leads him to conclude that they possess the same range of meanings as אני הוא, although this formula alone is used by Deutero-Isaiah to convey the divine forgiveness of sins (43:25) and God's eternal presence (41:4; 43:13; 48:12).

Richter, like Stauffer, considers the potential significance of certain Qumran and apocalyptic texts, and particularly Jewish liturgical traditions related to the Tabernacles and Passover feasts, but he cautiously notes that these isolated traditions may be of limited value when attempting to determine the origin of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι.[24] In line with his earlier aim of establishing links between אני הוא and other אני formulas, Richter adopts a far broader framework than Stauffer in his discussion of the NT usage of ἐγώ εἰμι,[25] including a brief examination of the Johannine metaphorical ἐγώ εἰμι statements. Whereas Stauffer believes that the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι functions in most Markan and Johannine traditions as a theophanic formula, his pupil carefully balances the proclamatory use of the expression (John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; possibly Mark 13:6; 14:62) with its role as a form of self-identification (Mark 6:50; John 4:26; 6:20; 18:5-8), the inevitable result of his earlier approach to the divine and non-divine usage of אני הוא. This is not to deny the importance attributed by Richter to these declarations, for his main aim is to establish the grammatical, formal

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[22] '*Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi*', 19-21.

[23] *Ibid.*, 39-44.

[24] *Ibid.*, 60: 'Alle diese Andeutungen sind aber nur sporadisch und noch stark umstritten, so daß sie zunächst nur als interessant erwähnt werden müssen. Sie genügen noch keineswegs um die zwischentestamentliche Zeit auch nur einigermaßen zu überdrücken'.

[25] *Ibid.*, 61-85.

and theological continuity between אני הוא and ἐγώ εἰμι as self-revelatory formulas. He notes that Jesus' pronouncement of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι is also linked to his forgiveness of sins (John 8:24; cf. Isa. 43:25), the judgement of his enemies (John 8:28; cf. Isa. 41:4-5; 43:9-10; 48:12-13), prediction and fulfilment (John 13:19; cf. Isa. 41:4; 43:10), and is even employed as an expression of eternal presence (John 8:58; cf. Isa. 43:13).

3. אני הוא and ἐγώ εἰμι as Biblical Revelatory Formulas

The proposed role of ἐγώ εἰμι as an *Offenbarungsformel* also dominates the doctoral thesis of H. Zimmermann,[26] and although it was presented to the University of Bonn in 1951, neither Stauffer nor Richter betrays any knowledge of its existence. Following a survey of past attempts at identifying the sources of ἐγώ εἰμι, particularly in oriental, Hellenistic and Mandean literature,[27] the lack of examples of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι in these texts leads Zimmermann to conclude that the appropriate background is to be sought in biblical traditions. His main interest lies not so much in identifying individual statements which may account for the NT usage of ἐγώ εἰμι, but in seeking 'den Weg aufzuzeigen, der vom AT über LXX und spätjüdisches Schrifttum zum NT hinführt'.[28] His analysis of the use of the divine revelatory formula in the Hebrew Bible, which takes the form of a survey of all examples of אני יהוה and its variations,[29] leads him to conclude that four categories of usage can be identified: i) the revelatory formula in its strictest sense (e.g., Gen. 28:13; Exod. 3:14), often linked to אל־תירא (Gen. 15:1; 26:24) or אנכי עמך (e.g., Gen. 28:15; Exod. 3:12); ii) to establish and secure God's word, particularly in relation to his commandments (e.g., Exod. 20:2; Lev. 21:8; Isa. 44:24); iii) to serve as the content of the knowledge acquired as a result of divine acts in

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[26] 'Das absolute "Ich bin" als biblische Offenbarungsformel'. Zimmermann published the results of his thesis in two summary articles, entitled 'Das absolute Ἐγώ εἰμι als die neutestamentliche Offenbarungsformel', 54-69, 266-76, and 'Das absolute "Ich bin" in der Redeweise Jesu', 1-20.

[27] 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 20-49. Previous analyses of Hellenistic and Mandean texts surveyed by Zimmermann in his thesis include, in particular, Norden, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede*, 177-239; Wetter, '"Ich bin es": Eine johanneische Formel', 233f.; Schweizer, *Ego Eimi: Die religionsgeschichtliche Herkunft und theologische Bedeutung der johanneischen Bildreden*, 46-112.

[28] 'Das absolute Ἐγώ εἰμι', 61.

[29] 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 51-109.

history (e.g., Exod. 29:46; Ezek. 6:7); iv) to highlight the uniqueness and exclusiveness of Yahweh (e.g., Isa. 45:5, 6, 18; 46:9). אני הוא declarations are classified as belonging to the third and fourth categories, although it is also proposed that the expression אני הוא functions as a substitute for אני יהוה and similar statements, since הוא alludes to the divine name already expressed in its immediate context.

Zimmermann, to a far greater extent than Stauffer and Richter, offers a quite detailed analysis of the LXX usage of ἐγώ εἰμι,[30] and he argues that the distinctively uniform character of the formula אני יהוה is lost in its Greek renderings (e.g., ἐγὼ κύριος, ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος, ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος). And while the use of ἐγώ εἰμι to render both אני הוא (Isa. 43:10) and אני יהוה (45:18) reflects this lack of uniformity, it also implies that the LXX translators regarded both formulas as equivalent to each other. This prompts Zimmermann to claim that he has discovered the 'bridge' connecting אני יהוה (= אני הוא) and the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι. Thus, even before embarking on an analysis of the relevant NT material, he makes the following claim:

> Das absolute ἐγώ εἰμι im Munde Jesu ist die alttestamentliche Offenbarungsformel. Das bedeutet formal gesehen: von אֲנִי יְהוָה, wie die alttestamentliche Offenbarungsformel im hebräischen Text lautet, geht der Weg über אֲנִי הוּא, das an manchen Stellen als Ersatz für אֲנִי יְהוָה auftreten kann, zu dem absoluten ἐγώ εἰμι der LXX, das als Brücke für das ἐγώ εἰμι des NT zu gelten hat.[31]

According to Zimmermann, אני יהוה is the revelatory formula *par excellence* in the Hebrew Scriptures and no independent significance can be attributed to אני הוא. Since he also believes that the decisive factor when attempting to evaluate the NT usage of ἐγώ εἰμι is to determine whether a predicate can be supplied from its context, Zimmermann concludes that the absolute expression occurs at least five times (John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; Mark 13:6). To these one may probably add John 6:20 (Mark 6:50) and 18:5-8, and, due to the accusation of blasphemy, Mark 14:62. Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι in its absolute form assumes the role of the *Offenbarungsformel* (ἐγώ εἰμι = אני הוא = אני יהוה), a definition extended to include the Johannine metaphorical ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements.[32] Thus, a consideration of the christological implications of his study leads Zimmermann to conclude that Jesus can indeed proclaim ἐγώ εἰμι because his primary goal is to reveal the Father.[33]

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[30] *Ibid.*, 110-23.

[31] 'Das absolute' Εγώ εἰμι', 270.

[32] 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 219-28.

[33] *Ibid.*, 170.

4. The Background to the Johannine Use of ἐγώ εἰμι

P.B. Harner's contribution, entitled *The 'I Am' of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Johannine Usage and Thought* (1970),[34] offers a much briefer discussion than its German counterparts, although numerous fresh insights contained in this study undoubtedly merit examination. The origin of the Deutero-Isaianic use of אני הוא is to be explained in the light of Near Eastern hymns of self-praise rather than scriptural passages read during Tabernacles (Stauffer) or the revelatory formula אני יהוה (Zimmermann).[35] Its distinctive features include the fact that Yahweh alone pronounces אני הוא, and it serves as a key expression of the exclusiveness of the one whose sovereignty over creation and history (Isa. 46:4; 51:10-13) represents a challenge to the exiles to respond to him with renewed faith (41:1-4; 43:8-13).

The significance of later Jewish liturgical and rabbinic texts is acknowledged by Harner,[36] but Septuagintal renderings of אני הוא and the Synoptic usage are regarded by him as the most likely source(s) of the Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι.[37] He makes a distinction between the clearly absolute examples of ἐγώ εἰμι, those for which no predicate can be supplied (8:58; 13:19), and the more ambivalent cases where the expression may possess a double meaning (8:24, 28; cf. 4:26; 6:20; 18:5, 8).[38] In its role as 'an early Christian attempt to formulate and depict the significance of Jesus, especially in terms of his relationship to the Father',[39] the true meaning and significance of the Johannine usage of ἐγώ εἰμι can be perceived through faith, for this expression ultimately expresses Jesus' power to forgive sins and offer eternal life.

To Harner's study one may add the recently published work of D.M. Ball, who offers a detailed analysis of both the absolute and metaphorical ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements in the Fourth Gospel.[40] Ball believes that it is necessary to consider both categories of sayings because it is doubtful whether 'the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in the text of John allows such a sharp distinction between the forms

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[34] See also *idem, Grace and Law in Second Isaiah: 'I am the Lord'*, in which he does not significantly depart from his 1970 contribution.

[35] Harner, *'I Am'*, 8, is indebted in this respect to Dion, 'Le genre littéraire sumérien de l' «hymne à soi-même» et quelques passages du Deutéro-Isaïe', 215-34.

[36] *'I Am'*, 17-26.

[37] *Ibid.*, 30-36.

[38] *Ibid.*, 37-48.

[39] *Ibid.*, 64.

[40] *'I Am' in John's Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications.*

of "I am"'.[41] Nevertheless, one of the central arguments developed by Ball in this investigation is that ἐγώ εἰμι sayings accompanied by an image emphasize Jesus' role and mission, whereas the absolute statements stress his identity. A particularly innovative aspect of this study is the way in which Ball analyses the literary function of the Johannine sayings (Chapters 2-4); tools from the field of narrative criticism are applied to each of the relevant passages in order to analyse their structure and style according to such literary criteria as setting, characterization and irony. Ball stresses the importance of starting with the text of the Gospel, because his aim is to explore the function of ἐγώ εἰμι within each passage. The identification of Johannine irony in many of these texts leads him to conclude, like Harner, that some ἐγώ εἰμι statements are deliberately intended to function on two levels (4:26; 6:20; 18:5, 8).

Ball draws attention to אני הוא in the second part of his study (Chapters 5-7), although it is clearly not his intention to offer a detailed study of the occurrences of this Hebrew expression in its various biblical contexts. It is proposed that all Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements, both absolute and metaphorical, derive their meaning from the Hebrew Scriptures and ancient Jewish traditions, but Ball argues that the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι is most closely linked to the Isaianic use of this phrase and its accompanying themes. It follows that ἐγώ εἰμι can often 'act as a key to point the alert reader back to the Old Testament and especially to Isaiah in order to interpret Jesus' sayings on a far deeper level',[42] for the Johannine Jesus is portrayed as the one in whom Isaiah's promise of salvation is fulfilled.

5. Previous Investigations and the Approach of this Study

In the most recent analysis of the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Fourth Gospel, Ball speaks of 'the excessive preoccupation of scholarship with the background to Johannine thought'.[43] Whereas the method of approach favoured by Ball is to begin with the text of the Fourth Gospel and seek to determine the significance of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements before considering their most likely background, the main objective of his predecessors has clearly been to discover the conceptual source of this expression. This has meant that an examination of

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[41] *Ibid.*, 15.
[42] *Ibid.*, 177.
[43] *Ibid.*, 16.

the individual examples of אני הוא in the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as in certain ancient Jewish traditions, has often only been undertaken in the hope that they may offer new insights into the meaning and function of ἐγώ εἰμι in New Testament traditions.

This tendency characterizes the work of Stauffer in particular, for, having ascertained that Jesus' use of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι occurs within the setting of Tabernacles and Passover, he then seeks to establish a pivotal role for אני הוא within the liturgy of the same feasts. Certain traditions do support the view that אנכי אלהים (or אנכי יהוה אלהיך) played an important liturgical function during the feast of Tabernacles (Pss. 46, 50, 81),[44] but equally persuasive evidence cannot be adduced for the setting of Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא pronouncements within the liturgy of this festival. A similar *Sitz im Leben* is sought by Stauffer for Ps. 115, a text which employs הוא as a divine epithet (vv. 9-11), but this is only firmly attested in a much later period (m.Suk 4:8). Moreover, if the Psalms cited by Stauffer are actually post-exilic,[45] his reconstruction of their combined influence on אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is weakened. Even rabbinic support for the proposed link between this expression and the festivals of Passover and Tabernacles is not as compelling as Stauffer claims. Evidence for the setting of אני הוא within the context of Passover is confined to an isolated, probably late Amoraic, tradition in the Passover Haggadah, and the association with Tabernacles only extends to אני (b.Suk 53a) and אני והו[א] (m.Suk 4:5), two enigmatic designations whose relationship with אני הוא has not been clearly delineated.

The approach to Jewish sources adopted in previous studies tends to be of limited value, both for an independent assessment of אני הוא and for an evaluation of the use of ἐγώ εἰμι. Methodological problems inevitably arise when a polemical tradition attributed to a third generation Palestinian Amora (j.Taan 2:1 [65b]) is used as proof that 'eine echt jesuanische Ichformel' has been identified,[46] particularly as this rabbinic tradition records a self-declaration which takes the form אל אני rather than אני הוא. Stauffer's appraisal of possible parallels also raises the question whether the texts cited by him provide a clear

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[44] On the original cultic setting of these Psalms, see especially Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, I:85ff., 104ff., 156ff.; Kraus, *Psalmen*, I:340ff., 372ff.; II:563f. For the view that Ps. 81 was composed for recitation during the liturgy of the Tabernacles feast, see MacRae, 'The Meaning and Evolution of the Feast of Tabernacles', 264; Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, II:586f.

[45] This is acknowledged by Stauffer in *Jesus*, 168 n.47.

[46] Stauffer, 'Probleme der Priestertradition', 148.

picture of ancient Jewish interpretations of אני הוא. Little weight can, for example, be attached to the two pronouncements in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* (8:3; 9:3), for the fact that this text has only survived in an Old Slavonic translation makes it difficult to reconstruct the original Semitic phrases, and, as Stauffer himself acknowledges, the first of the two declarations possesses an implied predicate ('You are searching for the God of gods .... I am he').[47]

The dependence of Richter, Zimmermann and Harner on Stauffer's findings in their own assessments of אני הוא means that very little additional Jewish material has been analysed by them. Moreover, the attempt, particularly by Richter and Harner, to determine the role of אני הוא in ancient Jewish circles has meant that they have confined themselves to traditions dating from the first two centuries CE. Such methodologically sound practice is commendable in studies whose main interest lies in exploring the NT usage of ἐγώ εἰμι, but a restriction of this kind limits the number of texts at their disposal, even though a closer inspection reveals that they in fact resort to citing much later traditions (e.g., b.Ber 104a; ExR 29:9; PesR 33:8).[48] All in all, there has been a tendency in these studies to adopt an extrinsic approach when examining both the biblical and pertinent rabbinic/targumic material relating to אני הוא. It is the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι of NT traditions that provides the framework for discussion of 'background' material, and the main purpose of the analysis of occurrences of אני הוא in the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as ancient Jewish interpretations of the expression, has been to provide interesting parallels.[49]

Much effort has also been made to discover examples of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form outside NT traditions, but this line of research has again suffered due to the paucity of available evidence. The absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι is not attested in non-Jewish Greek texts,[50] and it is also absent from the writings of

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[47] See 'ἐγώ', 350 n.85: 'Das Prädikatsnomen ist aus dem Vorhergehenden zu ergänzen. Aber der emphatische Unterton ist unverkennbar'.

[48] For problems with regard to the dating of rabbinic traditions, and particularly their anachronistic use by some NT scholars, see Alexander, 'Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament', 240-46; Müller, 'Zur Datierung rabbinischer Aussagen', 551-87.

[49] Warnings about using rabbinic texts as a 'quarry' are voiced by Schäfer, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the *Status Quaestionis*', 140. See also Neusner, 'The Use of the Later Rabbinic Evidence for the Study of First-Century Pharisaism', 215; Vermes, 'Jewish Studies and New Testament Interpretation', 13f.; *idem*, 'Jewish Literature and New Testament Exegesis: Reflections on Methodology', 373-76; Thomas, 'The Fourth Gospel and Rabbinic Judaism', 159-62.

[50] A search through the material included in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* corpus reveals no further occurrences of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι.

Josephus and Philo.[51] Two potentially important occurrences of ἐγώ εἰμι are found in the Pseudepigrapha, namely in the *Testament of Job* (29:4 and 31:6), which, in all probability, is a Jewish work originally composed in Greek between the first century BCE and the second or third century CE.[52] But these two examples cannot be defined as absolute or self-contained statements, because they act as Job's responses to two questions posed by Eliphas about his identity. In the first case Job is asked, σὺ εἶ Ιωβαβ ὁ συμβασιλεὺς ἡμῶν; and he offers an affirmative reply: ἐδήλωσα αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἐγώ εἰμι (29:3-4); in the second, a series of questions concluding with the words σὺ εἶ ὁ ὡς ἡ σελήνη καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες οἱ ἐν τῷ μεσονυκτίῳ φαίνοντες; (31:5) leads Job, once again, to respond with the words ἐγώ εἰμι (31:6).[53]

Despite the apparent interest in Jewish sources displayed in past research on the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι, no thorough investigation has yet been carried out of the interpretations of אני הוא in ancient Jewish traditions. This will be the main focus and concern of this particular study. It will initially consider the status and meaning of אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah (and אתה הוא in Ps. 102:28), and will attempt to bring the testimony of Deut. 32:39 back to centre stage since, one suspects, this divine pronouncement has been neglected due to a greater formal similarity between the Deutero-Isaianic use of אני הוא and the Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι statements.[54] An examination of the relevant material in the Hebrew Bible will seek to demonstrate that אני הוא does not act as a substitute for אני יהוה or other divine self-declaratory statements, but is an expression that possesses its own distinctive character and theological import (Chapter 1). This is followed by a study of the translational methods adopted by the Ancient Versions, as well as evidence from the Qumran texts, in their endeavour to offer an appropriate rendering of אני הוא (Chapter 2).

The central part of this investigation (Chapters 3-6) attempts to trace the

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[51] The only exception is Philo's citation of LXX Deut. 32:39a in *De Posteritate Caini* 167-68 (see Chapter 2 n.29 below).

[52] See, for example, Schaller, *Das Testament Hiob;* Spittler, 'Testament of Job', *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,* I:829-34.

[53] *Testamentum Iobi,* ed. Brock, 40f. Other examples of ἐγώ εἰμι forming a response to questions introduced by σὺ εἶ... are found in diverse traditions, including LXX II Sam. 2:20, Mark 14:62, John 9:9, the Pseudo-Clementines (*Hom.* II:24:6; XIV:10:1; *Rec.* II:11) and Acts of John 5. Cf. also Matt. 26:22, 25 (μήτι ἐγώ εἰμι) and Luke 24:39 (ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός). The possible implications of these statements for this particular study will be considered in Chapters 7-8 below.

[54] Reference to Deut. 32:39 is, for example, relegated to a footnote by Harner, *'I Am'*, 15 n.14.

development in the application of אני הוא in ancient Jewish traditions with the aid of a substantial amount of material assembled from targumic and rabbinic texts. This includes an analysis of targumic traditions related to Deut. 32:39 and the Deutero-Isaianic passages (Chapter 3) and a detailed study of several midrashic traditions in which the biblical אני הוא pronouncements play a decisive part (Chapters 4-5). When the framework for study is extended in this manner, without the restriction of finding early traditions set within a liturgical context, a more comprehensive picture of the rabbinic evidence begins to unfold and the various interpretations of אני הוא can be evaluated on their own terms. This study will also consider the biblical and later Jewish use of אני הוא from the perspective of grammar and syntax (Chapters 1, 6), for this aspect has largely been overlooked in previous studies.[55] In order to carry out this task, the rabbinic corpus has been examined in the search for occurrences of אני הוא and אנא הוא (אתה הוא and את הוא) in divine and non-divine contexts.[56]

Finally, the implications of this survey of biblical and ancient Jewish interpretations of אני הוא for the study of the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form in Markan and Johannine traditions will be explored (Chapters 7-8). Particular attention will be paid to the function of ἐγώ εἰμι as pronounced by Jesus in various contexts and to the possible interrelationship of its occurrences within each of these two Gospels; an attempt will be made to determine whether the setting, surrounding motifs and application of ἐγώ εἰμι strengthen the case for viewing these traditions as a conscious reflection on אני הוא in its role as a divine declaration, particularly in the light of its usual Septuagintal rendering as ἐγώ εἰμι. It is hoped that a procedure of this kind will produce an analysis of the NT usage of ἐγώ εἰμι which secures the role of the relevant Markan and Johannine traditions as important witnesses when attempting to assess the significance of אני הוא in Jewish and early Christian circles.

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[55] Richter, *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi'*, 19-21, does pay some attention to אני הוא as a grammatical formulation, but its potential significance, particularly in the light of its usage in rabbinic traditions, has not been explored.

[56] In addition to those rabbinic texts for which concordances have been prepared by Ch.J. Kasowski and B. Kosovsky, the following texts have been studied for possible אנא/אני הוא (and את/אתה הוא) statements: Aboth de Rabbi Nathan (Versions A and B), Mekhilta de Rabbi Shim'on ben Yohai, Midrashim Rabbah, Midrash Tehillim, Pesiqta de Rab Kahana, Pesiqta Rabbati, Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer, Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Zuta, Midrash Tanhuma (both editions), together with several later midrashic collections.

Chapter One

The Hebrew Bible and אֲנִי הוּא

In the Hebrew Scriptures the expression אֲנִי הוּא is primarily encountered in statements pronounced by Yahweh. Indeed, all examples of אֲנִי הוּא in its bipartite form are found in divine declarations. It occurs only once in the Pentateuch (Deut. 32:39), but it forms a distinctive feature of the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, with five occurrences of אֲנִי הוּא in its bipartite form (41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12) and three further cases where the expression is attached to a participle (43:25; 51:12; 52:6).[1] The related אַתָּה־הוּא addressed to Yahweh appears in Ps. 102:28.

To these statements one may add the isolated case of אֲנִי הוּא attributed to David (I Chron. 21:17), where the expression is syntactically bound to a verbal form (וַאֲנִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי), as well as the use of אַתָּה הוּא in a declaration pronounced by God against Edom in Jer. 49:12 (וְאַתָּה הוּא נָקֹה תִּנָּקֶה). The existence of these two particular formulations not only serves as a warning against making rash claims about an exclusively divine application of אֲנִי הוּא and אַתָּה הוּא in the Hebrew Bible, but it acts as a reminder that these expressions can possess a distinctive syntactic function. Thus, although a correct assessment of אֲנִי הוּא is inevitably dependent on acquiring a proper understanding of its meaning and significance within individual biblical texts, to which attention will be paid in §§2-4, it seems appropriate, in the first place, to consider the ways in which the different kinds of usage of אֲנִי הוּא have been analysed from the perspective of grammar.

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[1] *BHS* attempts to account for the Ketib of Jer. 29:23 (ואנכי הויד ועד) by proposing the following reading: וְאָנֹכִי הוּ[א] יֹדֵעַ וָעֵד ('I am he who knows and bears witness'). Alternatively, הויד could be a corrupt dittography of הָעֵד. For these and other possible explanations, see McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, II:731.

1. Grammatical Considerations

Most studies of Biblical Hebrew syntax draw attention to the distinctive role of the independent personal pronoun הוא, and its feminine and plural counterparts, as the element linking together the subject and predicate in nominal clauses.[2] The structure of these nominal constructions is often defined as possessing the sequence Subject-Pronoun-Predicate (Gen. 42:6: וְיוֹסֵף הוּא הַשַּׁלִּיט עַל־הָאָרֶץ), Subject-Predicate-Pronoun (Deut. 4:24: כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵשׁ אֹכְלָה הוּא) or Predicate-Pronoun-Subject (Lam. 1:18: צַדִּיק הוּא יְהוָה).[3] Such statements as אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים (II Sam. 7:28) and כִּי־אֲנִי־הוּא הַמְדַבֵּר (Isa. 52:6) are then classified as belonging to the first sequential form, because הוא is preceded by אַתָּה or אֲנִי (subject) and followed by a definite noun or participle (predicate). According to some grammarians, the independent personal pronoun functions purely as a copula (comparable to הָיָה) in nominal clauses of this kind, thus indicating that אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים should be translated as 'You are (the) God'.[4]

The assessment of הוא as a copula in tripartite nominal constructions even prompted Joüon to remark: 'C'est sans doute à l'analogie du pronom employé comme copule qu'il faut expliquer la phrase d'Isaïe אֲנִי הוּא, *je suis, j'existe*'.[5] Bartelmus, moreover, claims that, as הוא resembles the use of יֵשׁ as a copula, bipartite אֲנִי הוּא declarations act as 'Existenzaussagen'.[6] A different approach to

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[2] See especially Brockelmann, *Grundriß der vergleichenden Grammatik*, II:§53c; Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause;* Sappan, *The Typical Features of the Syntax of Biblical Poetry*, 92-111; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words and Structures in Biblical Hebrew*, 67-82; Gross, *Die Pendenskonstruktion im Biblischen Hebräisch*, 132-44; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Part III, §154ij; Geller, 'Cleft Sentences with Pleonastic Pronoun', 15-33; Niccacci, 'Simple Nominal Clause', 216-27; Michel, 'Probleme des Nominalsatzes im biblischen Hebräisch', 215-24; Zewi, 'The Nominal Sentence in Biblical Hebrew', 145-67.

[3] The identification of the subject and predicate in nominal clauses is currently the subject of much debate and will be considered below. Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause*, 31-34, particularly 42 and 45, proposes that the word order adopted for the first two categories can be explained as follows: the independent personal pronoun precedes the predicate (definite) in a clause of identification (Subject-Pronoun-Predicate), whereas it follows the predicate (indefinite) in a clause of classification (Subject-Predicate-Pronoun). See also Sappan, *Typical Features*, 109-11; Khan, *Studies in Semitic Syntax*, 72; Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §§8.4, 16.3.3a.

[4] Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax*, §30a; Fabry, 'הוא', *ThWAT* 2, 365; Khan, *Semitic Syntax*, 72f. See also Hartmann, ''Es gibt keine Kraft und keine Macht außer bei Gott': Zur Kopula im Hebräischen', 116f.

[5] *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique*, §154j.

[6] *HYH: Bedeutung und Funktion eines hebräischen 'Allerweltswortes'*, 143 n.75. Cf. Sappan, *Typical Features*, 68f., who describes הוא in the bipartite expressions אֲנִי הוּא and אַתָּה הוּא as a 'suppletion of the existential verb היה' (*ibid.*, xvii).

the interpretation of אֲנִי הוּא as a statement of existence is offered by Walker,[7] who regards the expression as a deliberate echo of the use of אֶהְיֶה in Exod. 3:14. Walker proposes that a form similar to the Aramaic and Syriac הֲוָא was current in early Hebrew (הָוָא); since its present participial form would have been הָוֶא, the expression אֲנִי הוּא should be translated as 'I am existing'. The participial form הֹוֶה from הָוָה does occur in Eccles. 2:22 and Neh. 6:6, but there are no examples of הָוָא in Biblical Hebrew.[8]

A final decision as to whether אֲנִי הוּא expresses the existence of Yahweh must be postponed until the relevant biblical passages have been analysed, but certain issues can now be explored. First, many grammarians reject the theory that the independent personal pronoun performs the function of a copula in nominal constructions.[9] Most nominal clauses in Biblical Hebrew consist only of two components (subject and predicate), which means that 'the predicative relation' is present in the clause regardless of the use of הוּא as a third component. Hence, הוּא does not necessarily act as a copula in the Indo European sense of the term, and the few cases where it can be identified as a copula reflect a comparatively late development in Biblical Hebrew (Eccles. 1:17; 2:23; 4:8).[10] Secondly, a firm distinction must be made between tripartite clauses and the bipartite expression אֲנִי הוּא, for in the latter case הוּא cannot serve as a connecting link between subject and predicate; it may function as the predicate or even as the subject of the clause, but it is unlikely that it can be defined as a copula unless the expression simply means 'It is I' (or 'I am'), and, in order to determine whether this is the case, the actual contexts in which אֲנִי הוּא occurs must be examined.

An alternative explanation proposed by some grammarians is that הוּא serves to provide the subject in tripartite nominal constructions with particular focus.[11] Muraoka argues that הוּא retains its original demonstrative force, whereas

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[7] 'Concerning *Hû'* and *'Anî Hû''*, 205f.

[8] Walker, *ibid.*, 206, also draws support from the LXX rendering of אֲנִי הוּא as ἐγώ εἰμι, although it should be noted that LXX Isa. 52:6 and Ps. 101(2):28 render הוּא as αὐτός (see Chapter 2 §1). Furthermore, Walker claims that the use of הוּאָה in Qumran texts represents the original participial form הוֹאֶה, although no evidence can be adduced to support this theory (see, for example, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, ed. Clines, II:502).

[9] See Gross, *Die Pendenskonstruktion*, 137-44; Niccacci, 'Simple Nominal Clause', 223; Zewi, 'Nominal Sentence', 147; *idem*, 'The Definition of the Copula and the Role of Third Independent Personal Pronouns in Nominal Sentences of Semitic Languages', 41-55.

[10] Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 69, 74f.

[11] Cf. Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik*, §141gh; Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16.3.3c; Davidson and Gibson, *Hebrew Syntax*, §1b.

identificatory clauses bearing the sequence Subject-Pronoun-Predicate can often be viewed as 'selective-exclusive', for 'the element to be emphasized is the subject, which is singled out and contrasted with other possible or actual alternative(s)'.[12] This contrastive-emphatic force is encountered in such statements as אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים,[13] rendered as '*You* are God', and is graphically illustrated by the declaration יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים in I Kings 18:39, which expresses the claim that Yahweh and not Baal is God.[14] In several of the clauses where הוּא acts as the second element of an address to (...אַתָּה־הוּא) or about Yahweh (...יְהוָה הוּא), the contrast between Yahweh and other gods is made explicit and the phrase אֵין עוֹד immediately follows.[15] הוּא is therefore said to play an integral role in the comparison of Yahweh with the nations' inferior experience of their own gods, for the ultimate aim of these declarations is to proclaim the uniqueness of Israel's God (cf. Deut. 4:33, 34 and vv. 35, 39; Deut. 7:4 and v. 9; II Sam. 7:23 and v. 28). But the resemblance between these various statements is not limited to their syntactic structure, for many can be termed deuteronomistic formulas found in particular in the exilic and post-exilic periods;[16] this, it seems, is when the contrastive-emphatic force of such formulations became prevalent.[17] That a similar contrast between Yahweh and the Babylonian gods figures prominently in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is consequently of significance,[18] and the view that הוּא can convey the notion of exclusiveness explains why אֲנִי הוּא is sometimes rendered as 'I am the One'[19] or as 'ich bin es (mit dem man immer und nur zu rechnen hat)'.[20]

In addition to the alternatives of defining הוּא as a copula and as providing its preceding component with emphasis or focus, a third explanation is offered in some studies of Biblical Hebrew syntax. Muraoka's approach in terms of emphasis has been criticized for not attributing a specifically syntactic function

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[12] *Emphatic Words,* 72.

[13] For clauses similar to אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים (II Sam. 7:28), see II Kings 19:15; Isa. 37:16; Jer. 14:22; Ps. 44:5; Neh. 9:6, 7; I Chron. 17:26; II Chron. 20:6.

[14] In addition to I Kings 18:39, see Deut. 4:35, 39; 7:9; 10:17; Josh. 2:11; I Kings 8:60; Ps. 24:10; 100:3; II Chron. 33:13. Cf. יְהוָה הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ (Deut. 10:9; 18:2; Josh. 13:14, 33); כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוּא הַמַּעֲלֶה אֹתָנוּ (Josh. 24:17; cf. Deut. 3:22; 9:3; 31:6, 8; Josh. 23:3, 10).

[15] See I Kings 8:60; Deut. 4:35, 39; אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים לְבַדֶּךָ (II Kings 19:15 = Isa. 37:16; cf. Neh. 9:6).

[16] Such expressions of 'the monotheistic creed' are regarded as characteristic of deuteronomistic phraseology by Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School,* 331.

[17] Cf. Braulik, 'Das Deuteronomium und die Geburt des Monotheismus', 280-90.

[18] See Wildberger, 'Der Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 516-20.

[19] Cf. Fokkelman, *Major Poems,* 125: 'I am the True One'.

[20] Fabry, 'הוּא', 367.

to הוּא and related pronouns,[21] whereas Zewi has recently investigated their status from a 'functional sentence perspective',[22] and claims that the key to a proper analysis of the available evidence lies in the recognition of the resumptive role performed by הוּא in nominal constructions involving extraposition.[23] The presence of emphasis in these types of extraposition is not denied, but Zewi cautions that not all cases are necessarily emphatic.

Two of the four patterns identified by Zewi are of relevance to this study. The first type seeks to account for such statements as אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֲמְכֶם (Isa. 51:12), whereas the second has a direct bearing on אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא (Deut. 32:39a). According to Zewi, the extraposed subject in Isa. 51:12a is the participial form at the end of the sentence (מְנַחֲמְכֶם), preceded by a predicate clause with the sequence Predicate-Subject (אָנֹכִי [אָנֹכִי] הוּא); the subject of that clause is הוּא, and this, in turn, represents the main extraposed subject.[24] No guidelines are offered by Zewi when attempting to identify the main subject in such cases,[25] although she assumes that the function of the predicate clause is to enable Yahweh as speaker (אָנֹכִי הוּא) or the one addressed (אַתָּה הוּא) to be identified with the main subject. Accordingly, Isa. 51:12a signifies that Yahweh confirms that he is the one who comforts his people.

Other nominal constructions attributed by Zewi to this syntactic type are those cases where the extraposed element takes the form of a subordinate verb nominalized by means of אֲשֶׁר. Attention is drawn to the statement pronounced by David in I Chron. 21:17, which is to be defined as a cleft sentence,[26] and is of significance for this particular study because it is the only biblical example of the expression אֲנִי הוּא uttered by a human being (וְאֲנִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי). The focal point of this scene is the notion that the sin and wickedness which have

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[21] Andersen, *Verbless Clause*, 18; cf. van der Merwe, 'The Vague Term Emphasis', 121f.

[22] Zewi, 'Nominal Sentence', 145-67; *idem*, 'Definition of the Copula', 41-55; 'Subordinate Nominal Sentences Involving Prolepsis in Biblical Hebrew', 1-20.

[23] This means that S.R. Driver's views on the *casus pendens* (*A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, §§196-201) are currently being revived and revised. Extraposition as a key factor in the analysis of nominal clauses is stressed by Gross, *Die Pendenskonstruktion*, 137-44; Geller, 'Cleft Sentences', 18-33; Niccacci, 'Simple Nominal Clause', 224-27.

[24] 'Nominal Sentence', 160-62. Cf. also Gen. 27:33; Isa. 43:25; 51:9, 10; 52:6.

[25] See, however, Baasten, 'Nominal Clauses Containing a Personal Pronoun in Qumran Hebrew', 1-3, who offers a summary of the different 'levels of linguistic description' (grammatical, logical and psychological) involved in the identification of subject and predicate in nominal clauses. The psychological subject (given information = 'theme') and the psychological predicate (new information = 'rheme') can be identified when the context of these clauses is taken into consideration.

[26] See Geller, 'Cleft Sentences', 27; Niccacci, 'Marked Syntactical Structures', 9-13.

incurred God's wrath, and whose consequences are now being suffered by the people, are the sole responsibility of David. Zewi thus defines אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי as the extraposed subject, אֲנִי־הוּא as its predicate clause, and she translates the declaration as 'I alone am guilty'.[27]

Some issues are not, however, addressed by Zewi's evaluation of these constructions. She proposes, for example, that the extraposed subject in the case of II Kings 19:15 is הָאֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ לְכֹל מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ which immediately follows אַתָּה־הוּא, but how would she account for the fact that a subject in the third person (הָאֱלֹהִים) is followed by לְבַדְּךָ with a second person suffix?[28] This suggests a link between לְבַדְּךָ and the proposed predicate ([אַתָּה־]הוּא), as also seems to be the case in I Chron. 21:17 where אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי is more closely related to אֲנִי than הוּא. What does, however, become apparent is that Zewi's approach to nominal constructions does not rule out the potentially emphatic force of such statements. A consideration of the context of these pronouncements can indicate that, in the same way as David, and not the Israelite people, is to be identified as the one who has sinned, Yahweh, and not the nations' gods, is the only one who can claim to be הָאֱלֹהִים.

Before considering a second syntactic type identified by Zewi, it can be noted that recent analyses of the syntax of Biblical Hebrew may illuminate some of the functions attributed to הוּא in Biblical Aramaic. Some claim that הוּא acts as a copula in such declarations as אַנְתְּ־הוּא רֵאשָׁה דִּי דַהֲבָא (Dan. 2:38, reading the Qerê; cf. 5:13),[29] but alternative explanations have been proposed. If הוּא, on the one hand, performs the function of strengthening the subject (אַנְתְּ), it means that Daniel announces to the king that he is the golden head of the statue in his dream (v. 32): '*You* are the head of gold'. But if אַנְתְּ־הוּא, on the other hand, serves as a predicate clause in a statement involving extraposition, the main subject is רֵאשָׁה דִּי דַהֲבָא: 'You are he - the head of gold'. Grammatical analyses of Dan. 2:38 are evenly divided on this issue. 'The head of gold' is described as the subject by those who claim that the central issue is the identity of 'the head',[30] while others regard אַנְתְּ as subject because the king is being

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[27] 'Nominal Sentence', 151. Clauses which open with the interrogative pronoun מִי־הוּא are also included in this category (e.g., Isa. 50:9: מִי־הוּא יַרְשִׁיעֵנִי; cf. Job 13:19; 17:3; 41:2).

[28] I am grateful to the Revd. Brian Mastin for drawing my attention to the grammatical structure of II Kings 19:15.

[29] See, for example, Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, §30.

[30] Cf. Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen*, §§72d, 98q. Kutscher, 'Aramaic', 379, comments that in Biblical Aramaic - as in all Semitic languages - the independent personal pronoun follows the predicate in tripartite nominal constructions of the kind encountered in Dan. 2:38.

addressed by Daniel since v. 31 (אַנְתְּ מַלְכָּא חֲזֵה הֲוֵיתָ, reading the Qerê).[31]

A particularly interesting formulation occurs in Dan. 4:19, one largely overlooked in studies of the syntax of Biblical Aramaic. Daniel's summary of the king's dream opens with the words אִילָנָא דִּי חֲזַיְתָ דִּי רְבָה וּתְקֵף (v. 17: 'the tree that you saw, which grew great and strong...') and he concludes by announcing אַנְתְּ־הוּא מַלְכָּא דִּי רְבֵיתָ וּתְקֻפְתְּ (v. 19, reading the Qerê). The most likely definition of this second statement is that, in its role as a dream interpretation, it identifies the king with the central image: 'the tree that you saw...it is you, O king, [the one] who has grown great and strong'). It thus follows that, in syntactic terms, הוּא performs an anaphoric role and represents אִילָנָא from the initial declaration.[32] This also means that אַנְתְּ־הוּא closely resembles a bipartite formulation; it is not self-contained, but possesses an antecedent already expressed in an earlier statement.

The proposed function of the distinctive statement in Dan. 4:19 therefore leads one to a further consideration of two-component אֲנִי הוּא declarations in Biblical Hebrew. Once again, Zewi's approach to nominal constructions seeks to provide some clarification, for she identifies another type of extraposition in which the extraposed subject stands at the beginning of the sentence and is followed by a predicate clause adopting the pattern Predicate-Subject.[33] Thus, with regard to the statement כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹמֵד עָלָיו אַדְמַת־קֹדֶשׁ הוּא (Exod. 3:5), it is proposed that the extraposed element ('the place on which you stand') precedes a predicate clause ('it is holy ground'). Zewi includes Deut. 32:39a in this category, and suggests that the divine declaration כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא also involves extraposition; the initial אֲנִי functions as the extraposed subject, while אֲנִי הוּא represents a predicate clause with הוּא as its subject. This is not, however, a particularly convincing explanation of Deut. 32:39a, for it more likely attests the poetic device of doubling אֲנִי for emphatic purposes rather than establishing a distinction between אֲנִי as extraposed subject and the second אֲנִי as predicate.[34] As Zewi herself acknowledges, similar doubling of the divine אָנֹכִי/אֲנִי occurs in Isa. 43:25 and 51:12, but no distinction between subject and

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[31] Kautzsch, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen,* §§87.3, 95.2; Muraoka, 'Notes on the Syntax of Biblical Aramaic', 166.

[32] Cf. Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen,* §98q; Montgomery, *Daniel,* 241. Cf. also LXX Dan. 4:20 (see Chapter 2 n.15).

[33] 'Nominal Sentence', 159f.

[34] Extraposition of the kind outlined by Zewi may, nonetheless, be detected in Ps. 76:8: אַתָּה נוֹרָא אַתָּה ('You, you are awesome'). Deut. 32:39a could only be classified as belonging to this category if it took the form אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי (or, possibly, הוּא אֲנִי הוּא).

predicate can be detected in such repetition. Furthermore, explanations in terms of extraposition cannot account for the Deutero-Isaianic usage of אֲנִי הוּא where there is no second אֲנִי (41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12).

The problems encountered in Zewi's analysis of Deut. 32:39a demonstrate that this and the other approaches to the syntactic role of הוּא in tripartite nominal constructions have certain limitations when attempting to evaluate the function and status of the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא. There is no doubt that the two-component אֲנִי הוּא is in some way related to the tripartite forms, although the non-involvement of such factors as extraposition means that it also stands apart from the longer formulations.[35] Moreover, the fact that אֲנִי הוּא in its bipartite form is only attested in poetic material in the Hebrew Bible has not been given particular attention in studies of Biblical Hebrew syntax. Thus, in the same way as the expression אֲנִי הוּא has been something of an enigma for commentators on the biblical texts,[36] the long-standing debate on the exact function of הוּא in nominal constructions suggests that syntactic issues relating to the status of the bipartite expression cannot simply be resolved. An indication of the complexity of these issues is the lack of agreement among grammarians with regard to the identification of subject and predicate. In several grammars הוּא is interpreted as the predicate of the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא,[37] while some analyses propose that it can actually serve as its subject.[38] The bipartite expression clearly does not have an extraposed subject, although one possible ramification of Zewi's analysis of the longer formulations is that הוּא, even in a two-component statement, may perform a specific syntactic function in relation to another, possibly preceding, statement rather than simply as the vehicle to strengthen אֲנִי.[39] Consequently, it is important to establish whether this expression is a free-standing and self-

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[35] The differences between the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא and tripartite nominal constructions are stressed by Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik,* §141h n.2; Fabry, 'הוּא', 366f.

[36] Volz, *Jesaja II,* 16: 'eine Art Geheimwort für Gott'; Westermann, *Jesaja,* 101: 'der für uns nicht übersetzbare lapidare Satz'; Wildberger, 'Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 511: 'die schwierig zu deutende Formel'; Elliger, *Deuterojesaja,* 125: 'merkwürdig unbestimmt'.

[37] E.g., Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik,* §141h n.1; Andersen, *Hebrew Verbless Clause,* 88; Sappan, *Typical Features,* 68-70; Gross, *Die Pendenskonstruktion,* 141f.; Davidson and Gibson, *Hebrew Syntax,* §1 n.1.

[38] Cf. Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* §154j, defines statements like Isa. 43:25 as following the sequence Predicate-Pronoun-Subject: the predicate is אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי strengthened by הוּא, and the subject is מֹחֶה פְּשָׁעֶיךָ. Cf., however, Muraoka, *Emphatic Words,* 72-75.

[39] Muraoka does not refer to the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא in his analysis of nominal constructions in *Emphatic Words,* but he later proposes (*Grammar,* §154j) that the expression, similar in structure to tripartite clauses, signifies that a third constituent (subject) is understood but not expressed: '*I am the one,* i.e. the entity in question'.

contained statement or does הוּא possess an anaphoric role and is it inextricably bound to a statement belonging to its immediate context. Concrete conclusions cannot, therefore, be drawn with regard to the status and meaning of אֲנִי הוּא without taking the context of the various biblical pronouncements into account. The various examples of אֲנִי הוּא in Deutero-Isaianic passages and Deut. 32:39 must firstly be scrutinized.

2. אֲנִי הוּא in the Poetry of Deutero-Isaiah

One of the most distinctive features of the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is its repetition of 'I' declarations pronounced by Yahweh. These appear in many forms: אָנֹכִי/אֲנִי יְהוָה (42:6; 43:11; 44:24; 45:5; 49:23); אָנֹכִי/אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ (41:13; 43:3; 48:17; 51:15); אֲנִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ (41:10); אֲנִי אֵל (43:12; 45:22; 46:9); אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן and אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן (44:6; 48:12; cf. 41:4); and אָנֹכִי/אֲנִי הוּא. Deutero-Isaianic formulations of this kind evidently belong to a widespread tradition of divine self-declaratory statements attested in other parts of the Hebrew Bible, although such formulas mainly occur in sources stemming from the exilic period (P source, the Holiness Code, Ezekiel).[40]

The divine 'I' statements of Deutero-Isaiah are sometimes compared with declarations attributed to gods in other ancient Near Eastern texts,[41] particularly Sumerian and Akkadian hymns of divine self-praise.[42] But there are insufficient grounds for claiming that the prophet simply applied these hymns, with certain modifications, to Yahweh. It is, in fact, beyond the parameters of this study to consider the possible influences of Near Eastern formulations on the Deutero-Isaianic אֲנִי pronouncements, although it is acknowledged that Yahweh's self-declaratory statements are often polemically motivated (see §2.10 below). The purpose of this present section is to determine the meaning and significance of the Deutero-Isaianic application of אֲנִי הוּא.

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[40] See especially Zimmerli, 'Ich bin Jahwe', *Gottes Offenbarung*, 11-40 (and *ibid.*, 41-119, 120-32). Other important studies include Elliger, 'Ich bin der Herr - euer Gott', 211-31; Rendtorff, 'Die Offenbarungsvorstellungen im Alten Israel', 32-38; Walkenhorst, 'Hochwertung der Namenserkenntnis', 3-28.

[41] Westermann, *Jesaja*, 24f.; Ringgren, 'הוּא', 369-71; Harner, *Grace and Law*, 3-10.

[42] Dion, 'Le genre littéraire sumérien', 215-34; Dijkstra, *Goods voorstelling*, 17-35, 85-221; Ruppert, 'Die Disputationsworte bei Deuterojesaja in neuem religionsgeschichtlichem Licht', 317-25.

2.1 *Isaiah 41:4*

מִי־פָעַל וְעָשָׂה קֹרֵא הַדֹּרוֹת מֵרֹאשׁ	ab
אֲנִי יְהוָה רִאשׁוֹן וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים אֲנִי־הוּא :	cd

Who has acted and worked? The one who calls the generations from the beginning. I, Yahweh, am the first and with the last, I am he.

This pronouncement occurs within a passage described as belonging to the *Gattung* of a trial speech (vv. 1-5[6-7]),[43] in which Yahweh, in the presence of nations summoned by him to act as witnesses (v. 1a), challenges the claims made on behalf of the Babylonian gods. The witnesses are called upon to determine the identity of the true God by securing an answer to the question: who steers historical events? Yahweh defends his case by drawing attention for the first time to Cyrus (v. 2: 'the one from the east'). In direct response to two questions introduced by מִי (vv. 2a, 4a), Yahweh claims responsibility for the military successes of the Persian king, and these, in turn, are offered as the most recent proof of his power.[44] His control over events is expressed in terms of the calling of the generations from the beginning (v. 4b), although there is a lack of agreement among interpreters as to whether the clause קֹרֵא הַדֹּרוֹת מֵרֹאשׁ is intended as part of,[45] or as a response to,[46] the second question. The latter appears to be a more plausible explanation, for it emphasizes that the one who is presently in command is the one who has acted from the beginning, followed by a self-declaration which elaborates upon this initial response.

Yahweh's presence is evident throughout Isa. 40, and he communicates by means of several rhetorical questions from v. 25 onwards, but his statement in 41:4cd represents the first 'I' pronouncement in this prophetic book. Indeed, the fact that the questions posed in 41:2-4 receive a direct divine response

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[43] Important form-critical studies of the 'trial speeches' include Begrich, *Studien zu Deuterojesaja,* 19-42; Schoors, *I am God your Saviour,* 181-245; Westermann, *Sprache und Struktur der Prophetie Deuterojesajas,* 51-61. These studies demonstrate that Deutero-Isaiah includes trial speeches against the nations (41:1-5; 41:21-29; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25) and against Israel (42:18-25; 43:22-28; 50:1-3).

[44] It is noteworthy that no object is supplied in the clause מִי־פָעַל וְעָשָׂה (v. 4a); this may imply that the question about divine activity is not restricted to the role of Cyrus as Yahweh's agent of deliverance. פָּעַל, with Yahweh as its subject, also follows a declaration of the words אֲנִי הוּא in Isa. 43:13c. See also Elliger, *Deuterojesaja,* 124, on the use of עָשָׂה in Isa. 41:4a: 'Es ist vollkräftiges Wort für das göttliche Tun und unterstreicht hier den Gedanken des göttlichen Schaffens in der Geschichte'.

[45] E.g., Lee, *Creation and Redemption,* 77, and several modern translations (e.g., NRSV, NKJV, NIV).

[46] E.g., Westermann, *Jesaja,* 54; Schoors, *I am God your Saviour,* 207; Korpel and de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55,* 70.

indicates that they stand somewhat apart from the long series of questions encountered in the previous chapter.[47] In addition, this statement constitutes the first of three examples of the distinctively Deutero-Isaianic divine predications רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן (cf. 44:6; 48:12). These self-predication statements play a significant role in Deutero-Isaiah's defence of the exclusiveness and incomparability of Yahweh, and, in all likelihood, function here as divine designations or titles,[48] particularly in view of the absence of definite articles. To claim that Yahweh is both 'first' and 'last' also forms an implicit response to Babylonian theogonic myths, since these designations demonstrate that Yahweh has not inherited his divinity from other gods, nor will he bequeath it to others (cf. 43:10). The subsequent predication וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים in 41:4d differs from its counterparts, but results, as proposed by Merendino,[49] from its thematic link with הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת in v. 4b. Yahweh calls the generations from the beginning and continues to be actively present with them until the end.

Yahweh's self-declaration (v. 4cd) draws out the theological implications of his initial assertion (v. 4b). Indeed, the declaration represents an effective piece of Deutero-Isaianic strategy; while the nations and their gods cannot answer such questions (cf. 43:9; 48:14), Yahweh, the one true God, provides a decisive and unequivocal response (cf. 45:21). In this particular case אֲנִי יְהוָה does not amount to a self-declaratory formula ('I am Yahweh'), for the tetragrammaton stands in appositive relation to אֲנִי before רִאשׁוֹן.[50] Various renderings of v. 4cd have, however, been proposed, ones which also reflect different views with regard to the status and function of the concluding אֲנִי־הוּא. Recognition of the poetic technique of 'swapping' in v. 4d has, for example, led to its rendering as 'I am with the last ones',[51] but this fails to convey the poetic structure of the divine self-declaration and limits its force to an assertion

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[47] Kuntz, 'The Form, Location, and Function of Rhetorical Questions in Deutero-Isaiah', 121-41, includes 41:2a and 4a in his study of the Deutero-Isaianic use of rhetorical questions, although he fails to draw attention to v. 4bcd as Yahweh's response to these two questions.

[48] See Williamson, 'First and Last in Isaiah', 98f., who proposes that Deutero-Isaiah's description of Yahweh as 'First' and 'Last' has been influenced by Isa. 8:23b, which 'provides the only possible source for one of his characteristic titles for God in a context where we expect him to be appealing to common ground between himself and his audience' (p. 104). See further *idem*, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 67-77.

[49] *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 127, 569.

[50] See Zimmerli, 'Ich bin Jahwe', 32, who describes Isa. 41:4c as a form 'die syntaktisch den Rahmen der Selbstvorstellungsformel sprengt'. See further Fokkelman, 'The Cyrus Oracle (Isaiah 44,24 - 45,7) from the Perspectives of Syntax, Versification and Structure', 305.

[51] Cf. Laato, *The Servant of YHWH and Cyrus*, 166: 'I, YHWH, who am the first and till the last I shall be there'.

of Yahweh's presence rather than his active power and unceasing involvement with those whom he 'calls'. Alternatively, the pronouncement can be rendered in such a way that it reflects the deliberate form of parallelism established between v. 4c (אֲנִי יְהוָה רִאשׁוֹן) and v. 4d (וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים אֲנִי־הוּא), consisting of the repetition of אֲנִי, two divine self-predications and the designations יְהוָה and הוּא.[52] The fact that the declaration opens with אֲנִי יְהוָה and concludes with אֲנִי־הוּא highlights this parallelism and lends itself to a rendering that maintains the poetic sequence of the final colon ('and with the last ones I am he').[53] A third possibility favoured by several interpreters is that אֲנִי־הוּא can be separated from its preceding constituent, while both self-predications are dependent on the initial אֲנִי: 'I, Yahweh, am the first and with the last; I am he'.[54] This rendering implies that the concluding אֲנִי־הוּא not only reiterates and confirms the claim encapsulated in the preceding divine self-predications (cf. 48:12), but climactically affirms the message of this prophetic unit; Yahweh is the one whose active intervention from the beginning to the end offers proof of his incomparability and sovereignty.[55] In this respect, both the second and third attempts at conveying the meaning of the divine pronouncement in v. 4 demonstrate the significance of אֲנִי־הוּא as a succinct expression of Yahweh's emphatic claim to be the one true God.

Within the literary setting of a trial scene, in which Yahweh's role as the one who guides the course of history is proclaimed above all possible contenders, it is announced that he is the one who remains until the end with the last of the generations called by him from the beginning; he will in the meantime secure the deliverance and restoration of his people. The reaction to Yahweh's speech and to the validity of his claims (v. 5) demonstrates the potency of his concluding pronouncement, and as the nations can offer no case in their defence, they must resort to fearful silence.

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[52] See Korpel and de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 94.

[53] Cf. Westermann, *Jesaja*, 55; Korpel and de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 70: 'And with the last ones I am the same One'. The fact that אֲנִי הוּא forms a parallel to אֲנִי יְהוָה in poetic terms (cf. Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 320 n.94) does not necessarily mean that הוּא serves as a substitute for the tetragrammaton in 41:4d (as proposed by Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 70). See further §2.10 below.

[54] Cf. North, *The Second Isaiah*, 35; Wildberger, 'Der Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 527; Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 125; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 123.

[55] Deutero-Isaiah frequently uses questions introduced by מִי as a rhetorical device to convince his audience of Yahweh's incomparability. See especially Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40-48*, 98-101; Kuntz, 'Rhetorical Questions', 121-41; Dijkstra, 'Lawsuit, Debate and Wisdom Discourse in Second Isaiah', 257-61, 265-71.

2.2 Isaiah 43:10

ab	אַתֶּם עֵדַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְעַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרְתִּי
cd	לְמַעַן תֵּדְעוּ וְתַאֲמִינוּ לִי וְתָבִינוּ כִּי־אֲנִי הוּא
ef	לְפָנַי לֹא־נוֹצַר אֵל וְאַחֲרַי לֹא יִהְיֶה :

You are my witnesses, says Yahweh, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be after me.

The occurrences of the expression אֲנִי הוּא in 43:10 and 13 also appear within a passage defined as a trial speech (vv. 8-13), in which witnesses drawn from among the nations (v. 9) and the exiles (vv. 8, 10a, 12c) are summoned to establish the identity of the true God (cf. 41:21-29). The role of Israel as a key witness in this unit is particularly significant, for, in view of the exiles' fears that Yahweh is powerless in the face of Babylonian conquests,[56] he offers assurance to his chosen people, collectively described as 'my servant'. Yahweh seeks to remove their spiritual blindness and deafness by reminding them of their past experiences of his salvific acts (cf. 42:18-21).

Whereas the central issue in 41:1-4 was the recognition of Yahweh's control of historical events, the aim of this speech is to convince those gathered of his exclusive power by highlighting his unique ability to predict the course of events, a particularly prominent theme in the trial speeches (41:22-26; 44:7; 45:21; cf. 48:14). Two vital aspects of Yahweh's sovereign command over history are therefore outlined in this passage, for to claim that he predicts events inevitably means that he also causes them to take place.[57]

Yahweh poses a question focusing on the so-called predictive powers of the pagan gods (v. 9cd). The nations offer no response to the call for them to verify such claims (v. 9e: אֱמֶת), thereby providing Yahweh's own witnesses with the opportunity to carry out their designated role. Israel's historical experiences of Yahweh's unique power to proclaim and direct events, leading to the exiles' recognition of the fact that he is responsible for all forms of deliverance, are now drawn upon as evidence which will enable (לְמַעַן) this displaced people to accept his claim conveyed by אֲנִי הוּא. The purpose of Yahweh's אֲנִי הוּא declaration is not simply to affirm that he is the one who can predict events, in

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[56] On the notion of *Gottverlassenheit* in exilic texts, see Vorländer, 'Der Monotheismus Israels als Antwort auf die Krise des Exils', 85-88.

[57] See, e.g., North, '"Former Things"', 111-26; Schoors, 'Les choses antérieures et les choses nouvelles', 19-47; Stuhlmueller, '"First and Last"', 495-511; Klein, 'Der Beweis der Einzigkeit Jahwes', 267-73.

response to the question posed in v. 9 ('Who among them declared this...?), but rather to announce to the people of Israel that their own experiences of his power to foretell and intervene should lead them to believe that he alone is God. אֲנִי הוּא, set within the framework of an *Erkenntnisformel,* serves as a concise declaration of the exclusive divinity and supreme authority of Yahweh, and it acts as a guarantee to the exiles of his future activity on their behalf (cf. v. 13).

The role of אֲנִי הוּא as the self-claim of the one true God is in fact elaborated upon in v. 10ef: 'Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be after me'. This statement not only highlights the role of אֲנִי הוּא as an expression of the sovereignty of Yahweh, but it forms a paraphrase of the self-predications רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן encountered in 41:4cd. Within the context of a trial-confrontation, Yahweh again substantiates his uncontested claim by stating that, in contrast to the Babylonian pantheon, he is neither preceded nor succeeded by another god.

2.3 Isaiah 43:13

12 וְאַתֶּם עֵדַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה וַאֲנִי־אֵל
13a גַּם־מִיּוֹם אֲנִי הוּא
bc וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל אֶפְעַל וּמִי יְשִׁיבֶנָּה׃

(12) And you are my witnesses, says Yahweh, and I am God. (13) And from this day I am he; and there is none who can deliver from my hand. I act, and who can hinder it?

The second utterance of אֲנִי הוּא within the trial speech of 43:8-13 follows the declaration that Yahweh is Israel's exclusive redeemer (v. 11b), supported by his assertions that he has foretold past events and has secured deliverance, culminating in the words וַאֲנִי־אֵל (v. 12).[58] The witnesses, who are to confirm the validity of these claims, are therefore reminded once again that Yahweh is the one who steers the events of history.

Although it has been proposed that the phrase גַּם־מִיּוֹם at the beginning of v. 13 amounts to an idiomatic expression meaning 'from the first day',[59] a more likely interpretation is that it signifies 'from this day' (cf. Ezek. 48:35),[60] which

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[58] 43:10-13 is, in fact, dominated by divine 'I' proclamations; אֲנִי occurs three times (vv. 10d, 12d, 13a) and אָנֹכִי three times (doubled in v. 11a, once in v. 12a).

[59] E.g., Lee, *Creation and Redemption,* 86 n.11; cf. Oswalt, *Isaiah: Chapters 40-66,* 149.

[60] Elliger, *Deuterojesaja,* 329; Korpel and de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry,* 161 n.4: 'One should take into account that the preceding גם refers back to v. 12 which invoked the past in support of the testimony of v. 12bB: as in the past, God will be a saviour now and in the future'. For criticisms of the view that the renderings of v. 13a offered by the Ancient Versions (LXX: ἀπ' ἀρχῆς; TIsa: מן עלמא; Vg: *ab initio*) point to מֵעוֹלָם as the original reading, see Elliger, *Deuterojesaja,* 308.

would certainly accord with divine claims linked to אֲנִי הוּא in other passages, in that Yahweh guarantees his future active presence with Israel in continuity with the promises he fulfilled in the past (41:4; 43:10). In other words, אֲנִי הוּא conveys Yahweh's continuing role as the powerful God who delivers. But in order to establish the precise significance of the statement גַּם־מִיּוֹם אֲנִי הוּא, its relationship with the preceding אֲנִי declaration must be considered. It is stated at the end of v. 12 that Yahweh is indeed God, an assertion possibly reiterated at the beginning of v. 13: 'And from this day I am he, namely God'.[61] This would mean that הוּא possesses an antecedent in the form of אֵל.

It cannot however be ruled out that אֲנִי הוּא is a self-contained expression in v. 13a, particularly as it amounts to its second occurrence within a unit in which the first was presented as the content of knowledge and belief. If so, אֲנִי הוּא is not necessarily dependent on אֲנִי־אֵל for its meaning, but forms a succinct parallel to the preceding assertion. In other words, it can be proposed that both אֲנִי־אֵל and אֲנִי הוּא serve in this trial speech as variant expressions of Yahweh's claim to exclusive divinity, and, in view of the role of v. 10ef as an explication of the אֲנִי הוּא claim, its force is now sustained with the aid of a statement providing proof that Yahweh alone can accomplish these acts. There are two possible interpretations of the clause וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל (v. 13b; cf. Deut. 32:39e), for it either functions as a claim with the positive message that no earthly power can snatch Israel away from Yahweh or it announces that no one can deliver the Babylonians and their gods from his hand.[62] Both readings of v. 13b imply that Yahweh offers assurance of deliverance to Israel, but an interpretation of the statement as Yahweh's assertion that, in the light of current events, the overthrow of Babylon is the result of his intervention accords with a line of argumentation adopted elsewhere by Deutero-Isaiah (41:2-4, 25; 44:28; 45:1-3; 46:10-11; 48:14).[63] Indeed, the view that the exiles' present situation is under scrutiny is confirmed by the use of פָּעַל in the next clause, for its other Deutero-Isaianic occurrence with Yahweh as subject (41:4a) describes Cyrus as the instrument of Babylon's downfall and Israel's deliverance. 43:8-13 thus concludes with the consoling words to Israel that no one can prevent Yahweh from carrying out his promises.

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[61] Cf. Dijkstra, *Goods voorstelling*, 248; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 320 n.94.

[62] See Hossfeld and Kalthoff, 'נצל', *ThWAT* 5, 570-77; cf. also Lindström, *God and the Origin of Evil*, 170.

[63] Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 329, also notes that, from the perspective of the redaction of Deutero-Isaiah's poetry, this trial speech (43:8-13) is immediately followed by a description of the downfall of Babylon (v. 14).

2.4 Isaiah 43:25

ab אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מֹחֶה פְשָׁעֶיךָ לְמַעֲנִי וְחַטֹּאתֶיךָ לֹא אֶזְכֹּר :

I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and your sins I will not remember.

This first Deutero-Isaianic example of אֲנִי/אָנֹכִי הוּא attached to a participial form (cf. 51:12; 52:6) functions as the central statement in a pericope which focuses entirely on Israel (43:22-28).[64] Yahweh's declaration undoubtedly consists of a promise of forgiveness (v. 25), but its awkward position between two units condemning Israel's sins (vv. 22-24, 26-28) has led to the proposal that it amounts to a later interpolation intended to alleviate the harshness of its surrounding declarations.[65] However, set within the larger context of an 'Appellationsrede des Angeklagten',[66] it appears to be a deliberately positioned statement which enables Yahweh to defend himself against complaints by his own people of undeserved abandonment and punishment.

The promise that Israel's sins will be wiped away plays a decisive role within this divine speech, for it is followed by Yahweh's offer to listen to his people's counter-accusations (v. 26), and the unit concludes with a summing up of his defence that Israel's sufferings are a natural consequence of the people's transgressions (vv. 27-28; cf. 40:2; 50:1). Nevertheless, by means of the characteristically Deutero-Isaianic technique of doubling אָנֹכִי (43:11; 51:12), Yahweh announces that he is the one who can offer forgiveness.

A case can certainly be made for interpreting this and the other extended divine אֲנִי/אָנֹכִי הוּא declarations as belonging to a different grammatical category from the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא,[67] but, despite the differences between these two kinds of statements, the emphatic declaration in 43:25 accentuates the salvific dimension associated with אֲנִי הוּא in other Deutero-Isaianic pronouncements, namely by claiming that Yahweh alone can reverse punishment. The participial form מֹחֶה does not, moreover, imply one specific act to be experienced in the future, but denotes the continuous aspect of the work accomplished by Yahweh

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[64] For the view that 43:22-28 can be described, in form-critical terms, as a trial speech directed at Israel, see Westermann, *Jesaja,* 106-9; Schoors, *I am God your Saviour,* 189-97.

[65] E.g., Volz, *Jesaja II,* 44 n.1; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte,* 351.

[66] Elliger, *Deuterojesaja,* 366; Boecker, *Redeformen des Rechtslebens,* 54-56.

[67] Whereas Isa. 43:25; 51:12 and 52:6 are usually categorized as tripartite nominal clauses, some studies of Hebrew syntax devote a separate section to the two-component אֲנִי הוּא. See Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik,* §135a n.1, §141h n.2; Fabry, 'הוּא', 366f.; Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* §154j.

for the benefit of Israel.[68] And although the inclusion of the word לְמַעֲנִי may appear somewhat strange, it in fact highlights Yahweh's personal interest in his acts of deliverance, as well as reiterating the overall message of this unit that future divine intervention will not depend on merit, but will amount to Yahweh's own deed on behalf of Israel.[69]

2.5 Isaiah 44:6

ab כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגֹאֲלוֹ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
cd אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹהִים׃

Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no god.

Although the expression אֲנִי הוּא does not actually occur in Isa. 44:6, it merits consideration due to the presence of the self-predications 'I am the first and I am the last'. In addition, close links between this declaration and אֲנִי הוּא (41:4; 48:12) have led to the incorporation of innovative אנא הוא formulations in Isa 44:6 and to its citation as a decisive monotheistic proof-text, particularly in order to clarify the meaning of the statement אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא (Deut. 32:39a), in a number of midrashic traditions (see Chapters 4-5).

This divine pronouncement also forms part of a speech (vv. 6-8) in which the exiles are summoned to act as witnesses to Yahweh (v. 8c). Rhetorical questions focus on divine incomparability (v. 7a: וּמִי־כָמוֹנִי) and the passage seeks to demonstrate that Yahweh, not the Babylonian gods, had the ability to foretell events now belonging to the past, as well as being able to predict the future (v. 7cd). Undoubtedly, the purpose of these questions is to elucidate the divine self-predications and the monotheistic statement 'besides me there is no god' (cf. 43:11; 45:21). No direct reference is made in this trial speech to the presence of opponents, but the lack of a response to Yahweh's challenge serves as a literary device which, once again, effectively rules out all the claims made by the Babylonians on behalf of their gods. The ultimate goal of this speech is clearly to convince Israel of the validity of Yahweh's claims, for only the one who is both רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן can intervene on behalf of his people and reveal himself as their redeemer and protective rock (v. 8e).[70]

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[68] Schoors, *I am God your Saviour,* 193; Grimm, *Deuterojesaja,* 210.

[69] Zimmerli, *Grundriß der alttestamentlichen Theologie,* 191.

[70] For the specific link established in Isa. 44:8 between divine protection (צור) and deliverance, cf. Deut. 32:15; Ps. 19:15; 78:35; 89:27. See Knowles, '"The Rock, his Work is Perfect"', 307-10.

2.6 Isaiah 46:4

ab וְעַד־זִקְנָה אֲנִי הוּא וְעַד־שֵׂיבָה אֲנִי אֶסְבֹּל
cd אֲנִי עָשִׂיתִי וַאֲנִי אֶשָּׂא וַאֲנִי אֶסְבֹּל וַאֲמַלֵּט׃

Even to old age I am he, and to grey hairs I will carry. I have made and I will bear, and I will carry and will save.

The literary unity of 46:1-4 is suggested by the deliberate contrast established between the depiction of the powerlessness of the Babylonian gods (vv. 1-2) and the pronouncements concerning the unceasing power of Yahweh to support and deliver his people (vv. 3-4). An imaginative scene is set of the images of Bel and Nebo being tied as useless burdens to the backs of animals when the Babylonians are forced into captivity (vv. 1bd, 2b). The vivid description of worshippers having to carry these idols to safety demonstrates the impotence and nothingness of their gods (cf. 41:24, 29; 45:20),[71] but the subsequent words of assurance depict Israel as the 'burden' carried by Yahweh from the beginning (vv. 3-4).[72] The central theme of Yahweh's unceasing support is expressed with the aid of three semantically related verbs which sustain the graphic images of vv. 1-2: עָמַס (v. 3c); נָשָׂא (vv. 3d, 4c); סָבַל (v. 4bd), and Yahweh stresses that his care for Israel extends from birth (v. 3cd) 'until old age' (cf. Ps. 71:9, 18) and 'grey hairs' (cf. Gen. 42:38; 44:29, 31).[73]

The words וְעַד־זִקְנָה אֲנִי הוּא evidently express the claim that Yahweh will continue to act as the faithful God of Israel. Some commentators interpret this occurrence of אֲנִי הוּא as referring back to earlier statements, particularly v. 3cd where the exiles are described as הָעֲמָסִים מִנִּי־בֶטֶן הַנְּשֻׂאִים מִנִּי־רָחַם.[74] But these two clauses actually perform an appositive function ('Listen to me, house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel - ones borne from the womb, ones carried from birth - even to old age I am he'), and it proves difficult to demonstrate that אֲנִי הוּא is syntactically dependent on these descriptions, particularly as the plural participial forms הָעֲמָסִים and הַנְּשֻׂאִים denote Israel-

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[71] For the view that Deutero-Isaiah viewed the Babylonian gods as bound up with their images, see Westermann, *Jesaja,* 146; Preuß, *Verspottung fremder Religionen,* 206ff., especially 218-20 (on 46:1-4).

[72] Hermisson, *Deuterojesaja,* 115: 'Die Götter sind ihren Verehrern eine Last / Jahwe trägt seine Verehrer als Last'.

[73] On the intricate word-play and parallelism established in 46:3-4, see Franke, *Isaiah 46, 47, and 48: A New Literary-Critical Reading,* 36-40, 85-89.

[74] Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte,* 320 n.94; cf. Dijkstra, *Goods voorstelling,* 248.

Jacob rather than Yahweh himself.[75] It is not necessary to interpret אֲנִי הוּא in 46:4a as a phrase tied to previous declarations, for it serves as a self-contained formulation. With regard to the meaning of this occurrence of אֲנִי הוּא, the focus in this passage on the permanence and unchanging character of Yahweh in relation to Israel leads to its interpretative rendering as 'I am the same' in several commentaries and modern translations.[76] The theme of divine immutability is undoubtedly given prominence in 46:3-4, but it also emphasizes that the continued involvement of Yahweh with Israel is a demonstration of his true divinity. In this respect, the אֲנִי הוּא declaration at the beginning of v. 4 bears close resemblance to other examples of its Deutero-Isaianic application. The future-oriented perspective suggested by the words וְעַד־זִקְנָה אֲנִי הוּא seeks to convey the notion of continuity between Yahweh's activity in the past and his present and future intervention on behalf of Israel (cf. 41:4; 43:13). Moreover, in view of the opening depiction of the total impotence of the pagan deities, succinct expressions of the dynamic and ceaseless activity of Yahweh are presented to the exiles as proof of his unique power, thereby verifying his claim to be the truly incomparable God (cf. 43:10; Deut. 32:37-39). The striking parallelism established between the images of birth (v. 3cd: מִנִּי־בֶטֶן, מִנִּי־רֶחֶם) and old age (v. 4ab: וְעַד־שֵׂיבָה, וְעַד־זִקְנָה) highlights the breadth and totality of Yahweh's faithfulness to, and involvement with, his people, and conveys what Deutero-Isaiah elsewhere expresses with the aid of the self-predications רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן (41:4; 44:6; 48:12).[77]

This pronouncement of אֲנִי הוּא is reinforced with the aid of statements which sustain the emphasis on the uniqueness of Yahweh by repeating the divine אֲנִי a further four times (v. 4bcd); the centrality of the message of Yahweh's care and support for Israel is highlighted by noting his activity in the past (אֲנִי עָשִׂיתִי),[78] and by reiterating a series of related verbs which embrace the future (v. 4cd). Promises of future acts of carrying echo the earlier statements

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[75] Although v. 3cd clearly implies that past acts of bearing have been carried out by Yahweh (cf. NRSV: 'who have been borne *by me* from your birth'), it should be noted that מִנִּי is an archaic form of מִן (see Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik*, §102b).

[76] Cf. Volz, *Jesaja II*, 75; North, *The Second Isaiah*, 49, 164; Whybray, *Isaiah*, 115.

[77] Hausmann, *Israels Rest*, 77.

[78] On the possible meanings of אֲנִי עָשִׂיתִי in v. 4c, see Hermisson, *Deuterojesaja*, 88, 114; Franke, *Isaiah 46, 47, and 48*, 39f. Whereas the verb עָשָׂה can be employed by Deutero-Isaiah to denote the creation of Israel (43:7; 44:2; 51:13; 54:5), Hermisson (*Deuterojesaja*, 114) proposes that its absolute use with no object in 46:4 serves as a succinct and general expression of Yahweh's activity in the past (cf. 41:4; 44:23; 48:3).

regarding Jacob-Israel (v. 3cd), but the final clause (וַאֲמַלֵּט) introduces a new dimension into this divine speech and makes explicit the claim that Yahweh's future acts of carrying will amount to the deliverance of Israel. The inclusion of this concluding promise of saving intervention clearly stands in contrast to the earlier description of the complete inability of the pagan deities to deliver (v. 2b: לֹא יָכְלוּ מַלֵּט מַשָּׂא). Babylonian gods cannot even save their own images, but Yahweh will decisively act on behalf of his own people.

2.7 Isaiah 48:12

ab שְׁמַע אֵלַי יַעֲקֹב וְיִשְׂרָאֵל מְקֹרָאִי
cd אֲנִי־הוּא אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן אַף אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן :

Listen to me, Jacob, and Israel, whom I called. I am he, I am the first and I am the last.

Although 48:12-16 strongly resembles some of the trial speeches, it is Israel alone who is now called by Yahweh to listen (v. 12), assemble (v. 14), draw near (v. 16) and consider the unlimited capacity of his power. The opening imperative שְׁמַע addressed to Jacob-Israel (v. 12ab) is reminiscent of 46:3ab, and in both cases it immediately precedes the use of the expression אֲנִי הוּא. As in 41:4cd, the declaration is substantiated by Yahweh's claims to everlasting activity; the focus on his role as the one who created heaven and earth (v. 13) and who predicts and steers events (vv. 14-15) establishes a firm basis for faith in his salvific deeds.[79] Indeed, the continuity between his acts of creation and deliverance is effectively conveyed by the threefold usage of קָרָא to denote the calling of Israel (v. 12), heaven and earth (v. 13) and Cyrus (v. 15).

This pronouncement of אֲנִי־הוּא by Yahweh, the final Deutero-Isaianic example of the expression in its bipartite form, is clearly self-contained. In its role as the opening clause of Yahweh's 'I' proclamation, אֲנִי־הוּא possesses no possible antecedent, and to propose that it only acquires meaning from the subsequent predications is to diminish the force of these three declarations as effective expressions of the exclusiveness of Yahweh. The conclusion to be drawn is that אֲנִי־הוּא functions as an assertion with independent status in 48:12, and that this final 'absolute' occurrence in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is marked by its presence in a particularly emphatic and solemn divine self-proclamation. The self-predications רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן thus reinforce the message

[79] Cf. von Rad, 'Das theologische Problem des alttestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens', 139-41; Rendtorff, 'Die theologische Stellung des Schöpfungsglaubens bei Deuterojesaja', 209-19.

encapsulated in the succinct אֲנִי־הוּא, namely the belief that Yahweh alone is the everlastingly active God. The significance of its formulaic application in 48:12 is also suggested by the fact that the association established in earlier passages between אֲנִי הוּא and Yahweh's acts of guiding historical events (41:4; 43:10, 13) now embraces declarations about his activity in creation; the God who determines the course of history is also the Creator of heaven and earth.

2.8 Isaiah 51:12

a אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֲמְכֶם

bc מִי־אַתְּ וַתִּירְאִי מֵאֱנוֹשׁ יָמוּת וּמִבֶּן־אָדָם חָצִיר יִנָּתֵן׃

I, I am he who comforts you; who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, and of the son of man who is made like grass?

Isa. 51:9-16 centres on a promise of salvation, for the speech responds to the exiles' lamentation and request for decisive intervention. אָנֹכִי, again doubled for emphatic purposes (cf. 43:25), becomes the decisive divine response to the plea's double imperative in v. 9 (עוּרִי עוּרִי). Yahweh offers assurance to his people with the aid of the verb נָחַם (v. 12a; cf. 40:1; 49:13; 51:3, 19; 52:9) to denote their future deliverance from enslavement (v. 14). This emphatically formulated divine declaration (אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֲמְכֶם) clearly bears some resemblance to the expression in its bipartite form,[80] and maintains the earlier emphasis on Yahweh as Israel's redeemer (41:4; 43:10-13; 46:4).[81]

It seems likely that v. 12a also echoes the two questions in vv. 9-10, both of which are introduced by אַתְּ־הִיא and are followed by participial forms. The feminine form (הִיא) corresponds to יְהוָה זְרוֹעַ (v. 9a), and the questions are intended to recall Yahweh's past activity, which includes his triumph over the mythical monster Rahab and his deliverance of Israel on the occasion of the

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[80] For the view that 51:12-14 is a later insertion, see Elliger, *Deuterojesaja in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritojesaja*, 207-12; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 51, 54, 185, 427f. Schoors, *I am God your Saviour*, 122, 126, defends its authenticity by noting features which are characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah, including the doubling of אָנֹכִי (51:9, 17; 52:1), the use of נָחַם and of participial forms in nominal clauses. See, however, Steck, 'Zur literarischen Schichtung in Jesaja 51', *Gottesknecht und Zion*, 65-70, who argues that redactional material in 51:12-16 consciously echoes key Deutero-Isaianic motifs, including an allusion to 43:25 both in terms of its form (אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא) and content (the forgiveness of sins).

[81] Grimm, *Deuterojesaja*, 385, proposes that v. 12a is an interpretative formulation influenced by אֲנִי הוּא and אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ (Exod. 20:2). אָנֹכִי would consequently establish a subtle correlation between Yahweh's salvific activity during the Exodus and his promise of future deliverance within the context of the Babylonian exile. Although it is difficult to prove that Isa. 51:12a reflects a case of 'inner-biblical exegesis', rabbinic traditions certainly develop this salvific association between אָנֹכִי of Exod. 20:2 and Isa. 51:12 (see Chapters 4-5 below).

crossing of the Sea. The call is upon 'the arm of Yahweh' to reveal its strength once more, and the similarly phrased response (אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא) seeks to show that this same power will be made manifest in future acts of 'comforting'.[82] Yahweh reminds the exiles of his intervention on their behalf (vv. 13, 16; cf. 41:4; 48:12-13) in order to strengthen their faith in him as their only deliverer. Consequently, Yahweh's self-defence transforms the argument presented by his people into a counter-accusation; it is the exiles themselves, by fearing the threats of other mortals (v. 12bc), who have forgotten their God (v. 13).

2.9 Isaiah 52:6

a לָכֵן יֵדַע עַמִּי שְׁמִי לָכֵן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
b כִּי־אֲנִי־הוּא הַמְדַבֵּר הִנֵּנִי :

Therefore, my people shall know my name; therefore, in that day [they shall know] that I am he who speaks, here am I.

52:3-6 takes the form of a disjointed series of declarations in prose, regarded by several interpreters as a later addition inspired by the original Deutero-Isaianic prophecies.[83] Four messenger-formulas follow each other in quick succession (vv. 3a, 4a, 5ac), and allusions are made in three stages to Israel's past enslavements in Egypt (v. 4b), Assyria (v. 4c) and the present exile in Babylon (v. 5). In addition, the redundant use of the second לָכֵן in v. 6a demonstrates a stylistic irregularity, whereas the use of a formula prevalent in post-exilic prophecy (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) also implies that vv. 3-6 forms a later interpolation.

Of all the statements presently under consideration, it is this occurrence of the extended form כִּי־אֲנִי־הוּא הַמְדַבֵּר which arouses the greatest scepticism among scholars with regard to its application of the expression אֲנִי הוּא. Its secondary nature, as well as its role as an expansion of the bipartite expression to highlight Yahweh's role as speaker, cannot be denied, although once again - as in the case of 43:25 - this statement contains themes echoing those already encountered in connection with Deutero-Isaianic אֲנִי הוּא statements, particularly the presentation of Yahweh as the one who intervenes on behalf of his people. In the same way as Yahweh's self-revelation cannot be separated from his creative and salvific activity, this emphatic statement in 52:6 stresses that, in the future, the exiles will know that the one who speaks is also the one who acts.

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[82] See further Seidl, 'Jahwe der Krieger - Jahwe der Tröster', 121f., 124f.

[83] See especially Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 215-18. Cf. Schoors, 'Arrière-fond historique et critique d'authenticité des textes deutéro-isaïens', 125-27.

2.10 The Meaning of אֲנִי הוּא *in Deutero-Isaiah*

A study of the five occurrences of the bipartite אֲנִי הוּא, as well as of the three examples of extended participial constructions (43:25; 51:12; 52:6), leads one to conclude that this expression plays a significant role in the presentation of Yahweh's unique identity as the one true God in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah. The first utterance of אֲנִי הוּא (41:4) is linked to present (the Cyrus event) and past (the calling of the generations from the beginning) circumstances which serve to strengthen the belief that Yahweh alone determines the course of history (41:2-4), thereby justifying his claim to be both רִאשׁוֹן and אֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים (v. 4cd). The required proof of Yahweh's eternal sovereignty is thus set out in the first of the Deutero-Isaianic trial speeches (41:1-5); there is no explicit challenge in this passage for the Babylonian gods to respond to such questions (this occurs for the first time in 41:21, 23: 'set forth your case...so that we may know that you are gods'),[84] but the people of Israel are called upon in 43:10 to carry out their designated role as witnesses to the *Geschichtsmächtigkeit* of Yahweh, with the result that אֲנִי הוּא serves as the object of knowledge, belief and understanding. Deutero-Isaiah highlights the significance of אֲנִי הוּא as a claim to unique and exclusive divinity by stating that no god was formed before or after Yahweh (43:10). For this reason, the one who pronounces אֲנִי אֵל (43:12) can also declare אֲנִי הוּא (43:13). Moreover, the God who is both רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן manifests his unceasing care for Israel from birth to old age (46:4) and the God who is Lord of history announces that he is also the Creator of heaven and earth (48:12, 13). This final occurrence of אֲנִי הוּא in Isa. 48, a chapter in which so many of the repeated Deutero-Isaianic themes are crystallized, is again linked to the self-predications אַף אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן אַף אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן.[85] Solemn claims are thus made by Yahweh with the aid of this self-declaration, claims which are meant to fill the exiles with new hope for their future deliverance. The presentation of such varied evidence is intended to encourage Israel to draw the conclusion that Yahweh alone can proclaim אֲנִי הוּא.

An analysis of each individual occurrence of אֲנִי הוּא in the Deutero-Isaianic poems also clarifies certain issues with regard to the meaning and possible

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[84] See Klein, 'Einzigkeit Jahwes, 267.

[85] The bipartite אֲנִי הוּא, as well as the self-predications רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן, are only two examples of the many key Deutero-Isaianic themes confined to Chapters 40-48. This may mean that Isa. 40-55, as a literary work, naturally falls into two halves, although some attribute Chapters 49-55 to a second stage of composition undertaken by the prophet after the fall of Babylon (Stuhlmueller, 'Deutero-Isaiah: Major Transitions in the Prophet's Theology' 129; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 2ff.).

renderings of the expression. The first section of this chapter drew attention to the evidence presented in grammatical studies against interpreting אֲנִי הוּא as a statement of existence. An examination of the relevant Deutero-Isaianic material also indicates that an assessment of אֲנִי הוּא simply as Yahweh's claim to existence does not appropriately convey its climactic force, for the central aim is to convince Israel of Yahweh's active power in the past, present and future, especially his power to carry out acts of deliverance on their behalf. The exiles cast doubt upon Yahweh's ability to perform, not upon his existence *per se*.

The fact that some of the אֲנִי הוּא declarations occur within divine speeches belonging to the *Gattung* of a trial speech is significant (41:4; 43:10, 13; cf. 48:12), for, in its role as a literary vehicle to convey an imaginary confrontation between Yahweh and his opponents, the trial speech presupposes that the nations are making elevated claims on behalf of their gods. The worshippers and, on one occasion, the gods themselves (41:21-24) are invited to participate by offering a case in their defence, but their inability to do so demonstrates that they cannot be held as true deities. Complete silence on the part of the Babylonian gods concerning their ability to deliver (45:20) and predict events (41:22-23, 26; 43:9; 44:7) provides a decisive argument in favour of Yahweh as the one and only God, the one whose predictions are fulfilled in the shaping and controlling of history.[86] Deutero-Isaiah's use of the trial speech as an effective literary device does not, therefore, conflict with his unequivocal expressions of monotheism;[87] the nations may regard their gods as real, and they are even given the opportunity to offer conclusive proof of their existence, but their empty claims prove the nothingness of their deities. Moreover, the innovative depiction of Babylonian gods as bound up with their images and carried away as burdens by their worshippers (46:1-2) demonstrates that Deutero-Isaiah is primarily concerned with the fact that their lack of power removes all possibility that they are true gods. Thus, when Yahweh proclaims אֲנִי הוּא, he lays claim to a sovereign existence which cannot be separated from the uniqueness and exclusiveness of his divinity, power and activity.

It has also been shown that it is unnecessary, and in some cases impossible, to attribute an anaphoric role to הוּא and propose that אֲנִי הוּא is syntactically

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[86] For the view that the issue at stake is Yahweh's exclusiveness in terms of his unique activity in creation and history, see Westermann, *Jesaja*, 17f., 72f., 101, 114f. Cf. Lohfink, 'Gott im Buch Deuteronomium', 107; Lind, 'Monotheism, Power and Justice', 433f.

[87] See Wildberger, 'Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 511-16, 522-30; Smith, *The Early History of God*, 152-54; Schmidt, 'Erwägungen zur Geschichte der Ausschließlichkeit des alttestamentlichen Glaubens', 293f.

bound to a statement belonging to its immediate context.[88] It is undoubtedly true that the task of determining the meaning and function of אֲנִי הוּא in the various Deutero-Isaianic passages is facilitated by an assessment of its interrelationship with accompanying statements (41:4; 43:10, 13 46:4), although it does not necessarily follow that הוּא [אֲנִי] is dependent upon, or even subordinate to, an element occurring in these statements. Yahweh's pronouncement of אֲנִי הוּא acts as a self-declaration which possesses independent status and significance.

The nature of the Deutero-Isaianic evidence has led some to interpret אֲנִי הוּא as an expression of divine immutability and eternal steadfastness.[89] The ceaseless and permanent aspect of Yahweh's activity figures prominently in several אֲנִי הוּא pronouncements, particularly those linked to the self-predication statements אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן and אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן (41:4; 48:12). And, because 46:4 highlights the notion that Yahweh's care for Israel continues until 'old age', this particular case of אֲנִי הוּא is often rendered as 'I am the same'.[90] The prophetic argument relating to the claim that Yahweh remains one and the same is, nonetheless, intended to substantiate the overall message that he is the only God.

As אֲנִי הוּא is closely linked on at least four occasions to Yahweh's explicit claim to divine sovereignty (41:4; 43:10, 13; 48:12), there are good grounds for arguing that it has the appearance of a monotheistic formula.[91] The notion of uniformity implied by this definition must, however, make allowances for the particular emphases encountered in connection with the use of אֲנִי הוּא in individual Deutero-Isaianic passages; claims regarding Yahweh's control over the course of history (41:2-4), his unique ability to predict events (43:9-10), the continuity between his past, present and future involvement with Israel (43:12-13; 46:3-4) and his creative activity (48:12-13) all serve to substantiate the prophet's message that real divine power belongs to Yahweh alone. The rendering 'I alone', which presupposes that הוּא acts as an enclitic pronoun to highlight אֲנִי,[92] may in fact go some way towards conveying the emphasis on divine uniqueness and exclusiveness, but this proposed rendering often gives

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[88] The dependence of אֲנִי הוּא on a statement belonging to its context is implied by Muraoka's interpretation of הוּא as meaning 'the one, i.e. the entity in question' (*Grammar*, §154j).

[89] Cf. Gesenius and Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik*, §135a n.1, where it is proposed that הוּא [אֲנִי] means 'ebenderselbe' or '[ein und] derselbe' in 41:4, 43:10, 13, 46:4 and 48:12. See further Brüning, *Mitten im Leben vom Tod umfangen*, 268-72.

[90] See §2.6 above.

[91] Volz, *Jesaja II*, 41; North, *The Second Isaiah*, 94; Wildberger, 'Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 526-29; Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 125; Grimm, *Deuterojesaja*, 91.

[92] Rosenbaum, *Word-Order Variation*, 35, 82, 161f., 188f.

the impression of being incomplete, as demonstrated by 43:10: 'so that you may know and believe me, and understand that I alone'. The most effective translation of אֲנִי הוּא, one which also embraces all Deutero-Isaianic examples of its usage, is arguably the most literal one, 'I am he', of which an appropriate paraphrase would be 'I am the one', to convey its force as a claim to unique and exclusive divinity. הוּא must be given due prominence, because it is the vehicle by means of which Yahweh's assertion that he is the true God is articulated. Even the extended formulations linked to participial forms seek to elaborate upon the claims expressed with the aid of אֲנִי הוּא, for it is stated that Yahweh is the only one who offers assurances of forgiveness (43:25) and consolation (51:12), and he alone reveals himself in word and deed as Israel's redeemer (52:6). The emphatic nature of these three declarations, together with the fact that their grammatical form amounts to a characteristic feature of Deutero-Isaiah, suggest that the proposed rendering of אֲנִי הוּא should also be reflected in the more expansive statements ('I, I am he who comforts you').

In its role as a self-declaration which, in terms of its Deutero-Isaianic usage, is pronounced exclusively by Yahweh, the interrelationship of אֲנִי הוּא and other self-declaratory statements must also be considered. In some cases, אֲנִי הוּא is followed by the pronouncements אֲנִי/אָנֹכִי יְהוָה (43:11, 15), אֲנִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ (41:10) אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ (48:17; 51:15), and is preceded or followed by אֲנִי אֵל (43:12; 46:9). However, אֲנִי הוּא is often separated by several cola from these declarations, and, in form-critical terms, can belong to different prophetic units. The only cases where 'I' pronouncements are found in the immediate context of אֲנִי הוּא are 41:4 (אֲנִי יְהוָה), 43:10-11 (אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי יְהוָה) and 43:12-13 (אֲנִי אֵל). Although it has been proposed that אֲנִי הוּא always acts as a substitute for the tetragrammaton,[93] the appositive function attributed to יְהוָה in 41:4a indicates that אֲנִי הוּא is more closely related to the accompanying self-predications whereas it is explicated with the aid of a monotheistic statement in 43:10 Moreover, to interpret אֲנִי הוּא as signifying 'I am he, namely Yahweh' especially within the context of trial speeches, would not provide conclusive proof of the exclusiveness of Israel's God, because יְהוָה as the name of their deity would be readily acknowledged by the exiles.[94] The central aim of the

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[93] Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 70-78, and, more reservedly, Richter, *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi'*, 39f.

[94] Deutero-Isaiah often attributes an appositive function to the tetragrammaton in divine 'I' proclamations (41:4, 17; 44:24; 45:3, 7, 8, 19; possibly 42:6; 49:23), and it also occurs in declarations that take the form אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ (41:13; 43:3; 48:17) or is immediately followed by monotheistic assertions such as וְאֵין עוֹד (e.g., 43:11; 45:5, 6, 18, 21).

Deutero Isaianic use of אֲנִי הוּא is to demonstrate that Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the only true God. In this respect, it more closely resembles such exclusive claims to divinity as אֲנִי אֵל (43:12; 45:22; 46:9).

In its role as a concise declaration of the uniqueness and sovereignty of Yahweh, אֲנִי הוּא can be described as a divine self-designation, one compared by some interpreters with the application of הוּא encountered in certain biblical traditions (Isa. 34:16; Jer. 5:12).[95] However, אֲנִי הוּא is not viewed or applied by Deutero-Isaiah as representing another divine name, 'I am הוּא' ('He'),[96] for the primary purpose of this self-declaration is to encapsulate Yahweh's claim to be the only true and powerful God. Within the context of his confrontation with the nations, the defence of Yahweh's supremacy presented in the light of the total inactivity and powerlessness of pagan deities demonstrates that his אֲנִי הוּא pronouncement completely surpasses the baseless 'I' claims made on behalf of the so-called rival gods.[97] אֲנִי הוּא assumes the role of sovereign self-declaratory formula or *Absolutheitsformel,*[98] thereby leading Wildberger to remark:

> Vorzustellen mit Namen braucht sich eine Gottheit ihren Verehrern nur, wenn diese mit der Existenz vieler oder doch mehrerer Götter rechnen. Im Moment, wo Jahwe Gott schlechthin ist, wird nicht nur der Gottesname überflüssig, sondern auch der Akt der Selbstvorstellung obsolet.[99]

Deutero-Isaiah thus proclaims that Yahweh, the God of Israel, is indeed the one true God, whose pronouncement of אֲנִי הוּא serves as a succinct self-declaration of his unmatched and uncontested divinity in order to assure the exiles that it is he who will secure their deliverance.

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[95] For these and other possible examples, see MacLaurin, 'YHWH', 455-57; Freedman, 'Divine Names and Titles', 76; Dahood, 'The Divine Designation «hû'»', 197-99. On the possible meanings of כִּי־פִי הוּא in Isa. 34:16, see Wildberger, *Jesaja,* III:1329f.; for interpretations of לֹא־הוּא in Jer. 5:12, see McKane, *Jeremiah,* I:120-22 ('he is powerless'). For the view that theophoric names like אֲבִיהוּא, אֱלִיהוּ and יְהוּא also attest the use of הוּא as a designation for Yahweh, see Noth, *Die israelitischen Personennamen,* 143f.; Dijkstra, *Goods voorstelling,* 248. But see de Vaux, 'The Revelation of the Divine Name YHWH', 58.

[96] As proposed by MacLaurin, 'YHWH', 455. Cf. Morgenstern, 'Deutero-Isaiah's Terminology for "Universal God"', 271-74, 278f.; Montgomery, 'The Hebrew Divine Name and the Personal Pronoun *Hû*', 161; Mowinckel, 'The Name of the God of Moses', 127f.; Kosmala, 'The Name of God (YHWH and *HU*)', 105f.

[97] *Pace* Dijkstra, *Goods voorstelling,* 248, who claims that similar formulations can be found in polytheistic contexts. He draws attention to Ugaritic phrases like *hw'il* (**huwa-'ilu*) and to an Akkadian acclamation taking the form *shû lû el/il-ni* ('He [Marduk] is our God') but these formulations are not real parallels to אֲנִי הוּא.

[98] Hermisson, *Deuterojesaja,* 113.

[99] 'Monotheismus Deuterojesajas', 528.

3. The Pronouncement of אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא by God in Deut. 32:39

Deut. 32:1-43, which contains the only other example of אֲנִי הוּא within a divine speech in the Hebrew Bible, has received much scholarly attention. Indeed, the many solutions offered in an attempt to establish the provenance and date of the Song of Moses have recently been likened to the circumstances of a scholar who walks into a labyrinth.[100] A section is therefore devoted to these issues before proceeding to a study of Deut. 32:39 and its interrelationship with the Deutero-Isaianic application of אֲנִי הוּא.

3.1 The Date and Origin of Deuteronomy 32

The poetic nature of the Song means that it can be easily lifted from its present context in the book of Deuteronomy, to which it has been fastened by an extensive introduction (31:16-30) and 'postscript' (32:44-47).[101] The apparent independence of the Song has led to much speculation about the date of its composition, and many seek an early date,[102] either on the basis of its archaic poetic forms (Albright), its ancient motifs (de Moor), the identification of those described as לֹא־עָם (v. 21) with the Canaanites (Cassuto) or the Philistines (Eißfeldt), or simply because its historical sketch ends with the entry of the Israelites into Canaan. The lack of references to later events could, nonetheless, result from the innovation of a poet who seeks to secure the artificial attribution of the composition to Moses, and its early poetic forms could be explained as the product of 'conscious archaizing'.[103] Because several of the Song's features bear strong resemblance to prophetic, deuteronomistic and wisdom traditions, it has been suggested that Deut. 32:1-43 stems from a period when such divergent literary forms and theological motifs could be easily combined.[104] Consequently, a significant number of scholars date Deut. 32:1-43 to the exilic

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[100] Peels, *The Vengeance of God,* 146f. Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32,* 1-98, offers a detailed review of past attempts at dating the Song with the aid of the following criteria: allusions to historical events, language, conceptual background and literary genre.

[101] Labuschagne, 'The Setting of the Song of Moses', 111-29.

[102] 12th century BCE: de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism,* 155-60, 217f. 11th century: Cassuto, 'The Song of Moses', 41-46; Eißfeldt, *Das Lied Moses,* 20ff.; Albright, 'Some Remarks on the Song of Moses', 339-46. 10th/9th century: Freedman, 'Divine Names and Titles', 79. 9th century: Wright, 'The Lawsuit of God', 26-67. 7th century: Reichert, 'The Song of Moses', 59.

[103] Hidal, 'Some Reflections on Deuteronomy 32', 18f.

[104] Von Rad, *Deuteronomium,* 143; Mayes, *Deuteronomy,* 381.

or early post-exilic period;[105] the 'no people' represent the Babylonians, and the Song forms a poetic response to the exile, understood in terms of punishment for transgressions (32:20-25), but which also offers the consoling message that future deliverance can be confidently awaited (vv. 34-43).

Striking similarities between the Song of Moses and the poetry of Deutero Isaiah are often cited as proof that a lengthy period of time cannot separate them. Parallel features shared by these two texts include the use of צור as a divine appellation (vv. 4, 15, 18, 30f.; cf. Isa. 44:8) and the 'creation' of Israel (vv. 6, 15, 18; cf. Isa. 43:21; 44:2, 21; 45:9),[106] but the principal argument presented in favour of their contemporaneity is the claim that both poetic compositions make powerful monotheistic assertions. With the aid of methods reminiscent of the Deutero-Isaianic trial speeches, the Song describes the pagan gods as לֹא־אֱלֹהַּ (v. 17) whose insignificance will be disclosed when Yahweh seeks vengeance upon his enemies (vv. 37-38). Yahweh is the just God (v. 3) who brought Israel into existence (vv. 6, 8-9), delivered his people in the past (vv. 7, 10-13) and will do so again in the future (v. 36). The highlighting of Yahweh's all-embracing activity within the Song thus coincides with its emphatic denial of the power of rival deities (cf. Isa. 41:1-4; 43:8-13),[107] and both texts are regarded as witnesses to an unambiguous form of monotheism which rejects both the power and existence of other gods.[108] For this reason, the Deutero-Isaianic application of אֲנִי הוּא is viewed as a particularly close parallel to Deut. 32:39, which, in turn, has led to the proposal that the Song, due to its attempt to convey the exclusiveness of Yahweh, attests the direct influence of Deutero-Isaiah's use of this distinctive expression.[109]

It is, however, extremely difficult to draw concrete conclusions with regard to the direction and nature of possible influence when attempting to analyse the interrelationship of Deutero-Isaiah and the Song of Moses, and one should not rule out the possibility that Deutero-Isaianic language and motifs are, either

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[105] E.g., von Rad, *Deuteronomium*, 143; Preuß, *Verspottung fremder Religionen*, 243-47; Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, 382. Among those who favour a post-exilic dating are Sellin, 'Wann wurde das Moselied Dtn 32 gedichtet?', 161-73 (5th century), and Meyer, 'Die Bedeutung von Deuteronomium 32,8f.43', 202-4, 209 (4th century).

[106] For a detailed analysis of these and other common elements, see Carillo Alday, 'El Cántico de Moisés', 143-85, 227-48, 327-51, 383-93.

[107] See Preuß, *Verspottung fremder Religionen*, 245f. See further Stolz, 'Monotheismus in Israel', 143-89.

[108] Carillo Alday, 'El Cántico', 343-5; Vorländer, 'Monotheismus Israels', 93-96.

[109] Cf. Baumann, 'Das Lied Mose's', 420 n.3; Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 125, 329; Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 321 n.97.

directly or indirectly, indebted to Deut. 32:1-43. Sanders has recently presented a detailed assessment of issues relating to the dating of the Song, and although he tentatively proposes that it is of northern origin from the ninth or early eighth century BCE, his main conclusion is that there is strong evidence in favour of viewing the period of the exile as the *terminus ad quem* for its composition. The Song's language, as well as its intertextual links with biblical and extra-biblical texts, imply that it cannot have been composed after the late pre-exilic period, particularly as its literary framework, which presupposes the content of 'this song' (cf. 31:16-22 and 32:10-25; 31:28-29 and 32:1, 5), is most likely of exilic origin.[110] A central argument employed by Sanders to support his dating of Deut. 32 is the nature of the monotheism reflected in the Song. Although it is often claimed that explicit monotheism only became prevalent during the exilic period, Sanders argues that a pre-exilic dating cannot be excluded if one adopts a definition of monotheism as the rejection of Israel's veneration of other gods rather than a denial of their existence.[111] His analysis is based, therefore, on the view that Deut. 32 acknowledges the existence of other gods (vv. 8-9, 23-24, 31, 43), but combined with monotheistic affirmations which emphasize the powerlessness of these deities (vv. 12, 15-21, 37-39).

Sanders' claim that the Song presupposes the existence of other gods hinges on his interpretation of the following statements. First, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (MT) in v. 8 is to be rejected in favour of בני אלהים, as attested in fragments of 4QDeut.[112] The use of similar expressions in Ugaritic texts (for example, *bn 'il(m)* - 'sons of Ilu'), and in numerous biblical traditions,[113] suggests that vv. 8-9 reflects an older Canaanite myth about the primordial division of the world according to the number of gods or 'sons of god'.[114] Secondly, Sanders adopts his teacher's interpretation of vv. 23-24 as a description of the deities *Reshep* and *Qeteb* used as 'arrows' or instruments of Yahweh's wrath against Israel (cf. Hab. 3:4f).[115] Thirdly, the MT reading of v. 43 ('Rejoice you, nations, about his people') is rejected in favour of 4QDeut[q] with its two additional cola, interpreted by Sanders as the summoning of the heavens and the gods to bow before Yahweh:

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[110] *Provenance,* 333-352. Cf. Levenson, 'Who Inserted the Book of the Torah?', 203-233.

[111] *Provenance,* 72-76, 426-29.

[112] *Ibid.,* 156-58, 363-74. A fragment of Deut. 32:8 in 4QDeut[j] reads בני אלוהים (see *DJD* 14, 90).

[113] בְּנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים (Gen. 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7); בְּנֵי אֵלִים (Ps. 29:1; 89:7); בְּנֵי עֶלְיוֹן (Ps. 82:6).

[114] Cf. Lohfink, 'Gott im Buch Deuteronomium', 119f.; de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism,* 156-58; Schenker, 'Le monothéisme israélite', 438-441.

[115] De Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism,* 157.

'Shout for joy, you celestials, with him (הרנינו שמים עמו), and prostrate yourselves before him, all you gods (והשתחוו לו כל אלהים)'.[116] The Qumran reading establishes the required parallelism between the first and second cola, and the replacement of גּוֹיִם (MT) with שָׁמַיִם (4QDeut[n]) provides an *inclusio* so that the Song again addresses 'the heavens' (v. 1). In addition, it is proposed that statements assuming the existence of other gods are not necessarily irreconcilable with v. 12 (וְאֵין עִמּוֹ אֵל נֵכָר) and v. 39 (וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי), since the aim of the Song is to emphasize that 'YHWH is the only god who acts on behalf of Israel. In that respect there is no other god with him. Other gods may exist, but for Israel they are worthless and so is their veneration'.[117] The powerlessness of these deities is also expressed with the aid of the designations לֹא אֱלֹהַּ (v. 17) and לֹא אֵל (v. 21).

This new assessment of the 'monotheism' reflected in the Song of Moses clearly demonstrates the extent to which past studies have overlooked the differences between the expressions of Yahweh's exclusiveness in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah and those found in Deut. 32:1-43. Admittedly, some of the statements which form the basis of Sanders' arguments have been subjected to quite different interpretation. While he, for example, regards the 'original' Qumran readings of vv. 8-9 and 43 as depicting an assembly of gods, other scholars argue that the scene is of a heavenly court in which the בני אלהים represent the angelic host (cf. LXX).[118] This alternative interpretation has been used to support the view that the Song is an exilic or post-exilic composition,[119] but by others as evidence for the pre-exilic belief in an angelic assembly,[120] in that the Song reflects a reinterpretation of a Canaanite myth to denote Yahweh and his angelic host. Furthermore, the nature of the Song's description of, and attitude to, other gods makes it difficult to decide whether their existence as subordinate deities to Yahweh is assumed or that the demonstration of their powerlessness amounts to a denial of their existence. Mockery and satire play an important role in the depiction of Israel's idolatry, and although the statement כִּי לֹא כְצוּרֵנוּ צוּרָם (v. 31) could be interpreted as presupposing the existence of

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[116] *Provenance*, 248-52, 422f.

[117] *Ibid.*, 427. See also Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh*, 71, 114f. n.3; *idem*, *Deuteronomium*, III:257f.

[118] Meyer, 'Die Bedeutung von Deuteronomium 32,8f.43', 201 n.15; Peels, *The Vengeance of God*, 142.

[119] Von Rad, *Deuteronomium*, 140.

[120] See, e.g., Lana, 'Deuteronomio e angelologia', 179-207, who dates the Song to the second half of the eighth century. See further Rofé, *The Belief in Angels in the Bible and in Early Israel*, 66-78.

other gods, it may amount to a reiteration of Israel's (false) assessment of the nations' claims. The mockery continues with the description of the gods eating and drinking (v. 38), which does not necessarily reflect the author's acceptance of the belief that gods can eat and drink, but is cited as a representation of the views held by Yahweh's opponents in order to demonstrate the futility of their claims. The irony of using the designation צור for other deities is made apparent in v. 37, where Yahweh declares: 'Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge?'. Once again, a fine line exists between interpreting this rhetorical question as one which assumes or, alternatively, denies the existence of other gods.

These comments are not intended to refute Sanders' claims regarding the nature of the monotheism reflected in the Song of Moses, but to demonstrate the inconclusive nature of some of the evidence and the complexity of certain exegetical and textual issues. Some caution is therefore required when using the Song's expressions of monotheism as a criterion for dating the composition. All in all, the evidence presented by Sanders does support the view that the Song focuses on the powerlessness of the foreign gods rather than their non-existence, and the jealousy motif (vv. 16, 19-21) becomes more understandable if Israel's attraction to other gods is viewed by the author as posing a real threat to Yahweh.[121] Thus, in conjunction with arguments relating to the language of the Song and its possible influence on biblical (exilic and post-exilic) texts, the declarations about 'other gods' and the expressions of Yahweh's unique sovereignty can be used as evidence for a pre-exilic dating.

3.2 Analysis of Deut. 32:39

ab רְאוּ עַתָּה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי

cde אֲנִי אָמִית וַאֲחַיֶּה מָחַצְתִּי וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל׃

> See now that I, I am he, and there is no god beside me. I kill and I make alive; I have wounded and I will heal; and there is none who can deliver from my hand.

This pronouncement serves as the culmination of the Song's many declarations by Yahweh (vv. 20-27, 34-35, 37-42). After an introductory appeal to the heavens and earth in their role as witnesses to the proclamation of the name and greatness of Yahweh (v. 3), the faithfulness of Israel's God is contrasted with the faithlessness of his people (vv. 4-5). Despite election (vv. 6-9) and past experiences of divine care (vv. 10-14), Israel is accused of disloyalty and

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[121] Cf. Schließke, *Gottessöhne und Gottessohn im Alten Testament*, 62.

apostasy (vv. 15-18), and consequently suffers punishment (vv. 19-25). But Yahweh recognizes that the annihilation of his people would lead to baseless claims of victory by his enemies (vv. 26-27); he decides to punish his opponents (vv. 28-35) and offer assurances of mercy towards Israel (v. 36). As the foreign gods are unable to offer protection (vv. 37f.), all-embracing power belongs to Yahweh alone.

The lack of response to the question 'where are their gods..?' (v. 37) provides Yahweh with the opportunity to call upon Israel to acknowledge his sovereignty. Israel has become powerless (v. 36), and Yahweh reminds his people that the gods to whom they offered sacrifices and libations and in whom they sought refuge in the past (vv. 37-38; cf. vv. 16-17, 21) are unable to offer deliverance.[122] Yahweh alone can intervene. His own response, which takes the form of a rhythmic and carefully constructed declaration, clearly represents the climax of the Song: 'See now that I, I am he, and there is no god beside me'. It is described by Luyten as the centre of the poem's 'eschatological finale' (vv. 34-43), whereby he builds on his suggestion that, if v. 43 originally consisted of six cola (4QDeut^{q}), v. 39 would constitute the middle point of the Song's concluding section.[123]

Yahweh's self-declaration is presented as an emphatic affirmation of his uniqueness amidst the silence of the foreign gods; their complete powerlessness stands in stark contrast to Yahweh's unlimited power. The earlier outline of Israel's past experiences of their God, and the recognition that he alone can offer deliverance to Israel and seek vengeance on his enemies, demonstrate that his supremacy is now to be acknowledged by his people. The doubling of אֲנִי (cf. Isa. 43:11, 25; 48:15; 51:12) heightens the solemnity of the pronouncement (אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא), and its implications are drawn out in Yahweh's subsequent declaration 'and there is no god beside me' (v. 39b).[124] As in the case of the Deutero-Isaianic application of אֲנִי הוּא, particularly in the trial speeches (41:4 43:10, 13), the immediate context of this divine pronouncement points to its role as Yahweh's claim to be the truly incomparable God.

This self-declaration is undoubtedly closely linked to its context, although it

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[122] Israelites guilty of apostasy are to be regarded as the addressees in vv. 37f. See Lindström, *God and the Origin of Evil,* 171-74; Sanders, *Provenance,* 236f., 413f.; Fokkelman, *Major Poems,* 123f.

[123] 'Primeval and Eschatological Overtones', 346.

[124] BDB, 768 §3d, provides some evidence for the use of עִם as 'except' (Ps. 73:25; II Chron. 14:10), although the more usual meaning of עִמָּדִי is 'with me' (Gen. 3:12; Deut. 32:4; Ps. 23:4).

is unlikely that an antecedent for הוּא should be sought. The view that it acts as a substitute for יְהוָה must be rejected on the grounds that the tetragrammaton is quite far removed from אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא (v. 36), and, as noted in connection with the Deutero-Isaianic statements, to render the initial claim as 'I, I am he, namely Yahweh' does not convey the poem's aim of demonstrating the superiority of Israel's God over all possible contenders. The only other possible antecedent is the use of the appellation צוּר by Yahweh in v. 37: 'Where are their gods, "the rock" in which they took refuge (צוּר חָסָיוּ בוֹ)?'. The silence following this challenge discloses the hollowness of the claims made on behalf of these deities (cf. also v. 31), as well as their complete inability to accomplish the role of צוּר. This designation unquestionably plays a key role in Deut. 32, as becomes apparent from the opening declaration in v. 4 ('The Rock - his deeds are perfect, and all his ways are just') and from its use as a *leitmotif* throughout the Song (vv. 13, 15, 18, 30, 31, 37).[125] But it is striking that the poet has chosen הוּא rather than צוּר as Yahweh's self-designation in v. 39, even though the rhythmic balance of this climactic declaration would not be impaired if it were phrased as אֲנִי אֲנִי צוּר. The divine claim expressed as אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא clearly goes beyond the self-identification of Yahweh as 'the Rock', particularly in view of the ironic application of this designation to describe the powerless pagan gods in the immediate context of Yahweh's declaration. אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא thus conveys the inevitable conclusion that is to be drawn in the light of the lack of a response to the challenge given by Yahweh; he alone is the true God, he is the one who rises up and manifests his sovereign power by delivering his people and destroying his opponents. The clear implication of this self-proclamation is that הוּא itself, combined with the emphatic twofold אֲנִי, serves - as in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah - as a succinct self-expression of Yahweh's unique and true divinity,[126] with the result that all other gods are to be excluded (v. 39b)

The subsequent description of Yahweh's sovereign activity with the aid of two merisms (v. 39cd) also provides a vivid explication of אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא. The first pair declares Yahweh's supreme power in terms of his ability to cause death and give life (cf. I Sam. 2:6; II Kings 5:7), without as yet expressing the belief that he can revive the dead (Dan. 12:2; II Macc. 7:9).[127] Nevertheless, the two pairs of antithetical statements, particularly the second, should not be divorced

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[125] See Braulik, 'Das Deuteronomium und die Geburt des Monotheismus', 296f.; Knowles, '"The Rock, his Work is Perfect"', 310-22.

[126] Cf. Luyten, 'Primeval and Eschatological Overtones', 346 n.22: 'See now: I, I (alone) am the (only) one'; Fokkelman, *Major Poems*, 125: 'I am the True One'.

[127] See, e.g., Knibb, 'Life and Death in the Old Testament', 407-11.

from their immediate context and interpreted solely as expressions of Yahweh's all-embracing activity. The act of wounding or striking (מָחַצְתִּי) recalls Israel's experiences of divine judgement resulting from past infidelity (vv. 23-25),[128] whereas the act of healing (וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא) expresses the divine promise of future restoration and deliverance (vv. 36, 43; cf. Jer. 30:17). The concluding statement in v. 39e also anticipates the subsequent depiction of Yahweh in the guise of a warrior seeking vengeance (vv. 41-42), for the gods cannot deliver their worshippers from the judgement and retribution executed by Israel's God.

Because the final clause of v. 39 is identical to Isa. 43:13b, its inclusion is sometimes interpreted as a case of the author having borrowed terminology and motifs from the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, particularly as this clause is regarded as disrupting the rhythmic balance of the four-cola pattern maintained in the rest of the Song, with the exception of v. 14).[129] Nevertheless, the decisive and climactic role played by v. 39 within this poetic composition makes it more likely that this divine self-declaration was deliberately formulated as a five-cola pronouncement; the phrase 'there is none who can deliver from my hand' is equally applicable and relevant to its context in Deut. 32, where it expresses the claim that no one can rescue Israel's enemies from the vengeance sought by Yahweh (vv. 35, 41-42), as it is in Isa. 43:13, where it anticipates the description of Yahweh's treatment of the Babylonians (v. 14).[130]

The correspondence between v. 39e and Isa. 43:13 again raises the issue of the nature of the Song's relationship with Deutero-Isaiah. Even with regard to v. 39, similarities between the two texts include the phrase וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל, the doubling of אֲנִי and the use of אֲנִי הוּא. But attempts at identifying the more 'original' text on the basis of stylistic and thematic parallels cannot be regarded as conclusive. Striking similarities also exist between Deut. 32:39 and pre-exilic statements recorded in Hos. 5:13-14 (cf. 6:1),[131] including the doubling of אֲנִי, references to divine acts of healing and wounding and the phrase וְאֵין מַצִּיל.[132]

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[128] This interpretation presupposes that the perfect form מָחַצְתִּי should be rendered as 'I have wounded' (cf. Sanders, *Provenance,* 240; Labuschagne, *Deuteronomium,* III:258); *pace* Lindström, *God and the Origin of Evil,* 175, who proposes that מָחַצְתִּי is explicative and that v. 39d should be rendered as 'indeed, by breaking [the enemy] into pieces I can heal'.

[129] Carillo Alday, 'El Cántico', 346.

[130] See, however, the discussion of this phrase in §2.3 above.

[131] On possible links between Deut. 32 and Hosea, see Cassuto, 'The Prophet Hosea', 95-100; Kuhnigk, *Nordwestsemitische Studien zum Hoseabuch,* 35-39.

[132] Cf. also Job 10:7: וְאֵין מִיָּדְךָ מַצִּיל. For the view that the presence of both 'early' and 'late' linguistic features in Deut. 32:1-43 reflects a period of transition in (poetic) Biblical

If the pre-exilic dating of Deut. 32:1-43 is accepted, it is possible that Deutero-Isaiah was acquainted with, and even inspired by, the Song. Deut. 31:29 interprets the Song of Moses as a prophecy of future events, and the promise of divine intervention, which involves the downfall of Israel's enemies without specifying their actual identity, could have influenced Deutero-Isaiah in the presentation of his message of hope to a displaced people. Indeed, key elements from Yahweh's memorable self-proclamation in Deut. 32:39 could have been adopted by the exilic prophet in order to demonstrate that the powerful self-manifestation of Israel's God is now taking place as the victories of Cyrus bring about the return of the exiles to their homeland.

4. אַתָּה־הוּא in Psalm 102:28

The isolated occurrence of the bipartite אַתָּה־הוּא addressed to Yahweh in Psalm 102:28 can, at least in formal terms, be viewed as related to אֲנִי הוּא of Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah.[133] The only other possible parallel occurs in Jer. 14:22 (הֲלֹא אַתָּה־הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ), which serves as a rhetorical question to highlight the uniqueness of Yahweh within a section emphasizing the gods' inability to bring rain. It is, however, unclear whether this statement consists of a bipartite formulation followed by יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ in apposition,[134] or forms the nominal construction 'Are you not Yahweh our God?'.

In Ps. 102 the words וְאַתָּה־הוּא appear towards the end of a psalm in which an individual's lamentation (vv. 2-12, 24-25a) is combined with a prediction of Yahweh's future compassion for Zion (vv. 14-23). A key feature of this psalm is its word of praise to the God who is enthroned in everlasting majesty (v. 13), and this contrasts dramatically with the petitioner's awareness of the fleeting nature of his own life and of his rejection by Yahweh (v. 11; cf. Ps. 90:3-10). This psalm is, in fact, characterized by its series of antithetical parallels, often formulated with the aid of nominal clauses, which draw out the contrast

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Hebrew, see Nigosian, 'Linguistic Patterns of Deuteronomy 32', 218-22. Nigosian favours the period between the tenth and eighth centuries BCE.

[133] As observed, for example, by North, *The Second Isaiah*, 94; Fabry, 'הוּא', 366; Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 125; Sappan, *Typical Features*, 68f.

[134] Cf. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 317; McKane, *Jeremiah*, I:329. LXX Jer. 14:22 interprets this question in the HT as possessing a bipartite form (οὐχὶ σὺ εἶ αὐτός;), but it offers no equivalent rendering for יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

between the limited future of the psalmist and the everlasting rule of Yahweh.[135] Therefore, in the concluding words of praise (vv. 25b-28) this theme is opened up in order to contrast even the transitoriness of heavens and earth (v. 27) with the permanence of their Creator: וְאַתָּה־הוּא וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתָּמּוּ.[136]

As the suppliant finds solace in his conviction that Yahweh will not fail to accomplish his plans, the concisely formulated declaration וְאַתָּה־הוּא highlights fundamental differences between the heavens and earth, which 'wear out like a garment' (v. 27), and the everlastingly present God. As a result, the element of contrast characteristic of Yahweh's use of אֲנִי הוּא in Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaiah is now linked to a comparison of the Creator and his creation (v. 26); וְאַתָּה־הוּא serves an emphatic and succinct assertion of Yahweh's uniqueness.[137] The interpretative translation 'You are the same, and your years have no end' is often proposed in order to sharpen the focus on the theme of divine changelessness in the psalm;[138] but the steadfastness of Yahweh, already noted as a significant aspect of the use of אֲנִי הוּא by Deutero-Isaiah, cannot be separated from the emphasis on his endlessly active presence as a source of hope for deliverance and restoration (cf. Isa. 41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12).[139] The centrality of the theme of everlasting divine sovereignty is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that וְאַתָּה־הוּא is closely related to v. 13, where a similar change of subject and the use of the adversative וְ enable the psalmist to praise Yahweh as the eternally enthroned God (וְאַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב).[140] Moreover, a certain *crescendo* can be detected from v. 25b onwards, reflected

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[135] For the way in which Ps. 102 describes the 'days' of the petitioner (vv. 4, 12, 23, 25) but the endless 'years' of Yahweh (vv. 25, 28), see Culley, 'Psalm 102: A Complaint with a Difference', 27f.; Sedlmeier, 'Zusammengesetzte Nominalsätze und ihre Leistung für Psalm cii', 246, 248.

[136] Sedlmeier, *ibid.*, 245, notes the following shifts in contrast within the psalm: from the suppliant (v. 12: וְאֲנִי) to Yahweh (v. 13: וְאַתָּה), and from the heavens and earth (v. 27: הֵמָּה) to Yahweh (v. 27: וְאַתָּה).

[137] Kraus, *Psalmen*, II:698; Brunert, *Psalm 102 im Kontext des Vierten Psalmenbuches*, 167: 'Es geht dem Beter nicht darum, die Fülle der erwarteten oder vergangenen Heilstaten aufzuzählen, sondern es geht letztlich immer nur um das Bekenntnis, daß JHWH ganz anders ist. Deshalb ist die Kurzformel אתה־הוא adäquater und völlig ausreichender Ausdruck seines Gottesbildes'.

[138] Kissane, *The Book of Psalms*, II:146; Dahood, *Psalms*, III:22; Brüning, *Mitten im Leben vom Tod umfangen*, 54f., 268-73; Sedlmeier, 'Zusammengesetzte Nominalsätze', 246.

[139] Cf. Ps. 90:2: וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד־עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל. LXX (89:2) renders this declaration as καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος σὺ εἶ; אֵל is read as אַל and is placed at the beginning of the next verse (μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς...).

[140] For a discussion of links between vv. 13 and 25b-28, see especially Brunert, *Psalm 102*, 137f., 162.

in the thematic links established between v. 25b (בְּדוֹר דּוֹרִים שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ) and v. 28b (וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתַּמּוּ), and between v. 27a (וְאַתָּה תַּעֲמֹד) and v. 28a (וְאַתָּה־הוּא). The latter parallel confirms the role of וְאַתָּה־הוּא as an expression of Yahweh's enduring presence, although it does not follow that the preceding reference to תַּעֲמֹד should be identified as the antecedent of הוּא; this is a case of parallelism where the two statements (vv. 27a, 28a) are closely related in terms of content without one being subordinate to the other. The single colon וְאַתָּה־הוּא thus sums up the overall focus of Ps. 102 on the unique permanence of Yahweh.

With regard to the interrelationship of וְאַתָּה־הוּא and the Deutero-Isaianic application of אֲנִי הוּא, it can be noted that the composition of Ps. 102 in the aftermath of the exile is certainly suggested by its presupposition that Jerusalem lies in ruins (v. 15) and that its rebuilding will amount to a manifestation of divine glory (vv. 16-17).[141] Other features reminiscent of, and possibly directly dependent on, Deutero-Isaianic themes include the description of the heavens as 'the work of your hands' (v. 26; Isa. 48:13) and the use of the idiom 'wearing out like a garment' to denote the notion of transitoriness (v. 27; Isa. 50:9; 51:6, 8).[142] It can thus be deduced that both Ps. 102 and Deutero-Isaiah reflect a broadly contemporaneous interpretation of the formulation אֲנִי/אַתָּה הוּא in terms of the active and permanent sovereignty of Yahweh.

5. אֲנִי הוּא and אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה of Exodus 3:14

The traditionally held view that Exod. 3:9-15 belongs to the Elohistic source stemming from the 8th century BCE and, consequently, pre-dates Deutero-Isaiah and possibly Deut. 32, has led to the interpretation of אֲנִי הוּא as an expression inspired by the divine pronouncement אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה to Moses in the theophany of the burning bush.[143] The purpose of this present short section

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[141] Cf. Kraus, *Psalmen*, II:695f.; Brüning, *Mitten im Leben vom Tod umfangen*, 297-303 (early post-exilic period in Jerusalem). A much later date of composition (third or second century BCE) is proposed by Steck, 'Zu Eigenart und Herkunft von Ps 102' 357-72, who claims that it has been influenced by later Wisdom and prophetic traditions.

[142] Other parallel themes include the restoration of Zion as a manifestation of Yahweh's power (v. 17; cf. Isa. 40:5; 52:10) and the creation of a people (v. 19; cf. Isa. 43:15). See especially Brunert, *Psalm 102*, 223-26, 234f.

[143] Carillo Alday, 'El Cántico', 343, is one of the few interpreters on the Hebrew Bible to make a proposal of this kind. This view is primarily expressed by scholars interested in the relationship between ancient Judaism and Christian origins (e.g., Fossum, *The Name of God*, 125 n.151; Chester, *Divine Revelation*, 207f.).

is not so much to offer a detailed study of Exod. 3:14-15 or to evaluate its status as a correct interpretation of יְהוָה,[144] but to offer certain comments with regard to the possible relationship of אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה and אֲנִי הוּא. Significant points of contact between the two expressions can certainly be noted, particularly the emphasis on the active and continuing presence of Yahweh; אֶהְיֶה is to be understood within the context of God's promise of deliverance from Egypt (cf. 3:8, 10, 12, 17), in the same way as אֲנִי הוּא serves as the basis of his claim to be the deliverer of his people from Babylonian captivity.

Drawing attention to certain elements shared by the two expressions does not, however, prove that Deutero-Isaiah and/or the author of the Song of Moses are indebted to Exod. 3:14-15 for their interpretation(s) of אֲנִי הוּא. Indeed, the differences between them far outweigh the similarities. First, important distinctions in terms of content and overall purpose exist between the two declarations. Exod. 3, on the one hand, depicts Moses' first encounter with Yahweh, and the revelation of his name and its meaning (vv. 14-15) is to be explained as a form of divine self-introduction; אֲנִי הוּא, on the other hand, consists of a short self-proclamatory formula by means of which Deutero-Isaiah asserts the exclusiveness of Yahweh in view of the threat of the attraction to Babylonian deities by those exiles who have, for a long time, been his chosen servant.[145] Secondly, the two formulas lack formal resemblance. Exod. 3:14 offers an etymological explanation of יְהוָה as stemming from the Qal imperfect of הָיָה. But אֲנִי הוּא bears no direct relation to הָיָה or the tetragrammaton, and is more closely linked to a series of divine אֲנִי declarations in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah which take the form of self-predications; its distinctiveness lies in the use of the independent personal pronoun הוּא as an effective self-designation.[146] This chapter has repeatedly sought to demonstrate that אֲנִי הוּא, in the light of syntactic considerations and its application in specific biblical contexts, is to be viewed as a bipartite construction which is more appropriately

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[144] For useful summaries of the literary-critical, etymological and exegetical issues arising from Exod. 3:14, see de Vaux, 'Revelation', 48-75; Schmidt, *Exodus: II:3*, 171-79.

[145] See further Richter, *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi'*, 37; cf. Schoors, *I am God your Saviour*, 212.

[146] Basic differences between the syntax of אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה and אֲנִי הוּא have been widely recognized, particularly in response to the claim made by Schild, 'On Exodus iii 14', 296-302, that אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה finds its closest parallel in I Chron. 21:17 (וְאָנֹכִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי), and is to be defined as a nominal sentence whose relative clause functions as the predicate of the main subject אֶהְיֶה ('I am the one who is'). For a critique of this view, see especially Albrektson, 'On the Syntax of אהיה אשר אהיה', 15-28; Kilwing, 'Noch einmal zur Syntax von Ex 3,14', 71f.; Floss, '"Ich bin mein Name"', 71f.

rendered as 'I am he' than 'I am' In other words, the integral role played by הוא within the expression reveals fundamental differences between אֲנִי הוּא and אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה. To claim that אֲנִי הוּא echoes Exod. 3:14 amounts, it seems, to an assessment of the two statements in the light of their LXX renderings, for, as will be shown in the next chapter, the Greek translation of אֲנִי הוּא as ἐγώ εἰμι bears closer resemblance to LXX Exod. 3:14 (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν).

Chapter Two

Textual Traditions and the Ancient Versions

1. The Greek Versions

An assessment of the Greek Versions enables one to gather evidence from among the oldest extant textual witnesses to biblical traditions. It is generally acknowledged that Greek translations were first prepared for the books of the Pentateuch, and that this collection influenced the translation techniques adopted for the remaining texts of the Hebrew Bible.[1] Thus, with regard to the renderings of אני הוא offered by the Septuagint translators, it is appropriate to begin with an analysis of LXX Deut. 32:39.

ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν ἐμοῦ·
ἐγὼ ἀποκτενῶ καὶ ζῆν ποιήσω,
πατάξω κἀγὼ ἰάσομαι,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὃς ἐξελεῖται ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν μου.[2]

The Septuagint version of the Song of Moses is generally characterized by its tendency towards literalness, although the innovative rendering of v. 39 reveals a concerted effort on the part of the translator to convey the profound significance of this climactic divine statement. Its doubling of the imperative ἴδετε rather than ἐγώ (v. 39a) is virtually unique to the LXX,[3] and clearly

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[1] See Tov, 'The Impact of the LXX Translation of the Pentateuch on the Translation of the Other Books', 577-92; Olofsson, *The LXX Version*, 26-28.

[2] For the view that LXX Deuteronomy was composed during the first half of the third century BCE, see, for example, Dogniez and Harl, *La Bible d'Alexandrie: Le Deutéronome*, 19; Aejmelaeus, 'Die Septuaginta des Deuteronomiums', 2.

[3] See also the *Vetus Latina* (§4 below). οἱ λ′ offer the more literal rendering ἴδετε νῦν (retroverted from Syh^{b}); F^{b} replaces the second ἴδετε with νῦν and adds a second ἐγώ before εἰμι.

provides the declaration with a more rhythmic opening line.[4] The assertion of monotheism in v. 39b is intensified into an unequivocal denial of the existence of other gods,[5] for while the HT reading (עמדי) could imply that there are no deities presently 'beside' or 'with' God, the Septuagintal translation removes all potential dangers by refuting their existence altogether. The two pairs of statements proclaiming the all-encompassing activity of God (v. 39cd) are, moreover, presented in the future tense; this has led to the proposal that the resurrection of the dead might already be implied by the phrase ζῆν ποιήσω,[6] and although no firm conclusions can be drawn on the basis of this rendering alone, the Septuagintal statement evidently lent itself to such interpretation in later periods.

The most significant aspect of LXX Deut. 32:39 from the perspective of this present study is its rendering of the Semitic idiom אני הוא as ἐγώ εἰμι,[7] a translational practice also adopted on three occasions in LXX Isaiah, possibly under the influence of LXX Deut. 32:39.[8] In response to the question posed in Isa. 41:4a (τίς ἐνήργησε καὶ ἐποίησε ταῦτα;), it is declared: ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐπερχόμενα ἐγώ εἰμι ('I, God, am the first and to the things to come I am'). The Septuagint translator evidently seeks to preserve the original word order of 41:4d, and ἐγώ εἰμι can here be interpreted either as bound to the preceding expression or as a self-contained declaration. In LXX Isa. 43:10, where Israel is called to join God (κἀγὼ μάρτυς) as witnesses, the 'absolute' status of ἐγώ εἰμι cannot be disputed (ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι). Moreover, LXX Isa. 46:4ab records the expression in both clauses rather than in v. 4a alone (MT) in order to highlight the parallelism of the two cola: ἕως γήρους ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ ἕως ἂν καταγηράσητε, ἐγώ εἰμι.

The translational method adopted in LXX Isa. 52:6 involves the inclusion of

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[4] Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy,* 531, suggests that ἴδετε is doubled for emphatic reasons. The proposal offered by Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven,* 86, is that the twofold ἴδετε reflects an early sensitivity to the doubling of אני in the Hebrew text.

[5] Cf. LXX Deut. 4:35, 39; Isa. 44:6, 8; 45:5, 15, 21. On other interpretative techniques adopted by the translator of LXX Deuteronomy to present a monotheism that totally excludes other gods, see Dogniez and Harl, *Le Deutéronome,* 48-50.

[6] See Cavallin, *Life after Death,* 103, 108.

[7] The following textual witnesses seek to clarify this bipartite statement by adding θεός after ἐγώ εἰμι: 550′ 246 75* 458 799.

[8] On the influence of LXX Deuteronomy on LXX Isaiah, see Harl, 'Le grand cantique de Moïse en Deutéronome 32', 131, 144. For the dating of LXX Isaiah ca. 140 BCE, see Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah,* 87, 90; van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches,* 30, 71-73.

αὐτός (ὅτι ἐγω εἰμι αὐτος ὁ λαλῶν· παρειμι),[9] a rendering evidently intended to highlight the role of God as the speaker of this self declaration (כי אני הוא המדבר הנני).[10] And although LXX Isaiah must be viewed as a composition with its own principles of translation, it is noteworthy that LXX Ps. 101(102):28 translates ואתה הוא as σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ ('But you are the same'). The presence of (ὁ) αὐτός in these cases indicates that their translators deemed it necessary to convey the underlying הוא of the Hebrew text.[11] Several Septuagintal texts also render הוא in tripartite nominal clauses with the aid of αὐτός or the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος.[12]

Various issues must be taken into consideration when attempting to evaluate the translation of אני הוא as ἐγώ εἰμι. One possible factor is that, by the third-second centuries BCE, the LXX translators interpreted הוא in most cases of the bipartite expression אני הוא as performing the function of a copula, or at least attempted to explain the underlying הוא with the aid of the Greek copula.[13] It has also been proposed that the LXX translators of Isaiah and the Song of Moses sought to present אני הוא as a deliberate echo of Exod. 3:14b (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν),[14] although ὁ ὤν clearly gives the phrase a different nuance from the bipartite ἐγώ εἰμι, whereas it is ὁ ὤν rather than ἐγώ εἰμι that is employed for the single occurrence of אהיה in v. 14d. It is significant, in this respect, that many Septuagintal books choose to convey the use of הוא in tripartite nominal constructions with the aid of the verb εἶναι, including the declaration attributed to David in I Chron. 21:17 (ואני הוא אשר חטאתי), and whose rendering in the

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[9] Symmachus offers the more literal translation ὅτι ἐγώ αὐτὸς ὁ λαλῶν (Eusebius).

[10] For the various ways in which αὐτός can give added emphasis, see Cignelli and Bottini, 'Concordanza del pronome αὐτός nel greco biblico', 156f.

[11] LXX Jer. 14:22 translates אתה הוא (without יהוה אלהינו) as οὐχὶ σὺ εἶ αὐτός. Cf. LXX I Sam. 9:19 where ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός represents Samuel's response to Saul (MT: אָנֹכִי הָרֹאֶה). Despite the lack of clear textual evidence, Wernberg-Møller, 'Pronouns and Suffixes in the Scrolls and the Masoretic Text', 44, proposes that this LXX translator read the pronominal form הוא rather than הראה, while the MT reading is due to textual corruption. However, the reverse is also possible.

[12] See LXX I Chron. 17:26 (σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς), Neh. 9:6 and Ps. 43(44):5, but not in LXX II Sam. 7:28 (σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός), II Kings 19:15, II Chron. 20:6, Neh. 9:7 and Isa. 37:16. In the case of יהוה האלהים הוא and related statements, הוא is either represented by the demonstrative οὗτος (e.g., Deut. 4:35, 39; 7:9; Josh. 13:14) or by αὐτός (e.g., I Kings 8:60; 18:39; Ps. 23 [24]:10).

[13] Harner, *'I Am'*, 7. See further Soisalon-Soininen, 'Die Wiedergabe des Hebräischen als Subjekt stehende Personalpronomens im griechischen Pentateuch', 119-21.

[14] Burkett, *The Son of the Man in the Gospel of John*, 145. On LXX Exod. 3:14, see Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, 33f.

Septuagint as καὶ ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἁμαρτών closely resembles the syntactic structure of LXX Exod. 3:14.[15]

It cannot be ruled out that the choice of the expression ἐγώ εἰμι for אני הוא also results from stylistic considerations. The awkward nature of the formulation ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός could, for example, have led to the omission of αὐτός,[16] particularly in poetic passages where the aim of the translators was to convey, in idiomatic Greek, the meaning - but not necessarily the precise wording - of this distinctively Hebrew construction.[17] It may even be the case that αὐτός was omitted from most LXX renderings of אני הוא in order to preserve a bipartite formula in both languages, and since ἐγώ αὐτός is an impossible formulation in Greek, ἐγώ εἰμι was adopted.

One proposal that requires investigation as part of the attempt to assess the Septuagintal renderings of אני הוא is the view that ἐγώ εἰμι was regarded by the translators of LXX Isaiah and Deuteronomy as a form of the divine name. This view is primarily associated with a number of NT scholars, but Harl - an expert in the field of Septuagintal studies - also draws similar conclusions. She claims that MT employs the 'virtually untranslatable' אני הוא (Deut. 32:39a: 'moi, moi, lui') as a divine name, which then prompted the translator of LXX Deuteronomy to devise ἐγώ εἰμι as its Greek counterpart; this distinctive name, in turn, influenced the way in which אני הוא was rendered in LXX Isaiah.[18] The previous chapter of this study has sought to demonstrate that the function of אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah as a succinct expression of the unique and exclusive sovereignty of God points to its role as a divine self-designation imbued with theological significance. What remains to be considered is whether the translators of LXX Deuteronomy and Isaiah, by rendering אני הוא as ἐγώ εἰμι, interpreted it as a distinctive divine name. Some NT commentators have highlighted two aspects of the application of ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah which, it is claimed, provide supporting evidence for its status as a divine name.

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[15] εἶναι is used in several cases to render הוא or its equivalents in nominal constructions. In addition to some of the examples listed in n. 12 above, see further LXX Isa. 51:9-10 which renders המחצבת רהב הלוא את היא as οὐ σὺ εἶ ἡ ἐρημοῦσα θάλασσαν. Similar translation techniques are used for Aramaic clauses, as demonstrated by LXX Dan. 2:38 (θ'): σὺ εἶ ἡ κεφαλὴ ἡ χρυσῆ (את הוא ראשה ד דהבא); cf. LXX Dan. 2:47; θ' Dan. 3:15; 5:13. An important parallel occurs in LXX Dan. 4:20 (θ' Dan. 4:20, 22), for in the same way as the bipartite את הוא (4:19) possesses an antecedent (v. 17: אילנא די חזית), it appears in Greek as τὸ δένδρον...σὺ εἶ, βασιλεῦ.

[16] Cf. Richter, *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi"*, 46.

[17] See Aejmelaeus, 'Translation Technique and the Intention of the Translator', 23-36.

[18] Harl, 'Le grand cantique', 131; Dogniez and Harl, *Le Deutéronome*, 339.

First, it has been argued that the solemnity and theological significance attributed to ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah is demonstrated by the fact that the self declaratory formula אני יהוה in Isa. 45:18 is also presented as ἐγώ εἰμι.[19] It could be argued that the Septuagint is dependent here on a Hebrew *Vorlage* which read אני הוא, or that the word κύριος was accidentally omitted from the LXX rendering,[20] but Dodd proposes that the variation results from the fact that the LXX translator interpreted the two formulas as equivalent to each other and viewed ἐγώ εἰμι as a form of the divine name. As already noted in Chapter 1 of this study, close links certainly exist between the various divine self declaratory formulas in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, but it is doubtful whether exact equivalence, at least from a Septuagintal perspective, can be established between אני יהוה and אני הוא on the basis of this isolated occurrence.

Secondly, particular attention has been paid to LXX Isa. 43:25 and 51:12, both of which adopt the following translation technique: ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἐξαλείφων τὰς ἀνομίας σου (43:25) and ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ παρακαλῶν σε (51:12). The two statements thus curiously render אנכי, already doubled in the Hebrew text, as ἐγώ εἰμι. This repetition has been used as evidence that the second occurrence represents the divine name; hence, it is translated by Dodd as 'I am "I AM", who erases your iniquities'.[21] This is an attractive suggestion, and may even account in part for the later Johannine usage of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι. But, with regard to LXX Isaiah, it could be argued that it is the application of a translational device rather than specific theological concerns that explains this rather unstylistic rendering of Isa. 43:25 and 51:12,[22] reminiscent of the later endeavours of Aquila and others to

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[19] Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 94. Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 113f., also draws attention to LXX Deut. 32:4 where הוא is interpreted as κύριος (cf. LXX Prov. 24:7).

[20] Among the textual witnesses that read ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος are: Codex Venetus, Q^{mg} and 88, Syh, 109 736 of the Hexaplaric recension, the Lucianic recension and 233. Cf. also VL: *ego sum dominus;* Vg: *ego dominus.*

[21] *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 94. Cf. Stauffer, *Jesus*, 168 n.54; Brown, *John*, I:536; Burkett, *The Son of the Man in the Gospel of John*, 144f. Dodd also proposes that the LXX translates [דבר צדק] אני יהוה (Isa. 45:19) as ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος [λαλῶν δικαιοσύνην] because it renders יהוה twice, once as ἐγώ εἰμι and once as κύριος: 'I am "I AM" the Lord, who speaks righteousness'.

[22] The second ἐγώ εἰμι in both Isa. 43:25 and 51:12 is omitted by 106, 109 736 of the Hexaplaric recension. Some textual witnesses also insert αὐτός after the second ἐγώ εἰμι in Isa. 43:25 (Codex Venetus, the Lucianic recension [except 86c], the main Catenae group, Cod. 403′, οἱ γ′ [QSyh]) and in Isa. 51:12 (Codex Venetus, 62 147 of the Lucianic recension, the main Catenae group, Cod. 403′, π′ [QSyh]).

distinguish between אני and אנכי by translating the latter as ἐγώ εἰμι.[23] In view of the generally free character of the translation techniques adopted in LXX Isaiah,[24] it is possible that אנכי was translated as ἐγώ εἰμι in order to demonstrate that this pronominal form carries particular emphasis ('*I, I* am the one who blots out your sins'). Even LXX Isaiah does not follow a fixed rule in this respect, for it presents some cases of אנכי as ἐγώ εἰμι (43:25; 46:9; 51:12) and others as ἐγώ (43:11; 44:24; 45:12-13; 49:25).

The conspicuous absence of ἐγώ εἰμι from Isa. 43:13 is also to be noted: ἔτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς (MT: גַּם־מִיּוֹם אֲנִי הוּא) καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν μου ἐξαιρούμενος. In fact, LXX Isaiah appears to be an unreliable witness for this section of Isa. 43, because the omission of אני הוא (v. 13a) and אני אל (v. 12d) suggests that this part of the translation is based on a defective text.[25] However, ἐγώ εἰμι is also absent from LXX Isa. 48:12, where the important declaration אני הוא אני ראשון אף אני אחרון is translated as ἐγώ εἰμι πρῶτος, καὶ ἐγώ εἰμι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,[26] although some manuscripts and recensions attempt to retrieve a Greek equivalent for אני הוא by reading the first two clauses in 48:12 as ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ πρῶτος.[27] These various factors thus highlight the difficulties encountered when seeking to determine whether ἐγώ εἰμι already serves as a divine name in LXX Isaiah.

However, there is no doubt that this succinct and rhythmic formulation is intended as a solemn expression of God's self-declaration in both LXX Isaiah and Deuteronomy, particularly as it occurs in contexts highlighting his limitless power and activity. The adoption of the words ἐγώ εἰμι to translate אני הוא in such climactic divine declarations as ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι (Deut. 32:39) suggests that it conveys God's claim to an identity which cannot be separated from his assertion of exclusive divine existence ('I am').[28] Indeed, it is the interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι as an expression of God's real and exclusive

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[23] Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila,* 69-78; Munnich, 'Contribution à l'étude de la première révision de la Septante', 212-14.

[24] See n. 26 below. See also van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen,* 29, 65-71; *idem,* 'Isaiah in the Septuagint', 513-19.

[25] 106 (Alexandrian group), the Lucianic recension and 86^{c} 233, 403′ 534 include ἐγώ εἰμι for אני הוא.

[26] Furthermore, LXX Isaiah offers no consistent rendering of אני אחרון (or ואת אחרנים) which takes the form εἰς τὰ ἐπερχόμενα (41:4), καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα (44:6) and ἐγώ εἰμι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (48:12).

[27] Codex Venetus, the main Catenae group, and α′σ′θ′ (Syh).

[28] See especially Wevers, 'The LXX Translator of Deuteronomy', 89; *idem, Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy,* 531.

existence that forms the basis of Philo's single comment on Deut. 32:39 in his writings.[29] Ironically, the exact phrase pronounced by God to proclaim his unique divinity is the one adopted in LXX Isaiah to convey the blasphemous self-exaltation of Babylon in 47:8, 10: ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἑτέρα (MT: אֲנִי וְאַפְסִי עוֹד),[30] but the proclamation of her doom and destruction swiftly follows (v. 11).

Finally, attention can be paid to the significance of the corrections offered by Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, although the evidence is difficult to evaluate because no variant readings exist for a number of the relevant statements (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 43:10, 13; 46:4). To discover how these revisers chose to translate אני הוא would certainly be significant, as they are regarded as key representatives of the Jewish revisions of the LXX text,[31] and a comprehensive picture of their preferred renderings would enable one to gain some insights into the 'accepted' Greek translation of אני הוא in ancient Jewish (rabbinic) circles. Although Symmachus, according to Eusebius, revised Isa. 41:4 to read καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἐσχάτων ἐγώ εἰμι, nothing is known of how Aquila and Theodotion would have translated this phrase. The Syrohexapla notes that the three revisers inserted ἐγώ εἰμι for the omitted אני הוא in Isa. 48:12,[32] but there is some uncertainty regarding the authenticity of this variant reading because, according to Q (Marchalianus), they read ἐγώ. 'The Three' are said to add αὐτός after the doubling of ἐγώ εἰμι in Isa. 43:25 and 51:12 (QSyh), a feature again reflecting their attempts at literalness.

The use of ἐγώ εἰμι to represent some of the key examples of the divine use of אני הוא has, understandably, prompted a number of NT commentators to regard the application of this bipartite Greek expression in LXX Isaiah and Deuteronomy as providing the linguistic bridge and conceptual background to the Johannine, and possibly Synoptic, attribution of these words to Jesus. For this reason, it will be necessary to return to the Septuagintal evidence in

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[29] In order to demonstrate how the God 'who actually is' (τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος) is apprehended, Philo (*De Posteritate Caini* 167-68) cites LXX Deut. 32:39a, while his subsequent paraphrase of this pronouncement demonstrates that it is understood as a declaration of divine existence: ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι ἴδετε, τουτέστι τὴν ἐμὴν ὕπαρξιν θεάσασθε. Moreover, similar arguments relating to the ὕπαρξις of God are expressed by Philo with the aid of LXX Exod. 3:14 in *De Somniis* I:231 and *Quod Deterius* 160.

[30] See further Nineveh's pronouncement in LXX Zeph. 2:15: ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν μετ' ἐμὲ ἔτι.

[31] See, for example, Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 74-99; Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch*, 263f., 283-97.

[32] See Reider, *An Index to Aquila*, 68.

Chapters 7-8 in order to determine the meaning and function of this expression as pronounced by Jesus.[33] If it can be demonstrated that the NT usage of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι has been directly influenced by the Septuagintal material, the main focus of attention will be those cases where אני הוא is represented by ἐγώ εἰμι (LXX Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10; 46:4 [43:25; 51:12]; cf. 52:6) as well as the new formulation in Isa. 45:18.

2. Texts Discovered at Qumran

The fact that Deuteronomy, Isaiah and the Psalms are among the most well-attested biblical books discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls facilitates the task of determining the ways in which אני הוא and אתה הוא were interpreted during the Second Temple period.[34] In 1954, Skehan published important fragments of the Song of Moses (32:37-43), discovered in Cave 4 (4QDeut^{q} = 4Q44) and consisting of two columns of eleven lines each.[35] The left and final column (vv. 41d-43) is well-preserved and attests the significance of this Song for the Qumran community,[36] for its 'extremely wide left margin, with no trace of stitching, after the ending of Deut. 32' points to the independent circulation of the Song in a separate manuscript.[37] The right column is, however, in poor condition and consists of five pieces (vv. 37-41c); the fragmentary nature of its upper portion is demonstrated by Skehan's reconstruction of v. 39a (line 6), whose only surviving words are [אני הוא] כי אני [ראו עתה]. The fragmentary nature of 11QPs^{a} (11Q5) also rules out a reconstruction of ואתה הוא (Ps.

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[33] It will also prove necessary to consider the use of ἐγώ εἰμι by beings other than God in such passages as LXX II Sam. 2:20 (MT: אָנֹכִי); 15:26 (MT: הִנֵּנִי). Cf. Schweizer, *Ego Eimi*, 44 n.241.

[34] The following relevant scrolls from Qumran (a few complete, but mostly fragmentary) have so far been identified: Deuteronomy (26 copies), Psalms (36 copies), Isaiah (21 copies). See Tov, 'The Text of Isaiah at Qumran', 491f.; Brooke, '"The Canon within the Canon" at Qumran and in the New Testament', 242-58.

[35] Skehan, 'A Fragment of the "Song of Moses"', 12-15. See now *DJD* 14, 137-42.

[36] Several non-biblical Qumran scrolls also contain citations of, or allusions to, Deut. 32:1-43; e.g., v. 2 (4Q509 3 5-6); v. 11 (4Q504 6 6-8); v. 22 (1QH 3:30-31; 17:13); v. 28 (CD 5:17); v. 33 (CD 8:9-10; 1QH 5:10, 27); v. 39c (4Q521 2 ii 12); v. 42 (1QM 12:11; 19:4). Portions of the Song (vv. 14-20, 32-33) have also been discovered in phylactery material in 4QPhyl^{n} (*DJD* 6, 72-74).

[37] Skehan, 'A Fragment of the "Song of Moses"', 12. Duncan, 'Excerpted Texts of Deuteronomy at Qumran', 43-62, demonstrates that 4QDeut^{q} is an example of an excerpted text intended for special, possibly liturgical or devotional, use.

102:28), although it is preserved in the fragment of Ps. 102:26-103:3 found in 4QPs^{b} (4Q84): ואתה הוא|.....|א ימתו.[38] The narrow space at its centre could only have included one word, probably ושנותיך, thereby pointing to this fragment's close links with the MT reading וְאַתָּה־הוּא in its bipartite form.

The most valuable source of textual evidence regarding the use of אני הוא in Qumran biblical scrolls is 1QIsa^{a}.[39] This complete scroll, together with 1QIsa^{b} and several pesharim on Isaianic texts, again confirm the importance of the book of Isaiah in Qumran circles.[40] Due to the poor condition of 1QIsa^{b}, none of its renderings of אֲנִי הוּא has survived, but 1QIsa^{a} contains complete versions of all the relevant statements and consistently renders the bipartite expression as אני הואה (41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12),[41] the cases followed by a participial form as אנוכי אנוכי הואה (43:25 and 51:12) and 52:6a as אני הואה המדבר. Thus, whether one regards the use of הואה as the preservation of an archaic form of the independent pronoun or as an important feature of the spoken Hebrew of the period,[42] the uniformity of these renderings of אני הוא in 1QIsa^{a} is striking, as is their close resemblance to MT. A further interesting feature is the addition of ו before שמי in 1QIsa^{a} 42:8, one which creates a new division in the statement אני יהוה הואה ושמי וכבודי לאחר לוא אתן.[43] Although it cannot be ruled out that the introduction of ו amounts to a scribal error,[44] it does mean that the text in its present form modifies God's initial pronouncement into a variation of אני הוא ('I, YHWH, am he'), whose function as a claim to divine exclusiveness is substantiated by the subsequent explanatory declaration.

No evidence can be adduced for the use of אני הוא in bipartite or tripartite constructions other than those declarations recorded in biblical scrolls, although this may be due to the fragmentary nature of texts discovered at Qumran. Some cases of אתה הוא statements addressed to God do, nevertheless, occur in non-biblical scrolls, including the declaration אתה הוא יהוה בחרתה באבותינו למקדם

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[38] Skehan, 'A Psalm Manuscript from Qumran (4QPs^{b})', 318. Palaeographic analysis of 4QPs^{b} suggests a date during the second half of the first century BCE. See Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, 34f.

[39] For the view that 1QIsa^{a} can be dated to 150-100 BCE, see Avigad, 'The Palaeography of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Documents', 69-71.

[40] See Brooke, 'Isaiah in the Pesharim and other Qumran Texts', 609-32.

[41] See also the portion of Isa. 48:12cd in 4QIsa^{d} 5 20: אני הוא אני ראשון גם אנ[י (*DJD* 15, 79).

[42] See Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1Q Isa^{a})*, 433-40; Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 117f.

[43] Kutscher, *Language*, 423.

[44] The reading of Isa. 42:8 preserved in 4QIsa^{h} 1 6 is closer to MT: הו|א שמי וכבדי (see *DJD* 15, 118).

('You are YHWH. You chose our fathers from of old') in 4Q393 3 6.[45] A further example occurs in 1QH 13:4, which, in the light of the evidence of 1QH frg. 17:5, is restored to read [אתה הוא עד עולם לעולמי ע]ם קודש מקדם ה[ ].[46] Although it is difficult to determine whether this example of אתה הוא amounts to a bipartite or tripartite formulation, the publication of *Hodayot* fragments by Puech leads him to offer the following reconstruction of 1QH 5:18 (= 13:4):

[כי ל]כה קודש מקדם ש[לם ו]לעולמי עד אתה הוא [והביאותני בסוד]קדושים

Puech's proposed reconstruction of the lacuna following אתה הוא, based on other examples in the *Hodayot* of the phrases בסוד קדושים (12:26 [4:25]; fr. 63:2; 4Q502 19 1) and והביאותני בסוד (6:32 [14:21]), implies that אתה הוא serves here as a bipartite formula.[47] This would mean that such Qumran hymnic material yields a close parallel to Ps. 102:28, for in both cases the expression אתה הוא is associated with God's everlasting presence. But, due to the tentative nature of Puech's reconstruction of 1QH 5:18, this potentially significant interpretation of אתה הוא cannot be confirmed.[48] In addition, the small number of Aramaic tripartite אנה הוא and אנתה הוא formulations found in non-biblical texts corresponds to similar developments in the Aramaic portions of Daniel,[49] and accordingly function as important witnesses to the continuation

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[45] For the text, see Falk, '4Q393: A Communal Confession', 190f., who compares this statement to Neh. 9:7 because the text in general echoes the language of Neh. 9.

[46] *Die Texte aus Qumran*, ed. Lohse, 160. An interesting, but much later, parallel occurs in the Hekhalot corpus: אתה הוא לעולמין]לעולמי עולמים קדוש ומקודש בשמך נרול ונורא (*Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, ed. Schäfer, 173).

[47] See Puech, 'Un hymn essénien en partie retrouvé et les Béatitudes', 66f.: 'Car à] Toi est la sainteté dès l'antiquité éter[nelle et] pour les éternités perpétuelles, Toi, Tu es. [Tu *m*'as fait entrer dans le conseil] des saints...' The lacuna is not reconstructed in the rendering offered by García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 319: '[For] to you belongs holiness before the centuries and for ever and ever. You are [....] holy ones'

[48] In addition to אתה הוא statements resembling biblical verses (Neh. 9:7; Ps. 102:28), יהוה הוא occurs in a section of praise to God in 11QPsAp[a] (11Q11) ii 3-5. Puech, '11QPsAp[a]: Un rituel d'exorcismes', 387, proposes the following reconstruction: 'Who ma[de these signs] and won[ders on the] earth? YHWH, it is he [who] has made [all by his pow]er (יהוה הוא[ה אשר] עשה את ה[כול בגבור]תו)' It follows from this proposed reconstuction that הוא not only resumes the tetragrammaton, but serves to highlight the claim that God is all-powerful.

[49] Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, 559f., cites two such examples of Aramaic declarations: 4QEn[g] = Enoch 93:2: אנה הוא ותוך (*Texte*, 247); 1QapGen 19:7-8: [...] אנתה הוא (*ibid.*, 171). Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 58, and Muraoka, 'Notes on the Aramaic of the Genesis Apocryphon' 35, favour the following reconstruction of 1QGenAp 19:7-8: [ע]ל[מא] אנתה הוא לי א[ל ('You are for me the eternal God'), interpreted as words addressed by Abraham to God (cf. Jub. 13:8, 16).

of a syntactic pattern which is also widely attested in later targumic and rabbinic traditions (see Chapters 3 and 6 below).

A particularly significant feature of a number of texts discovered at Qumran is their distinctive use of הוא or הואה as a designation for God. It was noted in the previous chapter of this study that some biblical traditions already point to a movement towards the use of הוא as a divine designation, and certain passages in non-biblical texts from Qumran demonstrate that this practice was adopted by the community during the late Second Temple period. Of particular significance is 4QMysteries[a] (4Q299) 3a ii-b 11-12, where God is praised with the aid of the following words:

עושה כול[תהיות
ה[וא מק]דם שלם הואה שמו ולע[ולם

The reconstruction proposed by Schiffman leads him to translate these two lines as: 'He causes everything [which comes into being.] H[e is from bef]ore eternity; the Lord is his name, and for e[ternity]'.[50] The phrase שמו הואה, in which הואה is intended as a divine epithet ('He is his name'), even as a substitute for the tetragrammaton,[51] is regarded by Schiffman as reminiscent of Exod. 15:3 (יהוה שמו), although the emphasis on the eternally powerful presence of God in these declarations also echoes IQH 5:18 as cited above.[52] Further examples occur in the poetic fragments of 4Q301 (4QMysteries[c]?), particularly in frg. 3a-b 4-8 where הוא or הואה is used six times (as well as two further reconstructed cases) in succinct declarations of the greatness of God. Words of praise in this poem take the form of a series of short declarations in which an adjective is followed by הוא or הואה (lines 4-7); they include such clauses as נכבד הוא (ll. 4, 5; cf. 4Q301 5 4), ונורא הואה (l. 5), [ונהדר ה[ואה

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[50] *DJD* 20, 41f.

[51] *Pace* García Martínez, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 400: 'He is first always. It is his name and [....]'. On the use of הואה or הוא in order to avoid writing the tetragrammaton in non-biblical Qumran texts, see Parry, 'Notes on Divine Name Avoidance', 439f.

[52] The expression שמו הואה can also be compared with a statement in the much later *Ma'aseh Merkabah*: הוא שמו ושמו הוא הוא בהוא ושמו בשמו (*Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §588). It has been proposed that this rhythmic formulation articulates the belief that God is to be identified with his Name ('He *is* his Name..'). See, for example, Grözinger, 'Die Namen Gottes und der himmlischen Mächte', 37: 'Er und sein Name sind eins'; cf. Janowitz, *The Poetics of Ascent*, 57. Alternatively, it has been suggested that הוא is interpreted in this formulation as a divine epithet in its own right. Cf. Schäfer, *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur*, III:314: '"Er" ist sein Name, und sein Name ist "Er". "Er" in "Er" und sein Name in seinem Namen'. See further *idem*, *Der verborgene und offenbare Gott*, 76f.

(ll. 6, 7; cf. 4Q301 4 4) and גדול הואה (ll. 4, 7).[53] The only other designation for God used in this poetic passage is אל (l. 6),[54] and the phrase is formulated in a manner (כבד אל[ו]) which implies that אל and הואה were presented by the author of this hymn as interchangeable divine designations.

These examples of the striking application of הואה in recently published Qumran texts also provide invaluable evidence when attempting to interpret the cryptic הואהא employed in 1QS 8:13. In this particular recension of the *Community Rule,*[55] Isa. 40:3a has the function of providing scriptural support for the establishment of a community in the wilderness (8:12-14), whereas its subsequent reference to the straightening of the highway (40:3b) is explicated in terms of the community's special practice of Torah study (8:15).[56] The initial reason for citing Isa. 40:3 is thus expressed as follows:

> When these become the Community in Israel [according to these rules] they shall be separated from the session of the men of deceit in order to depart into the wilderness to prepare there the Way of הואהא; as it is written: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of ...., make level in the desert a highway for our God' (Isa. 40:3).[57]

As the form הואהא represents a *hapax legomenon* in Qumran texts, its precise meaning has been the subject of detailed discussion.[58] The citation of Isa. 40:3

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[53] On these poetic fragments and the view that they resemble later *hekhalot* mystical texts, see Schiffman, *DJD* 20, 117-120. The reconstructed text (lines 4-7) is translated by Schiffman as follows: '[4] and honoured is H[e] in His l[o]ng suffering [and grea]t is He in [His] great anger. [And] e[xalted] [5] is He in the multitude of His mercies and awesome is He in the plan of His anger. Honoured is He [in] [6] and who rules over the earth. [And ho]noured is God by His holy people, and exalted is H[e] [7] [for] his chosen ones. And exalted [is He in the heights of] His [ho]liness. Great is He in the blessings [ ]' (*ibid.*, 118).

[54] On the use of אל, particularly as a replacement for the tetragrammaton, in non-biblical Qumran texts, see Stegemann, Religionsgeschichtliche Erwägungen', 200-2; Skehan, 'The Divine Name at Qumran', 16-18; Parry, 'Divine Name Avoidance', 440f.

[55] Important analyses of the redaction-history of 1QS and the Cave 4 fragments of other recensions of the *Community Rule* have been published in recent years. See especially Alexander, 'The Redaction-History of *Serekh Ha-Yahad:* A Proposal', 437-56; Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule.*

[56] On this dual interpretation of Isa. 40:3 in 1QS 8:12ff., see Fishbane, 'Use, Authority and Interpretation of Mikra at Qumran', 349, 361. See further Brooke, 'Isaiah 40:3 and the Wilderness Community', 117-32.

[57] This proposed rendering of 1QS 8:12-13 is a slightly adapted version of the translation offered by Charlesworth, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations. Volume 1: Rule of the Community and Related Documents,* 35-37.

[58] A fragment from a different recension of the Rule (4QS[e] [4Q259] 1 iii 4) reads האמת instead of הואהא. The absence of a correction in 1QS and the view that 4QS[e] represents a 'sekundäre Verbesserung' of הואהא (Nebe, 'Noch einmal zu הואהא in 1QS 8 13-14', 284) have led to the proposal that 1QS preserves the more original reading (see Rüger, 'הואהא -

in 1QS 8:14, in which יהוה is replaced by four bold points,[59] suggests that the preceding דרכ הואהא paraphrases דרך יהוה. The fact that 1QS consistently avoids using the tetragrammaton, and even states that the pronunciation of this sacred name will lead to punishment (6:27ff.), lends weight to the proposal that הואהא acts as a substitute for the tetragrammaton. Some claim that הואהא was devised as an abbreviation of [הא]לוהים הוא (cf. Deut. 4:35; I Kings 18:39),[60] although this seems unlikely since 1QS consistently uses הואה rather than the pronominal form הוא which is required for this particular abbreviation.[61] The theory proposed by Katz,[62] namely that הואהא represents an abbreviation of the Shema (יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד) has been described as 'an improbable, if not impossible, thesis',[63] for, apart from the lack of additional evidence for the existence of a formulation of this kind, the complex distribution of Hebrew letters required for this proposed correspondence is highly speculative.

In view of the consistent usage of the form הואה in 1QS, the most plausible explanation is that הואהא in 1QS 8:13 represents an extended form of הואה,[64] acts as a circumlocution for יהוה and can be rendered as 'to prepare the way of He/Him'. A similar phenomenon occurs in CD 9:5, which substitutes הוא for יהוה of Nah. 1:2 to read נוקם הוא לצריו. But while הואהא of 1QS 8:13 occurs within an anticipatory paraphrase of Isa. 40:3a, there is no conclusive evidence to support the view that this usage of הואהא betrays the direct influence of the divine self-declaration אני הוא (1QIsa[a]: אני הואה) from the poetry of Deutero-

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Er', 142 n.1). Nevertheless, Metso, *Textual Development,* 71, argues that the 1QS reading is syntactically difficult, due to the use of הואהא as a personal pronoun rather than the use of a possessive suffix, and is therefore probably corrupt; the 4QS[e] reading of a genitive construction (את דרך האמת) is 'a more intelligible text' and, in all likelihood, represents the more original reading. Metso thus concludes that the scribe of 1QS, working from a poorly preserved *Vorlage,* was only able to read the letters *he* and *aleph,* and 'conjectured the rest of the word' (*ibid.*). Metso does not, however, attempt to explain why the scribe of 1QS opted for הואהא rather than הואה.

[59] Cf. 1QIsa[a] 40:7, 4QTest (4Q175) 1, 19, and several examples in 4QTanh (4Q176), where four dots replace the occurrences of the tetragrammaton in Isaianic citations. See Tov, 'The Socio-Religious Background of the Paleo-Hebrew Biblical Texts', 359f.

[60] E.g., Betz, *Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumransekte,* 156 n.5; Howard, 'The Tetragram and the New Testament', 68.

[61] See Rüger, 'הואהא - Er', 143.

[62] Katz, *Die Bedeutung des hapax legomenom der Qumraner Handschriften HUAHA,* 67ff.

[63] Greenfield, review in *RevQ* 24, 1969, 572.

[64] See especially Rüger, 'הואהא - Er', 143f., who claims that הואהא ends with an *aleph otiosum,* comparable to ל/ב]דעה (1QS 9:18; 11:6, 15) and בדעהא (1QS 7:4). Cf. also Wernberg-Møller, *The Manual of Discipline,* 34; Skehan, 'Divine Name at Qumran', 39 n.2.

Isaiah.[65] The replacement of the tetragrammaton with הוא֗א does, however, reflect a relatively early stage in the application of הוא as a divine designation, one which becomes more widespread in later Jewish traditions.[66]

3. The Peshitta

Syriac renderings provided by the Peshitta also serve as important witnesses to the ways in which אני הוא was rendered in Jewish and early Christian circles, and the Peshitta reading of Deut. 32:39ab proves to be an appropriate point of departure: ܗܫܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܘܠܝܬ ܐܠܗ ܡܢ ܥܡܕܝ (literally, 'See now that I am, and there is no god apart from me'). The interpretative clarification of עמדי as ܡܢ ܥܡܕܝ (*'apart* from me') is reminiscent of LXX and targumic renderings of v. 39b (see Chapter 3), but the issue of central concern is the twofold use of the first person pronoun (ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ) to represent אני אני הוא.

Older grammars draw attention, in this respect, to two kinds of tripartite nominal clauses, namely those in which the 'subject' (ܐܢܐ) is repeated before or, alternatively, after the 'predicate'; in both types the second ܐܢܐ is said to function as a copula.[67] Several cases of the first type of nominal constructions are found in the Peshitta in connection with the self-declaratory formula 'I am the Lord' (ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܪܝܐ),[68] whereas the four verbal clauses in Deut. 32:39cd (e.g., ܐܢܐ ܡܚܝܐ ܐܢܐ) can be cited as examples of the second type of clauses in which the second ܐܢܐ follows the participle (cf. Isa. 43:25). The bipartite formulation ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ of Deut. 32:39a is similarly interpreted by Nöldeke and others as a statement whose second ܐܢܐ serves as a copula. This proposed definition of ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ points to two possible explanations of the formulation in Deut. 32:39a. It can signify that the Hebrew *Vorlage* included a single אני (ראו עתה כי אני הוא) or that the twofold אני of the Hebrew text prompted the translator to render אני אני הוא as ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ without attempting to provide a Syriac equivalent for הוא. The first proposal is more plausible than

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[65] As proposed in particular by Stauffer, *Jesus,* 133.

[66] See Yalon, review in *Kiryat Sefer* 28, 1952, 71. See further Chapter 6 §5 below.

[67] Nöldeke, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik,* §312c; Duval, *Traité de grammaire syriaque,* §375e; Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary,* 21.

[68] The Peshitta of Isaiah, for example, renders most occurrences of אני יהוה (and variations) as [ܐܠܗܐ] ܐܢܐ ܡܪܝܐ. Van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen,* 287, mistakenly regards this grammatical feature as a case of the 'characteristic' doubling of the divine אני in the Peshitta of Isaiah, possibly under the influence of Isa. 43:11, 25.

the second, particularly in the light of the Peshitta renderings of some of the analogous Deutero-Isaianic statements, as will be shown below.

Muraoka offers an alternative approach to the doubling of ܐܢܐ in Syriac nominal clauses, and although he bases his study on the Old Syriac Gospels, his conclusions are of relevance for an understanding of the Peshitta renderings of אני הוא.[69] Responding to the claim that the repeated pronoun represents the copula, Muraoka states: 'It is not a mere *Flickwort,* but serves an important purpose of emphasizing the subject - contrast or identification'.[70] Thus, in the same way as Muraoka interprets הוא as resuming and highlighting its preceding constituent in nominal constructions in Biblical Hebrew,[71] he claims that the Peshitta conveys this emphatic force by means of the repeated ܐܢܐ. Muraoka primarily focuses on such examples of tripartite clauses as 'I am Abraham' (ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܒܪܗܡ), but he concludes that the same principle can be applied to the two-component phrase ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ, which can be used for identificatory ('*I* am the one') or descriptive ('It's me') purposes.[72] The view that the second ܐܢܐ in the formulation ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ represents the copula is also rejected by Goldenberg, who deals specifically with the Peshitta text of Deut. 32:39a and defines it as an example of a nominal clause consisting of a predicate (the first ܐܢܐ) followed by an enclitic pronoun to express the subject (the second ܐܢܐ). Goldenberg thus focuses on the role of this construction as an expression of predicative relation.[73]

The Peshitta of Isaiah also renders אני הוא as ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ on two occasions (41:4; 43:13), although in three cases it opts for the expression ܗܘ ܐܢܐ (43:10; 46:4; 52:6) where the third person pronoun serves as its second component. Muraoka proposes that the difference between formulations consisting of ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ and ܗܘ ܐܢܐ in bipartite and tripartite statements 'is purely morpho-syntactic, no functional difference being intended'.[74]

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[69] 'On the Nominal Clause in the Old Syriac Gospels', 28-37. The implications of Muraoka's analysis for the study of nominal clauses in the Peshitta to the Pentateuch are explored by Avinery, 'On the Nominal Clause in the Peshitta', 48f.

[70] 'Old Syriac Gospels', 33.

[71] See Chapter 1 §1 above.

[72] *Ibid.*, 36f.

[73] 'On Some Niceties of Syriac Syntax', 337. Goldenberg offers the following translation of Pesh Deut. 32:39a: '[Sachez donc que] c'est moi [qui suis Dieu]'. For a recent discussion of the status of the enclitic personal pronoun in Syriac non-verbal clauses, see Joosten, *The Syriac Language of the Peshitta and Old Syriac Versions of Matthew,* 79-91, especially 89-91.

[74] 'Old Syriac Gospels', 34.

Goldenberg draws similar conclusions,[75] and, once again, interprets ܐܢܐ ܗܘ as a nominal construction whose predicate is followed by the subject.[76] To claim that these two formulations are interchangeable would certainly account for the evidence in the Peshitta of Isaiah, for no other criteria can be established to explain the choice of one form over the other.

A distinctive feature of the translations of אני הוא in the Peshitta of the Old Testament is the oscillation between ܗܘ ܗܘ (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:13; 43:25; 51:12) and ܐܢܐ ܗܘ (Isa. 43:10; 46:4; 52:6). Yet another grammatical pattern is encountered in the Peshitta of Ps. 102:28, representing the work of a different translator, namely the use of the particle ܐܦ with a pronominal suffix between the two personal pronouns: ܐܦ ܐܢܬ ܗܘ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ('But you truly are').[77] Striking affinities can, moreover, be detected between the LXX and Peshitta renderings of אני הוא, for the Peshitta similarly overlooks the occurrence of אני הוא in Isa. 48:12, whereas it renders Babylon's blasphemous claim (Isa. 47:8, 10) in the same way as it translates אני הוא (ܗܘ ܗܘ).[78] Although the Peshitta translators worked directly from a Hebrew *Vorlage,* such examples of correspondence with LXX readings does suggest a familiarity with Greek translations. It is therefore noteworthy that ܗܘ ܗܘ was the expression adopted in Syriac-speaking Christian communities to render the various occurrences of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Gospel traditions.[79]

4. The Vetus Latina and the Vulgate

Latin Bible translations known collectively as the *Vetus Latina* exhibit close dependence on LXX renderings of אני הוא.[80] Deut. 32:39a is represented by *videte videte quoniam ego sum,* with no Latin equivalent provided, once again,

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[75] 'On Syriac Sentence Structure', 108; *idem,* 'On Some Niceties of Syriac Syntax', 337.

[76] Goldenberg, 'On Syriac Sentence Structure', 136, defines the use of ܐܢܐ ܗܘ followed by a participle in Pesh Isa. 52:6 as an example of a cleft sentence whose predicate (ܗܘ) is focused: 'I am he that does speak' (cf. also Pesh I Chron. 21:17).

[77] On the use of ܐܦ in Classical Syriac, see Muraoka, 'On the Syriac Particle *it*', 21-22; Goldenberg, 'On Syriac Sentence Structure', 117-31.

[78] On LXX and Peshitta Isaiah, see van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen,* 287-89.

[79] The Old Syriac Gospels and the New Testament Peshitta render all occurrences of the 'absolute' ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus in Synoptic and Johannine traditions as ܗܘ ܗܘ, with the exception of John 8:58: ܐܢ ܐܦ ܗܘ (cf. Pesh Ps. 102:28).

[80] For the *Vetus Latina* manuscripts of Isaiah, see *Vetus Latina. 12: Esaias,* ed. Gryson. For the texts of Deut. 32:39 and Ps. 102:28, see *Bibliorum Sacrorum latinae versiones antiquae seu vetus Italica,* ed. Sabatier.

for the second אני of the Hebrew text (LXX: ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι).[81] The only case where slight deviation from the LXX can be detected is in the Latin translation of Isa. 51:12a (*ego sum ego sum ipse qui consolor te*), although this rendering is probably dependent on the variant reading ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός ὁ παρακαλῶν σε.[82] The *Vetus Latina* undoubtedly demonstrates its close adherence to Septuagintal readings of Deut. 32:39 and similar 'I' statements in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, but it cannot be regarded as an independent witness to early interpretations of the Hebrew expression אני הוא.

Jerome's awareness of the lack of literalness displayed in the LXX (and VL) led to his attempt at offering an accurate Latin translation based on the *hebraica veritas* (*Ep.* 106:9; *Apol.* 2:33).[83] His remarks that he was taught Hebrew by a Christian convert in Chalcis (*Ep.* 125:12) and continued to learn from Jewish scholars in Antioch (*Ep.* 18:10) suggest that Jerome had acquired sufficient knowledge of the language of the Hebrew Scriptures before embarking upon the task of presenting a faithful Latin translation.[84] Jerome's claim that he had discussions with Jewish teachers on the proper meaning of Hebrew texts (cf. *Ep.* 112:20) may also account for his apparent knowledge of ancient Jewish exegetical traditions.[85]

It is of particular significance, in this respect, that the renderings of the biblical occurrences of אני הוא found in the Vulgate reflect Jerome's movement away from the LXX to a close adherence to the syntactic structure and word order of the Hebrew source text. Translations of the Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא pronouncements demonstrate Jerome's early attempts at literalness (cf. *Ep.* 49:4) as well as his endeavour to convey the distinctive character of these divine self-declarations, since the expression is rendered as *ego ipse* on four occasions

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[81] The following similarities between VL and LXX can also be noted: i) VL renders the expression אני הוא as *ego sum* in Isa. 41:4, 43:10 and 46:4; ii) no renderings for אני הוא are provided in VL Isa. 43:13 and 48:12; iii) Isa. 52:6b is translated as *quia ego ipse qui loquebar, adsum.*

[82] See n.22 above.

[83] On Jerome's assessment of the LXX, see Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome,* 55-62; Kamin, 'The Theological Significance of the *Hebraica veritas* in Jerome's Thought', 243-53.

[84] Cf. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis,* 71-82.

[85] See, for example, Hayward, 'Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim', 105-23; Kedar, 'The Latin Translations', 331-34; Brown, *Vir Trilinguis,* 191-93. For a more cautious assessment of the extent of Jerome's contact with Jewish scholars, see Stemberger, 'Hieronymus und die Juden seiner Zeit', 347-64.

(Isa. 43:13; 46:4; 48:12; 52:6) [86] and once as *ego ipse sum* (43:10) [87] The use of *ipse* for הוא can thus be viewed as intended either to strengthen the preceding *ego* ('I myself') or even to convey the authoritative nature of this expression as a divine claim to uniqueness ('I am he' or 'I am the one').[88] Comparable translational methods can be detected in Jerome's translation of the declaration ואתה הוא in the Hebrew (*tu autem ipse es:* 'You are the same') and LXX versions (*tu autem idem ipse es;* σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ) of Ps. 101(102):28. An attempt at representing the use of הוא in these Deutero-Isaianic declarations also accounts for the renderings provided for the expansive forms in Isa. 51:12a (*ego ego ipse consolabor vos*) and 43:25a (*ego sum ego sum ipse qui deleo iniquitates tuas propter me*), the latter case revealing Jerome's familiarity with the technique of distinguishing between אני and אנכי.[89] Only one case of אני הוא is translated in the Vulgate as *ego sum* without *ipse* (Isa. 41:4: *ego dominus primus et novissimus ego sum).* This may indicate that Jerome interpreted this example of אני הוא as syntactically bound to אחרון (MT: וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים), although, since it also represents Jerome's first attempt at translating this distinctively Semitic idiom, he may have initially consulted the renderings provided by the LXX or *Vetus Latina* before subsequently offering his own interpretation of this expression in the form *ego ipse* (or *ego ipse sum*).

The rendering of Deut. 32:39 in the Vulgate should be considered in the light of Jerome's information about the chronological sequence of his translational activity. While the Vulgate version of Isaiah belongs to a period when Jerome sought to offer a faithful presentation of the source language, his translations of the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth and Esther stem from a later period (ca. 398-405 CE) and attest a greater flexibility when offering Latin translations of the Hebrew texts.[90] The Vulgate's version of Deut. 32:39ab stands as an important witness to this development, since close adherence to the Hebrew text now gives way to a more interpretative reading: *videte quod ego sim solus et*

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[86] Vg Isa. 43:13a: *et ab initio ego ipse;* 46:4a: *usque ad senectam ego ipse;* 48:12cd: *ego ipse ego primus et ego novissimus.* The Vulgate translates Isa. 52:6b as *quia ego ipse qui loquebar, ecce adsum,* but it interestingly renders David's emphatic statement in I Chron. 21:17 (ואני הוא אשר חטאתי) as *ego qui peccavi.*

[87] Vg Isa. 43:10cd: *ut sciatis et credatis mihi et intellegatis quia ego ipse sum.*

[88] On the use of *ipse* in Vulgate Latin, see Plater and White, *A Grammar of the Vulgate,* §99; Blaise, *Manuel du latin chrétien,* §§158, 168.

[89] Cf. Vg Isa. 43:11; 44:24; 46:9. The use of אנכי אנכי in Isa. 51:12 is either overlooked by Jerome or his Hebrew source text read אני אני. On his familiarity with Aquila's revision, see Barr, 'St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew', 284.

[90] Cf. *Ep.* 71:5. See Kedar, 'Latin Translations', 320f.

non sit alius deus praeter me ('See that I am the only one and there is no other god apart from me'). Jerome's innovative rendering seeks to convey the significance of the divine self-declaration in the Song of Moses as God's claim to exclusiveness, and the addition of *alius [deus]* is reminiscent of several targumic versions of v. 39b (see Chapter 3). This presentation of God's declaration may even reflect the views of those Jewish teachers with whom Jerome discussed the Hebrew text, for, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 3-4, the reading *[videte quod] ego sim solus* resembles the targumic and rabbinic assessment of the אני אני הוא pronouncement in Deut. 32:39.

5. The Samaritan Pentateuch and Targum

As the Samaritans regard the Pentateuch alone as their authoritative Scriptures, an evaluation of their preferred rendering of אני הוא must be limited to the textual evidence relating to Deut. 32:39. SamPent, the oldest surviving Samaritan text whose origins can probably be traced back to the second or first century BCE,[91] offers a rendering strikingly similar to MT. The only lexical, and rather unusual, difference between SamPent and MT occurs in v. 39d (ואנכי ארפא), for the former normally abandons the archaic אנכי in favour of אני (cf. also Exod. 22:26).[92] Even SamT, a less paraphrastic targum than its Jewish counterparts, provides a word-for-word translation of Deut. 32:39ab taking the form חזו כדו הלא אנא אנא הוא ולית אלהין עמי.[93] The use of עמי ('with me') reveals the literal character of this rendering, and it contrasts with the widespread modification of עמדי into an unequivocally monotheistic declaration in other Ancient Versions (LXX, PTgs, Pesh, Vg).

The fluidity of SamT's textual tradition is, nevertheless, indicated by a significantly different version of Deut. 32:39 in a 16th century manuscript (Vatican Cod. Samaritan No. 2). In addition to its use of אלהה instead of אלהין (v. 39b), this manuscript introduces such Hebraisms as אני אמית ואחיה (v. 39c) and renders v. 39a as חזו כדו הלא אני הוא.[94] These features are characteristic of

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[91] See Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge*, 68-74; Pummer, 'The Present State of Samaritan Studies: I', 43-45.

[92] Macuch, *Grammatik des samaritanischen Hebräisch*, §55aγ.

[93] On the date of SamT (ca. 250 CE) and the issue of its literalness, see Tal, 'The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch', 189f., 200-2.

[94] No particular importance should be attached to the omission of the second אני from this targumic reading of Deut. 32:39a; the fact that the twofold אני occurs in SamPent, as well as

later SamT manuscripts, resulting from the rise in the use of Hebrew in Samaritan synagogal worship. SamPent and SamT make no attempt to include interpretative embellishments in their renderings of Deut. 32:39, but this verse was ascribed particular significance in Samaritan circles, as will now be shown.

Excursus: The Interpretation of Deut. 32:39 in Samaritan Traditions

The central concern of this study is the interpretation of אני הוא in Jewish and early Christian texts, but the key role played by Deut. 32:39 in a variety of Samaritan traditions spanning several centuries certainly merits attention. This excursus will draw primarily on material from *Tibat Marqe,* more commonly known as *Memar Marqah,* which is an Aramaic compendium of exegetical, halakhic and liturgical traditions, and whose importance in Samaritan circles is only surpassed by SamPent and SamT.[95] It has been established by experts in the field of Samaritan studies that *Tibat Marqe* is a composite text made up of a variety of works attributed to Marqe.[96] Certain parts of the text, especially those traditions written in Samaritan Aramaic, stem from the late third or fourth century CE (particularly Book 2); many of its non-Aramaic traditions and those written in a contaminated Aramaic belong to a considerably later date, although they undoubtedly preserve older traditions.

Marqe, the author of the oldest sections of *Tibat Marqe,* and the poet 'Amram Dare were also responsible for a collection of fourth-century liturgical

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in all citations of this verse in *Tibat Marqe* and liturgical texts, indicates that its absence in SamT (MsE) is probably the result of a scribal error.

[95] See תיבת מרקה. *Tibat Marqe: A Collection of Samaritan Midrashim,* ed. Ben-Hayyim, based on a manuscript from Nablus (1531/32) and Ms. Kahle (1391). This long-awaited critical edition now replaces *Memar Marqah: The Teaching of Marqah,* ed. Macdonald, based on Ms BM Or 7923 (1738-41). Macdonald's edition was criticized by Ben-Hayyim (review in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 23, 1966, 185-91) for its complete standardization of the spelling, making it difficult to distinguish between the original text and later accretions, and for its lack of attention to textual variants. All the passages and references to *Tibat Marqe* in this excursus are drawn from Ben-Hayyim's edition.

[96] Ben-Hayyim, *Tibat Marqe,* v: '*Separate* works, all attributed to Marqe, were stored in a single chest in a public collection of books, perhaps that of a Samaritan synagogue in Damascus (whence come all the old manuscripts). An early scribe copied all the works contained in the chest into a single manuscript, thus creating - probably unintentionally - the source of what was later, as it was copied over and over again, understood to be a single, uniform literary text'. See Pummer, 'Einführung in den Stand der Samaritanerforschung', 32f.

hymns[97] which influenced later liturgical compositions intended for Samaritan festivals and sabbaths.[98]

Several of the midrashic traditions preserved in *Tibat Marqe* and the many allusions to Deut. 32 in liturgical hymns attest the sanctity of 'the great Song' (שירתה רבתה)[99] and the 'great saying' (מלה רבה)[100] of Deut. 32:39 for the Samaritans. In order to determine the significance of אני אני הוא in these texts, attention will be paid to three aspects arising from expositions of Deut. 32:39: i) its importance in Samaritan eschatology; ii) its role as the declaration of the one God; iii) the interpretative correlation of אהיה אשר אהיה and אני אני הוא.

i) Deut. 32:39 and Samaritan Eschatology

The great interest displayed in the Song of Moses in *Tibat Marqe* and liturgical texts results from their distinctive eschatological perspective, for the Samaritan doctrine of the Day of Vengeance and Recompense derives from the fact that SamPent and SamT read Deut. 32:35a as ליום נקם ושלם ('for the day...') whereas MT reads לִי נָקָם וְשִׁלֵּם ('mine is vengeance...').[101] This reading led to an interpretation of a significant part of the Song, especially God's promises of deliverance and punishment (vv. 35-42), as a description of divine future activity belonging to the sphere of 'cosmological transcendent eschatology'.[102]

A detailed description of the Day of Vengeance and Recompense is found in *Tibat Marqe* IV, a book which contains a series of homilies on the Song and whose concluding sections alone contain no less than twenty-nine citations of Deut. 32:39 in various forms. On this day, according to IV:93 (237a), 'the

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[97] See Tal, 'Samaritan Literature', 450-62.

[98] Cowley, *Samaritan Liturgy*, continues to be the most useful compilation of the earliest and later liturgical compositions (references in this excursus are to page and line numbers in Cowley's edition unless otherwise specified). See also Ben-Hayyim, *The Literary and Oral Tradition*, Vol. 3B, 41-371. Cowley, *Samaritan Liturgy*, xxxiv, offers the following brief survey of the three main periods of linguistic development in these liturgical texts: i) 4th century CE, when texts were written in a living Aramaic; ii) 10th and 11th centuries CE, when Aramaic was no longer the vernacular but continued to be used, mixed with Hebraisms, for the purpose of liturgy; iii) 14th century CE, when Hebrew was now mixed with Aramaisms (Ben-Hayyim refers to this hybrid language as 'Samaritan').

[99] *Tibat* II:36 (86b); Cowley, 42*25.

[100] *Tibat* IV:108 (246a).

[101] Cf. LXX Deut. 32:35: ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω, and the insertion of the phrase 'for the day of judgement' (ליום דינא) at the end of v. 34 in some targumic versions (O, N, FT-VP; cf. SifDeut §307).

[102] Dexinger, 'Samaritan Eschatology', 283. See further Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans*, 380-90. As this eschatological interpretation of Deut. 32:35 is already attested in SamPent, the concept of the Day of Vengeance must belong to a relatively early date.

Lord of the world will appear and proclaim עמי עורן ולא הוא אני אני'.[103] The first three words of this pronouncement correspond to HT (v. 39a), but they are followed by an Aramaic paraphrase that removes all potential ambiguity with the aid of the unparalleled rendering 'there is no *other* with me'.[104]

Important aspects of the Samaritan interpretation of Deut. 32:39 are disclosed by its citation in *Tibat Marqe* IV:93. The future self-revelation of God as the one who judges those gathered before him is evidently regarded as the climax of the Day of Vengeance. Book IV consistently portrays God as the supreme eschatological judge, and the inescapable verdict awaiting those who worship other gods is expressed in v. 39e: 'there is none who can deliver from my hand'.[105] Furthermore, the citation of v. 39ab substantiates the claim that God alone will carry out both reward and punishment, a feature which forms an integral part of the focus on God's unique sovereignty in *Tibat Marqe*. His self-manifestation on the Day of Vengeance with the declaration אני אני הוא will enable the world to know that he is the only God.

Several Samaritan liturgical hymns also illustrate this close link between Deut. 32:39 and the Day of Vengeance.[106] The most memorable depictions of the eschatological future with the aid of Deut. 32:39 belong to a comparatively late period in the history of Samaritan literary activity, although these hymns elaborate on some themes already well-established in earlier liturgical material. Thus, the eighth of the hymns attributed to Marqe and recited during the service for the Sabbath afternoon includes the statement: 'For he is the mighty one who stood over the substance of silence; he who will proclaim "I, I am he"' (Cowley, 23$_{12}$). The fourth-century poet 'Amram Dare depicts the future in

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[103] In a few cases, Moses himself pronounces Deut. 32:39 (*Tibat* IV:54 [209b]; IV:106 [245a]; IV:110 [246b]; Cowley, 78$_{023-24}$). But the description of Moses as one who spoke these words 'with the mouth of prophecy' (IV:106 [245a]) indicates that *Tibat Marqe*, at this point, is describing the first recital of the Song within its historical context, whereas the attention of the congregation is drawn to future declarations and acts belonging to God alone.

[104] Macdonald, *Memar Marqah*, II:182, 255, proposes that this Aramaic rendering of v. 39b has been taken from SamT, although none of the extant targumic mss. records this particular reading. It is more likely that ולא עורן עמי is an innovative paraphrase of v. 39b, as in the case of the statement ואין עמדי אל אחרי (Cowley, 516$_{9}$).

[105] *Tibat* IV:33 (196a); IV:42 (201b-202a); IV:110 (246b). The use of 'the hand of God' in his work of creation and acts of judgement is compared in IV:110 (246b).

[106] Liturgical texts closely associate Deut. 32:39 with the Day of Vengeance, either by citing the verse in full (Cowley, 213$_{13-15}$, 516$_{8-10}$, 859$_{4-6}$) or by selecting individual clauses (v. 39eab: 502$_{1-4}$; v. 39abc: 127$_{16-17}$), particularly v. 39a (515$_{31-32}$, 575$_{32-33}$, 595$_{7}$, 852$_{9}$, 857$_{18-19}$, 865$_{24-25}$), the words אני אני הוא (231$_{2}$, 422$_{7}$, 492$_{6}$, 350$_{3}$, 710$_{29}$, 856$_{1}$) or even simply אני אני (751$_{2}$, 2423$_{3-2431}$, 342$_{17}$, 392$_{19}$, 653$_{6}$, 730$_{7}$).

similar terms: 'Happy will be the world and its creatures when God proclaims "I, I am he". In battle God is unique, and there is no other god with him, and no stranger owns his place' (Cowley, 42$_{26-28}$). Despite the absence of explicit references to the Day of Vengeance, both these hymns - due to their condensed allusions to Deut. 32:39 - envisage a declaration belonging to a future setting.

A more complex issue is whether the Samaritan doctrine of resurrection is already linked to Deut. 32:39 in early liturgical material and in *Tibat Marqe*.[107] This question is clearly important in view of the use of this verse as a resurrection proof-text in several ancient Jewish traditions (see Chapters 3-4). The centrality of Deut. 32:39 in late Samaritan 'resurrection' traditions is well-attested, for the eighth stanza of *Shirat Haednah* ('Hymn of well-being') - attributed to the fourteenth-century poet Abisha ben Pinhas and recited during *Yom ha-Kippur* - contains a vivid description of the resurrection of the dead on the Day of Vengeance.[108] On this day, it is stated, God will destroy everything apart from Mount Gerizim and the Garden of Eden situated around it, and when the divine glory appears, all flesh will be struck with fear. God will pronounce the words of Deut. 32:39ab, and this leads Abisha to comment: 'And when he calls "See now" all places will shake in which the dead are buried', the earth will be split open and the dead will rise from their graves (Cowley, 51$_{532-33}$). This calling of the dead corresponds to the Samaritan concept of a 'day of standing' (יום המעמד) prior to divine judgement,[109] for the hymn proceeds with a description of Moses arising from the grave and interceding on behalf of Israel. Having accepted Moses' prayer for the righteous, God again pronounces the words of Deut. 32:39, this time in full (Cowley, 51$_{68-10}$):

שם יקרא בגדלו כמה הזכרי
ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא ואין עמדי אל אחרי
אני אמית ואחיי בכבודי ואוקרי
מחצתי ואנכי ארפא בגדלי וישרי
ואין מידי מציל ולא מן נקמי וצררי

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[107] See Bowman, 'Early Samaritan Eschatology', 68f. Cf. especially Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge*, 296f., who claims that *Tibat Marqe* is a collection of both priestly ('Garizim') and lay scholarly ('Synagoge') sources, and that only the latter source includes resurrection material. A more cautious approach is adopted by Dexinger, 'Samaritan Eschatology', 281-84; cf. also Isser, *The Dositheans*, 146-50, who regards the traditions about resurrection in *Tibat Marqe* as late interpolations.

[108] See Gaster, *The Samaritan Oral Law and Ancient Traditions I: Samaritan Eschatology*, 96-101; Bowman, 'Early Samaritan Eschatology', 63-72. Dexinger, 'Shira Yetima', 219, notes that Gaster erroneously attributes the title of the preceding hymn (*Shira Yetima*) to *Shirat Haednah* because both open with the same words.

[109] Cf. *Tibat* IV:93 (237a); Cowley, 35$_{01}$.

> Thereupon he will call out by his greatness, as is stated,
> 'See now that I, I am he, and beside me there is no other god'.
> 'I kill and I make alive' with my glory and honour,
> 'I have wounded and I will heal' with my greatness and righteousness.
> 'And there is none who can deliver from my hand' nor from my vengeance and distress.

This second embellished citation of Deut. 32:39 in Abisha's hymn describes the manner in which God is expected to carry out his role as eschatological judge. And as this eighth stanza subsequently portrays the righteous passing into the Garden of Eden and the sinners burning in a great fire, it seems that the poet has deliberately avoided citing v. 39cd until this part of the hymn in order to highlight its role as the scriptural expression *par excellence* of the two contrasting roles undertaken by God on the Day of Vengeance. In other words, 'I kill' signifies the final destruction of transgressors, but 'I make alive' denotes the everlasting blessings to be experienced by the righteous. Consequently, this hymn differentiates between two 'stages' in the use of Deut. 32:39 as a depiction of future eschatological events, for whereas God's initial declaration (v. 39a) brings about the resurrection of the dead in preparation for judgement, its subsequent pronouncement in full expresses the decisive acts carried out by God when both the righteous and unrighteous stand before him. These stages point, in all likelihood, to the existence of two originally independent interpretations of Deut. 32:39 stemming from different periods and combined by Abisha in his hymn. It is significant that the second, and probably later,[110] exegetical tradition linking v. 39c to divine activity after the initial raising of the dead bears closer resemblance to the citation of this verse in relation to the 'second death' in a late Jewish tradition in PRE 34 (see Chapter 4 §4) than to the more widespread distinction established in targumic and rabbinic traditions between the divine acts of bringing death to people in the earthly world and raising them to life in the eschatological future.

But to what extent does the close association established in *Shirat Haednah* between Deut. 32:39 and the doctrine of resurrection find expression in earlier Samaritan texts? Bowman, for example, proposes that Abisha 'took' his eighth stanza from the exposition of Deut. 32 in *Tibat Marqe* IV,[111] and although this may be partly true, specific points of contact between the use of v. 39c in both compositions need to be identified. Very few references are in fact made to

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[110] Cf. Macdonald, *Theology of the Samaritans*, 377

[111] 'Samaritan Eschatology', 67.

v. 39cd in *Tibat Marqe* and early liturgical texts, and these rare citations or allusions are often loosely linked to their context. The epithet אל הו ממית ומחיה (Cowley, 65228) certainly echoes v. 39c, but it appears in a late hymnic composition which focuses on divine names and attributes rather than eschatological judgement. The only exegetical comment on v. 39c in *Tibat Marqe* is recorded in IV:108 (246a): 'I kill every sinner and every one who deceives me and every false scripture that they say is from me, when it is not so. And I give life to all good [people] and the scripture they possess, which is from me and will return to me'. It is possible that this twofold innovative comment presupposes an eschatological scenario with God as judge, one subsequently adopted and transformed by Abisha into a dramatic illustration of God's activity on the Day of Vengeance. But to view this description of God 'giving life' to the righteous in terms of their resurrection is not the only possible interpretation of this pronouncement, and, even if the comment does presuppose the raising of 'the good' from the dead, recent analyses of the composite nature of *Tibat Marqe* indicate that this tradition probably belongs to a considerably later layer than the fourth-century material preserved in other parts of the work. Thus, the exposition of Deut. 32:39c in *Tibat Marqe* IV:108 does not in itself provide conclusive evidence that the doctrine of resurrection, firmly established by the time of *Shirat Haednah,* was embraced by much earlier generations of Samaritans.

ii) אני אני הוא as the Self-Declaration of the One God

The importance attached to Deut. 32:39 as the climactic expression of divine sovereignty in the eschatological future leads to its frequent citation in monotheistic declarations, for the commitment to confess the exclusiveness of God represents the first of the five tenets of the Samaritan creed. Repeated emphasis on God's changeless and everlasting nature as proof of his unity is, for example, not only associated with explanations of the divine name יהוה and the twofold אהיה of Exod. 3:14,[112] but with exegetical comments relating to the initial pronouncement in Deut. 32:39a: 'I, I am he, in the beginning and at the end' (אני אני הוא בשרוה ובעקבה, *Tibat Marqe* IV:107 [245a]).[113] Even the two words אני אני, cited as a concise representation of v. 39a, are often preceded or

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[112] The exegetical comment היה ויהיה is used for the tetragrammaton (Cowley, 3721, 34831, 46018) and Exod. 3:14 (*Tibat* 1:11 [9a]).

[113] Cf. *Tibat* IV:106 (245a): יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד שרוה ועקבה אני אני הוא. See further Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans,* 69-73.

followed by the phrase 'there is no second' (לא שני): 'God the Creator, with whom there is no second, who says אני אני'.[114] Hence, God's own declaration of his exclusive divinity in Deut. 32:39ab, together with Deut. 6:4 and 32:12b, provide a sound scriptural basis within Samaritan theology for worshippers to proclaim 'there is no God but one' (לית אלה אלא אחד).[115]

One particular tradition in *Tibat Marqe* IV:104 demonstrates the significance of Deut. 32:39a as an expression of God's own claim to exclusiveness within the context of the Day of Vengeance. Having described the trembling and fear experienced by all creatures as they await judgement, the divine pronouncement leads to a detailed midrashic exposition of אני אני הוא (243b-244a):

אני אני הוא הקעום על בראשית ועל טור סיני
אני אני הוא דהוית ולא הוה לבר מני
אני אני הוא דהוית ולא עדן ולא אתר
אני אני הוא דחיי עולם דילי
אני אני הוא דתלית ופרסת ביכילתי
אני אני הוא דנצבת גנתה ואשלית סדם
אני אני הוא <דאמליתי> וחסכת
אני אני הוא דכלה דילי ומעזרה לידי
אני אני הוא הממית לכל חי ומחיי לכל מאת
אני אני הוא המעזר הנקם לצרי

I, I am he - Lord of creation and Mount Sinai.
I, I am he - who was and there is no one apart from me.
I, I am he - who was - not in time or place.
I, I am he - to whom the life of the world belongs.
I, I am he - who raised up and spread out by my power.
I, I am he - who planted the Garden and uprooted Sodom.
I, I am he - who provided and spared.
I, I am he - to whom all belongs and to whom it will return.
I, I am he - who kills all living and makes alive all dead.
I, I am he - who recompenses my enemy with vengeance.

The main purpose of this poetic piece of interpretative exegesis is to highlight the theological implications of God's self-revelatory declaration (v. 39a). Whereas the first half of the passage deals with God's exclusive existence and emphasizes his transcendence and lordship over creation, the second includes descriptions of his ability to accomplish acts of deliverance and destruction, reward and punishment. By means of these embellishments a comprehensive

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[114] Cowley, 11126. See further, e.g., 3721, 34217, 6535-6, 7329-10.

[115] This formula occurs throughout *Tibat Marqe*, and is consistently used in both early and later liturgical texts. Macuch, 'Zur Vorgeschichte der Bekenntnisformel *lâ ilâha illâ llâhu*', 20-38, persuasively argues for the temporal priority of the Samaritan formula over its Islamic counterpart.

portrayal is offered of God's all-embracing activity, either with the aid of illustrative comments on the twofold אני (lines 1, 3, 5-9) or the content of the verse (v. 39ab in line 2; v. 39c in line 9;[116] v. 39e in line 10).

It is also significant that ten exegetical comments are included in this passage. In view of the importance attached to the 'Ten Words of Creation' in Samaritan traditions, and the fact that the Ten Commandments are interpreted as divine declarations related to a new creation within a salvific-historical context,[117] this innovative passage on אני אני הוא also seeks to present God's self-revelatory declaration on the Day of Vengeance as initiating a new creation.

iii) Historical (Exod. 3:14) and Eschatological (Deut. 32:39) Divine Revelation

Certain traditions in *Tibat Marqe* stress, moreover, that the eschatological divine self-revelation depicted in Deut. 32:39 finds its closest historical counterpart in the theophany described in Exodus 3:14. A tightly-knit midrashic section on the meaning of the declarations אני אני הוא and אהיה אשר אהיה is included in IV:55 (210b-211a) and closely resembles the ten-line exposition of Deut. 32:39.

אני אני הוא יתרבי אמורה מזוע עלמה
אהיה אשר אהיה פתח מדינת רוח
אני אני הוא פתח מדינת שאול
אהיה אשר אהוה פצה ושנק
אני אני הוא קטל וחוי
אהיה אשר אהיה אנשמת ואלעת
אני אני הוא פלטת ואבדת
אהיה אשר אהיה לישראל פרק מכל תשניק

I, I am he - Magnified be the speaker! The world trembles.
I am who I am - opened the city of relief.
I, I am he - opened the city of Sheol.
I am who I am - saved and punished.
I, I am he - killed and made alive.
I am who I am - I gave relief and I troubled.
I, I am he - I rescued and I destroyed.
I am who I am - delivered Israel from all affliction.

Four sets of comments are placed alternately in order to draw attention to the

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[116] This interpretation is different from the application of v. 39c encountered in the hymn of Abisha ben Pinhas, for the two antithetical statements are interpreted as denoting the divine act of killing all people in the earthly world and the subsequent act of raising all in preparation for judgement. This is closer to the depiction of the first 'stage' of resurrection on the Day of Vengeance.

[117] Bowman, 'The Exegesis of the Pentateuch', 247 n.19. See also *idem*, 'The Samaritan Ten Words of Creation', 1-9.

equal theological import of these two 'I' pronouncements. All the comments appended to אהיה אשר אהיה can be interpreted as focusing on God's historical intervention in the deliverance of Israel and the punishment of Israel's enemies. However, the embellishments attached to אני אני הוא depict God as the one who retrospectively assesses his activity on the Day of Vengeance, a day when the world will tremble at the opening of Sheol. The two divine 'I' declarations thus highlight God's manifold activity, for to announce that he can both deliver and destroy indicates that the author is eager to explain the twofold אהיה and the doubling of אני in similar terms. Also implicit in this correlation is the notion that divine acts of historical intervention serve as a paradigm for eschatological events, particularly as God, in a declaration preceding this exposition, announces: 'From the beginning the end has been prepared' (IV:54 [210b]).[118] This correspondence between past and future divine activity is also maintained in the section immediately following this poem in *Tibat Marqe*, and it opens with a recollection of an event linked to the Exodus (IV:55 [211a]):

> Woe to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians when this great name was revealed, and Moses the man entered Pharaoh's presence with it. He triumphed over his [Pharaoh's] might and terrified [him]. So when the True One will appear and the world will hear 'I, I am he', all the world will perish. Then the good will be delivered and all the evil ones will suffer retribution.

The fact that this short tradition follows a hymn focusing on אהיה אשר אהיה may imply that this formulaic expression is viewed as the divine name disclosed to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Admittedly, the connection between the poem and this passage on Moses' encounter with Pharaoh may be secondary, but a continuity between the two sections is presupposed on a redactional level by the initial reference to 'this great name' (אדן שמה רבה). Several Samaritan traditions interpret אהיה אשר אהיה as a divine name in its own right,[119] and its status as a designation for God is already implied in the preceding poetic section

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[118] A further tradition in *Tibat* IV:108 (245b) stresses the revelatory role of the divine אני by interpreting אני אני הוא as the single eschatological counterpart of the two self-revelatory formulas pronounced by God to Abraham and Moses: 'When he will speak, the whole world will listen at the same time. There is no life in it apart from he: "I, I am he". Abraham and Moses: Abraham the first of the righteous ones and Moses the highest of all prophets. "I, I am he" to the one and to the other. To Abraham he said: "I (אני) am El Shaddai" (Gen. 17:1), to Moses he said: "I (אני) am the Lord" (Exod. 6:2)'.

[119] *Tibat* I:25 (16a); II:55 (105a); IV:30 (193b). On the prominence of אהיה אשר אהיה in liturgical material, see Macdonald, 'The Tetragrammaton in Samaritan Liturgical Compositions', 40f.; on its use as a divine name in Samaritan phylacteries, see Bowman, 'Phylacteries', 534, 537.

where the two divine 'I' expressions (אהיה אשר אהיה and אני אני הוא) serve as the subject of individual statements (lines 2-5).

However, the main purpose of the tradition is to compare the awesome effect of the utterance of the divine name on Pharaoh with the terrible effect of the pronouncement of Deut. 32:39a upon the world on the Day of Vengeance (cf. Cowley, 515$_{31}$). Whereas the divine name with which Moses entered the presence of the Egyptian king had a devastating impact,[120] the consequence of God's own declaration of the words אני אני הוא on the Day of Vengeance will be even more powerful and destructive, for it will cause the whole world to perish in preparation for eschatological judgement. A further implication of this comparison is that God's future pronouncement of אני אני הוא is viewed as the eschatological counterpart of the name disclosed by Moses to Pharaoh.

The expositions of Deut. 32:39a cited above also offer important clues concerning the interpretation of אני אני הוא as a divine designation in certain Samaritan traditions. Several liturgical passages support this view, especially those cases where the initial part of the pronouncement (ראו עתה כי) is omitted so that the subsequent phrase, either אני אני הוא or simply אני אני,[121] can perform the function of a divine epithet. On some occasions the statement is reduced to אני אני with no indication given of its biblical context, but the phrase has undoubtedly been taken from Deut. 32:39a, for this is the only declaration in the Pentateuch where the divine אני is doubled. The most explicit example of the application of v. 39a as a designation for God occurs in a *Defter* hymn, where it appears among a variety of epithets preceded by אל:

אל אלהי האלהים . אל אדון האדונים . אל ארך אפים . אל אני אני הוא (61-2)

Further support for the distinctive role attributed to אני אני הוא in Samaritan exegetical and liturgical texts can be adduced from the fact that this utterance, like אהיה אשר אהיה of Exod. 3:14, is always cited in Hebrew. The tenfold exposition of v. 39a in *Tibat Marqe* illustrates this phenomenon, for each occurrence of אני אני הוא is followed by an interpretative statement composed in Aramaic. A distinction is also maintained in Samaritan texts between the Hebrew אני אני הוא and newly formulated divine 'I' statements; whenever an innovative pronouncement becomes the vehicle for God to highlight his own

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120 The overcoming of Pharaoh by the power of the divine name is stressed in an early Jewish tradition found in the fragments of Artapanus. For a discussion of this tradition, see Chapter 8 §5 below.

121 See Cowley 372$_{1}$: רם שם אני אני (cf. 297$_{32-33}$; 460$_{18-19}$). See also Macdonald, 'The Tetragrammaton in Samaritan Liturgical Compositions', 41-43.

words or deeds, the introduction is always phrased in Aramaic with the aid of אנה הוא or the compound form אנהו.[122] One such case occurs in a hymn by Marqe describing the giving of the Torah at Sinai which includes a paraphrase of Exod. 20:2-3: 'And a God of consuming fire came, proclaiming the Ten Commandments, beginning "You shall have no gods before me, [for] I am the Standing One" (אנה הוא קעימה[ד])'.[123] Not one example of אני אני הוא in translation or paraphrase can be found in Samaritan traditions.

In summary, Deut. 32:39 unquestionably serves as a divine statement of central importance in Samaritan theology. This is a verse whose pronouncement by God is envisaged by the Samaritans as projected into the eschatological future; he will declare אני אני הוא to the whole world in his role as judge on the Day of Vengeance and Recompense. Liturgical and exegetical traditions unanimously interpret this declaration as one pronounced by God alone, and it offers a succinct expression of his exclusiveness from beginning to end; its distinctiveness, as in the case of אהיה אשר אהיה, is secured in certain traditions by its interpretation as a divine self-designation.

The nature of the relationship between Samaritan and Jewish interpretations of Deut. 32:39 is more difficult to determine.[124] There are similarities between their application of this pronouncement as a monotheistic expression used by God himself to proclaim his unity and eternity, and it is certainly striking that the shift to an understanding of v. 39c as a description of the judgement of the righteous and unrighteous after their raising from the dead represents a late

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[122] Cf. *Tibat* I:4 (5ab), where God declares: 'I am he (אנהו) who gave life to Adam after death'. Several אתהו statements are addressed to God, particularly as a form of introduction in Marqe's hymns (e.g., אתהו אלהינו, אתהו רחמנה; see Cowley, 1725, 1823, 2118, 2215). Nevertheless, neither of these compound forms is imbued with exclusively divine force, as statements addressed to Moses are also introduced by אתהו (e.g., *Tibat* VI:48 [298b]). On this grammatical form, see Cowley, *Samaritan Liturgy*, II:xxxvii; Macuch, *Grammatik des samaritanischen Aramäisch*, §39aγ.

[123] Cowley, 511-2. Examples of אתה הו statements addressed to God are also attested: אתה הו אלהנן (Cowley, 20629) and אתה הו רחמנה (2084)

[124] There is evidence in early rabbinic traditions that the Samaritans and Jews continued to communicate with each other during the first and second centuries CE. Numerous references to the Samaritans, particularly in mishnaic traditions, imply a good knowledge of their religious practices; see Montgomery, *The Samaritans: The Earliest Jewish Sect*, 165-203; Schiffman, "The Samaritans in Tannaitic Halakhah", 323-50. See further Meeks, *The Prophet-King*, 216f., 257, 312-19. For the view that ties between Samaritans and Jews were finally broken during the third century CE, see Crown, 'Redating the Schism between the Judaeans and the Samaritans', 17-50.

phenomenon in both Samaritan and Jewish traditions. However, in addition to the fact that several of the passages considered in this excursus are considerably later than Tannaitic and Amoraic interpretations of אני אני הוא, common themes and emphases identified in Samaritan and Jewish expositions of Deut. 32:39 probably arise from independent reflection by both groups on a shared scriptural text. The extent to which targumic and rabbinic traditions offer their own particular interpretations of Deut. 32:39, especially when combined with analogous Deutero-Isaianic statements, will be the subject of the next chapters of this study.

Chapter Three

The Interpretation of אנה/אנא הוא in the Targumim

The Aramaic Targumim, which have become the subject of renewed scholarly interest during the past few decades, are among the most important witnesses to Jewish interpretative activity. While other Ancient Versions seek to provide faithful translations corresponding to the underlying Hebrew or Aramaic texts, the Targumim demonstrate a greater freedom in relation to the task of translating and expounding the Jewish Scriptures because their renderings were never intended to substitute or replace the original text.[1] For the purpose of this present study, an examination of the contribution of the Targumim to our understanding of ancient Jewish interpretations of אני הוא includes an analysis of the various targumic renderings of Deut. 32:39 (§1) and a study of the way in which the Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא statements have been presented in the Targum of Isaiah (§2). This is followed by a short survey of non-bipartite, sometimes innovative, אנה/אנא הוא formulations found in the Pentateuchal Targumim (§3) and in targumic poems associated with the recitation of biblical texts within a synagogal context (§4).

1. Targumic Renderings of Deuteronomy 32:39

Deut. 32:39 is one of those rare pentateuchal verses for which an interpretative translation is provided by all extant Targumim. The order in which these targumic renderings will now be examined does not presuppose a chronological

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[1] See Alexander, 'The Targumim and the Rabbinic Rules for the Delivery of the Targum', 23-26.

sequence of composition, but will proceed from the most literal to the more expansive translations. Such issues as the dating and interrelationship of the Pentateuchal Targumim have been addressed in detail in recent years,[2] and this section will also consider the extent to which certain elements in the targumic renderings of Deut. 32:39 can provide valuable information about the origin of their underlying exegetical traditions.

1.1 Targum Onqelos

חזו כען דאנא אנא הוא ולית אלה בר מני
אנא ממית ומחי מחינא ואף מסינא ולית דמן ידי משיזיב :

> See now that I, I am he, and there is no *god apart from* me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and *also* I heal; and there is none who can deliver from my hand.[3]

It is generally accepted that O is the most literal of the Pentateuchal Targumim, although its version of Deut. 32 forms a continuous midrashic commentary,[4] comparable to its translation of other poetic texts (Gen. 49; Exod. 15; Deut. 33).[5] However, O's rendering of Deut. 32:39 contains very little expansive or interpretative material,[6] and it functions in all likelihood as the response by God to the enemy's challenge for the God of Israel to make himself manifest (v. 37).[7] The opening words of this divine declaration are rendered literally by

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[2] See, e.g., York, 'The Dating of Targumic Literature', 49-62; Alexander, 'Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures', 243-47; Flesher, 'The Targumim', 41-51, 60-62.

[3] Italicized words denote additions to, or non-literal translations of, the HT.

[4] On O's midrashic elements as an abridgement of a fuller Palestinian tradition, see especially Vermes, 'Haggadah in the Onkelos Targum', 159-69; Bowker, 'Haggadah in the Targum Onkelos', 51-65. Among O's interpretative readings which correspond to, or form the basis of, expansive readings in the Palestinian Targumim are Deut. 32:2, 10, 24 (all PTgs) and 32:6, 14, 22, 32, 35 (PsJ alone).

[5] The only completely literal readings in O's version of Deut. 32 are to be found in vv. 1, 7, 8, 28, 29. In some cases, O deviates more considerably from HT than N/FT-VP (32:13, 14, 22, 40) and all PTgs (32:12, 20, 41, 42).

[6] The term 'expansive' is used here to denote embellishments 'detachable' from the translation, while the term 'interpretative' denotes translational deviations woven into the text which correspond formally to the underlying HT and cannot be extracted from the translation.

[7] In Chapter 1 §3 it was proposed that, despite the apparent ambiguity of ואמר, MT Deut. 32:37a describes Yahweh himself as challenging the gods of his enemies to deliver their worshippers (cf. LXX, 4QDeut^{q}). O offers the literal rendering ויימר, again without identifying its subject, although Drazin, *Targum Onkelos to Deuteronomy*, 287 n.107, proposes that O regards the enemy rather than God as the speaker in v. 37a (cf. also SamPent, N/FT-VNP/CG/ PsJ), because this targumic version renders אלהימו ('their gods') with the more 'respectful' term דחלתהון ('their fear') than the derogatory word מעות ('error' or 'idols').

O and the twofold divine אני is retained, but four modifications are made to its translation of the remaining parts of the pronouncement. One modification includes the use of the phrase בר מני (v. 39b), because the Hebrew term עמדי could be misinterpreted as presupposing the existence of other deities. O also removes another possible allusion to the existence of a plurality of gods by reading אלהים as the singular אלה (cf. O Deut. 4:7; 5:7; 29:12).[8] Furthermore, the form מחצתי ('I have wounded') is rendered as מחינא ('I wound'), with the result that v. 39d no longer refers to past acts of wounding (Israel), but becomes an even closer parallel to v. 39c as a succinct expression of God's all-embracing activity. The fourth interpretative element involves the translation of ואני as ואף before מסינא, which may reflect a deliberate movement away from the potential misuse of the twofold אני as scriptural proof that two different deities are at work; O thus clarifies the assertion that the one God (אנא) is responsible for the acts of killing, making alive, wounding and healing. By means of these subtle alterations, O accentuates the role of Deut. 32:39 as a climactic pronouncement by God of his exclusiveness and sovereignty.

1.2 Targum Neofiti, Fragment-Targumim and the Cairo Genizah Fragments

The text of N reads:[9]

חמון כען ארום אנה אנה בממרי הוא ולית אלהא אחרן בר מיני
אנה הוא דממית חיין בעלמא הדין ומחיי מיתי בעלמא דאתי
אנה הוא דמחי ואנה הוא דמסי ולית דמישיזיב מן ידיי

See now that I (1), I *in my Memra* (2), am he, and there is no *other god apart from* me; I am *he who* kills *the living in this world* and makes alive the dead in the world to come (3); *I am he who* wounds (4) and I *am he who* heals; and there is none who can deliver from my hands (5).

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[8] The stress on God's exclusiveness is evident throughout O Deut. 32. See in particular v. 17a where לא אלה is rendered by O/PsJ as דלית בהון צרוך ('for whom there is no need') and by N/FT-VN as דלית בהון ממש ('in whom there is no substance'). For the various attempts made by the Targumim to distinguish clearly between Yahweh (אלהים) and foreign gods, see Chester, *Divine Revelation,* 330-38. The designation אלהים for other gods/idols is usually avoided and replaced by טעות ('error'), but O Deut. 32:39 is one of the few instances where אלה is retained because of the direct comparison made between Yahweh and other gods (cf. all PTgs on Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7).

[9] N is used as base-text, but all major variants in FT-VN (Ms. Vatican Ebr. 440 and Ms. Nürnberg-Stadtbibliothek Solger 2.2[9]) are noted. This section also considers the CG fragment of Deut. 32 (TS A-S 72:77), included in *Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch,* ed. Klein, I:357 (MsDD). Different from most other CG texts, which are fragments of once complete texts, MsDD belongs to the same genre as FT, for it presents a collection of words/verses deliberately assembled together.

(1) FT-VN only include one אנא
(2) N(1) omits בממרי
(3) N(1) and FT-VN read לעלמא דאתי
(4) N(1) reads אנה מחי ('I wound')
(5) FT-V reads ידוי ('his hand'), FT-N reads ידי ('my hand'; cf. MT).

The CG text can be reconstructed as follows:

> See now that I, [I am he], and there is no *other god apart from* me; I kill [and I make alive]; *I am he who* wounds and I *am he who* heals; and there is none who can deliv[er from my hand].[10]

The number of divergences from HT increases considerably in N/FT-VN on Deut. 32:39, and these consist of short intersections within the translation and some interpretative modifications. The N and FT-VN renderings are therefore paraphrastic in character, but they also bear striking resemblance to each other.[11] Thus, with regard to the immediate context of this divine declaration, N/FT-VN and CG explicitly attribute the challenge expressed in v. 37 to the nations rather than to God (as in MT, LXX, 4QDeut^{q}), and, according to N's rendering, they declare: 'Where is the God of Israel (MT: אֱלֹהֵימוֹ), the Mighty One (תקיפה; MT: צור) in whom they trusted?'...Let him arise now and deliver them, and let him be a shield for them!' (vv. 37-38). This important interpretative clarification of the Hebrew text, indicating that God subsequently responds to the challenge of others, raises the issue whether those responsible for the renderings in N/FT-VN/CG (and O) assume that הוא [אנה אנה] in v. 39a possesses an antecedent from the preceding verses ('I, I, am he - the God of Israel who delivers his people'). This is certainly a plausible interpretation of the opening words of the divine declaration, although it cannot be ruled out that the targumic versions viewed v. 39a as a self-contained statement. Whichever interpretation is adopted, it is clear that these Pentateuchal Targumim regard the underlying אני אני הוא of the Hebrew text as a self-declaration by God which expresses his powerful and exclusive divinity; this assessment of the pronouncement is highlighted, moreover, by the various targumic modifications made to other elements within Deut. 32:39.

Neither N nor FT-VN tolerates the implication that other gods exist (עמדי)

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[10] For this reconstruction, see Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:356f.

[11] For the view that FT-VN represent one recensional family, see Klein, *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch,* I:26; Doubles, 'Towards the Publication of the Extant Texts of the Palestinian Targum(s)', 17f. Deut. 32:39 is not included in FT-P (Ms. Paris Bibliothèque nationale Hébr. 110), the other major FT recension, which is far more selective than FT-VN in its collection of targumic renderings for Deut. 32.

and they heighten this to a greater extent than O by inserting אחרן.[12] This also applies to the rendering provided by CG, although an assessment of its reading of אני אני הוא is hindered by the missing portion in the folio's right hand column. FT-VN also omit one of the two אני in v. 39a and insert במימרי before הוא ('I, in my Memra, am he'). This restriction to one אנא appears to be an attempt at overcoming potential theological problems caused by its twofold occurrence in the biblical text, particularly as this statement represents the only case in the Pentateuch where the divine אני is doubled; the attribution of the remaining אנא to the Memra also avoids the notion that those addressed can receive a visible revelation of God. N offers a slightly different solution by inserting במימרי after the second אנה, thereby attributing the twofold אנה to God and the Memra respectively. N's rendering of this divine self-declaration is quite unique in this respect, for rabbinic interpretations of v. 39a make a concerted effort to attribute both occurrences of אני to God by inserting innovative comments about his eternal presence and activity within the historical and eschatological spheres.[13]

The role of the Memra in these renderings of Deut. 32:39a has, in fact, been the subject of some discussion. Muñoz Leon, followed by Carmona,[14] attaches great importance to the evidence of N/FT-VN by stating that their inclusion of במימרי affirms 'la unicidad de Dios en su Verbo'.[15] And even though v. 39a in its original context unequivocally proclaims God's uniqueness, Muñoz Leon and Carmona are reluctant to separate this theme from the role attributed by N/FT-VN to the Memra; this leads them to produce the incorrect translation 'Yo soy único en mi Verbo',[16] which means that they ignore the second אנה (of N) and disregard the fact that הוא follows rather than precedes the reference to the Memra. A more acceptable explanation is offered by Chester, who attributes little significance to the Memra in N/FT-VN on v. 39a and regards it merely as N's attempt to resolve the problem of the twofold אני.[17] The secondary role of במימרי is also suggested by the fact that N/FT-VN do not associate the divine activity described in v. 39cd with the Memra, for the use of אנה הוא rather than

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[12] N Deut. 4:35: ליח אחרן בר מינה; CG Exod. 20:3: לא יהווי לכון אלה אחרן בר מני.

[13] For rabbinic responses to the doubling of אני in v. 39a, see Chapter 4 §§2, 3, 4, 6.

[14] Muñoz Leon, *Dios-Palabra,* 514f., 653; Carmona, *Targum y resurrección,* 51-59.

[15] *Dios-Palabra,* 515.

[16] To support his view that N focuses on God's uniqueness in his Word, Muñoz Leon draws attention to the rabbinic interpretation of the *Shema* in DeutR 2:31 (*ibid.,* 515), but this midrashic tradition does not even mention 'the word of God'.

[17] *Divine Revelation,* 206f.

אנה במימרי to introduce each action points to God alone as subject. Moreover, attention must be paid to an interlinear variant (I) in N which indicates that במימרי is to be omitted,[18] and although the gloss could denote an alternative reading, it probably belongs to the work of a corrector who either preferred a more literal rendering or wanted to stress that, in accordance with rabbinic expositions of Deut. 32:39a, both occurrences of אנה refer to God alone. The view that this interlinear variant in N represents a correction rather than an alternative reading is supported by the palaeographical work on Codex Neofiti carried out by Fitzmaurice Martin,[19] who demonstrates that the N text of Deut. 32:39 has been copied by the same hand as the one responsible for this section's glosses (mh10); the copyist initially included the reference to the Memra, then decided that it did not belong to N's rendering of v. 39a.

O interprets the two pairs of statements in v. 39cd as expressions of God's unique power to accomplish opposite acts, but substantial innovative material is included by N/FT-VN.[20] It is particularly noteworthy that new אנה הוא ד־ formulations are incorporated at this point. Although אנה הוא is evidently intended as the Aramaic equivalent of אני in the first (MT: אֲנִי אָמִית) and third (MT: וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא) cases, the insertion of the formulation אנה הוא דמחי (MT: מָחַצְתִּי)[21] points to the grammatical function of these statements as cleft sentences,[22] which, in this particular context, highlights the exclusive nature of God's claims.[23] The presence of אנה הוא ד־ declarations linked to participial forms in N/FT-VN (v. 39cd) closely resemble the form of the initial divine pronouncement (אנה אנה הוא), thereby establishing an unifying link between God's own declaration of his sovereignty (v. 39a) and the endorsement it

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[18] The copyist inserts הוא above במימרי to signify its omission, as becomes clear from an inspection of the facsimile of N (*The Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch: Codex Vatican Neofiti I*, II:441).

[19] 'The Palaeographical Character of Codex Neofiti I', 15-29.

[20] Some words are missing from CG, but the lacuna is of insufficient length for the text to have included the N/FT-VN expansions.

[21] N(I) reads אנה מחי (instead of אנה הוא דמחי) for מחצתי, because the copyist only uses אנה הוא where HT reads אני.

[22] Cf. Targum 1 Chron. 21:17 where similar אנא הוא ד־ constructions are used to accentuate that it is David who spoke (הלא אנא הוא דאמרית; MT: הֲלֹא אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי) and sinned (ואנא הוא דחבית; MT: וַאֲנִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר־חָטָאתִי). See also N/FT-PVNL Deut. 32:35: ואנה הוא דמשלם. On the use of cleft sentences in N, see Golomb, 'Nominal Syntax in the Language of Codex Vatican Neofiti I', 184-94; *idem*, *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti*, 212-17.

[23] Klein, *Fragment-Targums*, II:186: 'It is I who smites and it is I who heals' (for FT-V Deut. 32:39d); cf. Le Déaut and Robert, *Targum du Pentateuque IV: Deutéronome*, 276: 'C'est moi qui frappe et c'est moi qui guéris' (for N Deut. 32:39d).

receives from emphatic expressions of his all-embracing activity (v. 39cd). The repetition of אנה הוא also serves as a device which effectively overcomes the problems of the twofold אנה at the beginning of the pronouncement. The technique of developing innovative אנה הוא declarations to sustain the central message of divine unity is also encountered in several later rabbinic comments in Hebrew on Deut. 32:39 (see Chapter 4 §§4, 6), and it implies that these expanded targumic אנה הוא formulations possess a more significant role in relation to Deut. 32:39 than simply as the grammatical form required by the language of PTgs to provide a correct rendering of the underlying Hebrew text.[24]

N/FT-VN do not present the acts described in v. 39c as an antithetical pair, because the insertion of references to 'this world' and 'the world to come' transforms the statement into a declaration that God, and he alone, causes death and subsequently makes alive. This amounts to a theological interpretation not expressed by O in its version of v. 39, but it does represent a view that became prevalent from the last centuries BCE onwards, in that Deut. 32:39c can be interpreted as, or modified into, a proclamation by God of his raising of the dead (cf. IV Macc 18:18-19).[25] The sequence of divine acts described in v. 39c means that it also lends itself to the role of resurrection proof-text in several rabbinic traditions (see Chapter 4 §§1, 4, 6).

A comparison of the interpretative renderings of Deut. 32:39 provided by N and FT-VN (and partly CG) reveal some striking similarities pointing to their dependence on a basic source,[26] one which intensifies the emphasis on God's unity, reflects Jewish efforts to account for the doubling of אני (v. 39a) and attempts, with the aid of new אנה/אנא הוא formulations, to highlight the close link between the pronouncement of אני אני הוא by God and the subsequent assertions regarding his activity (v. 39cd). The frequent references already made in this section to analogous rabbinic traditions to be discussed in Chapter 4 indicate that the source(s) underlying N/FT-VN on v. 39 are, in all likelihood, directly related to these midrashic traditions. Common emphases include the heightening of the theme of divine exclusiveness and the explicit denial of the

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[24] For a recent description of the language of PTgs as 'Jewish Targumic Aramaic', see Kaufman, 'Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums', 120-23.

[25] See now Sysling, *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim*, especially 242-46 on Deut. 32:39.

[26] For an important source-critical attempt at discovering the 'synoptic core' of the expansive elements in PTgs on Deut. 32, see Flesher, 'Translation and Exegetical Augmentation in the Targums to the Pentateuch', 60-85. See further *idem*, 'Mapping the Synoptic Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch', 247-53.

existence of other deities (see Chapter 4 §§2-6), and the focus on divine acts embracing the historical and eschatological spheres (§§2.1, 4, 5), particularly in connection with resurrection (§§1, 4, 6).

Without anticipating the results of the assessment of rabbinic interpretations in the next chapter, it would, nevertheless, be useful at this point to consider whether the presence of parallel themes aids one in the task of dating the interpretative and expansive elements incorporated into N/FT-VN renderings of Deut. 32:39. Chester is of the opinion that N/FT-VN reflect a midrashic development stemming from the Amoraic period, similar to SifDeut §329 where a number of heretical ideas are explicitly refuted.[27] Undoubtedly, these themes are embedded in midrashic traditions belonging to the Amoraic period and later (see Chapter 4 §§4-6), but could they stem from an even earlier period? Although no exact parallel to the N/FT-VN renderings exists in rabbinic traditions, the application of Deut. 32:39 as an effective monotheistic and resurrection proof-text is already attested in texts which are probably of Tannaitic origin (see Chapter 4 §§1, 2.1). It does not necessarily follow that N/FT-VN on Deut. 32:39 should themselves be dated to the Tannaitic period, but there is no aspect of their interpretation of this verse which cannot be traced back to this early stage of Jewish exegetical activity.

1.3 Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

כד יתגלי מימרא דיי למפרוק ית עמיה יימר לכל עממייא
חמון כדון ארום אנא הוא דהוויי והוית ואנא הוא דעתיד למהוי
ולית אלקא חורן בר מיני אנא במימרי ממית ומחי מחיתי ית עמא
בית ישראל ואני אסי יתהון בסוף יומיא ולית דמשזיב מן ידי גוג
ומשיריתיה דאתן למסדרא סדרי קרבא עמהון :

When the Memra of the Lord will be revealed to redeem his people, he will say to all the nations: 'See now that I am he *who is and was, and* I *am he who is to be,* and there is no *other god apart from* me; I *in my Memra* kill and make alive; I have wounded *the people of the house of Israel* and I will heal *them at the end of days;* and there is none who can deliver from my hand *Gog and his hosts when they come to set up battle-lines against them'.*

Many of the exegetical comments preserved in PsJ Deut. 32 are related to those encountered in the other Pentateuchal Targumim, but for v. 39 it presents a far

[27] *Divine Revelation,* 206f.

more elaborate rendering of the text.[28] This is shown by its characteristic use of an introductory commentary to precede the translation of the divine pronouncement,[29] which, together with most of its expansive comments on this verse, can be easily detached from the basic translation.[30] The role of this introductory expansion must therefore be examined, particularly the extent to which it offers a reinterpretation of the declaration in its biblical context. The main purpose of this introduction is to prepare for the scene of divine self-revelation; the use of the imperfect forms יתגלי and יימר indicates that PsJ now looks ahead,[31] in a far more explicit manner than other PTgs on this verse, to God's future manifestation.[32] The declaration that the Memra of the Lord will be made manifest also forms a significant development from N's insertion of the Memra to explain the second אני of v. 39a, but it does resemble the attempt made by FT-VN to avoid the notion of God's visible self-revelation. Another prominent feature in the introduction is the focus on God as the redeemer of his people (למפרוק ית עמיה); liberation from Egypt was God's principal act of redemption, but he will deliver again when he reveals himself to Israel.[33] This implicit correlation between past and future salvific acts, already a characteristic feature of the Deutero-Isaianic application of אני הוא, is supported by the fact

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[28] In some cases PsJ makes additional embellishments to the expansive readings of N/FT-V(P) (e.g., vv. 10, 23, 36, 40), but in others it records unique expansions (e.g., vv. 7-9, 13, 24-26, 33-35, 39).

[29] Cf. PsJ Gen. 25:11; Lev. 9:23; Deut. 32:9, 23, 24. See Shinan, *The Aggadah in the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch,* I:39-83; Samely, 'The Background of Speech', 251-60; Shinan, '"Targumic Additions" in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', 147-50.

[30] For further striking examples, see PsJ Deut. 32:2, 8, 11, 25, 31, 36. See Alexander, 'Jewish Aramaic Translations', 229-34; *idem,* 'Rabbinic Rules', 17-19.

[31] For a detailed study of the significance of אתגלי in the Pentateuchal Targumim, see Chester, *Divine Revelation,* especially 184-219, where he attributes its use in PsJ Deut. 32:39 to a limited category of passages in which eschatological (and, in some cases, apocalyptic) themes are confined to secondary developments (cf. PsJ Exod. 12:42 and Num. 24:23 which use אתגלי with God or his Memra as subject within an eschatological context).

[32] Sysling, *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim,* 245, fails to recognize the focus on the future indicated by the verbal forms יתגלי and יימר, and he consequently interprets PsJ Deut. 32:39 as set within the context of the theophany to Moses (Exod. 3) and the promise of deliverance from Egypt. Sysling thus erroneously translates the opening statement as: 'When the Word of the Lord revealed itself in order to redeem his people, he said to all peoples..'. There are certainly some interesting parallels between PsJ Deut. 32:39 and Exod. 3:14 (see below), but it does not follow that PsJ links these pronouncements to the same historical setting.

[33] The verb פרק is often used in the Targumim to denote deliverance during the Exodus (see N Exod. 6:6, 7; N/PsJ Exod. 20:2). Cf. also PRE 34 (discussed in Chapter 4 §4): 'I am he who redeemed you from Egypt; I am he who in the future will redeem you at the end of the fourth kingdom'. This PRE text is particularly significant, because some of its exegetical remarks are closely related to PsJ Deut. 32:39 (see further below).

that PsJ Deut. 32:39 closely resembles the introduction to the account of God's future revelation in the poem of the Four Nights incorporated into PsJ Exod. 12:42 (כד איתגלי למפרוק ית עמא בית ישראל). In both cases, the eschatological self-manifestation of God forms the culmination of his creative-salvific activity as already experienced by Israel.

Furthermore, this introduction to v. 39 innovatively announces that the divine proclamation will be addressed to the nations. This accords with PsJ's attribution, as in other PTgs, of the challenge in vv. 37-38 to the adversaries who scornfully cast doubt upon the power of Israel's God: 'And the enemy will say, "Where is their Fear of Israel (האן הוא דחלתהון דישראל), the Mighty One in whom they trusted...Let him be for you a protection by his Memra!"'. The scenario is carried forward to v. 39, in the sense that God's pronouncement 'to the nations' forms a dramatic response to this challenge, and the nations are called upon to bear witness to his acts of judgement, as well as the restoration of Israel, so that they will be forced to acknowledge that he is the only God.

PsJ divides אני אני הוא into two parts and, in contrast to N/FT-VN, accentuates the doubling of אני in the base text by interpreting it as a succinct assertion of God's everlasting presence in the present, past and future: 'I am he who is and was, and I am he who is to be'. In one respect, the use of a tripartite formula as an interpretation of the twofold אני seems strange; the three-component exegesis may, alternatively, have been inspired by an understanding of הוא as a representation of the tetragrammaton. In its role as the opening part of God's pronouncement, this formula also expresses the ceaseless and active presence of God with Israel because, as demonstrated by the subsequent statements, the one who makes himself manifest has already 'wounded' Israel in the past, but he will 'heal' his people in the future (v. 39d). The significance attributed by commentators to PsJ's exposition of אני אני הוא has extended far beyond its present targumic context, and McNamara in particular has maintained that it amounts to the closest parallel to the tripartite formula ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος (Rev. 1:4, 8) and its variant forms (4:8; 11:17; 16:5),[34] which are themselves a form of exegesis of the Divine Name. McNamara claims that the use of דהווי, the only occurrence of this construction in PsJ, is equivalent to ὁ ὢν, and that the form והוית corresponds to the grammatically strange ὁ ἦν. The fact that the expression עתיד למהוי would be closer to ὁ ἐσόμενος than ὁ ἐρχόμενος does not deter McNamara from

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[34] *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch,* 97-117. Cf. also Vermes, *Buber on God and the Perfect Man,* 124.

concluding that Rev. 1:4 and 8 present a 'servile rendering' of PsJ's tripartite formula,[35] and he proposes that 'it is not to be excluded that the Apocalypse is directly dependent on TJI Dt 32,39 in its use of it, although it is possible that both texts are dependent on the same early liturgical tradition'. The first part of this statement must be rejected on the grounds that it cannot be maintained that PsJ's use of this tradition stems from a period prior to the composition of Revelation.[36] Due to the fluidity of targumic texts, and since PsJ underwent much development before its literary crystallization, no objective criteria can be established to attribute this part of PsJ Deut. 32 to the first century CE.[37] Nevertheless, this memorable interpretation of אני אני הוא amounts to the citation in PsJ of a much earlier exposition to stress God's eternal presence, not necessarily linked originally to Deut. 32:39 (see below), but one now used within an extended targumic comment which also incorporates later material. The remaining interpretative features in PsJ Deut. 32:39 indeed find their closest parallels in post-Amoraic material.

A proper assessment of PsJ's use of this tripartite formula for אני אני הוא is also aided, to a far greater extent than McNamara allows, by the extant targumic and rabbinic renderings of Exod. 3:14. While no other Jewish tradition relating to Deut. 32:39a incorporates the rhythmic formulation in this form, close parallels occur in expositions of Exod. 3:14, particularly in PsJ:

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[35] McNamara, *New Testament*, 112, regards ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a Christian addition. Delling, 'Zum gottesdienstlichen Stil der Johannes-Apokalypse', 125, argues that ὁ ἐρχόμενος arises from the emphasis in the book of Revelation on God's future active presence, particularly in his role as judge (cf. 1:7). See also Büchsel, 'εἰμί, ὁ ὤν', 396-98; Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, 29f.

[36] McNamara, *New Testament*, 112-17, forwards two arguments in favour of the early dating of some traditions in PsJ Deut. 32-33. First, it is claimed that PsJ Deut. 32:8 corresponds more closely to Qumran/LXX readings than MT, although Chester, *Divine Revelation*, 103f., 210 n.79, convincingly demonstrates that PsJ probably preserves a late tradition more similar to PRE 24. Secondly, McNamara argues that the description of 'Yohanan the High Priest' in PsJ Deut. 33:11 forms an allusion to John Hyrcanus. However, Schaller, 'Targum Jeruschalmi I zu Deuteronomium 33,11', 52-60, argues that this interpretative description stems in all likelihood from the Gaonic period and represents 'eher das End- als das Anfangsstadium targumischer Entwicklung' (*ibid.*, 60). See also Shinan, 'Post-Pentateuchal Figures', 136f., who proposes that יוחנן in PsJ Deut. 33:11 is an orthographical error for אהרן.

[37] For the view that PsJ's final redaction took place during the seventh/eighth century CE, particularly in the light of references to Muhammad's wife and daughter (PsJ Gen. 21:21), see Schäfer, 'Bibelübersetzungen II: Targumim', 222. But see Hayward, 'The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some Comments', 29, and *idem*, 'Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic', 82-93, where he claims that PsJ's portrait of Ishmael agrees with descriptions of pre-Islamic Arabs.

ואמר ייי למשה דין דאמר והוה עלמא אמר והוה כולא ואמר כדנא תימר לבני ישראל אנא הוא דהוינא ועתיד למיהוי שדרני לותכון

And *the Lord* said to Moses: '*He who spoke and the world came into being; (he who) spoke and all came into being'*. And he said: 'Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: "*I am he who is and who will be*" has sent me to you'.

PsJ, like most targumic versions of Exod. 3:14, offers paraphrastic interpretations of אהיה אשר אהיה in v. 14b (cf. Ngl1/Ngl2/FT-PVB)[38] and the single אהיה of v. 14d (cf. N).[39] These targumic traditions reflect various Jewish attempts at providing a correct translation of the two enigmatic formulas,[40] although only PsJ from among the Targumim uses different interpretative traditions for each of the two declarations. PsJ's comment on v. 14b is closely related to explanations of אהיה אשר אהיה presented by Ngl1/FT-PVB (N on 14d): 'He who said to the world "Be!" and it came into being (דהוי והוי; Ngl1: דהוי והוה), and who will say to it "Be!" and it will come into being (דהוי והוי; N: דהוי ויהוי)'. These targumic renderings link אהיה with God's command for the world to come into existence, a theme also reflected in the targumic epithet מן דאמר והוה עלמא ('he who spoke and the world came into being').[41] A variation on this theme is the claim that God created the world with ten sayings,[42] but a more specific point of contact with אהיה of Exod. 3:14 must be identified in order to account for the targumic application of a tradition about creation by a divine command to the theophany in the burning bush.

Ngl1/FT-PVB explain the twofold אהיה of v. 14b as God's command in

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[38] The importance attached to Exod. 3:14 in the Targumim is reflected by the fact that two quite different marginal variants exist for this verse in N. The Ngl1 variant is found in the left margin and Ngl2 on the right side of the column (see *Codex Vatican Neofiti I*, I:115). See further n.48 below.

[39] אהיה אשר אהיה (v. 14b) is preserved in Hebrew by O and N, as is the case with the final אהיה (v. 14d) in O/Ngl1/FT-VB, thereby attesting to the sanctity of these formulas in Jewish circles (cf. j.Meg. 1:9 [71d] and b.Shebu 35a, where it is stated that אהיה אשר אהיה is among the divine names one is forbidden to erase). These formulations are also left untranslated by Pesh and SamT.

[40] Exod. 3:14b is listed as one of the names of God in the following rabbinic traditions: Mek Kaspa 4 on Exod. 23:13 (H-R, 332); ARNA 34 (Schechter, 99); ARNB 38 (Schechter, 101); MHG on Gen. 46:8 (Margulies, 774).

[41] Cf. FT-PVN Gen. 11:2; FT-VN Gen. 21:33; and the declaration אנא בְרֵא כל בְמֵאמַר ('I created all with a word') in an acrostic poem linked to Exod. 20:2 in CG (MsG; Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts*, I:279). For the parallel rabbinic epithet מי שאמר והיה העולם, see Mek 'Amaleq 1 on Exod. 18:6 (Horovitz-Rabin, 193); b.Sanh 19a; b.Meg 13b.

[42] Cf. m.Abot 5:1; b.RH 32a; b.Meg 21b; GenR 17:1.

relation to the first and second (eschatological) creation, an interpretation that is dependent on certain theological and grammatical considerations. First, several targumic traditions develop a thematic correlation between God's creative and salvific activity. A significant line of interpretation occurs, for example, in the poem of the Four Nights linked to Exod. 12:42 (N/FT-VN/PsJ) or Exod. 15:18 (FT-P), in which God's self-manifestations during creation, his covenant with Abraham, his deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as well as future eschatological deliverance, are listed as four decisive salvific events which have or will take place during Passover night. Since this poem interprets the creation of the world as a salvific act,[43] it cannot be ruled out that the emphasis on divine creative activity in some targumic versions of Exod. 3:14bd (N/Ngl1/FT-PVB) is meant to serve as a reminder to Moses that God's past work in creation provides assurance of his future saving intervention. A link is accordingly established between God's work in the creation of the world and his work in the 'creation' of Israel as his people. Secondly, the association of אהיה with the divine command 'Be!' may find its origin in God's word 'Let there be' (יְהִי) in Gen. 1,[44] although extant targumic renderings of Gen. 1:3, 6, 14, do not use the same verbal forms as those employed for Exod. 3:14.[45] Thirdly, these targumic traditions may view אהיה as a causative form meaning 'I cause to be', and although it has been demonstrated that הָיָה is never used in a causative sense in Biblical Hebrew and cannot explain the original meaning of יהוה or its interpretation in Exod. 3:14,[46] de Vaux notes that the causative of הוה/הוי can be used in Aramaic.[47] One or possibly a combination of these factors must account for the unique renderings of Exod. 3:14bd provided by N/Ngl1/FT-PVB. The comment in PsJ on v. 14b represents a variation of this tradition, for, by supplementing the epithet דין דאמר והוה עלמא with the words אמר והוה כולא, it focuses on different objects rather than two stages of God's creative activity; this is probably due to the twofold use of the same verbal form in the Hebrew

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[43] See R. Le Déaut, *La nuit pascale,* 88-100, 115-19, 214-37.

[44] Fossum, *The Name of God,* 78f.; cf. Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence,* 19, 52.

[45] For example, FT-P uses jussive rather than imperative forms in Gen. 1:3 (יהי), 1:6 (יהוי) and 1:14 (יהוון).

[46] The view that 'Yahweh' is causative ('he who causes to be') is primarily associated with Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity,* 259, and Cross, 'Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs', 253. Their assumption that the original formula read אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה in Exod. 3:14 is rejected by de Vaux, 'Revelation of the Divine Name', 64: 'To correct the Massoretic text in order to make it conform to a hypothesis is totally arbitrary'. Cf. also Mowinckel, 'The Name of the God of Moses', 121-33; Kosmala, 'The Name of God', 103-6.

[47] 'Revelation of the Divine Name', 62f.

base text. What is, however, of particular significance for this present study is the fact that clear differences exist between the interpretations adopted by the Pentateuchal Targumim in their renderings of Exod. 3:14 and their assessment of אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39a.

The one exception, of course, is PsJ's interpretative explanation of אהיה (v. 14d), 'I am he who is and who will be', which forms a close parallel to its rendering of Deut. 32:39a. This formula underlines God's eternal presence rather than his creative activity,[48] and, from the perspective of the theophany in the burning bush, highlights its paradigmatic significance as an expression of assurance that God will continue to act on behalf of Israel.

But what is the relationship between the bipartite formula in PsJ Exod. 3:14 and its tripartite counterpart in PsJ Deut. 32:39? It is significant, in this respect, that the formulation represents an isolated Jewish interpretation of Deut. 32:39a, whereas PsJ Exod. 3:14d (אנא הוא דהוינא ועתיד למיהוי) possesses a number of rabbinic parallels. A comment attributed to R. Isaac (PA3) in ExR 3:6 attempts to explain the three occurrences of אהיה with the aid of the paraphrase אני שהייתי ואני הוא עכשו ואני הוא לעתיד לבוא. And in MidTeh 72:1 (162b), R. Yose in the name of R. Hanina offers an explanation presupposing the rabbinic association between the tetragrammaton and the divine attribute of mercy: 'You find אהיה written three times, and this means that the Holy One, blessed be he, said: "With mercy I created my world, and with mercy I will guide it, and with mercy I will return to Jerusalem"'.[49]

Although these midrashic expositions offer a threefold interpretation of the occurrences of אהיה in Exod. 3:14, the exegetical comment in ExR 3:6 is sufficiently similar to the bipartite formulation in PsJ Exod. 3:14 to substantiate

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[48] A second marginal variant in N (Ngl2) on Exod. 3:14b also highlights the theme of God's eternally active presence rather than his calling of the world into existence (N/Ngl1). Ngl2 offers two (originally independent) interpretations of אהיה אשר אהיה: 'I was before the world was created (אנא הוויתי עד לא איתברא עלמ[א]), and I was after the world was created. I am he who was your aid (אנא הוא דהוויתי בסעדכון) in the captivity of the Egyptians, and I am he who will be your aid (ואנא הוא דעתיד למהווי בסעדכו[ן]) in every generation'. Both comments are closely related to midrashic traditions on Exod. 3:14, while no close midrashic parallels can be adduced for the targumic interpretations of Exod. 3:14 in terms of creative activity (N/Ngl1/FT-PVB). The first comment in Ngl2, which combines an interpretation of אהיה as an expression of God's eternal presence with the theme of creation, corresponds to a tradition only recorded in late midrashic collections (ARAא on י״ה [*BM*, II:364]; MHG on Exod. 3:14 [Margulies, 54f.]). The second comment associates אהיה אשר אהיה with God's salvific acts and finds parallels in earlier rabbinic traditions (cf. b.Ber 9b; ARNB 38 [Schechter, 101]; ExR 3:6).

[49] See further Thoma, 'Der eine Gott Israels als Kraft und Ziel der Geschichte', 87-89.

the claim that they both draw from the same interpretative base. It should also be borne in mind that PsJ is seeking to explain the single אהיה of v. 14d rather than its three occurrences in total. However, due to the absence of this formulation in other targumic and rabbinic explanations of Deut. 32:39, it can be deduced that, at a relatively late stage of interpretative activity, אני אני הוא of Deut. 32:39a was explained in PsJ with the aid of a paraphrastic formula normally reserved for the threefold אהיה of Exod. 3:14bd. This proposal is supported by the fact that other (earlier) targumic versions offer quite different explanations of Deut. 32:39, on the one hand, and Exod. 3:14, on the other. Furthermore, the same tendency to unify these distinct exegetical traditions can be detected in later rabbinic texts, for SER 24 and ARAא (see Chapter 4 §§5, 6) combine comments applied to אני אני הוא in early traditions ('I am he in this world; I am he in the world to come') with remarks linked to Exod. 3:14 ('I am he before the world was created..').[50] If PsJ Deut. 32:39 has borrowed a formula originally devised for Exod. 3:14, it provides further evidence of the tendency in PsJ to create 'internal unity' by repeating interpretative renderings, ones drawn from well-known midrashic texts, for different biblical verses.[51]

A further distinctive feature of PsJ Deut. 32:39 is its assertion that the acts of killing and making alive are fulfilled through the agency of the Memra, but, in contrast to N/FT-VN, it does not use v. 39c to distinguish between divine activity in this world and the world to come. PsJ's innovative comments are reserved for v. 39d, because the description of God's act of healing is used to highlight his intervention 'at the end of days', namely at the end of the present world order in preparation for the world to come.[52] This rendering of v. 39cd does not, therefore, refer explicitly to resurrection, but states that a final conflict will result in the judgement of enemies and the restoration of Israel.

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[50] This means that PsJ Deut. 32:39 does reflect 'developed interpretations of the enigmatic divine name "I am (who I am)"' (Chester, *Divine Revelation,* 207), but it does not necessarily follow that Exod. 3:14b, as Chester claims, also provides the relevant background to the much earlier Tannaitic interpretations of אני הוא. Texts in Mek and MRS (see Chapter 4 §2.1) emphasize God's active presence with the aid of twofold exegetical statements, but they can quite adequately be interpreted in the light of the doubling of אני in Deut. 32:39a and other twofold אני pronouncements serving as proof-texts in both traditions (Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12). Despite certain points of contact between the rabbinic expositions of Deut. 32:39a and Exod. 3:14b (the theme of divine presence in the past/future), other aspects are not applied by the rabbis to the twofold אהיה of Exod. 3:14b (Egypt/Red Sea; this world/world to come).

[51] See Shinan, 'The "Palestinian" Targums - Repetitions, Internal Unity, Contradiction', 74-77.

[52] On בסוף יומא see, for example, PsJ Gen. 35:21; Exod. 4:13; 40:11; Num. 25:12. See also Kosmala, 'At the End of the Days', 36f.; Syrén, *The Blessings in the Targums,* 119-23.

PsJ's interpretation of the divine acts of wounding and healing is, in fact, much closer to the meaning of the original Hebrew text than to the parallel participial clauses offered by O/N/FT-VN, particularly as the perfect form מחצתי denotes an act belonging to Israel's past. Moreover, PsJ clearly regards God's salvific activity as directed towards Israel alone, thus reiterating the initial setting of the scene ('to redeem his people').[53] There is no doubt, as Chester notes, that this restriction of restoration to Israel stands apart from rabbinic references to a general resurrection (for example, SifDeut §329). Chester thus proposes that PsJ resembles the conclusions drawn in PRE 34 that a general resurrection will take place, but Israel alone shall be brought to life whereas the nations shall be condemned to death.[54] However, PRE 34 also uses v. 39c as a resurrection proof-text and states that God will raise those nations who reject a second god, but will pronounce a 'second death' upon those who embrace other deities; this kind of explanation is totally absent from the more or less literal rendering of v. 39c offered by PsJ.

The closest point of contact between PsJ and PRE 34 therefore occurs in their comments on v. 39d, understood in both passages in terms of Israel's past destruction and future restoration (see Chapter 4 §4). This similarity suggests that interpretations of v. 39d recorded by PsJ and PRE stem from a common source, and, as PRE 34 and the late MidTann on Deut. 32:39 are the only extant rabbinic traditions which record this particular interpretation,[55] it cannot be ruled out that PsJ has borrowed the exegetical comment directly from PRE.[56]

PsJ Deut. 32:39 concludes with an unique expansion which involves supplying שיזיב with an object, although it is difficult to determine whether the

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[53] PsJ possesses a more 'nationalistic' outlook than other targumic renderings of v. 39 (cf. PsJ Num. 11:26; TEzek. 37:10-14). See Gordon, 'The Targumists as Eschatologists', 115-17; Ribera, 'La exégesis judeo-targúmica sobre la resurrección', 299f.

[54] *Divine Revelation*, 209.

[55] Verse 39d is otherwise interpreted in rabbinic traditions as denoting God's physical wounding and healing of human beings (see Chapter 4 §6).

[56] For the view that PsJ is dependent on late midrashic collections like PRE, see especially Shinan, *The Aggadah in the Aramaic Targums;* Pérez Fernández, 'Sobre los textos mesiánicos', 39-56. See, however, Hayward, 'Anti-Islamic Polemic', 78-82, *idem*, 'Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer', 215-46, and particularly 'The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', 27f., where Hayward claims that it is difficult to establish PsJ's dependence on PRE because a substantial amount of its material is absent from PRE and *vice versa*. Shinan, 'Dating Targum Pseudo-Jonathan', 57-61, responds to this objection by stating that the redactor of PsJ was acquainted with more than one written or oral source, not PRE alone, and he may, in some, places have preferred to use traditions from other sources.

phrase מן ידי גוג contains a construct plural ('from the hands of Gog...')[57] or means 'from my hand Gog...'.[58] The latter suggestion seems more acceptable since it implies that Gog and his armies will set up battle-lines against Israel, but the deliverance of Israel by God at 'the end of days' will be made manifest when no one can save Gog from divine judgement (PsJ continues this theme in vv. 41-43). The alternative reading suggests that Gog and his armies act as the instruments of divine vengeance, but this interpretation tends to be ruled out by the widespread notion that Gog represents the eschatological adversary opposed to God.[59] This apparent ambiguity with regard to the precise meaning of the words מן ידי גוג at the end of this rendering of Deut. 32:39 arises from the fact that it represents a clear case of the tendency in PsJ to add an expansive gloss to its translation of the base text without paying appropriate attention to such issues as syntactic integration.

PsJ Deut. 32:39 thus records an amalgam of traditions mostly in the form of detachable glosses, and it employs expansive material drawn from some of the earliest (cf. Rev. 1:4) and latest (cf. PRE 34) Jewish traditions. In its present form, it stands as the most elaborate targumic version of Deut. 32:39 and is the product of considerable revision and augmentation. This rendering consequently bears witness to a later literary rather than early liturgical stage in the history of PsJ,[60] and confirms Alexander's definition of such Targumim as 'convenient repositories of traditional exegesis'.[61]

2. אנא הוא in the Targum of Isaiah

An attempt at identifying the interpretative methods applied to the Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא pronouncements during the first centuries CE leads to a consideration of the testimony of Targum Isaiah. As in the case of the Pentateuchal Targumim, the dating of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets has

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[57] McNamara, *New Testament,* 111; Klein, *Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Targumim of the Pentateuch,* 54.

[58] Le Déaut and Robert, *Deutéronome,* 277; Chester, *Divine Revelation,* 205.

[59] On references to the destruction of Gog in targumic traditions, see PsJ Exod. 40:11; Num. 11:26; 24:17. Cf. SifNum Beha'alotkha §76 on 10:9 (Horovitz, 70); SifDeut §343; MidTeh 2:2 (13a); 119:2 (245a); PesK 9:11. See further Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde,* 150f.; Vivian, 'Gog e Magog nella Tradizione Biblica, Ebraica e Cristiana', 395f.

[60] Cf. Shinan, *The Aggadah in the Aramaic Targums,* I:155-77; II:243-85; *idem,* 'Repetitions', 87.

[61] 'Jewish Aramaic Translations', 241.

been the subject of extensive discussion,[62] and although numerous difficulties have been encountered when attempting to date the work(s) on the basis of such criteria as historical allusions, literary parallels and linguistic considerations, significant advances have been made since the development of new methodological tools by Chilton to determine the date of TIsa as a complete document.[63] By analysing fifteen characteristic terms and expressions in the Targum, Chilton seeks to identify the formation of TIsa's exegetical framework during two key phases. This framework consists, he claims, of two Tannaitic layers (one presupposing the existence, the other the destruction, of the Temple) formed by a group of targumic interpreters ca. 70-135 CE, and was followed by a second major layer during the Amoraic period when some of the characteristic terms were taken up and developed as part of an 'interpretative continuum'.[64] Despite Chilton's initial claim that his hypothesis must be of 'a provisional nature',[65] and although one can only speculate about the actual processes involved in the composition of this framework, certain aspects of the targumic interpretation of the Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא pronouncements, particularly when compared with rabbinic comments on these statements, support the view that Tannaitic and Amoraic levels of interpretation can be identified in TIsa.

TIsa maintains, but also elaborates upon, several theological motifs associated with אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah. In relation to the first passage where this expression occurs (41:1-4), TIsa highlights God's exclusive control over history by stressing the inextricable link between his words and acts. The recollection by God of his salvific activity in the past (vv. 2-3) leads to a rhetorical question about the identity of this deliverer, 'Who says these things?' (MT: מִי־פָעַל וְעָשָׂה), to which a response is given with the aid of the all-embracing epithet 'the One who lives, speaks and acts' (קיים אמר ועביד). TIsa also shifts from the original Babylonian context of this trial speech in order to focus on God's dealings with Abraham rather than Cyrus as the one 'from the east';[66] this forms the basis of the promise that the eternal and living God,

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[62] See, e.g., Chilton, *The Glory of Israel,* 1-11; Smolar and Aberbach, *Studies in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets,* xiii-xvii. For the view that TJ cannot be earlier than the Arab conquest of Babylonia, see Levey, 'The Date of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets', 192-96; but cf. Gordon, *Studies in the Targum to the Twelve Prophets,* 142-46.

[63] *The Glory of Israel,* 12-96, 97-111; *idem, Targumic Approaches to the Gospels,* 51-61, 63-80; *The Isaiah Targum,* xviii-xxv.

[64] *The Glory of Israel,* 101.

[65] *Ibid.,* viii, 104.

[66] Cf. b.BB 15a; GenR 2:3; 43:3. See further Jones, 'Abraham and Cyrus', 305f.

the one who secured Abraham's victory over his enemy, will again act on behalf of the exiled 'sons of Abraham' (cf. TIsa 46:11).[67]

In the same way as the targumic versions of Deut. 32:39 are united in their sustained focus on its role as a declaration by God of his exclusiveness, at least three translation techniques can be identified in TIsa's renderings of אני הוא declarations which accentuate God's eternal and exclusive sovereignty. First, rhetorical questions are transformed into unequivocal assertions in order to remove all suggestions that God's acts in creation and history can be attributed to another deity.[68] Secondly, while the declaration in Isa. 43:10 that no deity has preceded or will succeed God could leave open the possibility that other gods presently exist, TIsa offers an explicit denial of their existence at the end of the statement (ובר מני ליח אלה).[69] Thirdly, several of the אנא הוא declarations in TIsa strengthen the prophetic argument concerning the eternity of God, a technique regarded by Chilton as characteristic of its Amoraic exegetical framework.[70] The claim 'and with the last I am he' (41:4d) becomes a pronouncement of God's possession of all ages (אף עלמי עלמיא דילי), and even the difficult phrase גם מיום אני הוא (43:13) is interpreted in terms of divine eternity (אף מן עלמא אנא הוא). Similarly, the metaphorical language of 46:4 ('to old age...grey hairs') is removed in order to dispel the notion that an end to God can be perceived: 'And to eternity I am he, and to the age of the ages my Memra exists' (ועד עלמא אנא הוא ועד עלם עלמיא מימרי קיים). The introduction of such features in TIsa signifies that the divine pronouncement of אנא הוא is interpreted as one that cannot be restricted to a specific period - it belongs to אלה עלמא (TIsa 42:5).

The most distinctive aspect of TIsa's approach to the various אני הוא declarations, one which encapsulates the focus on the creative and salvific

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[67] On the role of Abraham in TIsa as a paradigm of God's relationship with his people (41:4, 8; 43:12; 46:11; 48:15f.; 51:2), see Chilton, *The Glory of Israel,* 46-48; *idem, The Isaiah Targum,* 79-81, 95.

[68] Cf. TIsa 43:13 where the question 'Who can reverse it?' becomes 'I will not reverse it'. In TIsa 40:12 the extended rhetorical question about the creative activity of God (HT) becomes a brief question followed by a declarative response identical to TIsa 41:4ab (cf. TIsa 63:1). On this interpretative device, see Smolar and Aberbach, *Studies in Targum Jonathan,* 130; Klein, 'Converse Translation', 532-35.

[69] For additional examples of monotheistic formulas in TIsa, see ליח בר מני (43:11; 45:6, 21; 46:9); ליח בר מנך (37:16, 20); ולית עוד אלה בר מניה (45:14).

[70] See especially Chilton, 'Two in One', 556-61, where it is demonstrated that the emphasis in the Tannaitic framework of TIsa on a direct eschatology concerned with the imminent vindication of Israel gives way to a greater emphasis in its Amoraic framework on divine eternity and transcendence.

activity of the one everlasting God, is its repeated use of the formulaic self-designation אנא הוא דמלקדמין אף עלמי עלמיא דילי אנון וברי מני ליט אלה ('I am he that is from the beginning, even the ages of the ages are mine, and there is no god apart from me').[71] This innovative formula is employed for the self-designations אני ראשון and אני אחרון (TIsa 44:6; 48:12) and, in part, for the concluding words of 41:4 (ואת אחרנים אני הוא). It is also found in TIsa 43:10, despite the absence of comparable self-predications in the Hebrew base text; but the close thematic relationship between its claim that no deity existed before or after God and the self-designations 'first' and 'last' clearly accounts for its inclusion.[72] This targumic formula is applied with regularity and uniformity in these passages, and to determine its relationship with אנא הוא TIsa's version of the initial אני הוא declaration (41:4cd) can be compared with the Hebrew text.

MT אֲנִי יְהוָה רִאשׁוֹן וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים אֲנִי־הוּא

TIsa אנא יוי ברית עלמא מברישית אף עלמי עלמיא דילי אנון וברי מני ליט אלה

I, the Lord, *created the world from the beginning, even the ages of the ages are mine, and apart from me there is no god.*

This considerably modified declaration in TIsa provides no Aramaic equivalent for אני הוא. Two explanations can be proposed. אני הוא has been submerged under a phrase more commonly taking the form אחרון [אני] (44:6; 48:12), or it is represented by the concluding monotheistic formula (וברי מני ליט אלה), in which case the *meturgeman* views אני הוא as a divine claim to exclusiveness. A comparison of the use of this extended declaration in TIsa 41:4 and TIsa 44:6 reveals that both targumic renderings closely resemble the word order of MT Isa. 44:6cd (וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹהִים), which may indicate that an interpretative statement originally devised for 44:6 is now being applied to 41:4.

In the case of the divine proclamation in TIsa 43:10, where both Israel and the Messiah are called upon to act as witnesses,[73] two examples of אנא הוא are included in the targumic version of the pronouncement:

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[71] The translations of the various targumic statements used in this present section are slightly modified versions of those found in Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum.*

[72] On the targumic technique of 'associative translation', see Klein, 'Associative and Complementary Translation in the Targumim', 134*-40*.

[73] Cf. also TIsa 42:1 [Codex Reuchlinianus]; TIsa 52:13. On the messianic interpretation of TIsa 43:10, see Seidelin, 'Der *'Ebed Jahwe* und die Messiasgestalt im Jesajatargum', 222, 226-28; especially Chilton, *The Glory of Israel,* 90f., *idem,* 'Two in One', 556f., where it is argued that the portrayal of the Messiah in TIsa 43:10 as 'an eternal witness before God' belongs to the Amoraic exegetical framework of TIsa.

אתון סהדין קדמי אמר יוי ועבדי משיחא דאתרעיתי ביה
כדיל דתדעון ותהימנון קדמי ותסתכלון ארי אנא הוא
אנא הוא דמלקדמין אף עלמי עלמיא דילי אנון ובר מני לית אלה

You are witnesses *before me,* says the Lord, and my servant *the Messiah with* whom I *am pleased,* so that you may know and believe *before* me and understand that I am he. *I am he that is from the beginning, even the ages of the ages are mine,* and *apart from me* there is no god.

Although some later efforts have been made at removing one of the two occurrences of אנא הוא in TIsa 43:10,[74] the first phrase undoubtedly represents the self-contained אני הוא of the Hebrew text (MT: כִּי־אֲנִי הוּא), whereas the second serves as the introductory phrase to the explanatory formula. The aim of the interpretative declaration is to draw out the meaning and significance of the initial declaration of אנא הוא. Of particular interest is the fact that the targumic version of Isa. 44:6 also includes two occurrences of אנא הוא; the second is once again intended as an introduction to the formula 'I am he that is from the beginning...' which elucidates the divine self-predications אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן (44:6c), but the first occurs in its bipartite form with no equivalent expression in the underlying Hebrew text. This pattern is repeated TIsa 48:12, where the same sequence - the bipartite expression followed by the innovative divine self-designation - adheres closely to the base text (אֲנִי־הוּא אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן אַף אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן). The pattern established in these three renderings (TIsa 43:10; 44:6; 48:12) therefore demonstrates that the targumic formula is consciously employed in the Targum of Isaiah as an explication of אנא הוא in its bipartite form. This interpretative formulation highlights the role of the initial אנא הוא as the self-designation of the eternally active God whose presence from the beginning and his possession of all ages offer conclusive proof that he is the one and only God (ובר מני לית אלה).

This formula therefore functions as an effective monotheistic pronouncement in TIsa, and its absence from all other TJ texts leads one to conclude that it was primarily developed as an exegetical explanation of אני הוא and the self-predications אני ראשון ואני אחרון. It is also significant that, in contrast to the interpretative methods detected in TIsa's renderings of the 'absolute' אני הוא pronouncements, no such embellishments are included where it is linked to a

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[74] i) For the first אנא הוא, Ms. p.116 (Montefiore Library, London) reads ''' ארי אנא; the First Rabbinic Bible and Antwerp Polyglot Bible read: [אנא הוא דמלקדמין] ארי אנא; ii) the second אנא הוא is omitted by the Second Rabbinic Bible and in Kimhi's Commentary.

participial form (43:25; 51:12; 52:6).[75] This once again suggests that TIsa accentuates the significance of אני הוא in its bipartite form as an expression of God's all-encompassing power and presence, and in this respect it parallels the rabbinic application of these same Deutero-Isaianic statements as monotheistic proof-texts (see Chapter 4 §§2.1, 3; Chapter 5 §2).

3. אנה הוא ״י and Related Statements in the Pentateuchal Targumim

It has already been noted that some targumic traditions formulate אנה/אנא הוא declarations in their interpretative renderings of אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39 and אהיה אשר אהיה. Hence, Ngl2 on Exod. 3:14 includes such declarations as אנא הוא דהוויתי בסעדכון בגלותא דמצראי ('I am he who was your aid in the captivity of the Egyptians'), and it has been suggested above that the use of the formulation אנה הוא דמחי ואנה הוא דמסי ('I am he who wounds and I am he who heals') in N/FT-VN/CG Deut. 32:39d echoes the initial אנה אנה הוא. But neither of these innovative readings can be described as bipartite examples of אנה/אנא הוא, for in both cases the expression is syntactically bound to a verbal component.[76] Nevertheless, it seems pertinent, in a study of the various Jewish interpretations of the expression אני הוא, to consider the possible significance of these extended formulations and to determine their grammatical function.

Attention can firstly be drawn to the fact that the PTgs often render the divine self-declaratory formula אני יהוה and its variations by inserting הוא between אנא and the divine name to form the phrase ״י אנא הוא. Le Déaut recognizes the distinctive nature of this Aramaic rendering and even goes so far as to propose that ״י אנה הוא may be related to the Johannine use of ἐγώ εἰμι,[77] whereas Chester interprets the juxtaposition of אנה and הוא for the self-revelatory formula in N Gen. 46:3 as pointing to the role of הוא 'as a divine title in its own

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[75] Isa. 43:25a: אנא אנא הוא שביק לחובך בדיל שמי ('I, I am he who *forgives* your *sins* for my *name's* sake'); Isa. 51:12a: אנא אנא הוא מנחמכון ('I, I am he who comforts you'); Isa. 52:6b: בכין בעידנא ההוא תידעון ארי אנא הוא מלילית ומימרי קיים ('therefore in that *time you shall* know that I am he who speaks; *and my Memra endures*').

[76] A similar grammatical constructions is employed in TIsa 26:19: 'You are he (or: the one) who brings alive the dead' (את הוא מחי מיתין [MT: יְחָיוּ מֵתֶיךָ]); and also in the address to God in TIsa 63:16: 'For you are he (or: the one) whose mercies upon us are more than a father's upon sons' (ארי את הוא דרחמך עלנא סגיאין מאב על בנין [MT: כִּי־אַתָּה אָבִינוּ]).

[77] *La nuit pascale,* 229 n.43.

right'.[78] One must therefore enquire whether any particular significance can be ascribed to the recurring formulation יי הוא אנה/אנא in the Pentateuchal Targumim, or should one conclude that the insertion of הוא is required in order to provide a correct representation in Aramaic of the formula אני יי.

O, probably as a result of the syntactic features of its language (Jewish Literary Aramaic),[79] never adds a connecting הוא between אנא and the divine name to form this 'tripartite' formulation. However, of the ninety or so divine self-introductory or self-revelatory statements found in the Pentateuch, N includes הוא in 23 of its renderings to read אנה הוא אלהא (e.g., Gen. 26:24; 46:3),[80] אנה הוא יי (e.g., Exod. 6:2; 15:26; Lev. 11:45) or אנה הוא יי אלהכון (e.g., Exod. 16:12; 20:2; Deut. 5:6). There are also numerous examples of declarations for which N offers a rendering without הוא, although marginal or interlinear glosses modify its 'literal' readings in all but seven cases.[81] Of particular significance is the fact that, in the case of nine יי אנה declarations, the marginal glosses of N read יי אמר כדין/כדן ('thus says the Lord'),[82] an interpretative technique also found in the main text of N.[83] According to Levy, the purpose of this modification to יי אמר כדן is to establish a distinction between the use of אני יהוה as a solemn expression of divine self-revelation and those cases where the formula is appended to a commandment.[84] A procedure of this kind may then signify that N still preserves traces of a period of oral

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[78] *Divine Revelation,* 339. Cf. also Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence,* 34f., who translates the marginal gloss for N Lev. 21:8 as: 'because holy in My Memra I am He and in My Memra I sanctify you'. However, a closer inspection of this Ngl reveals that, combined with N, it actually reads: 'for holy am I in my Memra (ארום קדיש אנה בממרי); I am the Lord and in my Memra sanctify you (אנא הוא יי ובממרי מקד יתכון)'.

[79] A valuable summary of issues relating to the study of the language of O and PTgs is given by Kaufman, 'Dating the Language', 120-30.

[80] Chester, *Divine Revelation,* 339, translates N Gen. 46:3 (אנה הוא אלהיה דאבוך) as 'I am He, the God of your father'. He believes that הוא represents the underlying Hebrew הָאֵל (MT: אָנֹכִי הָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ), and that this creates an example of the use of אנה הוא as a divine name. But it should be noted that an Ngl for this statement reads הא, and it can be interpreted in one of three different ways: i) it signifies that אנכי of the base text should be rendered as אנה הא (cf. N Exod. 7:17); ii) הא replaces הוא; or, more plausibly, iii) הא represents the accidentally omitted הָאֵל: הא[אל]. See further Díez Macho, *Neophyti I. Targum Palestinense MS de la Biblioteca Vaticana. I: Génesis,* 307.

[81] The seven statements in question are: N Gen. 28:13; 35:11; Exod. 14:18; 20:5; Lev. 20:24; 25:38; 26:45.

[82] Ngl Exod. 6:8; Lev. 18:4; 20:7, 26; 22:2; 25:55; 26:2; Num. 3:45; 10:10.

[83] For example, N Lev. 18:5, 6; 19:2-37; Num. 3:13, 41. See also FT-P Lev. 19:16; FT-VN Lev. 18:21; CG Exod. 6:8; 12:12; Lev. 23:22, 43.

[84] Levy, *Targum Neophyti I,* I:349. See further Shinan, 'Live Translation', 47; *idem,* 'Echoes from Ancient Synagogues', 362f.; Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech,* 155f.

transmission when an attempt was made within the context of synagogal worship to avoid the excessive pronouncement of self-revelatory formulas.[85]

Particularly noteworthy are the twenty cases in N where marginal or interlinear glosses signal that הוא should be inserted between אנה and the divine name (e.g., Gen. 15:7; Exod. 6:6; 10:2; Lev. 18:2; Num. 15:41).[86] But this translational phenomenon is not confined to divine pronouncements, for הוא is also inserted into the targumic rendering of the 'I' statement uttered by Pharaoh in CG Gen. 41:44 (אנה הוא פרעה) and in Joseph's declaration of self-identification in N(I) Gen. 45:3 (אנה הוא יוסף).

What accounts for the addition of הוא in these declarations in the PTgs?[87] It could be argued that the *meturgemanim* (or scribes in the case of glosses) were eager to represent the archaic form אנכי with the aid of אנה הוא, as indeed applies to most אנכי statements (e.g., N Gen. 26:24; Deut. 5:6, 9; cf. CG Exod. 20:2, 5).[88] But this proposal does not account for all the available evidence, because in most cases אנה הוא is employed where the base text reads אני. A quite different explanation is offered by Levy, who claims that 'since הוא is unnecessary, this may be another form of circumlocution to avoid "אנה יי"'.[89] This comment can be interpreted in two ways. Levy is either suggesting that הוא is used in order to separate אנה from the occurrence of the tetragrammaton, or he implies that הוא is meant to replace the divine אנה so that the *meturgeman* can avoid uttering an exclusively divine pronouncement (hence, 'He is the Lord'). However, Levy's suggestion overlooks the fact that הוא is also inserted by PTgs into non-divine 'I' declarations (CG Gen. 41:44; N(I) Gen. 45:3).

The most likely explanation of this translation technique is that N/FT-

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[85] Evidence for the use of N within the context of the synagogue is adduced by Kasher, 'The Aramaic Targumim and their *Sitz im Leben*', 75-85. כדן אמר יי can be compared with the targumic technique of adding אמר משה after its rendering of ויאמר יהוה אלי (cf. N Deut. 2:2, 9, 17; 4:10). See further Levy, *Targum Neophyti*, I:46ff.; Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech*, 154f.

[86] Fitzmaurice Martin, 'Palaeographical Character', 18-20, demonstrates that the three scribes responsible for N's main text often revised their own work by means of glosses.

[87] Cf. also CG Gen. 31:13; CG Exod. 6:2, 7; FT-P Exod. 14:4, 18; CG Exod. 20:2, 5; CG Lev. 22:32, 33; FT-VN Lev. 26:44. The evidence in PsJ is far from consistent, because it translates the divine 'I' statements both with הוא (39x) and without הוא (51x). Moreover, PsJ reads אנא פרעה in Gen. 41:44, but אנא הוא יוסף in Gen. 45:3. Since no linguistic or theological criteria can be identified which may help to determine which form is used by PsJ, one may tentatively propose that it demonstrates PsJ's dependence on the readings of O in some cases (without הוא), but the readings of PTgs in others (with הוא).

[88] As suggested to me by Professor M.L. Klein during a conversation on the use of the formulation אנה הוא in CG texts.

[89] *Targum Neophyti*, II:37.

PVN/CG add הוא purely for grammatical reasons, either so that it functions as the copula to meet the requirements of the syntax of Jewish Targumic Aramaic,[90] even to highlight the אנה of the speaker.[91] The latter proposal implies that the formulation אנה הוא ... is related, at least in grammatical terms, to those examples of extended אנה הוא ד- formulations considered in the first section of this chapter (e.g., אנה הוא דמחי ואנה הוא דמסי). An innovative statement recorded in FT-VN/PsJ Lev. 10:20 is illuminating in this respect, for its expansive description of Moses hearing Aaron's words is supplemented by Moses' remark: 'I am he (or: the one) from whom the practice was concealed' (אנא הוא דאיתעלמת הילכתא מיני). In this particular case the words אנא הוא accentuate the fact that Moses himself was not familiar with the practice until Aaron taught it to him. This example again demonstrates that neither N/FT-PVN/CG nor PsJ confines אנא הוא formulations to God, but it also points to the role of הוא as the vehicle which gives particular prominence to the אנא of the divine or human speaker.[92] Thus, when הוא is inserted into targumic renderings of divine self-declaratory formulas, it serves as an effective device to convey the emphatic nature of the claim that God himself (and no other) is and acts in the way described.

4. אנא הוא in Targumic Poems and Expansions

Both FT-P and CG also preserve a number of targumic poems whose recitation originally preceded synagogal Torah readings for festivals and special Sabbaths.[93] Some of these poems are of direct relevance because they contain innovative אנא הוא statements pronounced by a variety of speakers.

One such group of targumic *piyyutim* is based on Exod. 12:2, the opening

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[90] This is the view favoured by Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, 159f., with reference to N Gen. 46:3; cf. Fassberg, *A Grammar of the Palestinian Targum Fragments from the Cairo Genizah*, §34a.

[91] See especially the discussion of syntactic issues relating to nominal clauses in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic in Chapter 1 §1 (and Syriac in Chapter 2 §3). See further Chapter 6 §1 below on the evidence in rabbinic texts.

[92] Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts*, II:41, favours this explanation for CG (Ms E) Gen. 43:9 (אנה הוא דעַרב יתה); he comments that הוא may have been added for emphasis: 'It is I who shall vouch for him' (I:120).

[93] See Ginsburger, 'Aramäische Introduktionen zum Thargumvortrag an Festtagen', 113-24; *idem*, 'Les introductions araméennes à la lecture du Targoum', 14-26, 186-94; Sokoloff and Yahalom, 'Aramaic Piyyutim from the Byzantine Period', 309-21; Klein, 'Targumic Poems from the Cairo Genizah', 58-109.

words of the Torah reading for שבת החודש (cf. m.Meg 3:4), and it describes a dispute among the twelve months. Four targumic versions of this dispute contain new אנא הוא statements (FT-P Exod. 12:2; an acrostic poem in CG MsGG; two non-acrostic poems in CG MsKK),[94] and it is with the aid of these formulations that each month lists its merits, and also claims that it shall be the setting for Israel's deliverance. According to the version in FT-P, which offers an imaginative depiction of the twelve months gathered before God, each month in turn draws attention to the decisive events that have taken place during its period and then exclaims: ואנא הוא דנסב כלילא.[95] The overall context of this poem points to the function of this אנא הוא utterance as an expression of each month's claim to superiority: 'I am the one who shall receive the crown!'

A similar אנה הוא formulation occurs in CG (MsT) in one of three extant acrostic poems linked to the Torah reading on the seventh day of Passover (Exod. 14-15).[96] These poems are collectively known as אזיל משה because they focus on Israel's deliverance as described in Exod. 14:30.[97] The setting of this poem is thus a lively debate between Moses and the sea as it threatens to close its path. But it is God's initial command to Moses that is of particular interest: 'Go in my name and say to the sea, "I am the messenger of the King of Glory (אנה הוא שליחיה דמלך הכבוד)"'.[98] Moses' declaration of his identity, as in the case of the claims made by the twelve months, amounts to an assertion of his authority over the sea, and it demonstrates that innovative אנה הוא statements of this kind are particularly suited to the genre of Aramaic dispute poems. This declaration does, however, occur without הוא in other versions of the poem

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[94] On the FT-P text, see Klein, *Fragment-Targums,* I:72f. On CG MsGG and MsKK, see Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:186f., 192f., 194f.

[95] Only two such formulations occur in the acrostic poem in CG (MsGG); the first statement, proclaimed by Iyyar, is identical to the repeated declaration in FT-P Exod. 12:2, whereas the second is pronounced by Siwan: 'I am the one who is chosen for the holy people' (אנא הוא בחירה לעמא קדישא). According to Poem 1 in CG (MsKK), Nisan is the only month to announce: 'for I am their father (אנה הוא אבוהון), and I am the one who will deliver (ואנה הוא דפרק) them from bondage'. Poem 2 in CG (MsKK) is more difficult to assess, for it ends abruptly on the twelfth line with Iyyar's claim (ואנה הוא דנסב כלילה).

[96] Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:238f.

[97] See Klein, *ibid.,* xxviii. Yahalom, *'Ezel Moshe''*, 173-84, proposes a 4th-5th cent. CE dating for a copy of this poem found in Berlin Papyrus 8498, one which is very similar to CG (MsT). See further Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer,* 331-34; Le Déaut, 'Les manuscrits du Targum du Pentateuque de la Guénizah du Caire', 570.

[98] Cf. also the acrostic poem about the death of Moses in CG (MsT), in which Moses identifies himself to Adam: 'I am Moses (אנה הוא משה) who received the Torah!' (Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:362f.).

(דאנא שלחיה דיוצר בראשית),[99] thus indicating that אנה הוא is a stylistic, but inconsistently applied, device to highlight Moses' authority over the sea.

Finally, attention can be drawn to four poetic sections on Exod. 20:1-3 discovered in the Cairo Genizah,[100] and recited before the Torah reading on *Shavu'ot.* After a description in the first section of the people's fear of death upon hearing God's voice (Exod. 20:1), the second includes a lengthy poetic expansion on אנכי ה' אלהיך. This acrostic portion contains ten אנא statements prompted by אנכי, and they all, in accordance with the widespread application of Exod. 20:2 as a monotheistic declaration, accentuate the uniqueness of God. The first statement is particularly noteworthy:

אנכי . אנא אנא הוא מלקדמין יחידא עד סוף עלמין
דלא יְשַׁנּוּנִי יומין ושנין אף לא עדנין וזמנין

'I' (אנכי): I, I am he, alone from the beginning to the end of the worlds; whom days and years do not change, nor even eras and times.

This initial declaration not only encapsulates the theological significance attributed to אני הוא in Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah as an expression of the exclusiveness, eternal presence and immutability of God, but it actually uses language inspired by these biblical אני הוא texts. First, the doubling of אנא demanded by its acrostic pattern leads to the formulation of an 'absolute' declaration of אנא אנא הוא strikingly reminiscent of Deut. 32:39a.[101] The proposal that this opening pronouncement amounts to a deliberate echo of the Song of Moses is supported by the fact that the sixth declaration in the poem contains an allusion to the bringing forth of oil from the flintstone (Deut. 32:13). Secondly, the association between the opening אנא אנא הוא and God's unique existence from the beginning displays Deutero-Isaianic influence, particularly in view of the close link between אני הוא and the self-predications

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[99] See FT-P Exod. 14:30 (Klein, *Fragment-Targums,* I:77) and CG (MsX) (*Genizah Manuscripts,* I:236f.).

[100] Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:278-81 (MsG). The first two acrostic sections based on Exod. 20:1-2 (Leningrad Antonin Ebr. III B67) were first published as MsG by Kahle, *Masoreten des Westens II,* 64f., but two subsequent sections on vv. 2-3, separated from the original manuscript to form Ms. Oxford Bodleian Heb f33, were later discovered (see Klein, *Genizah Manuscripts,* I:xxviii). For the view that CG (MsG) belongs to a relatively late date, see Kutscher, *Studies in Galilean Aramaic,* 4 n.10; Muraoka, 'A Study in Palestinian Jewish Aramaic', 5 n.6.

[101] This also closely resembles one of the final pronouncements made by God in the fourth section of this poem: 'I have no partner (שותף) in my doings, nor in the works of my hands. I, I am he, alone (אנא אנא הוא בלחודי)' (Klein, *ibid.,* 280f.).

אני ראשון and אני אחרון (41:4; 48:12).[102] Indeed, the view that this declaration about God's sovereign existence from the beginning (מלקדמין) to the end of the worlds forms an Aramaic paraphrase of Isaianic statements finds support in the rendering אנא הוא דמלקדמין in TIsa (44:6; 48:12; cf. 43:10).[103] Thirdly, the portrayal of the everlasting and changeless nature of God in this poem resembles Ps. 102:28, for clear affinities exist between the biblical declaration וְאַתָּה הוּא וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתַּמּוּ and the targumic phrase ואתה הוא ושנותיך לא יתמו. That this poem establishes a correlation between Exod. 20:2 and the divine declaration אני הוא is further supported by the rabbinic citation of אנכי ה' אלהיך in conjunction with various biblical אני הוא statements as monotheistic proof-texts (see Chapter 4 §§2, 5; cf. Chapter 5 §2.2).

The opening lines of this acrostic poem on Exod. 20:2 presents a succinct, but carefully formulated, reflection on the divine pronouncement of אני הוא in Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah. Indeed, there is no evidence for the bipartite use of אנא הוא by a figure other than God in these targumic poems, although extended formulations introduced by this expression are widely attested; even Moses and the twelve months can adopt this phrase in innovative pronouncements. Therefore, these poems bear witness to a linguistic feature characteristic of Jewish Targumic Aramaic, also found in targumic renderings of biblical 'I' pronouncements and reflected in several midrashic traditions in both Aramaic and Hebrew statements.

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[102] Moreover, the fifth comment in this poem is reminiscent of Isa. 43:25a: 'I am he who forgives the sins of the beloved peoples' (אנא הוא מָחֵל חובין לעממין חביבין).

[103] For the use of סוף to express the divine epithet אחרון, see Chapter 4 §6. Cf. also FT-P Num. 16:1: '[so that all these people may know] that you are their God, first God and last God (ארום את הוא אלההון אלה קמאיי ואלה אחרן)'.

Chapter Four

Rabbinic Interpretations of אני הוא
The Use of Deut. 32:39

Midrashic expositions of Deut. 32:39 accord in many respects with rabbinic interpretations of pronouncements in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah in which God declares אני הוא. Two chapters will, nevertheless, now be devoted to an analysis of these midrashic traditions so that particular attention can be paid to the different themes and emphases developed by the sages in connection with the pentateuchal and prophetic use of the divine self-declaration אני הוא. The investigation of rabbinic interpretations of Deut. 32:39 will attempt, in so far as it is possible, to place the six relevant (groups of) traditions in chronological sequence; this should facilitate the task of identifying early interpretative processes and tracing their application in more expansive traditions.

1. אני אני הוא and the Universal Revelation of Divine Glory

Mek Pisha 12 on Exod. 12:25

כיוצא בדבר אתה אומר שמעו שמים והאזיני ארץ כי ה׳ דבר והיכן דבר
זאזינו השמים ואדברה כיוצא בדבר אתה אומר ונגלה כבוד ה׳ וראו כל
בשר יחדיו כי פי ה׳ דבר והיכן דבר ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא כיוצא
בדבר אתה אומר אם תאבו ושמעתם ואם תמאנו ומריתם וגומר והיכן
דבר והבאתי עליכם חרב נוקמת וגו׳ כיוצא בדבר אתה אומר בלע המות
לנצח וגו׳ והיכן דבר אני אמית ואחיה וגומר

In similar manner you interpret: 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken' (Isa. 1:2). And where did he speak? 'Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak' (Deut. 32:1). In similar manner you interpret: 'And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken' (Isa. 40:5). And where did

he speak? 'See now that I, I am he' (Deut. 32:39). In similar manner you interpret: 'If you are **willing** and obedient...but if you refuse and rebel etc. [you shall be devoured by the sword; for **the mouth of the Lord has** spoken]' **(Isa.** 1:19-20). **And where did** he **speak?** 'I **will bring the sword** against **you, executing vengeance etc.'** (Lev. 26:25). In similar manner you **interpret:** 'He **will swallow up death** for ever etc. [for the Lord has **spoken]'** (Isa. 25:8). And where did he speak? 'I kill and I make alive etc.' (Deut. 32:39).[1]

One of the earliest extant rabbinic citations of Deut. 32:39a appears in Mek Pisha 12,[2] in a section forming the central part of an extensive commentary on the words כאשר דבר in Exod. 12:25 ('[And when you come to the land which the Lord will give you], as he has said').[3] In the same way as the expression כאשר דבר in its original context echoes the earlier declaration by God, 'I will bring you into the land' (Exod. 6:8), this piece of midrashic exegesis selects twenty-five further examples of statements whose use of the phrase 'as the Lord said' prompts a search for their 'source' (היכן דבר) in corresponding pentateuchal statements.[4]

The excerpt presently under consideration opens a new unit dealing with the sources of a series of prophetic texts, and it links the Isaianic formula 'for the (mouth of) the Lord has spoken (כי [פי] ה' דבר) with a cluster of statements by God drawn primarily from Deut. 32. After securing an interpretative link between Isa. 1:2 and Deut. 32:1 (האזינו),[5] the midrash views the description of the future manifestation of divine glory (Isa. 40:5) as relating directly to the

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[1] *Mechilta d'Rabbi Ismael,* eds. Horovitz and Rabin, 40. Cf. *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael,* ed. Lauterbach, I:91. All translations are my own unless otherwise specified. The following methods have been adopted for the use of parentheses in the translation of texts: ( ) are used for biblical references, { } for additions to the text made in printed editions, [ ] for certain explanatory additions and for the inclusion of uncited biblical sections which are required for a proper understanding of the midrash. Translations of scriptural citations largely follow the NRSV, although these are sometimes modified to accord with the rabbinic line of argumentation.

[2] Wacholder, 'The Date of the Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael', 117-44, proposes that Mek is a post-Talmudic composition with a pseudo-Tannaitic appearance. However, Stemberger, 'Die Datierung der Mekhilta', 81-118, convincingly argues that Mek is a collection of mostly Tannaitic traditions whose final redaction took place around 250-300 CE.

[3] Cf. YS Bo §207; YS on Judges §43; YS on Isaiah §445.

[4] The formula 'in similar manner you interpret' (כיוצא בדבר אתה אומר) appears to be a variation on the sixth of Hillel's hermeneutical rules (כיוצא בו במקום אחר) and is frequently used in exegetical traditions in Mek. See Towner, 'Hermeneutical Systems of Hillel and the Tannaim', 122-24.

[5] Cf. PTgs Deut. 32:1; SifDeut §306; TanB Ha'azinu §2 (26a). For the recitation of both these texts on the same Sabbath, see Perrot, *La lecture de la Bible dans la synagogue,* 87.

self-declaratory pronouncement 'See now that I, I am he' in Deut. 32:39a. The innovative midrashic correlation established between these two scriptural passages inevitably means that the content and context of the one statement is now viewed as elucidating the other. The linking of the declaration אני אני הוא with God's glory echoes an association with divine 'I' statements already established in Isa. 42:8 ('I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other').[6] Since, moreover, the verb ראה occurs in both Isa. 40:5 and Deut. 32:39, the assertion that this glory is universally experienced when God makes himself manifest suggests that Mek Pisha 12 also interprets Deut. 32:39a as a self-revelatory pronouncement.[7] It is possible that this exegetical unit also presupposes a close link between אני אני הוא as pronounced by God in the Song of Moses and the role of its Deutero-Isaianic counterparts (especially 41:4; 43:10, 13; 48:12) as divine declarations which are closely related to the manifestation of his glory and sovereignty.

A projection into the eschatological future is implied by this midrashic correlation, which means that the future-oriented perspective established in Isa. 40:5 is also presupposed for its pentateuchal counterpart.[8] In other words, the pronouncement of אני אני הוא by God (Deut. 32:39a) is being interpreted as the vehicle for his eschatological self-manifestation. The future orientation of Isa. 40:5 is also maintained in LevR 1:14, for in a tradition attributed to Rabbi Pinhas (PA5) in the name of Rabbi Hoshayah (PA3) a short *mashal* illustrating that a king only appears to his friend by means of his image leads to the following *nimshal*:

> Because in this world the Shekinah is revealed [only] to individuals, but [of] the world to come it is written: 'And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed etc.' (Isa. 40:5).[9]

Attention can also be drawn to a parallel piece of exegesis in TanB Wa-era §5 on Exod. 6:3 (11a), according to which God declares: 'In this world I revealed my name [only] to individuals, but in the world to come I will make my name known to all Israel, as it is said: "Therefore shall my people know my name etc." (Isa. 52:6)'. As the remaining part of Isa. 52:6 reads 'that I am he who speaks; here am I (כי אני הוא המדבר הנני)', this comment in TanB Wa-era

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[6] Cf. also Exod. 14:4; 29:43-46; 33:18f.; Ezek. 39:21f.

[7] See further Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence*, 30.

[8] See SifDeut §333: 'How great is this Song [Deut. 32], for it [contains references] to the present, the past and the future to come, as well as to this world and the world to come'.

[9] *Wayyikra Rabbah* (Margulies, I:31f.). Cf. also Aggadat Bereshit §23:2 (Buber, 20b). On this passage, see Goldberg, *Untersuchungen über die Vorstellung von der Schekhinah*, 329f.

§5 may provide further proof that the Deutero-Isaianic application of אני הוא came to be associated in certain rabbinic circles with a divine revelation belonging to the eschatological future (see §6 below; Chapter 5 §§1, 3.3, 4.1), although in this particular case the eschatological perspective has been developed due to the presence of the formula ביום ההוא in Isa. 52:6a. Similar traditions are recorded in PesR 22:7 and MidTeh 91:8 (200b), both of which are attributed to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (PA1) in the name of Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair (T4); they again cite Isa. 52:6 as evidence for the future disclosure of God's own name to Israel, now specified as the *shem hammeporash.* This explanation had led some to claim that the author of this midrashic comment 'treats אֲנִי הוּא as the Name of God, the *shem hammephorash,* which is to be revealed in the age to come'.[10] Such a proposal does, however, seem unlikely, for the function of the statement כי אני הוא המדבר is to highlight the future role of God as speaker, particularly as the expression אני הוא is syntactically bound to the subsequent participial form. Since, moreover, אני הוא is explicitly pronounced in Isa. 52:6, how can it be the name whose utterance presently remains unknown? Indeed, no rabbinic evidence can be adduced to support the claim that אני הוא represents the *shem hammeporash.*[11]

The eschatological setting of Deut. 32:39a is substantiated in Mek Pisha 12 with the aid of pronouncements about divine vengeance (Isa. 1:20; Lev. 26:25) and, more significantly, by the use of Isa. 25:8 and Deut. 32:39 as resurrection texts. Consequently, this Mekhilta passage discloses two key aspects in its interpretation of Deut. 32:39: the understanding of אני אני הוא as a self-revelatory formula linked to the disclosure of divine glory in the eschatological future and the widely attested rabbinic use of v. 39c as scriptural proof for the doctrine of resurrection.[12] Furthermore, Deut. 32:39 is cited in this midrashic passage to validate a variety of prophetic utterances, and is even presented as their source, thereby confirming the role of this pentateuchal declaration as a pivotal statement for which further support can be drawn, as will now be demonstrated, from Deutero-Isaianic divine אני pronouncements.

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[10] Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 93f.; cf. Brown, *John,* 536f.

[11] See in particular Chapter 6 §5 on m.Suk 4:5.

[12] Cf. SifDeut §329 par. 2 (cited in n.70 below); b.Pes 68a; b.Sanh 91b; DeutR 3:15; QohR 1:4:2 (2c); QohZutta 1:4. Isa. 25:8 is employed as a resurrection proof-text in ExR 25:21; DeutR 2:31; QohR 1:4:3 (2c). See especially Marmorstein, 'The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead in Rabbinic Theology', 577-91; Wahle, 'Die Lehren des rabbinischen Judentums über das Leben nach dem Tod', 291-309; Stemberger, 'Zur Auferstehungslehre in der rabbinischen Literatur', 238-66; Bollag, 'Auferstehung im Judentum im Lichte liturgischer und rabbinischer Texte', 231-39.

2. In Defence of the Unity of God

2.1 A Tannaitic Response to the 'Two Powers' Heresy
Mek Shirta 4 on Exod. 15:3

ה׳ איש מלחמה למה נאמר לפי שנגלה על הים כגבור עושה מלחמה שנאמר ה׳ איש מלחמה נגלה בסיני כזקן מלא רחמים שנ׳ ויראו את אלהי ישראל וכשנגאלו מה הוא אומר וכעצם השמים לטוהר ואומר חזה הויתי עד די כרסון ואומר נהר דינור נגיד ונפיק מן קדמוהי וגו׳ שלא ליתן פתחון פה לאומות העולם לומר שתי רשויות הן אלא ה׳ איש מלחמה ה׳ שמו

הוא במצרים הוא על הים הוא לשעבר הוא לעתיד לבוא הוא בעולם הזה הוא לעולם הבא שנ׳ ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא וגו׳ <וכתיב עד זקנה אני הוא וגו׳ וכתיב כה אמר ה׳ מלך ישראל וגואלו ה׳ צבאות אני ראשון ואני אחרון> ואומר מי פעל ועשה קורא הדורות מראש אני ה׳ ראשון ואת אחרונים אני הוא

'The Lord is a man of war; [the Lord is his name]' (Exod. 15:3)(1). Why is it said? Because he revealed himself at the Sea as a mighty one waging war, as it is said: 'The Lord is a man of war' (15:3). He revealed himself at Sinai as an old man full of mercy, as it is said: 'And they saw the God of Israel' (Exod. 24:10). And [of the time] when they were redeemed, what does it say? 'Like the very heaven for clearness' (Exod. 24:10). And it says: 'As I watched thrones [were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his throne]' (Dan. 7:9). And it [also] says: 'A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him etc.' (Dan. 7:10). So as not to give an opportunity for the nations of the world to say: 'There are two powers', but [rather Scripture says]: (1) 'The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name'.

He is the one who was in Egypt, he is the one who was at the Sea. He is the one who was in the past, he is the one who will be in the future to come. He is the one in this world, he is the one who will be in the world to come.(2) As it is said: 'See now that I, I am he etc.' (Deut. 32:39). <And it is written: 'To old age I am he etc.' (Isa. 46:4). And it is written: 'Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first and I am the last' (Isa. 44:6)(3)> And it says: 'Who has acted and worked? The one who calls the generations from the beginning. I, the Lord, am the first and with the last, I am he' (Isa. 41:4).[13]

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[13] *Mechilta,* ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 129f.; cf. *Mekilta,* ed. Lauterbach, II:31f. Two of the proof-texts cited in Shirta 4 (Isa. 46:4a; 44:6abc) are placed in parentheses between Deut. 32:39 and Isa. 41:4 in the Horovitz-Rabin edition (cf. *The Munich Mekilta,* ed. Goldin, 42r), whereas these additional citations are not included in other editions of Mek (see *Mekhilta,* ed. Friedmann, 37b; *Mekilta,* ed. Lauterbach, II:32).

Main Variations in Mek Bahodesh 5 on Exod. 20:2[14]

(1) Citation of Exod. 20:2 rather than Exod. 15:3.
(2) Reads: 'I am the one who was in Egypt, I am the one who was at the Sea. I am the one who was at Sinai. I am the one who was in the past, I am the one who will be in the future to come. I am the one in this world, I am the one in the world to come'.
(3) Following Deut. 32:39a, the midrash cites Isa. 46:4a; 44:6abc; 41:4.

MRS Beshallah on Exod. 15:3

ד״א] יי׳ איש מלחמה יי׳ שמו לפי שכשנגלה ה[קב״ה על הים]
נראה להן כבחור עושה מלחמה יי׳ שמו נגל[ה עליהן בסיני]
כזקן מלא רחמים חזה הווית וגומ׳ שלא ליתן פתחון פ[ה]
לומר שתי רשויות יש בשמים אלא יי׳ איש מלחמה [ד״א]

יי׳ איש מלחמה הוא נלחם במצ׳ יי׳ שמו הוא [נלחם על]
הים והוא על הירדן והוא על נחלי ארנון הוא בעולם הזה
והוא לעולם הבא הוא לשעבר <ו>הוא לעתיד לבוא שנא׳
ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא וגומ׳ כה אמ׳ יי׳ מלך יש׳ וגומ׳
אני יי׳ ראשון וגומ׳ אני הוא אני ראשון אף אני אחרון

{Another interpretation}: 'The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name'. Because when the Holy {One, blessed be he} revealed himself {at the Sea} he appeared to them as a young man waging war. 'The Lord is his name'. He revealed himself {to them at Sinai} as an old man full of mercy. 'As I watched etc.' (Dan. 7:9). So as not to give an opportunity to say: 'There are two powers in heaven', but [rather Scripture says] 'The Lord is a man of war'.
{Another interpretation}: 'The Lord is a man of war'. He made war in Egypt. 'The Lord is his name'. He {made war at} the Sea. And he was the one at the Jordan, and he was the one at the streams of Arnon. He is the one in this world, and he will be the one in the world to come. He was the one in the past {and} he will the one in the future to come. As it is said: 'See now that I, I am he etc.' (Deut. 32:39). 'Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel etc.' (Isa. 44:6). 'I, the Lord, am the first etc.' (41:4).'I am he; I am the first and I am the last' (48:12).[15]

The focal point of these three anonymously transmitted units of tradition is the multifarious self-disclosures of God to Israel during the Exodus and Sinai events.[16] The pericope in Shirta 4, which consists of Mek's second exegetical comment on the words [יהוה שמו] יהוה איש מלחמה, attempts to account for the

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[14] *Mechilta*, ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 219f.; *Mekilta*, ed. Lauterbach, II:231f.

[15] *Mekhilta d'Rabbi Sim'on ben Jochai*, eds. Epstein and Melamed, 81.

[16] See especially Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 33-57. Cf. Goldin, *The Song at the Sea*, 126-29; Schäfer, 'Israel und die Völker der Welt', 37-41.

twofold occurrence of the tetragrammaton in Exod. 15:3,[17] and the similar version in Bahodesh 5 seeks to explain the appearance of two divine names in Exod. 20:2 (אנכי יהוה אלהיך).[18] MRS records a related tradition, in some places abbreviated and in others expanded, but it is presented in the Epstein-Melamed edition as two individual comments.[19] The solution proposed by all three versions is that the doubling of the divine name(s) relates to God's self-manifestation to his people in guises appropriate for each occasion; he revealed himself at the Sea as a mighty warrior waging battle, but he appeared at Sinai as 'an old man full of mercy'. MRS seeks to present an even more precise contrasting parallel to the latter image by describing God as a 'young man'. All three versions of this tradition thus presuppose that the Israelites experienced a vision of God at the Sea and that the giving of the Torah was also a direct form of divine communication.[20] Neither the twofold occurrence of the tetragrammaton in Exod. 15:3 nor the use of two divine names in Exod. 20:2 can be used as proof for the existence of two separate deities or powers.[21]

Having cited Exod. 15:3 to elucidate the image of God as 'a mighty one waging war', both Mek texts select excerpts from Exod. 24:10 to illuminate the parallel description of God as 'an old man full of mercy'. In their original context the statements describe the theophany experienced on Mount Sinai, but, in stark contrast to ancient translations,[22] this piece of midrashic exegesis has no qualms about accepting Exod. 24:10-11 as a description of the direct self-manifestation of God to the Israelite delegation. The link between the Sinai theophany and the form of argumentation adopted in this particular midrash is not immediately clear, for in what way does the scriptural passage elucidate the

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[17] The tradition in Shirta 4 is also recorded with certain variations in YS Beshallah §246 and, in an abbreviated form, in LeqT on Exod. 15:3 (47a).

[18] Also recorded with some variations in YS Yitro §286.

[19] Cf. MHG on Exod. 15:3 (Margulies, 295).

[20] For related traditions about God's direct self-manifestation at the Sea and/or Sinai, see Mek Shirta 3 (Horovitz-Rabin, 126f.) and MRS on Exod. 15:2 (Epstein-Melamed, 78); Mek Bahodesh 3 on Exod. 19:11 (Horovitz-Rabin, 212); b.Sot 11b; ExR 28:5; NumR 11:2; ShirR 3:9:1 (21d); PesR 15:8; 33:11; PesK 5:8. See further Finkelstein, 'The Sources of the Tannaitic Midrashim', 229f.; Ego, 'Gottes Weltherrschaft und die Einzigkeit seines Namens', 261-64, 276f.

[21] Cf. b.Sanh 38b; j.Ber 9:1 (12d); MidTeh 50:1 (140a).

[22] LXX Exod. 24:10: καὶ εἶδον τὸν τόπον, οὗ εἱστήκει ἐκεῖ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (cf. v. 11); Symmachus: καὶ εἶδον ὁράματι τὸν θεὸν Ἰσραήλ. O/N/FT-P/PsJ Exod. 24:10, 11 (and PRE 45) interpret both statements as a vision of the glory of the Shekinah of God (O: 'glory of God'). See Nicholson, 'The Interpretation of Exodus xxiv 9-11', 89; Rüger, 'Die alten Versionen zu Ex 24,10 und 11', 39-42.

image of God as a merciful old man? It may be the case, as Goldin has claimed, that the midrash presupposes the content of the following verse (v. 11a: 'He did not lay his hand on the chief men'), and that it was God's mercy that prevented the Israelites from experiencing the usual consequences of having gazed directly upon him (cf. Exod. 33:20).[23] It is, however, curious that this Mek tradition does not cite v. 11 as a proof-text if its argumentation is dependent upon it. The midrash, in its present form, seeks to explain the merciful aspect of God by highlighting the distinction that can be established between two component parts of Exod. 24:10 to denote the period before (v. 10a) and after (v. 10c) Israel's deliverance. This particular interpretation is attested in other rabbinic traditions, including Mek Pisha 14 (on Exod. 12:41):

> And therefore you find that whenever Israel is in bondage, the Shekinah is as it were in bondage with them, as it is said: 'And they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone' (Exod. 24:10). And [of the time] when they were redeemed, what does it say? 'Like the very heaven for clearness' (24:10). And it says: 'In all their affliction he was afflicted' (Isa. 63:9).[24]

The interpretative key to this exegetical comment is its assumption that the phrase 'like a pavement/brickwork' under God's feet (v. 10b) forms an allusion to his solidarity with the Israelites when they were forced to make bricks during their enslavement in Egypt. Following Israel's deliverance, the brickwork was also removed from under God's feet and the theophany became a vision of heavenly brightness (v. 10c). As this explanation appears in a considerably truncated form in the tradition about various modes of divine self-disclosure in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5,[25] Goldin proposes that originally they both cited the fuller version as additional scriptural evidence, even as a second argument, for two forms of divine manifestation before and after deliverance.[26] But certain factors lead one to suspect that this two-component exegesis of Exod. 24:10 was not part of the more original version of the Mek traditions now linked to

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[23] *The Song at the Sea,* 127. See also PesR 47:2.

[24] *Mechilta,* ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 51. Cf. j.Suk 4:3 (54c); SifNum Beha'alotkha §84 (Horovitz, 82); LevR 23:8; ShirR 4:8:1 (26d). See further Goldberg, *Untersuchungen über die Vorstellung von der Schekhinah,* 169f.; Ayali, 'Gottes und Israels Trauer über die Zerstörung des Tempels', 227f.; Cohen, 'Shekhinta Ba-Galuta', 147-59.

[25] Cf. Schäfer, 'Israel und die Völker der Welt', 40, who comments that this haggadah 'muß so geläufig gewesen sein, daß der Verfasser bzw. Redaktor sich mit dieser Anspielung begnügen konnte'.

[26] *The Song at the Sea,* 127. Cf. also van Ruiten, 'The Use of Deuteronomy 32:39 in Monotheistic Controversies', 231.

Exod. 15:3 and 20:2.[27] In its present form the comment on Exod. 24:10 acts as a midrash within a midrash, thus interrupting the flow of an otherwise subtle and concisely formulated piece of exegesis. And while Mek Pisha 14 uses Exod. 24:10 to denote the solidarity of God with Israel in Egypt, its application in Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5 focuses on his self-revelation on Sinai. A more feasible explanation is that an earlier version of this Mek exegesis about God's manifold self-manifestations cited only the first part of this verse (v. 10a) in order to illustrate the giving of the Torah as an act of divine mercy, whereas it used the depiction of the Ancient of Days in Dan. 7:9 to clarify the image of God as 'an old man'.[28] A later redactor felt it was necessary to find a more explicit link between Exod. 24:10 and God's merciful nature and inserted the well-known midrash about divine solidarity.

Both Mek versions of the midrash accordingly turn their attention to the colourful enthronement vision of God as judge in Dan. 7:9. The basis for this exegetical shift must be the image of God seated upon a throne, for whatever the originally intended meaning of the description in Exod. 24:10,[29] the rabbis recognized a link between its 'pavement of sapphire stone' and a throne 'in appearance like sapphire' (Ezek. 1:26).[30] It seems probable that this understanding of Exod. 24:10 as a depiction of God seated upon a throne led to the forging of a link with the portrayal of the Ancient of Days in Dan. 7:9, whereas the description of divine power issuing forth as 'a stream of fire' (7:10) was cited as further demonstration of the animated and warrior-like manifestation of God.[31] It is, however, noteworthy that MRS does not seek

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[27] See Horovitz-Rabin, *Mechilta,* 129 n.16; Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind,* 230 n.38. LeqT on Exod. 15:3 (47a) proceeds directly from its citation of Exod. 24:10ab to Dan. 7:9.

[28] An attempt is made by מדרש חכמים (cited by Lauterbach, *Mekilta,* II:231) to overcome the problems presented by the compressed use of Exod. 24:10 in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5. Here the text of Bahodesh 5 is rearranged to read: '"And they saw the God of Israel; and like the very heaven for clearness". And when they were redeemed, what does it say? "As I watched thrones were set in place" (Dan. 7:9)'. This later midrash also omits the subsequent quotation from Dan. 7:10 (cf. YS Beshallah §246), and it consequently establishes a direct link between the Exodus theophany of the merciful God and Daniel's vision of the 'Ancient of Days'.

[29] See Nicholson, 'Exodus xxiv 9-11', 91f.

[30] For relevant, possibly Tannaitic, traditions, see MRS on Exod. 24:10 (Epstein-Melamed, 221); b.Men 43b; b.Hul 89a; TanB Shelah §29 (37b); NumR 17:5. Similarly, O/PsJ Exod. 24:10 claim that the vision is of God's glory seated upon a throne. Cf. also 4Q405 19 where 'brickwork' denotes the pedestal of the divine throne (Baumgarten, 'The Qumran Sabbath Shirot and Rabbinic Merkabah Traditions', 203).

[31] For the dual picture of God as a warrior and as one seated, with citations taken from Song 5:11 and Dan. 7:9 respectively, see b.Hag 14a: 'None is more fitting in session (בישיבה) than an old man, and none is more fitting in war than a young man'. This talmudic

scriptural support from Exod. 24:10, but proceeds directly to the Danielic text as an illustration of the self-revelation of God at Sinai. Certain difficulties are, nevertheless, created by the absence of Exod. 24:10 from MRS, for, despite the attempt made in this midrash to posit a connection between divine mercy and the substance of Dan. 7:9, the depiction of the Ancient of Days more closely resembles God's role as judge.[32] This lack of conceptual affinity between image and proof-text suggests that MRS is at this point offering a condensed version of the basic tradition and does not pay sufficient attention to the importance of Exod. 24:10a within the midrash.[33]

Such considerations lead one to enquire about the dating and theological emphases encountered in the three versions of this midrashic tradition. According to Segal, MRS on Exod. 15:3 simply seeks to demonstrate that the repetition of the tetragrammaton does not point to a plurality of deities, whereas both Mek passages expand the core tradition to introduce the themes of divine justice and mercy by focusing on God's self-revelation as יהוה at the Sea and as אלהים at Sinai.[34] The proposal that the Mek versions of this midrash incorporate the doctrine of two measures is integral to Segal's attempt to date early rabbinic polemics against a 'two powers' heresy, for he claims that the linking of יהוה with justice (Exod. 15:3) and אלהים with mercy (24:10) forms a direct response to heretical claims and amounts to the exact opposite of the equation established in (later) traditional rabbinic teaching.[35] It is therefore proposed that the introduction of this particular correlation between divine names and attributes in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5 pre-dates the establishment of the standardized doctrine during the late second century CE.[36]

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tradition probably views God as seated in his capacity as judge, but later traditions interpret זקן in terms of God as a sage seated to teach Torah (see further §2.2 below).

[32] MHG on Exod. 15:3 attempts to resolve this difficulty by omitting מלא רחמים, and it cites Dan. 7:9 to elucidate the statement that God was revealed at Sinai as an old man wrapped in a cloak.

[33] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 35, argues that MRS presents 'a simpler form of the tradition' than the Mek versions, although it seems more likely that the author/redactor of MRS received a version of this midrashic tradition which he abbreviated in various places (as proposed, for example, by Lauterbach, 'Some Clarifications on the Mekhilta', 184-88). For the more terse presentation of material in MRS in comparison with Mek, see Towner, 'Form-Criticism of Rabbinic Literature', 108f., 111. Schäfer, 'Israel und die Völker der Welt', 39, also regards the shift from כגבור to כבחור in MRS as evidence of secondary clarification.

[34] *Two Powers in Heaven*, 38f. Cf. Urbach, *The Sages*, 451f.; van Ruiten, 'The Use of Deuteronomy 32:39', 234.

[35] See Grözinger, 'Middat Ha-din und Middat Ha-rahamim', 95-114.

[36] See *Two Powers in Heaven*, 44-54, 173-76; Dahl and Segal, 'Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God', 16-22. To demonstrate the Tannaitic origin of the discussion of the

Certain factors do however suggest that this proposed attempt by the Mek passages to identify אלהים with divine mercy and יהוה with divine justice is not as clear-cut as Segal claims. If Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5 do consciously employ this 'early' equation, it can only be identified in relation to their citations of Exod. 15:3 and 24:10, particularly as the throne theophany of Dan. 7:9-10 describes God, the Ancient of Days, as sitting in judgement. Admittedly, neither אלהים nor יהוה occurs in Dan. 7 and there is no indication in Segal's analysis that he regards the attributes of justice and mercy as having been applied in the midrash to the Danielic passage.[37] While it is likely that the Mek versions are responding to the use of such texts as Dan. 7:9-10 by 'two powers' heretics, Segal's claim that these versions seek to demonstrate the unity of God by stressing the mixture of his merciful (אלהים) and just (יהוה) aspects in Exod. 20:2 is weakened by the fact that this scriptural statement is not even cited in Shirta 4. These considerations lead one to conclude that the primary focus of the Mek versions is not so much the relationship between God's attributes and his names, but the distinct revelations of God as a dynamic figure (Exod. 15:3, Dan. 7:10) and as a merciful old man (Exod. 24:10; Dan. 7:9). But even if an argument based on divine names and attributes does not possess particular prominence here, this does not affect Segal's overall attempt at dating the Mek presentations of this tradition. One could argue that the absence of a specific linking of God's attributes with his names, as well as the fact that the designation 'old man full of mercy' is followed by a proof-text in which the name אלהים occurs, support the view that the versions of this midrash recorded in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5 were established prior to the emergence of the standard rabbinic doctrine. Hence a Tannaitic dating towards the mid-second century CE remains a persuasive theory.[38]

The polemical objectives of this midrash are unequivocally expressed in all three versions: 'So as not to give an opportunity for the nations of the world to say "There are two powers"'. Segal claims that the use of לאומות העולם (absent from MRS on Exod. 15:3) as a designation for gentiles tends to rule out

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attributes of mercy and justice, Segal, *Two Powers,* 53f., cites m.Ber 9:5 (cf. m.Ber 5:3; 9:3; Meg 4:9).

[37] For rabbinic traditions which associate the plural 'thrones' in Dan. 7:9 with divine justice and righteousness/grace (צדקה), see b.Hag 14a and b.Sanh 38b, although in neither case is the argument linked with the divine names יהוה and אלהים.

[38] Schäfer, 'Israel und die Völker der Welt', 39, also concludes that this midrashic tradition stems from the early Tannaitic period, and that the whole *parashah* in Bahodesh 5 reached its present form towards the end of the second century CE (*ibid.*, 61f.).

heterodox Jews as the proponents of this heresy, whereas the exposition of specific scriptural texts suggests that the rabbis were directing their arguments at Hellenists who were well-versed in biblical traditions.[39] Some have claimed that gnostic dualistic teaching is being combatted,[40] but Segal favours gentile Christians as among those included in this designation, because the tradition presupposes a belief in two corresponding rather than competing deities. This is a compelling hypothesis, although it should not be overlooked that - if the early Tannaitic dating of this midrash is maintained - there is much debate as to whether a direct rabbinic response to Christian claims concerning doctrine and scriptural interpretation occurred before the early Amoraic period.[41] It cannot be ruled out that those targeted in this tradition include Jewish groups from apocalyptic and/or merkabah-mystical circles whose emphasis upon the role of a principal angelic figure, based on biblical theophanies (cf. Exod. 24:10; Dan. 7:9-14), was regarded by the rabbis as resulting from Hellenistic influence.[42] Moreover, the designation אומות העולם is used with particular frequency and in such a stylized manner for nations other than Israel in Mek that it becomes extremely difficult to establish the identity of the heretics in question.[43] This

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[39] *Two Powers in Heaven*, 54-57; *idem*, 'Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism', 133-61.

[40] Marmorstein, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien I*, 68; Gruenwald, *From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism*, 117. The monotheistic proof-texts found in the Mek/MRS tradition (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 44:6; 46:4) are frequently cited or paraphrased in gnostic texts to convey the vain boasts of the demiurge. On these gnostic passages, see Schenke, *Der Gott «Mensch» in der Gnosis*, 87-93; MacRae, 'Some Elements of Jewish Apocalyptic and Mystical Tradition and their Relation to Gnostic Literature', 210-16; Dahl, 'The Arrogant Archon and the Lewd Sophia', 701-6. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 251-53, proposes that the (later) gnostic use of these scriptural passages in fact serves 'as a polemical answer to the rabbinic polemic against "two powers"' (*ibid.*, 253) rather than *vice versa*.

[41] See especially Kimelman, '*Birkat Ha-Minim* and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer', 233; Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee*, 104-7; *idem*, 'Sadducees and Essenes after 70 CE', 353f.; cf. Kalmin, 'Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity', 163-65. See, however, Horbury, 'The Benediction of the *Minim*', 56-58, for the view that the tradition regarding Jesus' execution in the *baraita* of b.Sanh 43a preserves genuinely old (Tannaitic) material. Furthermore, Cohen, 'Analysis of an Exegetic Tradition in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*', 19-25, proposes that Mek Beshallah 7 on Exod. 14:31 reflects a second/third century rabbinic response to gentile Christians.

[42] On the use of these enthronement passages in apocalyptic-mystical traditions, see, in particular, Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 94-113; *idem*, 'The Vision of the Risen Christ in Rev. 1:13ff.', 1-11; Caragounis, *The Son of Man*, 83-131. Some rabbinic and targumic traditions allude to interpretations of Exod. 24:1 as a reference to Metatron (b.Sanh 38b) or Michael (PsJ Exod. 24:1); cf. Rüger, 'Die alten Versionen', 43.

[43] The designation אומות העולם is employed at least twenty-five times in Mek, and, on two occasions, a phrase identical to the one encountered in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5 is used (שלא ליתן פתחון פה לאומות העולם לומר), the first to combat the nations' rejection

further raises the possibility that the response is not directed at one specific group, but at a variety of contenders whose theology was defined in rabbinic circles as a 'two powers' heresy.[44]

All three texts proceed to support their basic line of argumentation with the aid of a series of rhythmic expansions which elaborate on the central theme of the unity of God. The introduction of each embellishment with הוא (Shirta 4/MRS) or אני (Bahodesh 5) results from their adherence to the basic lemma, Exod. 15:3 (יהוה איש) and 20:2 (אנכי) respectively, and the status of these twofold הוא expansions as statements offering further clarification of the doubling of יהוה (Exod. 15:3) also serves as evidence for the Tannaitic use of הוא to represent the tetragrammaton.[45] With regard to the actual content of these exegetical embellishments, it can be seen that both Mek texts maintain the initial twofold sequence of divine self-manifestations with the aid of three pairs of declarations (Egypt/Sea; past/future; this world/the world to come), to which Bahodesh 5 adds אני בסיני so that an explicit reference to the giving of the Torah is included (Exod. 20:2). But while the Mek versions introduce these poetic innovations as a sub-unit, MRS on Exod. 15:3 presents its expansions as a separate comment and begins by using the repetition of the tetragrammaton to describe God's warrior-like manifestations in Egypt and at the Sea. MRS then follows the format of Shirta 4 (הוא), but adds references to two locales frequently associated in rabbinic traditions with divine salvific activity, the Jordan and Arnon streams.[46]

The second and third interpretative pairs turn their attention away from historical acts linked to the Exodus to focus on God's eternal presence as proof of his unity. The timeless aspect of the unique One who serves the past, present and future is further accentuated by the uniformity of the expansions. This emphasis on eternal presence in the past/future and in this world/the world to

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of the Torah and the second to avoid their promotion of idol worship (see Horovitz-Rabin, 222f.).

[44] Fossum, *The Name of God,* 227f., claims that the heretics in question could have included Samaritans. Cf. Goodman, 'The Function of Minim', I:507: 'The very fact that *minim* have been identified, in different passages, with Jewish Christians, Gnostics, Hellenistic Jews, Sadducees and others constitutes evidence that the rabbis who compiled these rabbinic documents used the term in a vague way'.

[45] See further Chapter 2 §2 (הוא in Qumran texts) and Chapter 6 §5 (on m.Suk 4:5).

[46] Cf. Mek Beshallah 1 (Horovitz-Rabin, 80) and MRS (Epstein-Melamed, 46) on Exod. 13:19, where פקד יפקד gives rise to analogous twofold expansions (Egypt-Sea; Sea-wilderness; wilderness-Arnon streams; this world-the world to come). Cf. also Mek Shirta 9 on Exod. 15:16 (Horovitz-Rabin, 148); b.Ber 54a; SifDeut §306; NumR 19:25.

come cannot, nevertheless, be separated from another aspect of this midrash, namely that the unity of God is confirmed by his various self-manifestations as the deliverer of his people. The presupposition that God's past and future presence is made known through his activity on behalf of his people highlights the paradigmatic nature of the Exodus events,[47] and, in this respect, the hope expressed in these embellishments for the active presence of God in the (eschatological) future to correspond to his intervention on behalf of Israel in the past explicates the kind of language already embedded in Deutero-Isaianic prophecies (e.g., 41:17-20; 43:16-21; 48:20-21).[48] It is true, as noted in the previous chapter, that these formulations about the past and future active presence of God betray some affinities with targumic/rabbinic interpretations of Exod. 3:14;[49] but the lack of precise parallels, the widespread midrashic use of such embellishments for all kinds of 'doubling' in biblical texts,[50] and the fact that Deutero-Isaianic theology itself stresses the continuity between God's past and future activity, prevents one from claiming that reflection on Exod. 3:14 rather than the biblical אני הוא pronouncements must account for these midrashic expansions.[51] In fact, decisive scriptural support for the unity of God is subsequently drawn from precisely these texts.

All three versions thus conclude with a series of proof-texts drawn from Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaiah, although each one gives a slightly different presentation of the material. A cursory glance reveals that the proof-texts are bound together by the words אני הוא and אני ראשון ואני אחרון, thereby making this piece of midrashic exegesis the most comprehensive collection of divine אני

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[47] See Goldin, *The Song at the Sea,* 13-20; Mintz, 'The Song at the Sea and the Question of Doubling in Midrash', 186f.

[48] Anderson, 'Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah', 177-195; Simian-Yofre, 'Exodo en Deuteroisaías', 530-53.

[49] See especially Ngl2 on Exod. 3:14b: 'I am he who was your aid in the captivity of the Egyptians, and I am he who will be your aid in every generation' (cf. b.Ber 9b; ARNB 38 [Schechter, 101]; ExR 3:6; MidTeh 72:1 [162b]).

[50] See, e.g., Mek Shirta 3 (Horovitz-Rabin, 126) and MRS (Epstein-Melamed, 78) on Exod. 15:2, where ויהי in the phrase 'and he has become my salvation' (ויהי לי לישועה) leads to the following innovative exposition: 'He was in the past (היה לי לשעבר), and he will be in the future to come (ויהיה לי לעתיד לבא)' (see also n.46 above). Cf. SifDeut §31 on Deut. 6:4, where the repetition of divine names is interpreted as: '"The Lord our God" in this world; "the Lord our God" in the world to come'. The significance of midrashic interpretations of biblical repetition is skilfully analysed by Samely, 'Scripture's Implicature', 171-74.

[51] Segal, for example, repeatedly asserts (*Two Powers in Heaven,* 37, 41, 52) that the exegetical expansions in the Mek/MRS tradition are based on the interpretation of the theophany described in Exod. 3, but he neither cites nor analyses the rabbinic and targumic expositions of Exod. 3:14. See further the comments made in Chapter 3 n.50 above.

statements in the whole rabbinic corpus. Shirta 4 cites two declarations which are to be read in full (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4) and which offer scriptural proof that God's eternity demonstrates his unity.[52] The significance ascribed to these two proof-texts in the overall argumentation regarding the twofold יהוה (Exod. 15:3) is demonstrated by the fact that the doubling of אני occurs in the utterances of the one God,[53] further highlighted by his assertion 'and there is no god beside me' (Deut. 32:39b). In other words, the role of הוא as the unifying link between the various embellishments as expressions of divine unity is now climactically supported by scriptural proof-texts where the twofold אני has only one referent (= הוא). Both Deut. 32:39 and Isa. 41:4, together with Isa. 44:6 (48:12 in MRS), assume a similar role in Bahodesh 5 and MRS; the one exception, where אני is not doubled, is Isa. 46:4 (Bahodesh 5), although the inclusion of this statement does demonstrate that, in addition to citing scriptural examples of the doubling of the divine אני, this midrashic version evidently views אני הוא as a decisive monotheistic expression. And when one considers that a multitude of biblical passages asserting the unity of God could have been selected for citation, it seems that this group of proof-texts has deliberately been chosen because God offers a self-proclamation of his unity and eternity.

God's all-encompassing presence and activity, initially illustrated with the aid of twofold expansions, thus receive scriptural support from God's own doubling of אני in both pentateuchal and prophetic texts. Even the content of Deut. 32:39 confirms this basic argument, for the description of his power to kill and make alive and to wound and heal (v. 39cd) effectively echoes the earlier images of God as a mighty warrior and a merciful old man. The same holds true for the content of the Deutero-Isaianic texts, because the designations used by God to convey his eternal presence (ראשון and אחרון) now serve as a prophetic explication of the twofold אני in Deut. 32:39a.[54] Consequently, the twofold הוא or אני interpretative phrases in Mek/MRS safeguard the unity of God by stressing his exclusive activity in every event and period of time, and these, in turn, are authenticated by scriptural texts in which the true identity and

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[52] As noted in n.13 above, the citation of additional proof-texts (Isa. 46:4 and 44:6a) in parentheses in the Horovitz-Rabin edition of Shirta 4 indicates the tentative nature of their inclusion. It is more likely that this version of the tradition, as attested by other Mek editions, only cited Deut. 32:39 and Isa. 41:4.

[53] Cf. Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence,* 31f.

[54] The interpretation of the Deutero-Isaianic statement אני ראשון ואני אחרון as a kind of prophetic exegesis of Deut. 32:39a is also encountered in SifDeut §329 (see §3 below). See further LeqT on Deut. 32:39 (59b); Midrash Hadash on Gen. 47:29 (Mann, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue,* I:195f.).

sovereignty of the one God (אני/הוא) is proclaimed by him with the aid of the words אני הוא [אני] and the self-designations אני ראשון and אני אחרון.

It may be possible to venture further and propose that a more deliberate application of the proof-texts can be detected in this midrashic tradition. Goldin claims that particular importance can be attached to the total number of אני statements cited in the Mek texts.[55] The use of וגו׳ after Deut. 32:39a in Shirta 4 indicates that the whole verse, containing two further cases of אני, should be read; this, together with Isa. 41:4, amounts to six אני statements, corresponding exactly to its number of embellishments. As Bahodesh 5 records seven formulations (with אני בסיני), it seems pertinent to investigate whether the same number of אני statements can also be identified. Bahodesh 5 does not cite Deut. 32:39a with וגו׳,[56] but its broader selection of prophetic texts also leads to a total of seven examples of אני (two in Deut. 32:39a, one in Isa. 46:4a and two each in Isa. 44:6c and 41:4cd). This exegetical collation between embellishments and אני declarations cannot, however, be detected in MRS on Exod. 15:3, because its own selection of proof-texts gives a total of eleven אני pronouncements.

Goldin simply notes the numerical correspondence between embellishments and their corresponding אני proof-texts, but the intentional play on אני can be extended to include the content of these statements. As shown by the following illustration, there are indications that motifs explicated in the embellishments correspond sequentially to those contained in the divine אני declarations:

Shirta 4

He is the one who was in Egypt,	ראו עתה כי אני
He is the one who was at the Sea.	אני הוא (Deut. 32:39a)
He is the one who was in the past,	אני אמית ואחיה
He is the one who will be in the future.	מחצתי ואני ארפא (v. 39cd)
He is the one in this world,	אני ה׳ ראשון
He is the one in the world to come.	ואת אחרנים אני הוא (Isa. 41:4cd)

Bahodesh 5

I am the one who was in Egypt.	ראו עתה כי אני
I am the one who was at the Sea.	אני הוא (Deut. 32:39a).
I am the one who was at Sinai.	ועד זקנה אני הוא (Isa. 46:4a)
I am the one who was in the past,	אני ראשון
I am the one will be in the future.	ואני אחרון (Isa. 44:6c).
I am the one in this world,	אני יהוה ראשון
I am the one in the world to come.	ואת אחרנים אני הוא (41:4cd).

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[55] *The Song at the Sea,* 129.

[56] See Horovitz-Rabin, *Mechilta,* 220; Lauterbach, *Mekilta,* II:231.

If a correlation of this kind is consciously established between midrashic commentary and proof-text in Shirta 5 and Bahodesh 5, it can be proposed that the following features find expression in both versions: i) the doubling of the divine אני in Deut. 32:39a illustrates the dual manifestation of God in Egypt and the Sea, the basic theme of the midrash; ii) God as 'the first' (Isa. 41:4) corresponds to his active presence in this world, whereas the expression 'and with the last ones' is linked to his presence in the world to come. Some expositional elements are developed by the Mek versions in their own distinctive ways. Shirta 4, on the one hand, associates the two remaining occurrences of אני in Deut. 32:39cd with the past and future, a technique which recalls the targumic/rabbinic use of these divine statements as expressions of God's past punishment and future restoration. Bahodesh 5, on the other hand, links its second citation of the divine designations 'first' and 'last' (Isa. 44:6) to the past and future, but interestingly elucidates the reference to Sinai and its echo of כזקן מלא רחמים with the image of old age (46:4). Admittedly, a certain fluidity can be detected in the application of proof-texts in Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5, but it seems clear that a series of biblical statements has consciously been selected whose unifying factor is the doubling of the divine אני with the aid of אני הוא [אני] and the analogous self-predications אני ראשון and אני אחרון. The prominence of the twofold אני, the repetition of the designations 'First' and 'Last' and the demonstration of the all-embracing nature of God's activity (Deut. 32:39cd) highlight the role of the preceding embellishments as uncompromising affirmations that the one God embraces the past and the future, this world and the world to come.

As the rabbis sought to combat the heretical view that Exod. 15:3, 24:10 and Dan. 7:9-10 point to the existence of two deities, support to the contrary can be drawn from Deut. 32:39, whose twofold use of אני encompasses the eternally active presence of God; he alone, not two separate powers, performs the acts of killing and making alive, wounding and healing. Deutero-Isaianic אני citations further attest the unity of God, for he alone is ראשון and אחרון. The ultimate argument that can be presented by the sages in response to the 'two powers' heresy is that their claims receive endorsement from God's own assertions of his everlasting unity.

2.2 The Lord of the Sea and Sinai: Secondary Elaborations

Exegetical discussions of various divine self-manifestations are also recorded in three homiletical midrashim (PesR 21:6; PesK 12:24; TanB Yitro §16).

Although these three traditions post-date SifDeut §329 (see §3 below) and do not cite Deut. 32:39, their close association with the midrash reflected in Shirta 4, Bahodesh 5 and MRS on Exod. 15:3 calls for brief examination.

PesR 21:6 [21:12-13]

אמ״ר לוי בדמויות הרבה נדמה הב״ה לישראל לזה עומד ולזה יושב לזה בחור ולזה

זקן כיצד כשנגלה הב״ה על ים סוף לעשו׳ מלחמתן של בניו ולהפרע מן המצריים לא נראה להם אלא כבחור שאין מלחמה נאה לעשות אלא ע״י בחור שנ׳ ה׳ איש מלחמה ה׳ שמו וכשנגלה הב״ה על הר סיני ליתן תורה לישר׳ לא נראה להם אלא כזקן שאין תורה נאה יוצאת אלא מפי זקן מה טעם דכתי׳ בישישי׳ חכמה ובאורך ימים תבונה וכן דניאל אמ׳ חזה הויתי עד די כרסוון רמיו ועתיק יומין יתיב וגו׳

אמ״ר חייא בר אבא אם יאמר לך ברא דזנותא תרין אלהי׳ אינון אמור ליה אנא הוא דימא ואנא הוא דסיני

['Face to face' (Deut. 5:4)]. R. Levi said: In many guises did the Holy One, blessed be he, appear to Israel. To one [he appeared] standing, and to one seated; to one as a young man, and to one as an old man.
How? When the Holy One, blessed be he, revealed himself at the Red Sea to wage wars for his children and to take revenge upon the Egyptians, he only appeared to them as a young man, for war is more fittingly waged by the hand of a young man. As it is said: 'The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name' (Exod. 15:3). And when the Holy One, blessed be he, revealed himself on Mount Sinai to give the Torah to Israel, he only appeared to them as an old man, for Torah is more fitting when it comes from the mouth of an old man. What is the reason? The verse: 'Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days' (Job 12:12). And thus Daniel said: 'As I watched, thrones were set in place and the Ancient of Days took his throne etc.' (Dan. 7:9).
R. Hiyya bar Abba said: If the son of a whore says to you: 'There are two gods', say to him: 'I am he of the Sea and I am he of Sinai'.[57]

PesK 12:24

לפי שנראה להן הקב״ה בים כגיבור עושה מלחמה ונראה להם בסיני כסופר מלמד תנאה ונראה להם בימי דניאל כזקן מלמד תורה נראה להם בימי שלמ׳ בחור אמ׳ להן הקב״ה לא בשביל שאתם רואים אותי בדמוייות הרבה אלא אני הוא שבים אני הוא שבסיני אנכי י״י אלהיך

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[57] *Pesiqta Rabbati: Vol. 1*, ed. Ulmer, 448-51 (here following Ms. Dropsie 26 89ab, which is virtually identical to Ms. Casanata 3324 73ab). The reference in parentheses (21:12-13) is to the paragraph division adopted in the Ulmer edition.

> Because the Holy One, blessed be he, appeared to them at the Sea as a mighty one waging war, and he appeared to them at Sinai as a scholar teaching the lesson, and he appeared to them in the days of Daniel as an old man teaching Torah, [and] he appeared to them in the days of Solomon as a young man (1), the Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'Do not [misinterpret] because you see me in many guises, but [rather]:"I am he who was at the Sea; I am he who was at Sinai. 'I am the Lord your God'" (Exod. 20:2).[58]

Main Variations in TanB Yitro §16 on Exod. 20:2 [59]

(1) The days of Daniel and Solomon are reversed.

The midrash in PesR 21:6 (21:12-13) stems from the lemma that God spoke פנים בפנים at Sinai (Deut. 5:4), and this anthropomorphic expression leads to an exegetical discussion attributed to Rabbi Levi (PA3) on the various modes of divine self-manifestation experienced by Israel. Of these three later midrashic units,[60] it is the version in PesR that bears closest resemblance to the Tannaitic versions considered above, particularly MRS on Exod. 15:3, because it also focuses on the images of God as a young (Exod. 15:3) and old man (Dan. 7:9). The absence of certain elements (the series of exegetical embellishments and proof-texts drawn from Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaiah) suggests, however, that the compiler of PesR was acquainted with a different or possibly condensed version of the MRS tradition. The central theme of the midrash in PesR 21:6 is its linking of the portrayal of God as a young man (standing) with the Sea, and as an old man (seated) with Sinai,[61] but its citation of Job 12:12 signifies a shift in emphasis, because God is now depicted as the wise elder who gives the Torah. This transference from mercy (Mek/MRS) to wisdom also points to a dependence on an exegesis similar to MRS on Exod. 15:3, for the allusion to divine mercy - obscured due to the absence of a citation from

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[58] *Pesikta de Rav Kahana,* ed. Mandelbaum, I:223. Cf. YS Yitro §286.

[59] *Midrasch Tanchuma,* ed. Buber, 40a.

[60] The Palestinian provenance and fifth-century dating of PesK is maintained by Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash,* 295f. For the view that Tanhuma-Yelamdenu material stems from fourth/fifth century Palestine, see *ibid.,* 305f.; and for the view that the core of material in PesR probably dates from fifth/sixth century Palestine, see Ulmer, *Pesiqta Rabbati,* xv, xxiv. A lengthy process of redactional development is acknowledged for these three homiletical midrashim (see Stemberger, *Introduction,* 295, 302, 305f.).

[61] Cf. also ExR 23:1 (attributed to R. Berekhyah [PA5] in the name of R. Abbahu [PA3]), according to which the Israelites declare that God was experienced as one standing at the Sea, but, following this triumph and the praise of the Song (Exod. 15), his throne became firmly established (Ps. 93:2) and he was thereafter experienced as one seated.

Exod. 24:10 - has now been replaced in order to focus on wisdom as the divine attribute revealed at Sinai. Similarly, the direct link established in MRS between the Sinai theophany and the Ancient of Days seated upon a throne explains the use of Dan. 7:9 in PesR 21:6 to clarify the image of God as an old man seated to give the Torah.

The aim of the midrash in PesR 21:6 is to combat those who hold ditheistic beliefs (powers>gods), as demonstrated by the comment attributed to Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba (PA3), a contemporary of Rabbi Levi and a member of the same school.[62] Some scholars have interpreted the harsh depiction of the proponent of this heresy as the 'son of a whore' (ברא דזנותא) as referring to Jesus, thus polemicizing against belief in the virgin birth,[63] although others adopt the probably more plausible view that Rabbi Hiyya's statement acts as a general response to claims made by Christian believers.[64] The ditheistic beliefs combatted in PesR 21:6 may even be viewed as the direct descendants of the heretical claims to which the Mek/MRS tradition responds. While it is difficult, as already noted, to determine the precise identity of the heretics described in the earlier tradition (אומות העולם), the fact that direct refutations of Christian claims became more prevalent during the Amoraic period may support the view that a rabbinic perception of Christian beliefs is reflected here. Rabbi Hiyya responds in Aramaic by citing a solemn, but innovative, pronouncement which forms a self-declaration emphasizing the unity of God: 'I am he (or: I am the one) of the Sea and I am he of Sinai' (אנא הוא דימא ואנא הוא דסיני). These parallel claims, whose uniformity in terms of structure serves to accentuate their role as the pronouncements of the one God, accordingly sum up the central message that God's manifold self-disclosures demonstrate his unique capacity to make himself manifest to Israel in a variety of ways.

The exegetical tradition recorded in PesK 12:24 and TanB Yitro §16 contains many secondary elaborations, and the twofold structure of the Tannaitic texts (Sea/Sinai) has been expanded to include a fourfold commentary on Exod. 20:2 (warrior/scholar; old man/young man), particularly as this later tradition does

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62 On Hiyya, see Bacher, *Die Agada der palästinensischen Amoräer*, II:174f., 296, 300.

63 Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 265 n.1, 304f.; Strack, *Jesus, die Häretiker und die Christen*, 37; Simon, *Verus Israel*, 196.

64 Bietenhard, *Caesarea, Origenes und die Juden*, 44. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 56, adopts a more cautious approach and states that the Aramaic word זניתא can be associated either with זנא/זנה ('to be unchaste') or with the Hebrew term מִין to function as a general reference to heretics. See further Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Überlieferung*, 244-47.

not explicitly combat a 'two powers/gods' heresy. Despite the lack of proof-texts in PesK 12:24 and TanB Yitro §16, the comment about the appearance of God as an old man (זקן) during the days of Daniel reveals a familiarity with the midrashic application of Dan. 7:9 reflected in MRS/PesR, although the overly concise link established in MRS between the Sinai theophany and the Danielic text is now divided into two chronologically separate manifestations. The core image of old/young man is also extended to include God's self-manifestation 'in the days of Solomon', which assumes the well-established midrashic link between God as a young man and Song 5:15 ('His appearance is like Lebanon').[65]

The one feature that binds together these midrashic units is the climactic divine proclamation אני הוא שבים אני הוא שבסיני and its Aramaic parallel as cited by Rabbi Hiyya. Undoubtedly, this twofold declaration is closely linked to, and may even stem from, the rhythmic embellishments encountered in Mek/MRS (אני בסיני and אני על הים), but the introduction of the formulation אנא הוא (PesR 21:6) or אני הוא (TanB Yitro §16/PesK 12:24) also calls for comment. Two factors should be taken into account. First, these אני/אנא הוא declarations reflect a tendency in rabbinic traditions to insert הוא into nominal constructions (Hebrew and Aramaic), a feature already encountered in targumic traditions, and, in this particular case, the expression conveys the contrastive force required by the declaration as an expression of divine unity: 'I [and no other] am the one of the Sea/Sinai'. The emergence of these innovative אני הוא formulations in rabbinic texts will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6. Secondly, if the traditions recorded in these homiletical midrashim betray a familiarity with the Mek/MRS traditions or with versions similar to them, it is indicative that the proof-texts containing אני הוא have not been cited. These newly formulated אני/אנא הוא statements may, nevertheless, have been inspired by the Tannaitic use of divine אני הוא pronouncements as scriptural proof-texts against a 'two powers' heresy. Alternatively, these formulations, particularly in the case of PesK 12:24 and TanB Yitro §16, can be interpreted as an exegetical paraphrase of Exod. 20:2a (אנכי יהוה אלהיך);[66] this would imply that אנכי is now represented by אני הוא and that the earlier Tannaitic correlation established between יהוה and the Sea (Exod. 15:3) and between אלהים and Sinai (24:10) is

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[65] This exegetical association is attested in the next comment on Exod. 20:2 in both PesK 12:24 and TanB Yitro §16. Cf. also b.Hag 14a which illustrates the contrast between God's self-manifestations as an old and young man by drawing attention to his white hair (Dan. 7:9) and dark hair (Song 5:11).

[66] See further Chapter 6 §§2.2, 2.3 below.

also echoed. It remains to be noted that, whether one regards the statement אני הוא שבים אני הוא שכסיני an its Aramaic counterpart as betraying the influence of these biblical proof-texts or as an independently devised formulation stemming from a later period, it attests the use of אני הוא (אנא הוא) within a declaration made by God to accentuate his unity and exclusiveness.

3. Rabbinic Refutations of Heretical Claims

SifDeut §329 (§1)

ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא זו תשובה לאומרים אין רשות בשמים האומר שתי רשויות בשמים משיבים אותו ואומרים לו והלא כבר כתוב ואין אלהים עמדי או כענין שאין בו כח לא להמית ולא להחיות ולא להרע ולא להטיב תלמוד לומר ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא אני אמית ואחיה ואומר כה אמר ה' מלך ישראל וגואלו ה' צבאות אני ראשון ואני אחרון ומבלעדי אין אלהים

'See now that I, I am he'. This is an answer to those who say that there is no power in heaven. To the one who says that there are two powers in heaven (1), they reply and say to him: 'And is it not also written "And there is no god beside me"?' Or as in the case [when one says] that there is no might in him (2) to kill or to make alive, to do bad or to do good, Scripture says: 'See now that I, I am he; I kill and I make alive'. And it says: 'Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no god' (Isa. 44:6) (3).[67]

Main Variations in MidTann on Deut. 32:39 (§1)[68]

(1) Omits 'in heaven'.
(2) Reads: '(He who says) that there is a kingdom in heaven, but that there is no might in him etc.'
(3) No quotation from Isa. 44:6.

This anonymously transmitted tradition in the first section of SifDeut §329 and its secondary development in MidTann seek, with the aid of Deut. 32:39abc and Isa. 44:6, to refute the claims made by three different heretical categories or

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[67] *Siphre ad Deuteronomium*, ed. Finkelstein, 379. Cf. also YS Ha'azinu §946.

[68] *Midrasch Tannaïm zum Deuteronomium*, ed. Hoffmann, 202. Hoffmann gives the name 'Midrash Tannaim' to a halakhic midrash which he believes is based on a lost Mekhilta of Deut and on SifDeut, and his edition is compiled from excerpts in later works (particularly MHG). As MidTann on Deut. 32:39 is largely dependent on SifDeut §329 (or a related version), its value only extends to the insights it offers into the introduction of later interpretative elements.

groups.[69] By allowing the content and structure of Deut. 32:39abc to direct the line of argumentation, the overriding concern of this midrashic unit is to provide a correct interpretation of each clause in this pentateuchal statement. A second section thus presents v. 39cd as an effective resurrection proof-text (הבטחות), together with Num. 23:10, Deut. 33:6 and Hos. 6:2.[70] A third section, recorded in MidTann but not in SifDeut §329, focuses on the twofold אני of v. 39a (see further §4 below). And, in a final section, v. 39e assumes the role of proof-text to elucidate the view that fathers cannot save their sons, nor brothers each other, from the retribution for sin.[71]

The midrash opens with a citation of v. 39a to refute those who claim that there is no power in heaven, namely those who embrace atheistic beliefs.[72] The emphasis is placed on the words ראו עתה אני אני הוא as an expression by God of his real divinity, even as an utterance which breaks the silence that could be misinterpreted as proof of his non-existence. SifDeut accordingly secures a thematic continuity between this and the preceding *piska* (§328) where a well-attested piece of exegesis attributed to Rabbi Nehemyah (T3) is cited, in which Titus is described as entering the Holy of Holies and, having slashed the two curtains, challenges God by uttering the blasphemous taunt: 'If he is God, let him come and prevent [me]' (אם אלוה הוא יבוא וימחה).[73] This scenario of a

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[69] For the view that SifDeut had reached its present form by the end of the third century CE, see Stemberger, *Introduction*, 273; Fraade, 'Sifre Deuteronomy 26', 296-98. See especially *idem*, *From Tradition to Commentary*, 185 n.56, where the following factors are taken into consideration: i) the language of SifDeut is clearly Mishnaic Hebrew; ii) only Tannaitic sages are named; iii) the closest parallels to traditions in SifDeut are to be found in Tannaitic midrashim; iv) there is an implied opposition in SifDeut to a centralized appointment of rabbis to positions of judicial and administrative authority, which also suits a mid-third century context. For the view that the bulk of the midrashic material contained in Sifre Ha'azinu (Deut. 32) stems from the period following the failure of the Bar Kochba revolt, see Hammer, 'A Rabbinic Response to the Post Bar Kochba Era', 37-53.

[70] SifDeut §329 par. 2 reads: 'Another interpretation: "I kill and I make alive". This is one of four assurances given to them [Israel] as an indication of the resurrection of the dead. "I kill and I make alive" (Deut. 32:39). "Let my soul die the death of the righteous" (Num. 23:10). "Let Reuben live, and not die" (Deut. 33:6). "After two days he will revive us" (Hos. 6:2). I could assume that death [refers] to one and life to another, [but] Scripture says: "I have wounded and I will heal" (Deut. 32:39). In the same way as wounding and healing [refer] to one [person], so death and life [refer] to one.'

[71] Cf. also b.Sanh 104a; *Mishnah of R.Eliezer*, ed. Enelow, 94f.

[72] Cf. SifDeut §320; QohR 1:18:1 (6d).

[73] Cf. b.Git 56b; ARNB 7 (Schechter, 20). Other rabbinic traditions claim that the speakers in vv. 37-38 are 'the nations' (cf. ExR 15:16; TanB Saw §16 [11a]; see also the targumic renderings analysed in Chapter 3 §1 above). For a rabbinic discussion of the identity of the speakers in Deut. 32:37-38, see especially SifDeut §327.

gentile ruler, depicted as the personification of 'the nations of the world', who questions the existence of Israel's God is effectively answered by means of the divine declaration in v. 39a. MidTann even concludes its identical comment on Deut. 32:38 with a citation of v. 39a, thereby making אני אני הוא the irrefutable reply to Titus' challenge for God to make himself manifest and prove his power. Nevertheless, it should be noted that such elements of thematic coherence between the rabbinic tradition concerning Titus (§328) and the exposition of Deut. 32:39 (§329) can only be secured on a redactional level. The exegetical discussion that follows in SifDeut §329 is undoubtedly self-contained, which indicates that its initial comment on Deut. 32:39a does not presuppose that an antecedent for הוא must be identified from its immediate biblical (or midrashic) context. The words ראו עתה אני אני הוא stand on their own as God's distinctive self-declaration.

The second statement in SifDeut §329 (and MidTann) is directed at those who embrace a belief in 'two powers', although the actual basis of this heretical claim - such as the reinterpretation of certain scriptural texts - is not specified. Indeed, the highly condensed manner in which this heretical group or category is refuted makes it extremely difficult to establish the identity of its proponents. It may be the case, as Segal notes, that the primary concern of this midrashic compendium is to focus on the component parts of Deut. 32:39 as providing a forceful response to a variety of heretical claims, and that exegetical rather than polemical concerns have led to a 'rabbinic stylization of various arguments' mainly for the benefit of the Jewish community.[74]

However, it is possible to interpret this second refutation as a direct rabbinic response to the progressive form of reasoning that could be deduced from the first; the statement אני אני הוא (v. 39a) may indeed demonstrate that there is a power in heaven, but the repetition of אני could be taken as proof of the existence of two divine beings. The Tannaitic Mek/MRS texts cite v. 39a to combat the belief in a plurality of powers, but the potential dangers of its doubling of אני are addressed by its rendering in the Pentateuchal Targumim (N/FT-VN/PsJ) as well as in later rabbinic discussions (see §§4, 6 below). The potential misuse of Deut. 32:39a is therefore brought into the open in SifDeut §329, and the tradition may belong to a stage of controversy when this scriptural statement itself was used to support binitarian beliefs.[75] Hence to

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[74] *Two Powers in Heaven,* 85.

[75] It is, for example, possible that the tradition recorded in SifDeut §329 originally formed a response to an interpretative reading of Deut. 32:39a by third-century Christians. Although

counter-balance this claim, v. 39b is cited as a corrective (ואין אלהים עמדי).

It is even more difficult to identify the proponents of the third allegation,[76] although the 'heresy' undoubtedly amounts to a denial of the omnipotence of God. The rabbinic response is clear and uncompromising; to those who claim that God does not possess the power to kill or make alive, he himself declares אני אמית ואחיה (v. 39c). Interestingly, this particular citation of v. 39 as proof of the all-encompassing power of God relates more closely to the originally intended function of this biblical statement than to its prevalent exegetical role as a resurrection proof-text, to which SifDeut dedicates the following section.

There are certain indications that the reference to this third heretical claim has been secondarily inserted into SifDeut §329,[77] particularly as the subsequent citation of Isa. 44:6 bears no direct relation to the issue of divine omnipotence. That this claim represents a later accretion can also be adduced from the otherwise tightly formulated framework of the *piska* in SifDeut §329, in which each component of Deut. 32:39 is given a single midrashic interpretation. The sequence is therefore disrupted by the inclusion of v. 39c to refute the claim about God's lack of power, for this same scriptural statement will be used as a resurrection proof-text in the next section. If the reference to the third heresy represents a secondary addition, SifDeut §329 provides another example of the midrashic technique of citing Isa. 44:6 as prophetic endorsement of the counter-arguments expressed in Deut. 32:39ab (cf. Mek on Exod. 15:3 and 20:2). The declaration אני ראשון ואני אחרון offers a vigorous response to the claim 'there is no power in heaven', for it makes explicit what is assumed in Deut. 32:39, that God has existed from eternity and will continue to do so. The divine self-predications of Isa. 44:6c therefore supply the twofold אני of v. 39a with a

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the doubling of אני in this statement could not itself have been used as support for the existence of 'two powers' by groups whose scriptural exegesis was based on the Septuagint (LXX Deut. 32:39 reads ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι (cf. VL); the Vulgate reads: *videte quod ego sim solus*), it is significant that Origen cites Deut. 32:39a as a divine pronouncement which expresses the unity of Christ with God: 'What, therefore, is the meaning of the sacred scriptures when they say "Before me there was no other god, nor shall there be after me" (Isa. 43:10), and "I am (ἐγώ εἰμι), and there is no god apart from me" (Deut. 32:39)? One is not to believe that, in these statements, the unity refers to the God of the universe in his purity apart from Christ, or to Christ apart from God; but rather we say that it is, as Jesus says: "The Father and I are one" (John 10:30)' (*Dialogue with Heraclides* 4).

[76] For attempts to link this third category to Epicureans, see *ibid.*, 85f.

[77] See in particular Basser, *Midrashic Interpretations of the Song of Moses*, 240f., who also describes the introduction to the third claim (או כעניין) as 'indicative of a parenthetical remark'; cf. *idem*, *In the Margins of the Midrash*, 63-66; van Ruiten, 'The Use of Deuteronomy 32:39', 237 n.51.

monotheistic 'content'. In addition, the phrase ומבלעדי אין אלהים (44:6) removes the potential problem that a 'two powers' heresy could find exegetical ammunition in the twofold אני and עמדי of v. 39ab. For this reason, the citation of Isa. 44:6 in SifDeut §329 strengthens the adopted role of Deut. 32:39 as a scriptural weapon against a variety of heretical claims.

4. The Doubling of the Divine אני

Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer 34

ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא (ואין אלהים עמדי מה ראה הכתו׳ לומר ב׳ פעמים אני אני) אלא אמר הקב״ה אני הוא בעולם הזה ואני הוא לעולם הבא אני הוא שגאלתי (אתכם) ממצרי׳ אני הוא שעתיד לגאול אותן בסוף מלכות רביעית לכך נאמ׳ אני אני הוא

כל גוי שיאמ׳ שיש אלוה שני אני אמיתהו במות שני שאין בו תחיה וכל גוי שיאמר שאין אלוה שני (אני אני) אחייהו לחיי העול׳ (הבא) ולעתיד (לבא) ממית לאלו ומחיה לאלו לכך נאמר אני אמית ואחיה

מחצתי את ירושלם ואת עמה ביום (חרון) אפי וברחמ׳ גדולי׳ ארפא להם לכך נאמר מחצתי ואני ארפא וכל מלאך ושרף לא יצילו את הרשע׳ מדינה של גיהנם שנאמר ואין מידי מציל

'See now that I, I am he {and there is no god beside me'. Why does Scripture see [it appropriate] to say 'I, I' twice?} The Holy One, blessed be he, said: I am he (1) in this world, and I am he (1) in the world to come. I am he who redeemed {you} from Egypt; I am he who in the future will redeem them at the end of the fourth kingdom. Therefore it is said: 'I, I am he'.
Every nation who says that there is a second god, I will kill with a second death, wherein there is no resurrection. And every nation who says that there is no second god,{I, I} will make alive for the life of the world {to come}. And in the future {to come} I will kill these and make alive those. Therefore it is said: 'I kill and I make alive'.
I have wounded Jerusalem and her people on the day of {anger} my wrath, but with great mercy I will heal them. (2) Therefore it is said: 'I have wounded and I will heal'. And no angel or seraph will deliver the wicked from the judgement of Gehinnom, as it is said: 'And there is none who can deliver from my hand'.[78]

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[78] *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer: Codex C.M. Horowitz,* 117 (29a), based on the Venice 1544 edition. Parentheses in the text and translation denote editorial omissions proposed by Horowitz. A briefer version of this midrash is found in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer,* ed. Luria, 79a, which does not include the phrase 'at the end of the fourth kingdom' or the extended comment on v. 39c ('Every nation.. and I make alive'). Cf. also YS Ha'azinu §946.

Main Variations in MidTann on Deut. 32:39 (§3)[79]

(1) Does not include הוא.
(2) The concluding section discusses the merits of the fathers (cf. SifDeut §329 par. 3)

The opening lines of this developed tradition display a shift from an actual debate on the 'two powers' heresy to a more reflective exegetical assessment of the purpose of the doubling of the divine אני (v. 39a).[80] PRE 34 and MidTann attribute the response to God himself, who offers a paraphrastic explanation of the twofold אני in terms of his eternally active presence and unique salvific activity. Close links can be detected between these interpretative 'I' declarations and the embellishments recorded in the Mek/MRS tradition, but the absence of certain features (Sea/Sinai) results from the fact that this later tradition seeks to highlight the continuity between past and future, earthly and eschatological, activity.[81] MidTann offers a faithful rendering of אני (v. 39a) in its first twofold paraphrase (אני בעולם הזה ואני לעולם הבא) and preserves traces of early rabbinic translational practices (cf. Mek Bahodesh 5), whereas the use of the formulation אני הוא בעולם הזה in PRE 34 is reminiscent of developments encountered in Amoraic texts (§2.2 above). The replacement of אני with אני הוא is also reflected in the second pair of declarations in the form of cleft sentences about God's past and future acts of deliverance,[82] and indications of secondary development can once again be detected in the fact that an additional pair of explanatory statements has been included. These interpretative comments on the doubling of אני thus elaborate on a theme already associated with the unity of God in certain Tannaitic traditions, but, in terms of their form and content, they find their closest parallels in other late expositions (cf. PsJ Deut. 32:39 and §§5, 6 below).

Earlier rabbinic discussions, particularly as reflected in SifDeut §329, express the concern that certain scriptural verses, even Deut. 32:39 itself, can be misinterpreted, and this leads to the citation of another component of the

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[79] Cf. MHG on Deut. 32:39 (Fisch, 731).

[80] For the eighth/ninth century dating of PRE, see Stemberger, *Introduction,* 329; Pérez Fernández, *Los Capítulos de Rabbí Eliezer,* 20-22.

[81] Cf. also ExR 21:3 where the doubling of אני in Deut. 32:39a illuminates Isa. 65:24 ('Before they call I [אני] will answer, while they are yet speaking I [אני] will hear'). The citation of Deut. 32:39 leads to the following comment: 'And everyone who does the will of God and prays with his heart is heard in this world and also in the future to come'.

[82] Cf. MidTeh 31:2 (119a) for a close parallel which offers the following comment on the phrase 'everlasting salvation' (תשועת עולמים) in Isa. 45:17: 'I am he who redeemed you in the past (אני הוא שגאלתי אתכם לשעבר), and I am he who will redeem you in the future (ואני הוא גואלכם להבא)'. See also Chapter 3 n.48 above.

same verse (v. 39b) as an effective counter-argument directed at those who embrace a 'two powers' heresy. And although the opening section of this much later tradition in PRE 34 makes no explicit reference to its polemical objectives, its comment on v. 39c does introduce a threatening description of the fate of those who embrace ditheistic beliefs.[83] The nations who believe in the existence of a second god will be punished with a 'second death', which is a popular phrase in targumic texts, but rare, and virtually unique to this tradition, in rabbinic literature.[84] It is declared that such people, at the time of resurrection, will face death and eternal judgement, while those holding firm to monotheistic beliefs will experience God's power to give life. Thus, in contrast to the widespread rabbinic application of אני אמית as a description of the first death in העולם הזה (see §§1, 5, 6; N/FT-VN Deut. 32:39), PRE 34 reflects an interpretation of both parts of v. 39c as expressions of divine eschatological activity.[85] The use of the designation 'nation' (גוי) to describe those who will experience a 'second death' or resurrection is also significant.[86] Not only does this designation echo the Tannaitic description of those who embrace a belief in 'two powers' as 'the nations of the world' (Mek Shirta 4 and Bahodesh 5), but it elaborates upon a distinction already established in the biblical context of the Song of Moses between the sovereignty of Israel's God and the powerlessness of the nations opposed to him (Deut. 32:37-38; cf. N/FT-VNP/PsJ).

While PRE 34 and MidTann associate the divine acts of killing and making alive with the nations' acceptance or rejection of a 'second god', the subsequent elucidation of v. 39d adopts a more nationalistic stance. This midrashic passage does not interpret v. 39d as a description of the divine acts of wounding and healing individual beings, but introduces a description of God's attitude towards Jerusalem and her people (cf. PsJ Deut. 32:39). As the destruction of

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[83] See TanB Beha'alotkha §16 (26b): 'Do not mix with those who say there are two gods in the world, for their destiny is to perish from the world'. Cf. NumR 15:14; DeutR 2:33.

[84] Cf. O/N/FT-PVNL Deut. 33:6; TIsa 22:14; 65:6, 15; TJer 51:39, 57 (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8). For possibly related rabbinic traditions, see b.Sanh 92a and SifDeut §347; cf. also TanB Wa-yiggash §10 (105a) where Jacob mournfully declares: אני מת בשני עולמות ('[perhaps] I am to die in both worlds'). See further Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, II:41-49; Sysling, *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim*, 210-28.

[85] For Samaritan parallels, see Excursus in Chapter 2 ('The Interpretation of Deut. 32:39 in Samaritan Traditions').

[86] The reference to the nations is not found in some editions (e.g., *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, ed. Broda) nor in YS Ha'azinu §946, which read כל מי ('whoever').

Jerusalem results from God's anger and her 'healing' from his mercy,[87] the issue of the twofold אני clearly remains on centre stage, because the vengeful and merciful aspects of God's self-manifestation are, once again, proof of his unity and exclusiveness. Traces of earlier rabbinic responses to the issue of angelic participation can also be detected in the concluding comment in PRE 34 on v. 39e,[88] where it is stressed that no mediator can intervene and deliver those who await the judgement of Gehinnom.[89]

This extended tradition in PRE 34 and MidTann bears witness, in various ways, to significant developments in the Jewish interpretative history of Deut. 32:39. The preservation of an earlier rabbinic defence against heretical misinterpretations (SifDeut §329) leads to further claims that God alone embraces the earthly and eschatological worlds. The eschatological orientation of this tradition is heightened by the warning that divine punishment awaits those who embrace ditheistic beliefs, while those who confess the unity of God will be rewarded with resurrection. Divine punishment and mercy are also revealed in Israel's experience of destruction and hope for restoration, thereby demonstrating that God alone executes vengeance and offers consolation.

5. The Unique Bond between God and Israel

Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 24

כך אמר להן הקב"ה לישראל בניי אני הוא שישבתי תשע מאות שבעים
וארבעה דורות קודם שיברא העולם עד שדרשתי וחקרתי וצרפתי ובחנתי
כל דברי תורה מיום שנברא העולם ועד אותה שעה יושב אני על כסא
כבוד שלי שליש היום אני קורא ושונה ושליש היום אני דן את העולם
ושליש היום אני עושה צדקה וזן ומכלכל ומפרנס את כל העולם וכל
מעשה ידיי שבראתי בעולם אני הוא שהנחתי תשע מאות שבעים וארבעה
דורות קודם שיברא העולם ובאתי ונדבקתי בכם אני הוא שהנחתי שבעים
לשונות שבארץ ובאתי ונדבקתי בכם

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[87] Midrashic traditions often associate the future healing of Jerusalem with the divine promise אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם (Isa. 51:12a). Cf. LamR 1:23 (13b); PesR 33:7, 12, 13; MidTeh 147:3 (269a); YS Hosea §522.

[88] Goldin, 'Not by means of an Angel', 412-24.

[89] Cf. SifDeut §325: '"Vengeance is mine and recompense": I will punish them by myself (בעצמי); not by means of an angel and not by means of a messenger'. On the relationship between בעצמי and אני הוא, see Chapter 6 §4 below. On targumic traditions that equate the judgement of Gehinnom with a 'second death', see Sysling, *Tehiyyat Ha-Metim*, 219-22.

אני הוא שנאמר בי כי אני ה' ואין עוד אלהים ואפס כמוני וקראתי אתכם אלהים בנים ועבדים אני הוא שנאמר בי לפני לא נוצר אל ואחרי לא יהיה וקראתי אתכם אחים ורעים אני הוא שנאמר בי צדיק ומושיע אין זולתי השויתי שמכם לשמי הגדול

אני הוא עד שלא נברא העולם אני הוא משנברא העולם אני הוא בעולם הזה אני הוא לעולם הבא אני אמית ואחיה

['I am the Lord you God' (Exod. 20:2)] Thus said the Holy One, blessed be he, to Israel: My children, I am he who sat for nine hundred and seventy-four generations before the world was to be created, while I studied and examined, tested and refined all the words of Torah. From the day that the world was created and until the very hour [when the Torah was revealed], I used to sit on my throne of glory. One third of the day I read from Scripture and studied the Mishnah; and one third of the day I judged the world; and a third of the day I did righteousness, and I fed, sustained and provided for all the world and for all the work of my hands that I have created in the world. I am he who put aside the nine hundred and seventy-four generations before the world was to be created and came and attached myself to you. I am he who put aside the seventy languages of the earth and came and attached myself to you.

I am he of whom it is said: 'For I am the Lord, and there is no other; [I am] God, and there is none like me' (Isa. 46:9), and [yet] I called you godlike beings, children and servants. I am he of whom it is said: 'Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be after me' (Isa. 43:10), and [yet] I called you brothers and friends. I am he of whom it is said: 'Righteous and a Saviour; there is none besides me' (Isa. 45:21), and [yet] I linked your name to my great name.

I am he before the world was created; I am he since the world was created. I am he in this world; I am he in the world to come. 'I kill and I make alive' (Deut. 32:39).[90]

One of the main concerns of the midrashic traditions so far considered is to evince the unity and everlasting presence of God on the basis of his salvific activity. This means that the relationship between God and Israel forms an integral and recurring theme. God's gift of the Torah to Israel as an expression of the unique bond between them is the primary focus of an extended exposition of Exod. 20:1-2 in Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 24.[91] This particular work bears more of the marks of an unified composition than a midrashic anthology, and its thematic and stylistic coherence, arising from an imaginative application

[90] *Seder Eliahu Rabba,* ed. Friedmann, 130. It is also recorded, with some variations, in YS Wa-ethannan §830.

[91] For different views about the date of SER (third-tenth century CE), see Braude and Kapstein, *Tanna debe Eliyyahu,* 4-12. Stemberger, *Introduction,* 341, favours a date before the ninth century CE, but after the redaction of the Babylonian Talmud.

of several well-known rabbinic traditions, points to this text as the work of an individual author.[92]

SER 24 opens with the comment that the giving of the Ten Commandments demonstrated that Israel had been chosen by God from among the nations; joy was expressed on that occasion since God spoke with his people as though he were addressing each one individually (אנכי יהוה אלהיך).[93] This leads to an innovative speech governed by אנכי of the lemma (Exod. 20:2), but it also forms a closely-knit commentary structured around ten אני הוא formulations which seek to express the all-embracing nature of God's activity. In order to stress that the gift of the Torah was no spontaneous decision by God, the first declaration introduced by אני הוא uses vivid anthropomorphic language to portray God as a sage who, prior to the creation of the world, studied and refined all the words of the Torah. The comment that God adopted this role for 974 generations before the world came into existence becomes intelligible in the light of SER 2 (Friedmann, 9), which cites the well-known rabbinic tradition that the original plan to allow a thousand generations to pass before giving the Torah (cf. Ps. 105:8; I Chron. 16:15) was changed to twenty-six generations (from Adam to Moses) to enable God to receive Israel's praise.[94] A description then follows of God's daily activity during the interim twenty-six generations, during which time he was seated on the throne and dedicated himself to study, acts of judgement and deeds of charity,[95] followed by an explanation of how God came and attached himself to Israel by means of the gift of the Torah.

The theme of divine exclusiveness permeates the whole passage, but a more vigorous style of argumentation is adopted by the author in the second section without, however, abandoning the emphasis on God's unique love for Israel. The expositional shift from descriptions of divine activity, particularly the giving of the Torah, to solemn monotheistic declarations clearly relates to Israel's acceptance of the Torah as an expression of her acknowledgement of the exclusiveness of God (Exod. 20:2), for the covenantal relationship embodied in the Ten Commandments is dependent upon Israel's obedience. With the aid of three identically structured statements (אני הוא שנאמר בי), God reminds Israel of his sovereignty by citing three different Deutero-Isaianic

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[92] See Braude, '"Conjecture" and Interpolation in Translating Rabbinic Texts', 78f.; *idem*, 'Novellae in Eliyyahu Rabbah's Exegesis', 11-22.

[93] Cf. PesK 12:25; PesR 21:6 (21:12 [Ulmer, 448f.]); SER 23 (Friedmann, 127).

[94] See b.Zeb 116a; b.Shab 88b; Tan Yitro §9; see Braude, 'Novellae in Eliyyahu Rabbah's Exegesis', 19f.

[95] This appears in virtually identical form in SER 14 (Friedmann, 61f.); cf. also b.AZ 3b.

expressions of monotheism, all of which possess thematic agreement with one aspect or other within the exposition. Isa. 46:9, the first proof-text, serves as a form of prophetic exegesis of Exod. 20:2, due in particular to its combination of a self-declaratory 'I' declaration with the divine claims to uniqueness and incomparability. The second citation focuses on the unique existence of God from the beginning (Isa. 43:10), thereby illuminating the earlier concern of the midrash with his pre-creation activity. Moreover, the description of God as 'saviour' (Isa. 45:21) recalls the Exodus/Sinai setting of this extended divine speech. And yet, despite the uncompromisingly monotheistic force of these three prophetic declarations, SER 24 states that God wishes to express his close attachment to Israel with the aid of elevated, even quasi-divine, designations. The reference to the epithet 'godlike beings' represents a compressed version of the widespread application of אלהים (Ps. 82:6) to the Israelites for their acceptance of the Torah.[96] Acknowledgement of God's exclusiveness is the prerequisite for Israel to be addressed by this lofty title, as clarified by the subsequent comment in SER 24 on Exod. 20:2: "'I am the Lord your God': If you live by it, "you are godlike beings"'.[97]

The concluding pairs of divine pronouncements accentuate the eternal presence of God as proof of his unity (cf. §§2, 3, 4 above), although the first pair possesses a different nuance from previously encountered embellishments linked to Deut. 32:39, since it employs אני הוא to introduce its descriptions of God's pre-creation activity and his exclusive presence since creation. It is in relation to the rabbinic/targumic interpretations of Exod. 3:14 that this twofold formulation is usually encountered,[98] and this suggests that SER is citing interpretative comments originally composed as exegetical clarifications of the twofold אהיה. As individual pericopes in SER often develop a specific theme by drawing and elaborating upon earlier rabbinic material,[99] it can be proposed that this well-known explanation of Exod. 3:14 was, in fact, the exegetical starting-point of this passage in SER 24, thereby inspiring the opening description of the activity of God before and after creation.

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[96] As, for example, in b.AZ 5a; SifDeut §§306, 320; ExR 32:7; TanB Wa-era §9 (13b). The twofold designation 'brothers and friends' echoes Ps. 122:8 (למען אחי ורעי), and may again reflect the earlier midrashic application of this phrase as a designation for Israel (cf. Mek Beshallah 3 on Exod. 14:15 [Horovitz-Rabin, 99]; cf. SER 18 [Friedmann, 109]).

[97] *Seder Eliahu Rabba*, ed. Friedmann, 130.

[98] In addition to Ngl2 on Exod. 3:14 (cited in Chapter 3 n.48), see ARAא on ה' (*BM*, II:364; *BHM*, III:25) and MHG on Exod. 3:14 (Margulies, 54f.).

[99] See Werblosky, 'A Note on the Text of Seder Eliyahu', 201.

Familiarity with earlier exegetical discussions in defence of God's unity, particularly with a version similar to the Tannaitic comments on Exod. 15:3 and 20:2, also accounts for the final pair of statements in this exposition: 'I am he in this world; I am he in the world to come' (cf. PRE 34/MidTann). Thus, in this particular case the author of SER cites a pair of formulations more closely associated with rabbinic exegesis of Deut. 32:39a than Exod. 3:14. In fact, the otherwise incongruous citation of Deut. 32:39c at the end of the passage implies that SER 24 has taken the final pair of interpretative comments from a tradition on Deut. 32:39a, and has even included the scriptural citation which usually follows these embellishments (see §6 below) without taking into account the fact that these words bear no direct relation to the theme of the exposition. Consequently, a divine speech partly developed from a well-established interpretation of Exod. 3:14 concludes with the insertion of a twofold explanation usually employed for Deut. 32:39a. In this respect, the composition bears witness to the emergence of a later targumic/rabbinic phenomenon which involves the midrashic fusion of comments on Exod. 3:14 and Deut. 32:39, caused, to a large extent, by the potential problems of the twofold אני.[100] The clear distinction established by earlier sages between comments on Exod. 3:14 (before and after creation) and Deut. 32:39 (this world and the world to come) is consequently blurred in these later traditions.

If this proposed reconstruction of the development of the extended passage in SER 24 is accepted, various aspects of its use and interpretation of the expression אני הוא can also be identified. The significance of אני אני הוא within the Song of Moses is certainly reflected in SER 24, for although Deut. 32:39a is not cited, the brief excerpt from v. 39c demonstrates the author's familiarity with exegetical explanations of this pentateuchal verse. Another kind of usage is attested in the citation of אני הוא embellishments known to have functioned independently as interpretative renderings of Exod. 3:14 and Deut. 32:39. Such formulations as אני הוא עד שלא נברא and אני הוא לעולם הבא cannot be defined as self-contained occurrences of אני הוא, and yet these innovative statements maintain the formulaic character of the expression and add new dimensions of meaning to the citation of such statements as Deut. 32:39 as monotheistic proof-texts (as demonstrated in particular by the Tannaitic traditions analysed in §2.1). A third kind of usage displayed in SER 24 consists of the introduction of six extended אני הוא declarations within the divine address to Israel; their formal structure is decided in each case by אנכי of the

[100] See the discussion of PsJ Exod. 3:14 and Deut. 32:39 in Chapter 3 §1.3 above.

base-text, whereas the uniform pattern adopted for each statement (אני הוא ש־) points to their syntactic status as cleft sentences. These six statements accomplish several functions within the commentary. They bind together each aspect of the divine speech, they represent אנכי of the opening declaration and they highlight the exclusive nature of God's claims by demonstrating that he alone is responsible for the acts and utterances described into the passage. If these six formulations also build upon the concluding midrashic embellishments about the active presence of God before and after creation, it may be possible to place these different usages of אני הוא in a sequential oder. This possibility will be considered in more detail below, particularly in Chapter 6, as further examples of innovative אני הוא statements in rabbinic texts are analysed.

6. The Declaration of אני הוא in the Eschatological Future

Alphabet of Rabbi Aqiba (Recension א) on the Letter א"ף

> Another interpretation: Aleph (אלף). This is the Holy One, blessed be he, who is the first (ראשון) and is the last (אחרון). He is the chief (אלוף) among many thousands of kings. In the same way as Aleph is the beginning/head (ראש) of all the letters of the alphabet, so the Holy One, blessed be he, is the beginning/head of all kings, and he is also the end of all noblemen. And from where [do we learn] that he is the first and the last? As it is said: 'I, the Lord, am the first and with the last, I am he' (Isa. 41:4).
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> [Would it not be] more appropriate for Scripture to say: 'and with the last [one] (אחרון) I am he'? Why does Scripture say 'and with the last ones (ואת אחרונים), I am he'? It teaches that when he renews the world, the Holy One, blessed be he, will stand by himself and arrange the orders of the last ones of the world to come; the order of the righteous, the order of the pious, the order of the humble, the order of the prophets, the order of kings and princes and noblemen, the order of the leaders of the generation, the order of all generations, all creatures, all animals, all birds and all souls. (1) And he will bring down Hanoch, the son of Jared, whose name is Metatron, and the four animals from underneath the wheels of the chariot of his throne, and he will place his throne to one side and will raise up Korah and his followers from Sheol and from the great Deep. And they will bring before him all the inhabitants of the world, and he will make them stand on their feet, and he will arrange his own judgement before the creatures and say to them all: 'Have you seen another god apart from me in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the four corners of the world? Bear witness to me and speak the truth', as it is said: "And you are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God" (Isa. 43:12)'. Metatron and the holy animals, and Korah and his followers, will all answer at the same time, with one voice, (2) with one mouth, with one utterance, and all the inhabitants of the world will say before him: 'We have never seen a god

like you in the heavens above, and we have never seen another power like you on the earth below. There is no king like you, and there is no rock besides you, and there are no gods apart from you. You are the first and you are the last; there is no god apart from you, and there are no other gods, as it is said: "There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours" (Ps. 86:8)'. In this hour the Holy One, blessed be he, will answer all the inhabitants of the world, as it is said: 'See now that I, I am he, and there is no god beside me' (Deut. 32:39).

Why is 'I, I' [said] twice? It teaches that the Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'I am he before the world was created, and I am he since the world was created, "and there is no god beside me" in the world to come. "I kill and I make alive." I am he who kills all sons of man and all creatures in this world, (3) and I am he who restores spirit and soul to them and will make them alive in the world to come. And I am he who has wounded them in this world with blindness of eyes, deafness of ears, lameness of feet, withering of fingers, separation of limbs, uncircumcision of lips, muteness of mouth and tongue. And I am he who heals them in the world to come. "And there is none who can deliver from my hand" on the day of judgement'.[101]

Main Variations in Midrash Bereshit Rabbati §10[102]

A section of this tradition is also woven into a longer passage in MBR, which serves as the conclusion to a compilation of expositions related to Gen. 5:24. Significant differences between this version and ARAא include the following elements:

(1) The parallel section in MBR begins at the point: 'And in the world to come the Holy One, blessed be he, will bring forth Metatron and the four animals...'
(2) Reads: 'and they will say with one mouth and with one utterance before all the inhabitants of the world: "We have never seen...."'
(3) The remaining part reads: 'and I am he who restores spirit and soul to them in the world to come. "I have wounded and I will heal". And I will make them alive with their blemishes that come with them from the world, so that they may recognize each other and not say: This is a new world, but the dead are not alive. And I will heal them afterwards in the world to come. "And there is none who can deliver from my hand" on the day of judgement in the future to come'.

This lengthy midrashic passage, recorded in one of two extant recensions of ARA,[103] offers a developed interpretation of Deut. 32:39 in which secondary expansions to earlier layers of tradition can easily be detected.[104] It serves as the

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[101] *Bet ha-Midrasch*, ed. Jellinek, III:16f., based on the Constantinople (1514-16) and Venice (1546) editions. For this text with some variations, see also *Batei Midrashot*, ed. Wertheimer, II:348-50. Numerous medieval manuscripts of ARAא are yet to be published (see further Herr, 'Smaller Midrashim: Otiyyot de-R. Akiva', 1516).

[102] *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati*, ed. Albeck, 28f.

[103] The (shorter) recension of ARAב contains a variety of traditions largely unrelated to ARAא (see *BHM*, III:50-64; *BM*, II:396-418).

[104] A tenth/eleventh century dating for ARAא was favoured by Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*, 178. An earlier date has also been proposed, either the

penultimate interpretation of the letter *Aleph* in ARAא and can be divided into three main sections (as indicated in the translation), of which part of the second and all of the third appear in a slightly different form in MBR §10. As the major differences between these two versions occur at the beginning and end of their shared material, it seems that the compiler of MBR has woven a tradition, possibly directly from ARAא, into an extended discussion of Gen. 5:24.

The central theme of the first section in ARAא is the identification of God as ראשון and אחרון. In the same way as *Aleph* is the first letter of the alphabet, God is the first and, uniquely in his case, also the last. This description presupposes the scriptural support provided by divine self-predications (Isa. 41:4cd), but the biblical evidence is not immediately cited, for the exegetical tradition develops a word-play based on אלף and אַלוּף ('chief') to accentuate the superiority of God over a multitude of earthly kings. This secondary identification with אַלוּף plays a decisive role in the discussion, for it not only relates directly to *Aleph,* but elucidates the link with God as ראשון in preparation for the next case of word-play between ראשון and ראש in their capacity as expressions of divine sovereignty (cf. Isa. 41:4).[105] In the same way as *Aleph* represents the first and chief letter of the Hebrew alphabet, God is the pre-eminent ruler over all kings. By stating, therefore, that God is supreme because he precedes all kings and prevails as סוף over all nobles, an innovative paraphrase has been formulated on the basis of the initial identification of God as ראשון and אחרון. This intricately woven application of the letter *Aleph* to God thus introduces the central theme of the extended exposition, the pronouncement of the unity and exclusiveness of God.[106]

The next section proceeds to discuss the difficulties arising from the plural form ואת אחרנים in its proof-text (Isa. 41:4); this raises the question why the other Deutero-Isaianic self-predication statements (44:6; 48:12), in which God in fact declares אני אחרון, have not been singled out for citation. Two explanations can be offered. First, the initial comment on *Aleph* repeatedly refers to God as הוא, thereby attesting to a deliberate highlighting of his

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seventh/eighth century (Scholem, 'Über eine Formel in den koptisch-gnostischen Schriften', 173) or the seventh-ninth century (Townsend, 'Minor Midrashim', 381). For the attribution of MBR to Mosheh ha-Darshan (eleventh century), see Stemberger, *Introduction,* 355f.

[105] Cf. MHG on Gen. 46:8 (Margulies, 772), where God is praised as לכל לראש 'for he is first over all first(s) (שהוא ראשון לכל ראשון)', followed by a citation of Isa. 41:4.

[106] For other examples of midrashic traditions which link the numerical value or uniqueness of *Aleph* to the theme of divine unity, see PesR 21:12; *Mishnah of Rabbi Eliezer,* 138; MHG on Deut. 5:6 (Fisch, 102); ***BHM,*** III:55; ***BM,*** II:403.

supremacy. God himself then provides the required proof in his decisive self-assertion אני הוא (41:4). Consequently, the absence of the expression אני הוא from Isa. 44:6, and its introductory rather than climactic role in 48:12, can account for the selection of 41:4 as proof-text. Secondly, the words את אחרונים form an effective bridge between this and the subsequent midrashic section in ARAא, because the second deals specifically with the divine judgement of 'the last ones'. Although the singular אחרון would more appropriately conclude a section in which God is identified as סוף, the phrase ואת אחרונים leads to an extended narrative which reaches its culmination with God's own proclamation of the words אני אני הוא (Deut. 32:39a).

The central section looks ahead to the eschatological renewal of the world.[107] Its comprehensive list of potential recipients of the gift of resurrection points to all forms of earthly life as experiencing God's manifestation as eschatological judge, whereas the inclusion of 'kings' and 'noblemen' echoes the introductory theme of the superiority of God over all earthly rulers. All these introductory narrative features are, however, absent from MBR §10 where the description of Enoch in Gen. 5:24 forms the basis of its exegesis. The elusive reference to Enoch's earthly departure in this scriptural statement led to much speculation about his heavenly ascent and transformation into a glorious being (cf. AscIs 9:9; II Enoch 22:8-10), whereas a comparatively late feature, particularly in merkabah-mystical texts, is the identification of Enoch with Metatron (cf. also PsJ Gen. 5:24). Thus, following an array of traditions about this principal angel, MBR §10 turns its attention to the eschatological future and incorporates this colourful description of God summoning Metatron and the four animals of the *merkabah* throne to descend before him.

The introduction of Enoch-Metatron and the four creatures at this point in the narrative raises the question of the interrelationship of ARAא and mystical Hekhalot texts. Certain features are closely related to those found in the texts of the Hekhalot corpus, particularly 3 Enoch,[108] and as the various traditions in ARAא were compiled at a later date, it is possible that 3 Enoch is the direct

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[107] See E. Sjöberg, 'Wiedergeburt und Neuschöpfung im palästinischen Judentum', 70-74; Le Déaut, *La nuit pascale*, 237-57.

[108] The following elements in the ARAא tradition are paralleled in mystical texts: the lists of princes and noblemen (cf. 3 Enoch 45:2); the use of *Aleph* as a divine name (see *3 Enoch* ed. Odeberg, II:165); אלוף as a divine designation (*Synopse* §394: אלוף אלוף הוא). Other similar features or themes are noted below. For the fifth/sixth century CE dating and Babylonian redaction of 3 Enoch (= *Synopse* §§1-70, 71-80), see Alexander, 'The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch', 156-80; *idem*, '3 Enoch and the Talmud', 40-68.

source of certain elements in ARAN. The concise presentation of comparable elements in ARAN does, however, make it difficult to determine its precise relationship with mystical texts, and several of its features are either unparalleled[109] or reflect theological emphases different from those encountered in mystical traditions.[110] Even Alexander, who argues that ARA should be considered with the Hekhalot texts, admits that it is of 'uncertain genre and diverse content'.[111] The most plausible explanation is that this particular narrative unit in ARAN betrays familiarity with merkabah-mystical themes, and has woven them into a narrative which nevertheless belongs to the genre of midrash.[112] It amounts to a carefully formulated exposition of a biblical text (Isa. 41:4) which, in turn, leads to an innovative description, clothed in mystical language and idiom, of the eschatological future.

As the clearest indication of mystical influence on the ARAN tradition is the appearance of Metatron, an analysis of his status within this narrative may clarify the underlying aims of the author/compiler of this midrashic narrative. The detailed portrayal of Metatron in 3 Enoch (3-16; 48CD) and the scattered references to him in related texts project the image of an exalted figure whose titles and functions substantiate his unique role as the celestial vice-regent of God.[113] He possesses his own throne (3 Enoch 10:1; §295) and he presides over a heavenly law court and executes judgement (3 Enoch 16:1; 48C:8); he is addressed as ה׳ הקטן (3 Enoch 12:5; 48C:7; §§295, 405), as 'the glory of the highest heaven' (3 Enoch 13:1), and is even attributed the name *Aleph* (§§276-

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109 In no extant Jewish mystical text does a biblical citation (Isa. 41:4) determine its exegetical framework; none refers to Korah and his followers; none cites Deut. 32:39.

110 The emphasis in this ARAN tradition is on eschatological themes relating to the renewal of the world, but 3 Enoch focuses on heavenly meetings (e.g., 28:7, 9; 26:12; 31:1) and an ascent during one's earthly life. See Gruenwald, *From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism*, 122; Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 288; *idem*, *Der verborgene und offenbare Gott*, 158f. A close parallel to the eschatological scenario of ARAN does occur in 3 Enoch 48C:2: '"I took him" - Enoch the son of Jared, from their midst, and brought him up with the sound of the trumpet and with shouting to the height, to be my witness, together with the four creatures of the chariot, to the world to come' (tr. Alexander, '3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch', *OTP*, I:311). 3 Enoch 48BCD is, however, regarded as a later addition to the text (see *ibid.*, 310-15).

111 Review of Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, in *JJS* 34, 1983, 106.

112 Cf. Bloch, 'Othijoth de Rabbi Akiba', 226; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, ix: 'Die Zugehörigkeit des ABdRA zur Hekhalot-Literatur läßt sich von der literarischen Gattung her kaum vertreten'.

113 See especially Odeberg, *3 Enoch*, I:79-146; Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition*, 42-55; Alexander, 'The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch', 159-67; Fauth, 'Tatrosjah-Totrosjah und Metatron', 40-87; Morray-Jones, 'Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition', 7-11.

277). All such features are absent from the depiction of the archangel in this particular ARAא tradition, which portrays God as summoning Metatron and other figures from the heavens above, together with Korah from the lowest depths, to act as witnesses to his unique and exclusive divinity. While Metatron also serves as God's principal witness in Jewish mystical texts,[114] it becomes apparent that his only function in this ARAא tradition is to be one among many witnesses to the uniqueness of God. Thus, the impression gained from these fleeting references to Metatron is that the narrative plays down the role of the principal angel.[115] God alone acts as eschatological judge, for he 'will stand by himself' (בעצמו) and 'arrange his own (עצמו) judgement'.

A further distinctive feature of this passage is its explicit reference to God moving his throne to one side when he calls the angelic figures to stand before him. This feature implies a response to a tendency in certain Jewish mystical traditions to elevate the divine throne, for those who approach it are said to 'bring forth all kinds of praises and hymns in front of it'.[116] The ARAא narrative explicitly states that the throne is set aside in order to make it clear that God alone is the object of the confessional worship that follows.

In the presence of angelic figures, the earthly inhabitants are called before God in preparation for judgement, thereby setting the scene for a vivid dramatization of the gathering of 'the last ones' based on Isa. 41:4. God cross-examines all those gathered in their role as witnesses (Isa. 43:12), and makes their confession of his exclusiveness the decisive test in this process of judgement. The initial confession in ARAא amounts to an unanimous refutation, pronounced by Metatron, Korah and the earthly inhabitants, of the existence of other gods and powers.[117] This leads to an elaborate monotheistic

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[114] See 3 Enoch 4:3, 5; 48C:2; §376; cf. *The Shi'ur Qomah,* ed. Cohen, 79: 'R. Ishmael said: 'Metatron, the great prince of testimony, said to me: "I give testimony based on this testimony, regarding the Lord, God of Israel, the living and existent God"' .

[115] The status of other references to Metatron in ARAא, especially the traditions about 'the exaltation of Enoch-Metatron' and the names of God and Metatron (cf. 3 Enoch 48BCD), is disputed. According to Alexander, '3 Enoch', *OTP,* I:310 n.a, these traditions were taken from ARAא and attached to 3 Enoch, although he concedes that 'the Alphabet can hardly be the original source of this material' (*idem,* 'Historical Setting', 158). For the view that these traditions have been secondarily inserted into ARAא, see Odeberg, *3 Enoch,* II:165; Schäfer, *Synopse,* x; *idem, Hekhalot-Studien,* 227f., 230f. Jellinek, *BHM,* III:xv n.3, claims that these 'exaltation' traditions represent a separate literary work (ספר חנוך) and notes their absence from the Constantinople (1514-16) and Venice (1546) editions of ARA.

[116] Hekh §236. See Schäfer, *Der verborgene und offenbare Gott,* 13f.

[117] According to the Jellinek edition of ARAא (*BHM,* III:17), the earthly inhabitants unite with the heavenly figures in pronouncing this confession (ואומרים לפניו כל באי עולם), but

statement: "There is no king like you (אין מלך כמוך),[118] and no rock besides you (ואין צור בלתך), and there are no gods apart from you (ואין אלהים זולתך)." The subsequent declaration (אתה ראשון ואתה אחרון) also marks the culmination of a sequence which began in the introductory section with the declarations הוא ראשון והוא אחרון;[119] this confirms the unified theme of the passage, because the declaration of the eternal presence of God is made the ultimate proof of his sovereignty. The confessional response concludes with a citation of Ps. 86:8, which gives God as judge the opportunity to declare his exclusive divinity to the earthly inhabitants.[120] The universality of this eschatological divine self-manifestation, a theme already established in Mek Pisha 12, now reaches its most developed crystallization in the rabbinic exegesis of Deut. 32:39. By means of a visually graphic dramatization of the judgement scene, God climactically declares אני אני הוא.[121] In other words, the exegetical conundrum of Isa. 41:4d (ואת אחרנים אני הוא) finds its most persuasive illustration in the divine claim to uniqueness expressed in Deut. 32:39.

As both ARAא and MBR are compilations of often loosely connected traditions, this narrative commentary now turns abruptly to a detailed exegetical analysis of Deut. 32:39, reminiscent of PRE 34. The compilers have, however, attempted to present the whole discussion as a coherent unity by weaving certain features from the eschatological scene into the subsequent exegesis, including the repetition of אני אני הוא to enable God to explain the doubling of אני to the earthly and heavenly figures ('[he] said to them'). The setting within

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according to MBR §10 (Albeck, 29) and the Wertheimer edition of ARAא (*BM*, II:349) it is the heavenly figures who make this monotheistic declaration in the presence of the inhabitants of the world (לפני כל באי העולם). The former reading presupposes the unanimity of the confession, whereas the latter implies that God's verdict at the time of eschatological judgement will be dependent on participation or non-participation in this confession.

[118] This confession of the exclusive kingship of God, followed by God's pronouncement of Deut. 32:39, is reminiscent of a statement in *Sefer Haqqomah* (see *The Shi'ur Qomah*, ed. Cohen, 133), which combines the theme of divine kingship and God's all-embracing activity as described in Deut. 32:39cd: מלך ממית מלך מחיה מלך מוחץ מלך רופא.

[119] Cf. *Synopse* §383: אל ראשון ואחרון כי אתה ראשון ואחרון. See also §§378, 946, 964; *The Shi'ur Qomah*, ed. Cohen, 84, 86. For the description of God as king over 'the first ones and the last ones', see *Synopse* §§274, 276, 418.

[120] Cf. MidTeh 95:2 (210a): "'For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Ps. 95:3). Are there other gods? It is written: "See now that I, I am he, and there is no god beside me" (Deut. 32:39)'. The monotheistic confession of the heavenly figures is also expressed with the aid of Ps. 86:8 in Midrash Aleph Beth 5:2 (ed. Sawyer, 42).

[121] Cf. *Sefer Eliahu* (*BHM*, III:67): 'Elijah said: "I see the dead ones take form and their dust kneaded, and they become as they were in the beginning, giving praise to God, as it is said: 'See now that I, I am he'".

the context of a 'new creation' may also account for the use of expansions linked to Exod. 3:14 about divine existence before and after creation (see SER 24) instead of those traditionally associated with Deut. 32:39a (Mek/MRS and PRE 34), but this passage again attests the midrashic combination of these innovative formulations in late traditions. Even v. 39b (ואין אלהים עמדי) is explicitly applied to the setting of the celestial theophany 'in the world to come', thereby establishing a three-stage sequence from God's presence before and after creation to the eschatological future. Similarly, v. 39c is interpreted in eschatological terms as denoting the restoration of spirit to those who face judgement, in that the words 'I make alive' accentuate a future revivification which ultimately leads to resurrection. At this point the two versions of this tradition part company; ARAא lists various forms of earthly wounding and offers assurance of eschatological healing (v. 39d), while MBR echoes the lively rabbinic debate about the physical state of those raised from the dead.[122] MBR §10 offers a more apologetically motivated explanation than its rabbinic counterparts, because it states that God will revive humans in their earthly form so that they may recognize each other and not regard the 'new world' as a different earthly world.[123]

The exegetical link already established between the divine אני in this world (killing/wounding) and in the world to come (making alive/healing) leads both ARAא and MBR §10 to offer an eschatological interpretation of the final component of Deut. 32:39, for it is unequivocally declared that no one can intervene on behalf of earthly figures on the day of judgement. The passage thus concludes with a reiteration of its central theme; the self-manifestation of God in the eschatological future will confirm his role as exclusive judge, and this will convince all of his claim to be both ראשון and אחרון, ultimately expressed in the self-declaration אני אני הוא. And it is the acknowledgement of the unity and exclusiveness of God that will enable those gathered to experience his unique power to make alive and heal.

Rabbinic interpretations of Deut. 32:39 in fact come a full circle with this innovative and highly developed composition. The juxtaposition of Isa. 40:5 and Deut. 32:39a secured in Mek Pisha 12 (on Exod. 12:25) led to an interpretation of אני אני הוא as the self-declaratory formula pronounced by God within the context of the universal disclosure of his glory, a scenario now graphically illustrated in this extended narrative in ARAא/MBR. But, above all,

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[122] Cf. b.Sanh 91b; QohR 1:4:2 (2c); QohZutta 1:4.

[123] Cf. also 2 Baruch 50:2-3. See Stemberger, *Der Leib der Auferstehung*, 87f.

both the midrash encountered in Tannaitic traditions (Mek Shirta 4; Bahodesh 5; MRS on Exod. 15:3) and this late tradition demonstrate that rabbinic arguments for the unity of God find their ultimate expression in his own claims to everlasting presence (Isa. 41:4) and exclusive divinity (Deut. 32:39).

7. Concluding Remarks

These midrashic traditions, recorded in compositions or compilations ranging from the late Tannaitic period to the seventh/eighth century CE, illustrate the rabbinic application of Deut. 32:39 as an important proof-text and as a scriptural passage which provides the framework for more detailed exposition. Overall thematic continuity between early and later midrashic traditions is a particularly striking feature; all maintain the biblical emphasis upon Deut. 32:39 as a sovereign self-declaratory formula, and it serves as a decisive pronouncement in defence of God's unity, either as part of an attempt to combat heretical claims (Mek/MRS on Exod. 15:3 and 20:2; SifDeut §329) or in more reflective pieces of exegesis (PRE 34; SER 24; ARAN). Many methods and techniques are used to elucidate the unity and exclusiveness of God, including the stress upon his role as both historical and eschatological redeemer, his eternal presence and his unique ability to perform opposite acts. Deut. 32:39, and even its twofold אני at the beginning of the statement, is interpreted as incontrovertible proof that the one who speaks is the one and only God. Deut. 32:39 thus continues to serve as a forceful expression of monotheism in rabbinic circles, confirming its status as 'a standard proof-text for refuting heretics'.[124]

Several traditions, but particularly the earlier ones, also posit a conceptual link between Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaianic statements in which the divine אני plays a prominent role. The technique of scriptural harmonization relates the climactic declaration by God in the Song of Moses to the future manifestation of his glory (Mek Pisha 12 on Exod. 12:25), and a deliberate juxtaposition of scriptural passages substantiates God's claim to exclusiveness by accentuating his eternity (Mek/MRS; SifDeut §329). Only once is the sequence of pentateuchal>prophetic text reversed (ARAN), although Isa. 41:4 in fact serves as an exegetical springboard to the climactic declaration of Deut. 32:39ab at the centre of the narrative.

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[124] Hayward, *Divine Name and Presence*, 36 n.21. Cf. also Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 9, 37, 89, 150.

These various rabbinic traditions serve, moreover, as important witnesses when attempting to assess rabbinic interpretations of the use of the expression אני הוא within the context of divine pronouncements. With regard to the citation of scriptural passages in which God declares אני הוא [אני], it has been seen that the earlier traditions focus on the unity of God primarily in response to heretical claims, and although a vast array of monotheistic declarations could have been selected (e.g., Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4), the elements that bind together the cited proof-texts are אני הוא and the self-predications אני ראשון ואני אחרון as pronounced by God himself (Mek/MRS).

Interpretative אני הוא declarations are also employed in certain midrashic traditions, and these non-bipartite formulations have been inspired by rhythmic embellishments which are introduced by הוא or אני in Tannaitic discussions of the various modes of divine self-manifestation. Of the midrashic traditions analysed in this chapter, the earliest example of innovative אני הוא formulations can be dated no earlier than the Amoraic period (ca. 280 CE), if the attribution of the explanation in PesR 21:6 to Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba can be taken as an indicator of its provenance and dating. Even in this more developed stage, such twofold pronouncements as 'I am he in this world; I am he in the world to come' continue to reflect the force of the self-declaration אני הוא as a divine claim which excludes all other 'powers', thereby making this expression an effective vehicle for claims attributed to God in defence of his unity and sovereignty.

The expression אני הוא has also been encountered in some innovative divine declarations where it is attached to a verbal component, particularly in late examples of midrash (PRE 34; SER 24; ARAא); these formulations can be defined as emphatic in nature and fulfil the function of cleft sentences ('I am he/ the one who..'). In view of the fact that these constructions give prominence to the אני of the speaker, they also contribute to the central theme of divine exclusiveness presented in midrashic arguments related to Deut. 32:39.

Chapter Five

Rabbinic Interpretations of אני הוא Self-Declarations by God in Deutero-Isaiah

Several of the midrashic traditions analysed in the previous chapter cite divine 'I' declarations from the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah to substantiate the message of Deut. 32:39 by underlining the eternal presence of God as proof of his unity. In other texts it is these prophetic אני הוא declarations that serve as principal scriptural proof-texts. Different themes are encountered in the four groups of traditions which will now be analysed, with varying degrees of emphasis placed on the expression אני הוא as the vehicle for God's self-declaration.

1. The Superiority of the Divine אני

LevR 24:9 (GenR 90:2)

אמ׳ ר׳ שמעון בן לקיש שתי פרשיות הכתיב לנו משה בתורה ואנו למידין אותן מפרשת פרעה הרשע כת׳ אחד אומר והייתי רק למעלה יכול כמוני תל׳ לו׳ רק לשון מיעוט גדולתי למעלה מגדולתכם ואנו למידין אותה מפרשת פרעה הרשע אתה תהיה על ביתי יכול כמוני תל׳ לו׳ רק הכסא אגדל ממך גדולתי למעלה מגדולתך

והדין דבר אל כל עדת בני ישראל קדושים תהיו יכול כמוני תל׳ לו׳ כי קדוש אני קדושתי למעלה מקדושתכם ואנו למידין אותה מפרשת פרעה הרשע ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף אני פרעה יכול כמוני תל׳ לו׳ אני פרעה גדולתי למעלה מגדולתך

ר׳ יהוש׳ דסיכנין בש׳ ר׳ לוי מאני שלבשר ודם את למד אני של הקב״ה ומה אני שלבשר ודם על ידי שאמ׳ פרעה ליוסף אני פרעה זכה לכל הכבוד הזה לכשיבא אני של הקב״ה עד זקנה אני הוא כה אמר י״י מלך יש׳ וגואלו אני ראשון ואת אחרונים אני הוא על אחת כמה וכמה

(1) R. Simeon ben Laqish said: There are two sections that Moses gave us in writing in the Torah, and [whose meaning] we learn from the section about the wicked Pharaoh. One verse says: 'And you shall be above only' (Deut. 28:13). One could infer [that you will be] like me [God], and [therefore] Scripture states 'only', a term of limitation [to indicate]: my greatness is above your greatness. And we learn this from the section about the wicked Pharaoh: 'You [Joseph] shall be over my house' (Gen. 41:40). One could infer [that you shall be] like me [Pharaoh], [and so] Scripture states: 'Only with regard to the throne will I be greater than you' (*ibid.*): my greatness is above your greatness.

And [from] this verse 'Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel...You shall be holy' (Lev. 19:2) one could infer [that Israel will be holy] like me, [and so] Scripture states: 'for I am holy' (*ibid.*): my holiness is above your holiness. And we learn this from the section about the wicked Pharaoh: 'And Pharaoh said to Joseph: "I am Pharaoh"' (Gen. 41:44). One could infer [that Joseph] is like me [Pharaoh], and so Scripture states: 'I am Pharaoh': my greatness is above your greatness.

R. Yehoshua of Sikhnin in the name of R. Levi (2): From the human 'I' you may learn [the meaning] of the 'I' of the Holy One, blessed be he. And just as by means of the human 'I' - Pharaoh having said to Joseph, 'I am Pharaoh' - [Joseph] acquired all this glory, how much more so when the 'I' of the Holy One, blessed be he, comes to pass. 'To old age I am he' (Isa. 46:4a); 'Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer...I am the first' (44:6ac)'and with the last I am he' (41:4d) (3).[1]

Main Variations in GenR 90:2[2]

(1) Preceded by the lemma of Gen. 41:40b.
(2) Attributed to R. Aha alone.
(3) Cites one proof-text: Isa. 46:4cd.

This text represents a Palestinian Amoraic tradition which moves progressively in three stages towards a comparison of the divine and human אני הוא. LevR 24:9 and GenR 90:2 present the exegetical argument, attributed in both cases to Rabbi Simeon ben Laqish (PA2), that certain divine declarations are illuminated by Pharaoh's statements in Gen. 41:40, 44.[3] The first section raises the issue whether the divine promise of blessings for obedience in Deut. 28:13 (MT: וְהָיִיתָ רַק לְמַעְלָה) could lead one to infer that the nation will be as exalted as

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[1] *Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah,* ed. Margulies, III:564-66. Cf. TanB Wa-yishlah §20 (87ab); YS on Isaiah §459 (only the section attributed to R. Yehoshua of Sikhnin); MHG on Gen. 41:40, 44 (Margulies, 627f.).

[2] *Midrash Bereshit Rabba,* ed. Theodor and Albeck, III:1100f. Cf. LeqT on Gen. 41:40 (104a); YS Miqqes §148.

[3] For the view that the final redaction of GenR took place during the first half of the fifth century in Palestine, see Stemberger, *Introduction,* 279f. On the Palestinian provenance of LevR, its fifth-century redaction and interrelationship with GenR, see *ibid.,* 290f.

God. But the midrashic application of the rule of *mi'ut* eliminates an inference of this kind, for it points to the function of רק as a term of limitation which secures the incomparability of God. Support for this is drawn from the 'human example' of Pharaoh's bestowal of imperial authority upon Joseph (Gen. 41:39-45); all notions of equality are ruled out by רק (v. 40b), for the throne belongs to Pharaoh alone. In the same way as the Pharaoh-Joseph relationship cannot amount to equal kingship, the unique relationship between God and Israel leads to exaltation but not equality.

An identically structured argument demonstrates, moreover, that the words 'You shall be holy' (Lev. 19:2) do not signify that holiness equal to God's will be granted to his chosen nation. It is at this point that אני begins to occupy a central position in the argument, for the declaration כי קדוש אני symbolizes the exclusive nature of the divine claim and Israel's derivative form of holiness. Similarly, Joseph's authority in Egypt is limited due to Pharaoh's pronouncement of the words אני פרעה as an expression of his own sovereignty. The same distinction between the bestowal of authority upon Joseph and the significance of Pharaoh's 'I' claim is found in an exposition of אני (Eccles. 8:2) in NumR 14:6:

> What is [the meaning of] 'I am Pharaoh' (Gen. 41:44)? Thus said Pharaoh to Joseph: 'Although I said to you "You shall be over my house etc." (v. 40), thus making you king over all, take heed that you give me honour and acknowledge me as king over you'. Therefore he said: 'I am Pharaoh', as much as to say: 'The awe of my kingship shall be upon you'.[4]

NumR 14:6 subsequently relates the significance of this encounter between Pharaoh and Joseph to God's pronouncement of the self-revelatory formula 'I am the Lord' to Moses (Exod. 6:2). Despite having told Moses that he would be as god to Pharaoh (7:1), it is God alone who possesses true divinity: 'Take heed that my divinity shall be over you, for I made you god over Pharaoh alone'. By securing this analogy between God's words and those belonging to a human king, the divine and human אני embody an emphatic and exclusive claim: 'I am the Lord' of whom there is only one, and 'I am Pharaoh' of whom there is only one. The citation of Lev. 19:2 (כי קדוש אני [ה' אלהיכם]) in LevR 24:9 and GenR 90:2 therefore serves as a variation of the declaration 'I am the Lord' cited in NumR 14:6, but since Pharaoh is repeatedly described in the former midrashic tradition as 'the wicked one' (הרשע), it can be proposed that

[4] Cf. also TanB Wa-era §9 (13ab).

his claim to sovereignty (אני פרעה) is also viewed as a deliberate distortion of an otherwise exclusively divine formula.[5]

The concluding section, attributed to Rabbi Yehoshua of Sikhnin (PA4) in the name of Rabbi Levi (PA3), consists of an interpretative expansion which seeks to validate the earlier comparison between the human and divine אני. With the aid of *qal wa-homer,* it is argued that if Joseph, upon hearing the words אני פרעה, was able to acquire glory in the form of honour and authority, how much more so in the case of those who receive a revelation of the divine אני. The adoption of this hermeneutical principle demonstrates the limitations of the human-divine king analogy. Pharaoh's words are confined to an individual in a situation belonging to the past, but the manifestation of the divine אני, already experienced by Israel in relation to Lev. 19:2, will occur again in the future.

Different Deutero-Isaianic proof-texts are selected in the two versions of this midrash. GenR 90:2 cites Isa. 46:4cd, where divine promises of future activity are expressed with the aid of אני ('I have made and I will bear, I will carry and will save'). However, LevR 24:9 selects passages in which the divine אני occurs in self-declaratory formulas, closer in form to Pharaoh's claim and also to כי קדוש אני and אני ה׳. The superiority of the divine אני is also highlighted by the fact that the single self-declaration attributed to the Egyptian king now gives way to three אני statements pronounced by God.

The three Deutero-Isaianic passages are cited in reverse sequence in order to conclude with the pronouncement of אני הוא which relates to the encounter with God to be experienced by 'the last ones' (41:4d). The presence of such phrases as ועד זקנה and ואת אחרנים suggest that the declarations have been consciously grouped together in LevR 24:9 as expressions of a divine self-manifestation belonging to the future. This also implies that the citation of pentateuchal self-declaratory formulas taking the form אני ה׳ has been avoided, because they are viewed as relating to God's self-disclosure within the compass of historical events; the divine utterance of אני הוא is interpreted in this midrash in future, even eschatological, terms, a feature already encountered in relation to the rabbinic citation of Deut. 32:39a (Chapter 4 §§1, 6). Furthermore, in the light of the key role played by the God-Pharaoh analogy in this midrash, the three concluding prophetic proof-texts serve as succinct expressions of the everlasting rule of God, the one with whom no king can be compared.

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[5] For rabbinic traditions concerning Pharaoh's claims to divinity (based on Ezek. 29:3), see Mek Beshallah 8 on Exod. 15:11 (Horovitz-Rabin, 142); ExR 5:14; 8:1, 2; Tan Wa-era §9; TanB Wa-era §8 (12a).

2. God as the First and the Last

Some midrashic traditions employ Isa. 41:4 and 44:6 as scriptural support for the use of ראשון as a divine epithet,[6] and these texts are often concerned with God's self-revelation within a historical and/or eschatological framework.[7] In another group of (late) traditions known as the 'midrash of the ten kings', both ראשון and אחרון function as designations to elucidate God's role as the first and last king.[8] This theme echoes the significance attached to the divine self-declarations אני ראשון and אני אחרון in earlier midrashic discussions as expressions of the uniqueness of the eternal God. This line or argumentation occurs in two clusters of traditions which discuss the unity of God either in terms of 'truth' or as one who possesses no divine predecessors or successors.

2.1 Truth: j.Sanhedrin 1:1 (18a)

מהו חותמו של הקדוש בורך הוא רבי ביבי בשם רבי ראובן אמת
מהו אמת אמר רבי בון שהוא אלהים חיים ומלך עולם אמר ריש
לקיש א"לף רישיה דאלפא ביתא מ"ם באמצעיתה ת"ו בסופה
לומר אני יי' ראשון שלא קיבלתי מאחר ומבלעדי אין אלהי' שאין
לי שותף ואת אחרונים אני הוא שאיני עתיד למוסרה לאחר

What is the seal of the Holy One, blessed be he? R. Bebai in the name of R. Reuben [said]: Truth. What is [the significance of]'truth'? R. Bun said: Because he is the living God and the eternal King. Resh Laqish said: Aleph is the beginning of the alphabet, Mem is in its middle [and] Taw at its end. It is said: 'I, the Lord, am the first' (Isa. 41:4c), because I did not receive [my divinity] from another; 'and besides me there is no god' (44:6c), because I have no partner; 'and with the last I am he' (41:4d), because I will not deliver [it] to another.[9]

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[6] Two groups of traditions can be identified, all of which stem from Palestinian Amoraic circles: i) LevR 30:16: 'I [God] will reveal myself to you as the First, as it is said: "I, the Lord, am the first" (Isa. 41:4)' (cf. GenR 63:8; ExR 15:1; PesK 27:10; PesR 51:3); ii) PesK 5:18 and PesR 15:25: 'And who will punish for you "the head" [Nebuchadnezzar]? The First: "I, the Lord, am the first etc." (41:4)' (cf. TanB Bo §14 [25a]).

[7] A number of these texts (LevR 30:16; PesK 5:18; 27:10; PesR 15:25) take the form of a *hatimah*, a word of consolation at the end of a *piska* which adopts an eschatological perspective. The designation ראשון conveys the future revelation of God's sovereignty. On the homiletical *hatimah*, see Goldberg, 'Die Peroratio (*Hatima*) als Kompositionsform', 1-22.

[8] PRE 11 (ed. Luria, 28a-29a); the Midrash of Three and Four (*BM*, II:70f.); *Otar Midrashim*, 461; YS on I Kings §211; cf. TSheni on Esther 1:1.

[9] *Synopse zum Talmud Yerushalmi*, eds. Schäfer and Becker, IV:157. Text and translation follow the *editio princeps*, although Ms. Leiden Or. 4720 (fol. 219a) contains no significant variations.

The theme of this tradition and its parallels (GenR 81:2; DeutR 1:10; ShirR 1:9:1 [10cd]) is that the seal of God is represented by 'truth',[10] an identification secured in j.Sanh 1:1 (18a) with the aid of two distinct interpretations attributed to Amoraic rabbis. According to Rabbi Bun (PA4), the term אמת signifies that he is the living God and eternal king (שהוא אלהים חיים ומלך עולם). Although some modern commentators interpret this explanation as a paraphrase of a *notariqon* devised from אמת (אלהים מלך תמיד),[11] Rabbi Bun's statement in fact represents a quotation from Jer. 10:10 where these exact words follow an identification of God with 'truth' (ויהוה אלהים אמת).[12] The second explanation, attributed to Resh Laqish (PA2), declares that, since אמת symbolizes the totality of the Hebrew alphabet - *Aleph* constitutes its beginning, *Mem* appears in the middle and *Taw* at the end - the interpretation of אמת as the divine seal effectively articulates the belief in the unity of the eternal God. This second explanation is not, however, without its exegetical difficulties, because Resh Laqish has evidently adopted the Hellenistic method of reading μ as the middle letter of the Greek alphabet,[13] while the Greek equivalents of אמת are ἀρχή, μέσον and τελευτή.[14]

The second comment in its present form thus regards the symbolic value of the three Hebrew letters as indicative of the all-embracing and exclusive divinity of God, and scriptural proof in the form of a combined citation of Isa. 41:4cd and 44:6d sustains its midrashic reasoning. The most likely explanation of this fusion of two biblical statements is that a search has been conducted for a 'proof-text' which coincides exactly with the letter sequence of אמת, an impossible procedure if support is drawn solely from either Isa. 41:4 or 44:6.[15]

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[10] For the use of אמת as a divine epithet, see Ps. 31:6; II Chron. 15:3; IQH 4:40; 15:25. See further Berkovits, 'Emeth, the Concept of Truth', 279-85. On the identification of אמת as the divine seal, see b.Shab 55a; Yoma 69b; Sanh 64a.

[11] Cf. Str-B II:362; Kittel, 'ἀλήθεια B: אֱמֶת im rabbinischen Judentum', 238; Wewers, *Sanhedrin: Gerichtshof,* 5 n.38.

[12] See j. Ber 1:5 (3c); ExR 38:1; LevR 6:6; 26:1; TanB Huqqat §5 (52b); PesK 4:2.

[13] See Kosmala, 'Anfang, Mitte und Ende', 110; Böhl, '*Emeth* (Wahrheit)', 164.

[14] See further Josephus, *Ap.* 2:190, where God is described as ἀρχὴ καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλος οὗτος τῶν πάντων. Cf. *Ant.* 8:280: ἀλλ' ὃς ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος τῶν ἁπάντων. The Alexandrian fragments of Aristobulus (IV:5) also depict God as 'the beginning, the middle and the end'. See further the discussion of the midrashic application of Isa. 44:6 in ExR 29:5 (§2.2 below), particularly in view of the attribution of the designation ἐγὼ τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ to Jesus in Rev. 22:13.

[15] GenR 81:2, DeutR 1:10 and ShirR 1:9:1 only cite Isa. 44:6. GenR 81:2 therefore attempts to establish a correspondence between אמת and Isa. 44:6cd by reversing the order of

Interpretative paraphrases, strikingly reminiscent of Isa. 43:10, are also inserted between each component to highlight the role of these statements as expressions of God's unity and uniqueness. To interpret אני יי ראשון (41:4) as a declaration of supreme pre-existence means that God has not received his divinity from a prior deity. Moreover, the monotheistic claim expressed in Isa. 44:6 provides the required proof that God has no partner (שותף),[16] whereas the statement that he is את אחרונים removes the misconception that he will bequeath his divinity to another. By concluding with the final statement of 41:4, this midrash climactically expresses the eternal unity of God with the aid of the self-designation אני הוא, thereby echoing the initial words of Rabbi Bun's citation of Jer. 10:10 (הוא אלהים חיים). The adoption of אמת as a divine epithet in this midrashic passage therefore accentuates the force of the Deutero-Isaianic 'I' statements as expressions of the all-encompassing presence of the one God.

2.2 'No Father, Brother or Son': ExR 29:5

דבר אחר אנכי ה' אלהיך אמר ר' אבהו משל למלך בשר ודם מולך
ויש לו אב או אח אמר הקב"ה אני איני כן אני ראשון שאין לי אב
ואני אחרון שאין לי אח ומבלעדי אין אלהים שאין לי בן

> Another interpretation 'I am the Lord your God' (Exod. 20:2). R. Abbahu said a parable [stating] that a human king rules and [yet] has a father or a brother. The Holy One, blessed be he, said: 'I am not so. "I am the first" (Isa. 44:6) for I have no father; "and I am the last" for I have no brother; "and besides me there is no god" for I have no son'.[17]

The monotheistic claims expressed in Isa. 44:6 also account for this polemically motivated discussion of the unity of God prompted by Exod. 20:2. It is presented in the form of an antithetical *mashal*, where the situation of a human king, whose kingship has been received from his father and can be passed on to his brother, is contrasted with the exclusive kingship of God. The citation of Isa. 44:6, together with its accompanying explanatory additions, serve as a three-component *nimshal* corresponding to the initial comparison in order to

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the letters: '*Aleph* is the beginning of the alphabet, *Taw* [is] the end of the alphabet [and] *Mem* in the middle. As a reference to "I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no god"' (ed. Theodor-Albeck, II:971).

[16] The use of this term may shed some light on the original polemical objectives of this tradition. As שותף implies a complementary rather than opposing figure, it is unlikely that the tradition is responding to gnostic claims (as proposed by Böhl, '*Emeth* (Wahrheit)', 166). See Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 111f., 137; Fossum, *The Name of God*, 234-36.

[17] *Midrash Rabbah*, ed. Mirqin, VI:25.

demonstrate that God alone can claim to be the 'First' and the 'Last'. ExR 29:5 develops its exposition around the structure of Isa. 44:6cd, but concludes with a comment unparalleled in the initial *mashal*, namely that God has no son. This concluding feature offers significant clues regarding the circumstances that gave rise to this midrashic argument. As in the case of several traditions attributed to Rabbi Abbahu (PA3), the head of the rabbinic school in Caesarea is combatting a group of *minim* with whom he regularly debated,[18] Christian believers who claimed that Jesus was the Son of God.[19]

The distinctive application of Isa. 44:6 in ExR 29:5 may also indicate that Abbahu is not only arguing against Christian claims concerning Jesus' divine sonship, but is specifically responding to the attribution to Jesus of the words ἐγὼ τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος (Rev. 22:13; cf. 1:17, 2:8).[20] This would mean that a prophetic text already subjected to first-century Christian interpretation is being reclaimed by Rabbi Abbahu as a defence by God of his unity.[21] Furthermore, these verses from the book of Revelation are cited in third-century Christian texts as scriptural support in discussions of the divinity of Jesus.[22] It is, admittedly, difficult to identify the precise nature and form of the Christian biblical exegesis to which rabbinic traditions of this kind could be responding,[23] but the significant role played by the designations 'First' and 'Last' in discussions of the divine sonship of Jesus among third- and early fourth-century Jews and Christians in Caesarea suggests that Rabbi Abbahu's interpretation of Isa. 44:6 reflects an awareness of the Christian use of this divine pronouncement.

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[18] Lachs, 'Rabbi Abbahu and the Minim', 197-212; Levine, 'R. Abbahu of Caesarea', 61f.

[19] See Str-B II:542; Cohon, 'The Unity of God', 130; Lachs, 'Rabbi Abbahu', 200f. See further j.Shab 6:10; DeutR 2:33; QohR 4:8:1 (13bc); ShirR 7:9:1 (38b); Aggadat Bereshit 31:3 (Buber, 27b).

[20] For the view that the designations ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος in Revelation are derived from Isa. 44:6 (41:4; 48:12), see especially Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, 27, 55f.; Hofius, 'Das Zeugnis der Johannesoffenbarung', 515.

[21] Cf. Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 17:1, where it is stated that the Jews refuted Christian claims regarding Jesus' divine sonship by citing Deut. 32:39 (Syriac rendering): '"Although God has no son, you say concerning this crucified Jesus that he is the son of God". They offer as an argument that God said: "I, I am God and there is no other apart from me"'. See also Neusner, *Aphrahat and Judaism*, 68, 159.

[22] See, e.g., Origen, *Comm. in. Ioh.* i.116, where Rev. 22:13 is cited after the description of Jesus as the Son of God who 'is the beginning of things which exist' (cf. i. 22, 132).

[23] For a recent discussion, see Stemberger, 'Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews', 574f.; cf. Horbury, *Jews and Christians*, 26f., 200-225.

Another polemical saying attributed to Rabbi Abbahu and directed against Christians can be noted in this respect,[24] one which has played a significant role in some scholarly discussions of Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι. The relevant rabbinic tradition occurs in j.Taan 2:1 (65b):

> R. Abbahu said: If a man says to you 'I am God' (אל אני), he lies. 'I am the Son of man' (בן אדם אני), in the end he will regret it. 'I ascend to heaven', so he has said, but he will not achieve it.[25]

Attention must firstly be paid to the fact that this three-component formulation amounts to an innovative adaptation of Balaam's pronouncement in Num. 23:19, transformed into a prophetic warning about Jesus' claims. Stauffer, however, attempts to derive this threefold statement from Jesus' own self-testimony;[26] he proposes that the initial claim (אל אני) represents an authentic Jewish record of the declaration made by Jesus during his trial before the Sanhedrin,[27] rendered as ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62 and followed by the other two components (καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως). Furthermore, the phrases 'he lies' and 'he will not achieve it' in Abbahu's saying are viewed as alluding to specific events (e.g., Mark 14:65; 15:29-32; John 19:7, 28, 30), while 'he will regret it' denotes Jesus' death as the inevitable consequence of his acts. Stauffer draws the conclusion that אל אני stands for אני הוא and that j.Taan 2:1 (65b) provides independent proof that Jesus uttered the 'theophanic' אני הוא.

Chapter 7 of this study will consider whether the expression אני הוא lies behind Jesus' response to the high priest in the form ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62, but an attempt can now be made to determine whether אל אני in j.Taan 2:1 in fact represents אני הוא. The speculative nature of Stauffer's proposal has long

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[24] Lauterbach, *Rabbinic Essays,* 550f.; Bammel, 'Christian Origins in Jewish Tradition', 323; Irsai, 'אמר ר' אבהו', 173-77. One recent exception is Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth,* 80-82, who regards Abbahu's statement as directed against claims made by Roman emperors rather than Christians, although it seems unlikely that the statement בן אדם אני and Abbahu's verdict reflect 'eine Anspielung auf das Dilemma der römischen Kaiser, sich nicht als Menschen geben zu können, ohne ihre Würde in Frage zu stellen' (*ibid.,* 81).

[25] Cf. YS §766, where a later form of this tradition is attributed, in part, to R. Eleazar ha-Qappar (T4): '"God is not man that he should lie" (Num. 23:19). And if he says he is God (שהוא אל), he is a liar. And he will lead men astray and say that he will depart and return at the end of days'.

[26] 'Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung', 50-52; *idem,* 'Probleme der Priestertradition', 148; *Jesus,* 142f.; *Jesus war ganz anders,* 183f.

[27] 'Geschichte Jesu', 173; *idem,* 'Messias oder Menschensohn', 94f. See also Bammel, 'Erwägungen zur Eschatologie Jesu', 24 n.6: 'eine Polemik gegen die Prozeßaussage'.

been noted,[28] although he himself, in response to the criticism that it is impossible to retrieve אני הוא from אל אני, stated that Abbahu is forced to phrase Jesus' statement in this way due to his dependence on Balaam's declaration as an anti-Christian proof-text.[29] Other factors however indicate that this saying reflects a more general assessment of Christian claims.

If Abbahu regarded Jesus as having pronounced the words אני הוא, the first component of this polemic could, for example, have been formulated to read: 'And if a man makes himself God (אל) and says to you, אני הוא'. It also raises the question whether the use of the expression אני הוא would have been interpreted as blasphemy in Jewish circles, an issue that can only be addressed when all the relevant rabbinic evidence has been surveyed (see Chapter 6). It is, however, indicative that this polemical tradition presents the initial claim to divinity in the form אל אני, a phrase declared by all kinds of arrogant figures in biblical (Ezek. 28:2) and rabbinic traditions.[30] Indeed, the phrasing אל אני is not a sequence demanded by Num. 23:19 (לא איש אל), again suggesting that Ezek. 28:2 rather than אני הוא forms the relevant background to this saying. Consequently, the presence of אל in the central proof-text provided Abbahu with the exegetical occasion to portray Jesus as belonging to a long line of figures who pronounced אל אני, thereby attesting to the rabbinic perception of Jesus as having claimed to be divine.

3. The Eternal Steadfastness of God

Several rabbinic traditions of diverse content and purpose make the divine declaration in Isa. 46:4 the focal point of their expositions. This statement lends itself to a variety of interpretative contexts, as demonstrated by its application to the creation of humankind (§3.1), Israel's plight during the exile (§3.2) and in the future (§3.3). What binds these traditions together is their understanding of Isa. 46:4 as a declaration which offers consolation in times of distress, as God's assurance of his continued support.[31] Its striking metaphors are clearly

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[28] Kümmel, *Verheißung und Erfüllung,* 44f. n.102; Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu,* 45f.; Catchpole, 'You Have Heard His Blasphemy', 17.

[29] 'Neue Wege der Jesusforschung', 174.

[30] Cf. Mek Shirta 2 on Exod. 15:1; GenR 96:5; ExR 8:2. See further Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth,* 77-80.

[31] Isa. 46:4 is cited as a word of comfort to such individuals as Mordecai (EstherR 7:13 [13a]) and David (Aggadat Bereshit §35:1 [30b]).

instrumental to the innovative descriptions of God's activity, while the occurrence of אני הוא in this verse makes it a succinct declaration by God of his permanence and everlasting presence.

3.1 God's Enduring Presence from Creation: b.Sanhedrin 38b

Isa. 46:4 is cited in b.Sanh 38b in the concluding part of an Amoraic tradition which highlights the problems caused by the plural forms in Gen. 1:26 (MT: נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ).[32] A passage attributed to Rabbi Yehudah (BA2) in the name of Rab (BA1) innovatively depicts God as creating a company of angels and taking counsel with them about the creation of humankind, thereby eliminating the possibility that angelic figures function as co-creators.[33] The first two groups of angels oppose this aspect of God's creative activity and are swiftly destroyed, but a third company declares that the Creator possesses the freedom to act as he wishes. The tradition then concludes:

כיון שהגיע לאנשי דור המבול ואנשי דור הפלגה שמעשיהן מקולקלין אמרו לפניו רבונו של עולם לא יפה אמרו ראשונים לפניך אמר להן עד זקנה אני הוא ועד שיבה אני אסבול וגו׳

When he [God] came to the men of the generation of the flood and the men of the generation of the division, whose deeds were corrupt, they [the angels] said before him: 'Lord of the world, did not the first ones [group of angels] speak rightly before you?' He said to them: 'Even to old age I am he and to grey hairs I will carry etc.' (Isa. 46:4).

Despite the opposition expressed by the angels, brought about by their anticipation of human wickedness,[34] God proclaims that even those generations who epitomize corruption cannot prevent him from adhering to his original plan of creating and providing assistance, and the overall message of this divine response to the angels is conveyed with the aid of Isa. 46:4. The uncited portion of this divine declaration (46:4cd) lends itself in particular to its present

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[32] See Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 95-98. On the interrelationship of this tradition and its parallels (MHG on Gen. 1:26 [Margulies, 1:55]; 3 Enoch 4:6-9), see Alexander, '3 Enoch and the Talmud', 45-54; Morray-Jones, 'Hekhalot Literature and Talmudic Tradition', 11-17.

[33] Cf. GenR 8:4; 17:4; NumR 19:3; TanB Huqqat §12 (55b). See especially Marmorstein, *Studies in Jewish Theology,* 97-99; Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 85-98; Fossum, *The Name of God,* 204-11; *idem,* 'Gen. 1,26 and 2,7', 208-17.

[34] See Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 220-22.

haggadic context,[35] since the recollection of God's past creative acts (אני עשיתי) is followed by a promise of future support (ואני אשא ואני אסבל).[36] It does not necessarily follow that the opening words (ועד זקנה אני הוא) play no role in this innovative scene; this concise 'I' declaration sums up the message of the verse, as well as its midrashic application as an expression of God's steadfastness despite human sinfulness. It is God, without angelic mediation, who has created humankind and, despite angelic opposition, his support will remain unchanged. This Deutero-Isaianic statement thus encapsulates the focus in the talmudic version of this midrash on God's enduring presence with his creatures, and it also brings the theme of divine immutability to the foreground; God does not vacillate in his decisions, but holds fast to his original plans.

3.2 God's Presence with Israel from Beginning to End: MidTeh 137:3 (PesR 28:2)

באותה שעה געו כל ישראל בבכיה עד שעלתה שועתם למרום א״ר אחא בר אבא באותה שעה בקש הקב״ה להחזיר כל העולם לתוהו ובהו אמר הקב״ה כל מה שבראתי לא בראתי אלא בשביל אלו שנאמר וגם אני אכה כפי אל כפי והנחתי חמתי עולם שבראתי לא בראתי אלא בשתי ידי שנאמר אף ידי יסדה ארץ אחריבנו

א״ר אלפא בר קרויא באותה שעה נכנסו כל מלאכי השרת לפני הקב״ה ואמרו לפניו רבונו של עולם העולם כלו ומלואו שלך לא דייך שהחרבת דירתך של מטה אלא שתחריב בית דירתך של מעלה אמר להם וכי תנחומין אני צריך אני מכיר בראש ואני מכיר בסוף שנאמר ועד זקנה אני הוא על כן אמרתי שעו מני אמרר בבכי אל תאיצו לנחמני

['By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion' (Ps. 137:1)]. In this hour the whole of Israel burst forth in wailing, until their cry ascended to the height[s]. R. Aha bar Abba said: In this hour the Holy One, blessed be he, wanted to return the whole world to chaos.

The Holy One, blessed be he, said: 'All that I created, I created only for your sake, as it is said: "I will also strike hand to hand, and I will satisfy my anger" (Ezek. 21:22). The world I created, I created with only two hands,

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[35] Alexander, '3 Enoch and the Talmud', 47, notes that the citation of Isa. 46:4 in b.Sanh 38b is 'puzzling' until the second half of the declaration is taken into account. MHG on Gen. 1:26 and 3 Enoch 4:6-9 (Ms. Vaticanus 228) do not cite the first two clauses of Isa. 46:4.

[36] TIsa 46:4cd reads: 'I have created every man, I scattered them among the peoples; I will also forgive their sins and will pardon' (see also Chapter 1 n.78). Cf. ExR 29:7 which interprets ואני אסבל (Isa. 46:4) as an expression of God's tolerance of the tower of Babel and the sin of the golden calf. See also QohR 7:7:2 (19b); MidTeh 32:4 (122b).

as it is said: 'My hand laid the foundation of the earth [and my right hand spread out the heavens]" (Isa. 48:13). I will now destroy it'.
Rabbi Ilfa bar Keruya said (1): In this hour all the ministering angels came before the Holy One, blessed be he, and they said before him: 'Lord of the world, the world and all that is in it belongs to you. Is it not enough for you that you have destroyed your dwelling-place below, but [that you must] also destroy the house of your dwelling above?' He said to them: 'Do I need comfort? I know the beginning and I know the end. As it is said: "Even to old age I am he" (2) (Isa. 46:4a). Therefore I said: "Look away from me, let me weep bitter tears; do not try to comfort me' (Isa. 22:4)" [...Go down from my presence and lift their burden'].[37]

Main Variations in PesR 28:2[38]

(1) Rabbi Tahlifa bar Keruya
(2) Continues with Isa. 46:4bc

Numerous themes are combined in this complex exegetical tradition, attributed in both versions to the same rabbinic authorities,[39] in order to depict the unique relationship between God and Israel as one of solidarity in times of suffering.[40] God hears the wailing of the Jews in Babylon, whose suffering is highlighted in the preceding section by the description of Nebuchadnezzar increasing the burdens of the kings of Judah by placing Torah scrolls filled with sand upon their shoulders. The divine response to these earthly events is to declare that the world, created solely for the sake of Israel,[41] must now be destroyed.

An innovative scene attributed to Rabbi Ilfa bar Keruya (PA2) depicts the intervention of ministering angels, who attempt to appease God by declaring that Israel forms only one part of the world. The angelic protest that the heavenly Temple will suffer the same fate as the earthly one presupposes the view that the two Temples symbolize the earthly/heavenly worlds and that to destroy creation involves the annihilation of both these worlds.[42] Indeed, the preceding section illustrates the return to chaos in terms of God striking both hands together (Ezek. 21:22), clarified by the statement that the earthly world

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[37] *Midrasch Tehillim,* ed. Buber, 262a. Cf. also the later revision of this tradition in SEZ 9 (Friedmann, 188f.); YS on Psalms §884. For a summary of issues relating to the provenance and dating of Midrash Tehillim, see Stemberger, *Introduction,* 322f.

[38] *Pesikta Rabbati,* ed. Friedmann, 135ab.

[39] The unknown Tahlifa (PesR 28:2) is a corrupt form and should read Ilfa (see Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 182).

[40] See Schäfer, *ibid.,* 181-83; Ego, *Im Himmel wie auf Erden,* 148f.

[41] Cf. ExR 38:4; 40:1; ShirR 7:3:3 (36d); TanB Bereshit §§3, 10 (1b, 3b); MidTeh 11:2 (49ab); 25:9 (107a).

[42] See especially Ego, *Im Himmel wie auf Erden,* 149.

was created by one divine hand and the heavenly world by the other (Isa. 48:13; cf. b.Hag 12a). A similar discourse in SER 28 demonstrates that God's pronouncement of cosmic destruction forms a kind of *Trauergestus*:[43]

> In this hour the Holy One, blessed be he, said: 'I will bring together heaven and earth and I will strike them against each other and will [thus] destroy the whole world, all of it, as it is said: "I will also strike hand to hand and I will satisfy my anger" (Ezek. 21:22) with them, and be comforted'.[44]

The introduction of the theme of comfort in SER 28 is significant in view of the alternative consoling words offered by the angels in MidTeh 137:3 and PesR 28:2. Schäfer persuasively argues that the angels offer themselves to God as a worthy substitute, for Israel's calamity should not lead to the disappearance of the heavenly world.[45] However, God declares that he requires no comfort, for his original plan remains eternally valid: 'I know the beginning and I know the end'.[46] As the whole cosmos was created for the sake of Israel, there is no purpose for the angels, it seems, unless Israel survives.

The citation of Isa. 46:4, whose midrashic application here is close to its function in its original context, demonstrates that God will remain faithful to his chosen nation 'to old age', and it expresses his promise to support his people from creation (the beginning) to deliverance (the end). אני הוא thus acquires significance in this tradition as an affirmatory pronouncement of God's continued presence for the deliverance of his people. Interestingly, despite the divine call to be allowed to lament the fate of Israel (Isa. 22:4),[47] the pronouncement of Isa. 46:4 serves as a kind of watershed in the discourse between God and the angels. His declaration of solidarity with Israel leads to the abandonment of the decision to destroy the world and, after the citation of Isa. 22:4, he commands the angels to descend and lift the burdens of the kings of Judah. God decides to intervene in earthly events in order to maintain his relationship with Israel, true to the promise expressed in Isa. 46:4.

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[43] Kuhn, *Gottes Trauer und Klage*, 222.

[44] SER 28, ed. Friedmann, 150.

[45] *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 182. Cf. SEZ 9 (Friedmann, 189), which describes the angels' intervention when God wishes to accompany the tribes of Israel into exile: 'Master of the world, you still have seventy nations in the world and [also] us, of whom there is no fathoming or counting'.

[46] Cf. SER 1 (Friedmann, 3 and 6): 'Blessed be he, who knows the beginning and the end (שמכיר בראש ובסוף), and who declares from the beginning what the end [will be] before it has been made'.

[47] Cf. LamR Petihta 24 (6b); SER 28 (Friedmann, 154). See further Kuhn, *Gottes Trauer und Klage*, 61-64, 222-24; Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 180f.

3.3 God as Future Hope and Prospect: Sifra Ahare Mot Pereq 13:11

ת׳ל ללכת בהם אינך רשאי ליפטר מתוכן וכן הוא אומר יחיו לך לבדך וגו׳ בהתהלכך תנחה אותך בעולם הזה בשכבך תשמור עליך בשעת מיתה והקיצות היא תשיחך לע״ה וכן הוא אומר הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר וגו׳

ושמא תאמר אבד סברי ואבד סכויי תלמוד לומר אני ה׳ אני סברך ואני סכוייך ועלי בטחונך וכן הוא אומר ועד זקנה אני הוא וגו׳ ואומר כה אמר ה׳ מלך ישראל וגואלו ה׳ צבאות וגו׳ ואומר אני ה׳ אני ראשון אף אני אחרון ואומר אני ה׳ ראשון ואת אחרונים אני הוא

Scripture says: 'Walk in them' (Lev. 18:4). You are not permitted to make yourself exempt from them. And therefore it says: 'Let them be for yourself alone etc.' (Prov. 5:17). 'When you walk, it will lead you' (6:22) in this world. 'When you lie down, it will watch over you' (*ibid.*) in the hour of death. 'And when you awake, it will talk with you' (*ibid.*) in the world to come. And therefore it says: 'Awake and sing, O dwellers in the dust etc.' (Isa. 26:19).

And perhaps you will say: My hope is gone and my prospect is gone, [but] Scripture says: 'I am the Lord' (Lev. 18:4). I am your hope, and I am your prospect and you place your trust in me. And therefore it says: 'And to old age I am he etc.' (Isa. 46:4). And it says: 'Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts etc.' (44:6). And it says: 'I am the Lord; I am the first, and I am the last' (48:12). And it says: 'I, the Lord, am the first, and with the last I am he' (41:4).[48]

This passage appears within a *parashah* dedicated to the theme of Israel's relationship with God as secured by her obedience to the Torah (Lev. 18:4). Sifra illustrates the total commitment required from the people with the aid of Prov. 5:17, whereas 6:22 and its threefold expansions depict the Torah's constant companionship in this world through death to the hour of awakening for resurrection (Isa. 26:19).[49] The reward for Torah obedience is the promise of God's presence in times of distress and hopelessness, as expressed by the self-declaratory formula אני ה׳ of the lemma (Lev. 18:4) and its interpretative paraphrase which takes the form of two nominal clauses: 'I (אני) am your hope, and I (אני) am your prospect' (cf. b.BM 33b; MidTeh 1:20 [11a]).

Divine words of reassurance are supported with the aid of four Deutero

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[48] *Sifra*, ed. Schlossberg, 86b. Cf. YS Ahare Mot §591; MHG on Lev. 18:4 (Steinsalz, 518). The basic core of Sifra is believed to have been composed ca. 250-300 CE, but Sifra Ahare Mot 13:3-15 is one of many secondary additions to the text, as demonstrated by the absence of this section from the first printed edition of Sifra. See Stemberger, *Introduction*, 261.

[49] Cf. m.Aboth 6:9; SifDeut §34; ARNB 35 (Schechter, 79f.). See also Avemarie, *Tora und Leben*, 283f.

Isaianic proof-texts which contain the expression אני הוא and the self-predication statements אני ראשון and אני אחרון. The meaning and function of these four divine self-declarations within the Sifra tradition can be delineated as follows.

First, the citations clearly express the view that God will ultimately deliver his people from oppression, for his role as the exclusive deliverer of his people is prominent in Isa. 46:4, is strengthened by the presence of the epithet גואל in 44:6 and is presupposed by the self-designation אחרון (44:6; 48:12; cf. 41:4).

Secondly, these prophetic texts secure the future orientation demanded by the central promise of God's enduring support (see §1 above),[50] for the rabbinic exegete could otherwise have selected self-declaratory statements more closely resembling אני ה׳ of its base text (Lev. 18:4). This midrashic unit thus attests a specific interpretation of the four prophetic 'I' statements as assurances of the future presence of God with his people. Indeed, it is striking that the sequence in which these אני pronouncements are presented in Sifra is also encountered in other traditions (cf. Mek Bahodesh 5; LevR 24:9), for their arrangement reflects a deliberate movement from the 'near' (ועד זקנה) to the (eschatological) future (ואת אחרנים). A further consequence of this adopted sequence is that the series of divine self-declarations begins and ends with the words אני הוא.[51]

Thirdly, the correlation established between אני ה׳ (Lev. 18:4) and אני הוא (Isa. 46:4; 48:12; 41:4) may throw some light on the way in which the latter expression is understood in this exposition. The exegete either regarded the occurrence of the tetragrammaton in the pentateuchal formula as the antecedent of הוא in the prophetic proof-texts ('I am he - the Lord') or viewed אני הוא as a divine self-designation which forms a parallel to אני ה׳ of the base text.[52] Both assessments can in fact be viewed as plausible explanations of the way in which this tradition applies and interprets אני הוא of the proof-texts, and both point to the close relationship between אני הוא and the 'I' declaration in Lev. 18:4, particularly as it belongs to the clearly future perspective of the midrash.

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[50] Isa. 46:4 also conveys assurance of God's support in the eschatological future in DeutR 7:12: "'Even to old age I am he, and to grey hairs I will carry etc.' The Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'My children, by your life, in the same way as I have raised you in this world, so I will raise and hold you dear in the future to come'".

[51] Mek Shirta 4 and j.Sanh 1:1 (18a) also conclude with Isa. 41:4d.

[52] It is, for example, noteworthy that the occurrence of אני הוא in the third cited proof-text (Isa. 48:12) is rendered in the Sifra midrash as אני ה׳, which may indicate that the midrashist viewed the former as a variation of, or substitute for, the latter.

4. I, I am he who Comforts you: God as Future Deliverer

The divine promise expressed in Isa. 51:12 (MT: אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֲמְכֶם) is also applied in a variety of ways in rabbinic traditions, and its doubling of אנכי and the future role of God as the comforter of his people become particularly prominent themes. Two homiletical *piskas* (PesK 19; PesR 33) are dedicated to the exposition of these and several other aspects of this divine declaration, for Isa. 51:12-52:12 was the prescribed *haftarah* reading for the fourth of the seven sabbaths of consolation after the ninth of Ab, the day of mourning for the destruction of the two Temples (cf. m.Taan 4:6). Two midrashic traditions included in these *piskas* are of particular relevance to this study.

4.1 The Future Doubling of the Divine אנכי: *PesK 19:5 (PesR 21:15)*

ד"א אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם ר' אבון בשם ריש לקיש למלך שכעס על מטרונא וטרדה והוציאה מבית פלטין שלו לאחר ימים ביקש להחזירה אמרה יכפול כתובתי ואחר כך הוא מחזירני כך א' הקב"ה לישראל בניי בסיני אמרתי לכם פעם אחת אנכי י"י אלהיך ובירושלם לעתיד לבא אני אומר לכם שני פעמים אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם

Another interpretation: 'I, I am he who comforts you'. R. Abun in the name of Resh Laqish: It is like a king who became angry with the queen and banished her and sent her away from his palace. After [some] years he wanted to restore her, [but] she said: 'Let him double my marriage settlement and then he may restore me [as queen] (1)'. Likewise, the Holy One, blessed be he, said to Israel: 'My children, at Sinai I declared to you once (2): "I am the Lord your God" (Exod. 20:2). But in Jerusalem in the future to come (3) I will declare to you twice: "I, I am he who comforts you"'.[53]

Main Variations in PesR 21:15 [21:36][54]

(1) Adds: 'and I will return to him'.
(2) Reads: 'I declared אנכי to you once' (no citation of Exod. 20:2).
(3) Does not include '[in the future] to come'.

This king-*mashal,* attributed to the prominent Amoraic tradents Rabbi Abun (PA4) in the name of Resh Laqish (PA2), evidently seeks to account for the

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[53] *Pesikta de Rav Kahana,* ed. Mandelbaum, I:306f. Cf. YS on Isaiah §474; MHG on Deut. 5:6 (Fisch, 103f.).

[54] *Pesikta Rabbati,* ed. Friedmann, 106b [21:15]; *Pesiqta Rabbati,* ed. Ulmer, 480f. [21:36].

doubling of אנכי in Isa. 51:12.[55] The kind of symbolism used in this *mashal* occurs frequently in rabbinic midrash, for the actions of a mortal king explain by analogy the acts of God, while the queen or consort (מטרונא) represents the community of Israel. This particular scenario of a king banishing his wife from the palace is also found in LamR 1:56 (19c), where it is said that, following her banishment, she seeks shelter among her neighbours (the gentile nations).[56] But the emphasis is different in this present *mashal,* for the king subsequently requests that his wife returns to the palace. He must however respond to certain conditions set down by the consort to secure her return; she will not resume her position until the original marriage settlement is doubled.[57]

This analogy evidently stands as a general illustration of the relationship between God and Israel, with no precise correspondence of situations intended in the *nimshal.*[58] The marriage settlement represents the covenantal relationship secured between God and Israel at Sinai, as expressed in Exod. 20:2 and its single occurrence of אנכי. The banishment of the queen signifies Israel's state of exile after the destruction of the Temple,[59] but God promises restoration, again expressed with the aid of אנכי. This archaic form, no longer current in Rabbinic Hebrew, evidently caught the imagination of sages and became associated with future divine acts of healing and restoration, as demonstrated in ExR 3:4 where אנכי becomes symbolic of the first (Gen. 46:4) and last redemption (Mal. 3:23).[60] The placing of Isa. 51:12a immediately after Exod. 20:2 also indicates that the Deutero-Isaianic declaration does not serve as a kind of substitute formula, but is attributed theophanic significance in its role as the

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[55] Cf. PesK 19:3 (Mandelbaum, II:305) where the doubling of אנכי in 51:12 is said to signify the future paternal (Ps. 103:13: רחם) and maternal (Isa. 66:13: נחם) roles of God as comforter.

[56] Cf. NumR 13:2; DeutR 1:2; PesK 1:1; 19:2.

[57] For the marriage settlement as symbolic of the relationship between the king and his consort, see further LamR 3:21 (26a); PesK 19:4; PesR 21:15 (earlier section [21:34-35]). See Stern, *Parables in Midrash,* 56-62.

[58] See Mintz, *Hurban,* 79-83; Stern, 'The Rabbinic Parable', 642.

[59] On rabbinic responses to the destruction of the Temple, see especially Cohen, 'The Destruction', 18-39; Mintz, *Hurban,* 49-83; Kirschner, 'Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Responses to the Destruction of 70', 27-46; Kraemer, *Responses to Suffering,* 73-78, 96-98, 140-46, 176-83.

[60] Many traditions focus on the significance of the divine אנכי; see, e.g., TanB Yitro §16 (40a); ExR 29:9; PesK 12:24, 25; PesR 21:12-15; 33:8. A late tradition recorded in Midrash Tadshe (*BHM,* III:164) links אנכי to the theme of divine sovereignty: 'The first letter of the word is *Aleph* and the last [letter] of the word is *Yod.* From one to ten is a full number, and all shall know that the Holy One fills the whole world. He is the first and the last, as it is said: "I am the first and I am the last" (Isa. 44:6)'.

future counterpart of the words pronounced by God on the occasion of the Sinai revelation.[61]

The two-sided aspect of this covenantal relationship is also presupposed in the *nimshal,* for in the same way as God will ultimately deliver his people from tribulation, Israel must continue to be obedient to the Torah. Other examples of the midrashic juxtaposition of Exod. 20:2 and Isa. 51:12 demonstrate that Israel's acceptance of the commandments beginning with אנכי leads to God's proclamation of future restoration with a twofold אנכי, as shown in particular by PesR 33:4:

> Another interpretation: 'I, I [am he who comforts you]'. Why is אנכי אנכי said twice? Because at Sinai they received אנכי twice: 'I am the Lord your God' (Exod. 20:2) 'For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God' (20:5). Therefore the Holy One, blessed be he, will comfort you with two אנכי: 'I, I am he who comforts you'.[62]

The juxtaposition of scriptural passages established in PesR 33:4 again affirms the significance of Isa. 51:12a as a promise of future divine intervention on behalf of Israel.[63] This Deutero-Isaianic statement consequently proved to be a text of decisive importance in rabbinic homilies, particularly from the Amoraic period onwards when the certainty of Israel's election was being called into question.[64] In virtue of its role as the opening verse of the *haftarah* for a sabbath of consolation, Isa. 51:12a expresses the divine assurance that present experiences of adversity will be replaced by 'double' acts of comfort. It therefore underlines the rabbinic conviction that the current state of affliction represents only one stage within God's wider plan for his people.

4.2 God Kindles the Fire and Comforts: PesR 33:1

ואחר כל השבח הזה כתב פתח לבנון דלתיך ותאכל אש בארזיך וכן אמרו שלח אש בעצמותי אמרו לו ישראל רבון העולמים עד אימתי כך לא הכתבת בתורתך שלם ישלם המבעיר את הבערה ואתה הוא שהבערת

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[61] Isa. 43:25 is interpreted in eschatological terms in TanB Shemini §6 (12b) on Lev. 19:2. The offer of a sacrifice leads to the forgiveness of Israel's sins in this world, 'but in the world to come I will forgive their sins without a sacrifice, as it is said: "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions etc."'.

[62] *Pesikta Rabbati,* ed. Friedmann, 151a. Cf. YS on Isaiah §474.

[63] Cf. also ExR 29:9; PesK 19:1, 2; PesR 33:6, 7; LamR 1:23 (13b), 26 (13d), 52 (19a).

[64] For the view that early Church leaders interpreted the nation's sufferings as proof that God had rejected Israel, see, e.g., Ayali, 'Gottes und Israels Trauer', 215-31; Barth, 'The "Three of Rebuke and Seven of Consolation"', 512-14; Silberman, 'Challenge and Response', 247-53.

שנאמר ממרום שלח אש בעצמותי ואתה צריך לבנותו ולנחם אותנו לא על ידי מלאך אלא אתה בכבודך אומר להם הקדוש בורך הוא חייכם כך אני עושה שנאמר בונה ירושלים ה' נדחי ישראל יכנס ואני הוא שמנחם אתכם ומניין ממה שקראו בעניין הנביא אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם

And [yet] after all this praise [of the Temple], it is written: 'Open your doors, Lebanon, so that fire may devour your cedars' (Zech. 11:1), and they said: 'He sent fire into my bones' (Lam. 1:13). Israel said to him: 'Lord of the worlds, for how long so? Have you not written in your Torah: "The one who started the fire shall make full restitution" (Exod. 22:5)? And you are he who started [it], as it is said: "From on high he sent fire into my bones" (Lam. 1:13). And you must rebuild it and comfort us - not by the hand of an angel, but you [yourself] with your glory'. The Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'As you live, thus shall I do, as it is said: "The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel" (Ps. 147:2). And I am he who will comfort you'. And where [do we learn this]? From what they read from the lesson of the prophet: 'I, I am he who comforts you'.[65]

With the aid of the image of fire, this opening section of PesR 33 states that God was instrumental in the destruction of the Temple. By applying the message of a biblical proverbial statement (Exod. 22:5), Israel's response is to announce that God is obliged to rebuild the Temple and comfort Israel, because he is the one who is responsible for present distress.[66] The one who kindled the fire must now deliver, to which God offers an affirmatory response by means of an oath, true to the promises expressed in Ps. 147:2.

Of particular significance are the two extended אני/אתה הוא declarations in this midrashic exposition, similar to those encountered in Chapter 4 (§§4, 5, 6), as well as the formula לא על ידי מלאך to emphasize that God himself will act in his glory.[67] Indeed, this formulaic denial of angelic participation relates closely to the function of the אני/אתה הוא statements, for they accentuate that God himself has destroyed the Temple and he alone is able to save his people.[68] Israel's declaration of divine responsibility therefore identifies God with the subject of Exod. 22:5 ('And you are he who started [the fire]'). A similar

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[65] *Pesikta Rabbati,* ed. Friedmann, 149b. Cf. MHG on Gen. 50:21 (Margulies, II:882).

[66] On other traditions which depict Israel's complaints about suffering as directed at God, see Stern, *Parables in Midrash,* 130-45; Kraemer, *Responses to Suffering,* 115-49.

[67] Cf. PesR 33:12 (Friedmann, 156b): 'In this hour "I will comfort you" (Lam. 2:13). I, in my glory will come and comfort you. "I, I am he who comforts you"'.

[68] Cf. also the Passover Haggadah passage analysed in Chapter 6 §4 below, which also uses the formulaic denial of angelic mediation, stresses that God will act by his own glory and concludes with his self-declaration אני הוא.

formulation, with the same syntactic structure, is also used to convey God's promise to his people (ואני הוא שמנחם אתכם), which serves as an anticipatory paraphrase of the scriptural statement from which it receives confirmation. A conscious interpretative strategy can be detected in this respect, for the rabbinic exegete, knowing that this homiletical passage must conclude with the *haftarah* text, gradually leads the audience or readers towards the declaration of Isa. 51:12a. Thus, the concluding message of hope is that God will transform Jerusalem's present affliction with acts of restoration and deliverance.

5. Concluding Remarks

Diverse interpretations of Deutero-Isaianic 'I' declarations are encountered in the midrashic units analysed in this chapter, and divine pronouncements which include the expression אני הוא (41:4; 43:10; 46:4; 48:12) - often in conjunction with the self-designations אני ראשון and אני אחרון (44:6; 48:12; cf. 41:4) - or the statement אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם (51:12) are applied to a variety of interpretative contexts. This diversity arises as a result of the motifs and theological claims associated with individual divine self-declarations, but their function within the midrashic framework is often to communicate and elaborate upon key themes already firmly established in the biblical passages themselves. These themes include the emphasis on the eternally sovereign God who is both ראשון and אחרון (§2), his enduring presence from creation to deliverance (§3), as well as the message of consolation and hope that God will ultimately deliver his people (§4).

Certain common features can, nevertheless, be identified in these midrashic texts. First, the passages stem primarily from Palestinian circles,[69] as is also true of the rabbinic citations and expositions of Deut. 32:39, and they reflect certain interpretative methods that became prevalent during the Amoraic period and beyond. There are indications that Palestinian rabbis, to a far greater extent than their Babylonian colleagues, were trained to use biblical exegesis for apologetic purposes and to combat the beliefs and claims of other religious

[69] The only exception is the midrashic tradition in b.Sanh 38b (see §3.1 above), which is attributed to Rabbi Yehudah in the name of Rab (BA1), although there is evidence that Rab followed his uncle, Rabbi Hiyya, to Palestine to study under Rabbi (T5), and taught there before returning to Babylonia. See Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia,* I:116-21; II:126-28.

groups.[70] It is therefore significant that divine 'I' pronouncements from the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah are cited by Amoraic authorities as scriptural proof-texts against Christian claims about the divine sonship of Jesus (§2.2), whereas other traditions reflect rabbinic attitudes to what are deemed to be exaggerated claims about the status and activity of angelic figures (§3) and the responses of the sages to the accusation brought by others, particularly Church leaders, that the destruction of the Temple meant that God had abandoned Israel (§4).

Secondly, several of these midrashic units are bound together by their understanding of the future orientation of many divine self-declarations in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, and this affects the sequence in which they are cited as proof-texts in order to proceed from the near (Isa. 46:4) to the eschatological future and conclude with the phrase ואת אחרנים אני הוא (41:4). Whether in defence of God's unity or to highlight the theme of his enduring support, the Deutero-Isaianic application of אני הוא can serve as an expression of God's future self-manifestation. Indeed, in some of these rabbinic expositions, either אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם or אני הוא is interpreted as the future counterpart of God's historical self-disclosure with the aid of אני ה׳ or אנכי ה׳ אלהיך (§§1, 3.3, 4). Such assurances of the future presence and activity of God are closely related, in this respect, to traditions where the phrase ועד זקנה אני הוא acts as a succinct expression of the steadfastness of God with his people (§§3.1-3).

Thirdly, the traditions analysed in this chapter interpret the Deutero-Isaianic usage of אני הוא, either implicitly or explicitly, as God's own pronouncement of his sovereignty. This reveals a clear continuity with the application of the expression אני הוא in its original Deutero-Isaianic context, and it also parallels the rabbinic interpretation of the solemn self-declaration אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39. With the aid of these prophetic proof-texts, the rabbis declare that no earthly king can be compared to God (§1), for he alone is eternally present (§2); he alone, with no angelic 'partner', has created and now sustains his people (§3); he alone has the ability to kindle the fire and comfort, for he is the exclusive agent of both retribution and deliverance (§4).

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[70] See especially b.AZ 4a, according to which Rabbi Abbahu protects his Babylonian colleague Safra from the *minim* by telling them: 'We [in Palestine], who are frequently with you, make it our business to study [the Bible]; but they [in Babylonia] do not study it'. See further Simon, *Verus Israel,* 184-86; Lachs, 'Rabbi Abbahu and the Minim', 206-8; Horbury, *Jews and Christians,* 204f.

Chapter Six

The Use of אני הוא Formulations in Rabbinic Texts

The analysis of the midrashic interpretations of biblical passages in which God proclaims אני הוא has revealed different usages of this expression. In addition to the citation of Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaianic declarations, some rabbinic traditions examined in Chapter 4 employ succinct אני הוא formulations whose purpose is to draw out the theological implications of the divine proclamation of אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39 as an expression of the exclusive, all-embracing presence of God (e.g., אני הוא בעולם הזה ואני הוא לעולם הבא). In addition, a few expositions include declarations in which אני הוא is syntactically bound to another component, usually a verbal form introduced by the relative marker שׁ (e.g., אני הוא שגאלתי אתכם); these function as cleft sentences with particular focus, developed within the midrashic framework to serve as explanations of אני אני הוא (Deut. 32:39), אנכי (Exod. 20:2) or אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם (Isa. 51:12), and they can provide a divine speech with an unified structure or act as an anticipatory paraphrase of the concluding citation from Scripture.

The purpose of this present chapter is to examine the much larger number of Hebrew אני הוא (Aramaic אנא הוא) statements devised quite independently of Deut. 32:39 and the Deutero-Isaianic texts. It is necessary to incorporate this material into the discussion because the extended formulations serve as important witnesses when seeking to evaluate the status and meaning of אני הוא in rabbinic traditions. 'I' statements pronounced by human figures will be analysed (§1), followed by innovative self-declarations attributed to God (§2).[1] These texts require consideration before the use of אני הוא in the Passover Haggadah (§4) and [א]אני והו in m.Suk 4:5 (§5) can be discussed.

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[1] See the Appendix at the end of this study.

1. אני הוא and אנא הוא Declarations Definitions and Usage

Most אני הוא and אנא הוא statements in rabbinic texts consist of an occurrence of this expression which cannot be separated from a third component; this can either take the form of a noun or its equivalent in a nominal construction (e.g., b.Git 15b: אני הוא עד שני) or a verbal form preceded by the relative marker שֶׁ- in Hebrew (e.g., j.Yoma 1:1 [38d]: אני הוא שראיתי את המעשה) or דְּ- in Aramaic (e.g., j.BQ 8:8 [6c]: אנא הוא דטעית). Those examples where a bipartite case of אני הוא or אנא הוא is attributed to a human or angelic figure will be discussed in §1.2.

1.1 The Role of הוא in Nominal Constructions

The inclusion of הוא in tripartite nominal constructions in Rabbinic Hebrew clearly fulfils a syntactic function.[2] Segal, for example, proposes that the third person pronoun is 'regularly employed in noun clauses as the copula between subject and predicate',[3] and cites m.Nazir 8:1 (אם אני הוא הטמא: 'If I am the unclean one') and b.Shab 31a (אתה הוא הלל שקורין אותך נשיא ישראל: 'Are you Hillel whom they call the *nasi* of Israel?') as illustrative examples.[4] Segal's proposals and methodological procedures have, however, been subjected to detailed scrutiny.[5] He has been criticized for citing examples indiscriminately from both earlier (Mishnah) and later (Talmud Babli) texts, as well as for drawing on selective excerpts without taking their overall context into account. Moreover, little attention is paid by Segal to the fact that a far greater number of nominal constructions in rabbinic texts do not include הוא as a third constituent. How, therefore, should one account for this apparent distinction between

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[2] On the function of הוא in nominal constructions in Modern Hebrew, see, e.g., Hayon, *Relativization in Hebrew*, 74-85; Azar, 'The Emphatic Sentence in Modern Hebrew', 209-29; Glinert, *The Grammar of Modern Hebrew*, 168-78.

[3] *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, §405 [198f.]; *idem*, *Diqduq leshon ha-Mishnah*, §§332f. Cf. Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew*, 19, 181f.

[4] Segal offers no further clarification with regard to his proposed definition of 'copula', but in his later publication he comments as follows: 'This pronoun [הוא] is an element that links together the subject and predicate only from the perspective of linguistic usage and practice. From a grammatical perspective, the pronoun functions as a second subject to replace the main subject, which remains suspended and stands outside the sentence. Thus, in the sentence אני הוא הטמא, we have a double subject: אני and הוא. The sentence actually has two parts: הוא הטמא and the main subject אני located outside the sentence' (*Diqduq*, §333).

[5] See especially Kaddari, 'On the Syntax of the Separate Pronoun *Hu*: c. On the Pronominal 'Copula' in Mishnaic Hebrew', 248-57.

'tripartite' nominal clauses containing הוא and those where the independent pronoun is not included? It cannot, for example, be claimed that two-member clauses without הוא are reserved for indefinite nouns, but three-member formulations with הוא for definite nouns or their equivalents, because both bipartite and tripartite forms occur in connection with proper nouns,[6] participles[7] and adjectives.[8] And while j.Git 2:1 (44a) reads ואני הוא העד השיני, the parallel statement in b.Git 15b reads אני הוא עד שני.

Alternative definitions have more recently been proposed in an attempt to explain the syntactic function of הוא within nominal constructions. Muraoka claims that in Rabbinic (Mishnaic) Hebrew,[9] as indeed in Biblical Hebrew, the main purpose of הוא as a 'third component' in nominal clauses is to emphasize or strengthen the preceding element (hence, 'If *I* am the unclean one').[10] According to Kaddari, who also pays particular attention to the structure of nominal constructions, הוא can act as a 'nominal predicator' (described by him as ציין השאה שמנית) by pointing to the grammatical status of the noun or pronoun which precedes הוא as the predicate of the sentence; this also indicates that stress is placed on the predicate.[11] The clause אני הוא הטמא [אם] (m.Naz 8:1) is thus defined by Kaddari as possessing the marked order Predicate-הוא-Subject, which indicates that אני functions as predicate; [12] the rendering of this clause, in literal terms, would accordingly be 'if the unclean one is I'. Kaddari also proposes that הוא fulfils the same role in nominal clauses following the unmarked order Subject-Predicate-הוא, where it again immediately follows the predicate (cf. m.Ohal 11:3: אדם חלול הוא - 'A man is hollow').

In order to clarify the possible function(s) of הוא in nominal constructions, it seems pertinent to consider in more detail the overall context of the statement אם אני הוא הטמא (m.Naz 8:1), the clause cited by both Segal and Kaddari,

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[6] E.g., אנא חוני המעגל: 'I am Honi the circle-drawer' (b.Taan 23a; MidTeh 126:1 [256a]), but אנא הוא בן עזאי דהכא: 'I am Ben Azzai of this place' (j.Peah 6:3 [19c]; j.Sot 9:2 [23c]).

[7] E.g., אני הוא הקורא ואני המדבר (LevR 1:9).

[8] E.g., אני ראשון (GenR 1:10), but אתה הוא אחרון (PesR 7:7).

[9] For recent discussions of differences between Rabbinic Hebrew as attested in Tannaitic traditions (RH^1) and Amoraic traditions (RH^2), see Stemberger, *Introduction*, 101-4; Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew*, 1-4.

[10] Muraoka, 'The Nominal Clause in Late Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew', 241-47.

[11] 'On the Syntax of the Separate Pronoun *Hu'*, 257-63.

[12] *Ibid.*, 257f. This syntactic definition of m.Naz 8:1 is also adopted by Azar, *The Syntax of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 80.

particularly as it represents one of only two such formulations in the Mishnah,[13] and is therefore one of the earliest extant rabbinic examples of a tripartite clause in which the words אני הוא act as its first two components. The statement occurs within a halakhic stipulation regarding a situation when a person testifies that one of two Nazirites has contracted uncleanness, and then states: 'but I do not know which one of you (ואיני יודע איזה מכם)'. Both Nazirites must cut off their hair, bring one offering for uncleanness and one for cleanness (cf. Num. 6:9ff.) and say to each other: 'If I am (or: it is I who am) the unclean one (אם אני הוא הטמא), let mine be the offering for uncleanness and yours the offering for cleanness; but if I am (or: it is I who am) the clean one (ואם אני הוא הטהור), let mine be the offering for cleanness and yours the offering for uncleanness'. Seven examples of this twofold conditional clause occur altogether in the halakhic unit, although in three cases it takes the form אם טמא הייתי...ואם טהור הייתי.[14] Kaddari's analysis of these clauses defines הטמא/הטהור as subject and אני as predicate. But the immediate context of the statements in m.Naz 8:1 also indicates that the אני of each speaker is highlighted with the aid of הוא and an element of contrast is implied: 'If *I* [not the other] am the unclean one..'. It does not, moreover, necessarily follow that the element preceding הוא in nominal constructions always acts as predicate. With regard to the other example of this syntactic structure in the Mishnah (Sanh 5:5), a judge who returns to court the day after he has found a defendant innocent states: 'I was (literally: I am) in favour of acquittal [yesterday] (אני הוא מזכה), and I am in favour of acquittal today' (ומזכה אני במקומי).[15] In this particular case, the speaker draws attention to the agreement between his previous and present verdict, and אני could be defined here as the subject of the clause.[16]

A twofold statement in m.Sot 1:5 is also noteworthy in this respect because of its different structure.[17] In the case of a woman accused of adultery and brought before a court of law, the following options apply: 'If she said, "I am unclean (טמאה אני)", she forfeits her marriage settlement and leaves. But if she

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[13] See m.Sanh 5:5 (Mss. Kaufmann, Paris, Parma), also discussed below.

[14] The citation of this halakhic stipulation in t.Naz 5:3 (Lieberman, 143) demonstrates that the inclusion of הוא is not a fixed syntactic practice, for these conditional clauses are rendered both with (Codex Erfurt) and without (Codex Vienna) הוא.

[15] This is followed by an identically structured statement pronounced by a different judge who is in favour of conviction: 'I was in favour of conviction [yesterday] (אני הוא מחייב), and I am in favour of conviction today'.

[16] Azar, *The Syntax of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 79, defines the structure of אני הוא מזכה in m.Sanh 5:5 as Subject-הוא-Predicate.

[17] Cf. also b.Sot 7a; NumR 9:33.

said, "I am clean (טהורה אני)", they bring her up to the Eastern Gate'. The pronoun אני, in both these two member nominal clauses, functions as subject and is preceded by the predicate (טהורה/טמאה) which is given prominence because the woman is disclosing information about her own condition. The alternative word order (Subject-Predicate) also occurs frequently in rabbinic texts, as demonstrated, for example, by m.Qid 2:3 where it is stated that a woman is not required to become betrothed to a man if the following circumstances arise: '[If he said, "Be betrothed to me] on the condition that I am a priest (שאני כהן)" and he was found to be a levite'.[18]

Other cases of nominal constructions introduced by אני הוא (or אתה הוא) occur in the form of declarative statements in which the identity of the speaker, or the one addressed, corresponds to previously known or stated information. An illustration of this kind of formulation occurs in b.Yeb 16a, where a narrative describes how Rabbi Dosa ben Harkinas, having been told that the disciple whose identity he is eager to establish is none other than Rabbi Aqiba, exclaims: 'You are Aqiba ben Joseph (אתה הוא עקיבא בן יוסף) whose name is known from one end of the world to the other!' In view of the proposed syntactic definitions outlined above, it is certainly plausible that עקיבא בן יוסף acts as the subject of this statement, although the formulation also indicates that הוא serves to highlight or strengthen אתה ('*You* are Aqiba..').[19] This syntactic pattern proves to be an useful tool in midrashic traditions, as demonstrated, for example, by the colourful depiction of Trajan's arrival when the Jews are discussing Deut. 28:49 ('The Lord will bring a nation against you...as the eagle [הנשר] swoops down'). The emperor then announces in Aramaic: 'I am the eagle (אנא הוא נשרא) who planned to come in ten days, but the wind brought me in five', and then commands his legions to kill them.[20]

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[18] Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew*, 182, offers the following definitions of the different cases of word order for nominal clauses in Rabbinic Hebrew: clauses usually take the form Subject-Predicate when they function as statements of identification (both subject and predicate are determinate), but they take the form Predicate-Subject when they serve as clauses of classification (the predicate is general or indeterminate). Cf. also Chapter 1 n.3 above.

[19] Cf. GenR 39:1 (Theodor-Albeck, I:365): 'Rabbi Isaac said: It is like one who was going from place to place and saw a residence on fire. He said: "Is it possible that the residence has no one to look after it?" The owner of the residence looked out and said to him: "I am the owner of the residence (אני הוא בעל הבירה)". Similarly, because Abraham our father said: "Is it possible that the world has no guide?", the Holy One, blessed be he, looked out and said to him: "I am the guide (אני הוא המנהיג), the Lord of all the world".

[20] EstherR Petihta 3 (1bc); cf. LamR 1:45 (17c); 4:22 (29d).

The majority of אני הוא formulations in rabbinic texts can, however, be defined as cleft sentences. These statements are characteristic of both Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic.[21] As in Biblical Hebrew (cf. I Chron. 21:17), the technique of 'clefting' transforms a simple statement in such a way that its verbal component, introduced by the relative marker שֶׁ־ in Hebrew or דִּ־ in Aramaic, becomes nominalized, and אני/אנא הוא in first position fulfils the function of 'foregrounding'.[22] Cleft sentences in rabbinic traditions consequently convey focus or emphasis and enable the speaker (אני) to draw attention to his/her own acts, words or identity. As the majority of such formulations occur in talmudic traditions, they are often expressed by rabbis in conversation with their colleagues. Thus, for example, b.Sanh 11a describes an incident when Rabbi Gamaliel discovers eight rather than seven scholars in the upper chamber and asks: 'Who has come up without permission? Let him go down'. Samuel the Small stands and says: 'I am he (or: the one) who came up without permission (אני הוא שעליתי שלא ברשות)'. The new element or piece of information introduced into the narrative and highlighted in the response is that Samuel (אני) is the person in question.[23]

1.2 Bipartite אנא הוא *and* אני הוא *as Expressions of Self-Identification*

All the examples so far considered in this chapter can be defined as statements which consist of the expression אני/אנא הוא or אתה/את הוא followed either by a noun phrase to form a nominal clause or, more predominantly, by a verbal component in a relative clause to form a cleft sentence. But some examples of 'bipartite' אני/אנא הוא statements also occur in rabbinic traditions, the majority of which are pronounced in Aramaic. An intriguing story about Rabbi Aqiba, for example, relates how he returns to the town of his father-in-law twenty-four years after the latter made a vow that his daughter would not benefit from his estate after she became secretly betrothed to Aqiba when he was a shepherd (b.Ket 63a). Without recognizing his son-in-law, the old man asks the now well-respected rabbi to invalidate the earlier vow (cf. b.Ned 50a), and Aqiba presses him: 'Would you have made your vow if you had known that he was a

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[21] On cleft sentences in Talmudic Aramaic, see Schlesinger, *Satzlehre der aramäischen Sprache des babylonischen Talmuds*, 221-25; Goldenberg, 'Tautological Infinitive', 50-54; *idem*, 'Imperfectly-Transformed Cleft Sentences', 128f.; Golomb, 'Nominal Syntax', 185; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, 64, 160.

[22] Cf. Schlesinger, *Satzlehre der aramäischen Sprache*, 223f.; Golomb, 'Nominal Syntax', 184-86.

[23] For targumic parallels, see Chapter 3 §3.

great man?' When the man confirms that he would never have established it, Aqiba simply proclaims אנא הוא, and the man falls to the ground, kisses the rabbi's feet and gives him half his wealth. The two-member phrase אנא הוא undoubtedly functions in this unit as a form of self-identification; הוא is anaphoric and refers back to its antecedent גברא רבה ('I am he [that great man]').[24] The two-member אנא הוא employed in b.Ket 63a closely parallels the application of this syntactic structure in Dan. 4:19, where the use of the expression אנת הוא in the dream interpretation can be understood as relating directly to the phrase אילנא די חזית at the beginning of v. 17 ('you are the one [the tree that you saw]').[25] Indeed, all such cases of the bipartite אנא הוא uttered by human speakers in rabbinic passages fulfil this anaphoric or resumptive function and cannot be isolated from an earlier description; the new element introduced in each case is אנא.[26]

This particular application of אנא הוא in its bipartite form is not confined to Aramaic declarations, for a few parallel statements also occur in Rabbinic Hebrew. One such example occurs in a haggadic tradition based on the appearance of the angel to Manoah's wife (NumR 10:5),[27] and it is attributed to

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[24] A further possibility, although one which amounts to a less effective rendering in its present context, is that this bipartite phrase can be rendered as 'It is I' if one adopts the syntactic definition that הוא represents the subject ('great man') and אנא acts as predicate. However, in the case of both renderings ('I am he' and 'It is I'), הוא clearly possesses an antecedent.

[25] See further Chapter 1 § 1 above.

[26] Four additional traditions have been identified in which אנא הוא serves as an expression of self-identification and הוא fulfils an anaphoric role.

i) According to b.BB 4a, Herod disguises himself and attempts to force R. Baba ben Buta to curse him; when the rabbi refuses to co-operate by citing Eccles. 10:20 and Exod. 22:27, Herod finally identifies himself by means of the words אנא הוא ('I am he [the king whom I requested you to curse]').

ii) According to b.Erub 54a, the blind R. Joseph declares that the cup of wine he tastes reminds him of the mixing of Raba bar Joseph bar Hama, and Raba answers אנא הוא ('I am he [Raba]').

iii) A narrative in MidTeh 126:1 [256a] relates how Honi the Circle-Drawer returns to his house of study after seventy years of sleep and hears the rabbis say: 'This tradition is as clear to us as it was in the days of Honi the Circle-Drawer', whereupon he proclaims אנא הוא ('I am he [Honi]'), but the rabbis refuse to believe him.

iv) A tradition in GenR 35:2=PesK 11:15 describes how Simeon ben Yohai claims that he and his son should be included among the small group of men who are as righteous as Abraham, and then declares: 'If there is but one, I am he (or: it is I)' (אם חד הוא אנא הוא).

[27] See also ShirR 2:1:1 (13cd), where the phrase אני חבצלת השרון (Song 2:1) is immediately followed by Israel's innovative pronouncement אני וחביבה אני אני היא ('I am she and beloved am I'), then repeated seven times (cf. MidTeh 1:20 [10b]).

Simeon ben Laqish (PA2), whose name is frequently linked to expositions of biblical אני pronouncements. To explain why the angel did not initially appear to Manoah, the midrash presupposes the question posed in the biblical text, 'Are you the man who spoke to the woman?', to which the angel responds 'I am (אני)' (Judges 13:11).[28] The angel then becomes the mouthpiece of an explanatory comment on this one-word response to underline the fact that he has and will appear again (אני הוא בתחלה ואני הוא בסוף), and that the content of his message remains the same (שאיני מחליף בדברי). This twofold 'I' statement works in close conjunction with the biblical text and elaborates on the response given to Manoah's question ('Are you the man ..?'). The angel identifies himself as the one who revealed himself in previous situations: 'I am he [the 'man' revealed] in the past, and I am he [the 'man' who will reveal myself] at the end'. Thus, once again, אני הוא assumes the role of an expression of self-identification in order to affirm the content of an earlier statement.[29]

2. אני הוא Declarations Pronounced by God

In addition to the citation of scriptural passages in which God is the speaker, innovative 'I' statements attributed to God figure prominently in the midrashic framework of several rabbinic traditions. These declarations are found in a variety of exegetical contexts, although they occur primarily in interpretations of biblical statements already containing God's pronouncement of אני, particularly self-declaratory formulas (§2.1). אני הוא is inextricably linked to a third component in the majority of cases, but a few examples of אני הוא in its bipartite form also occur in rabbinic traditions (§2.2).

2.1 אני הוא Declarations by God in Midrashic Traditions

Earlier sections have sought to demonstrate that cases of אני/אנא הוא followed by a verbal component in a relative clause operate as cleft sentences, in which the words, acts or identity of the speaker are highlighted. This grammatical

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[28] For similar questions and affirmations of identity in biblical traditions, see II Sam. 2:20 (אנכי) and Gen. 27:24 (אני).

[29] An example of the anaphoric use of אתה הוא can be found in the well-known tradition about Hillel in b.Shab 31a where he is asked: 'Are you Hillel whom they call the *nasi* of Israel (אתה הוא הלל שקורין אותך נשיא ישראל)?'. Following Hillel's affirmative response, the one who questions him declares: 'If you are he (אם אתה הוא), may there not be many more like you in Israel!'.

principle also applies to similarly formulated statements attributed to God in midrashic passages. Thus, in a tradition attributed to Rabbi Hiyya ben Bun in ShirR 4:4:9 (25c), an attempt is made to explain the difficult term לתלפיות (Song 4:4) by interpreting its two components as denoting the past and present state of the Temple; it was beautiful (יופי), but it has been made a ruin (תל). This interpretative comment is followed by a divine response, one which takes the form of a twofold statement announcing that, in the same way as the two parts of the word לתלפיות make up one entity, it is God himself who has destroyed but will also restore the Temple: 'I am he who made it a ruin in this world (אני הוא שעשיתיו תל בעולם הזה), and I am he who will make it an object of beauty in the world to come (ואני הוא שעתיד לעשותו יפיפית לעולם הבא)'.[30] The statement thus offers the divine message of consolation that the present situation will be reversed and the Temple ruin will become the object of beauty once more. In addition, this statement attests the application of the syntactic structure אני הוא ש־ within a divine speech, and it serves as an effective device to express the message of the midrash that it is God who can both destroy and restore the Temple. In other words, the element given particular prominence in the twofold declaration is the divine אני, and it is stressed that his activity embraces this world and the world to come. The use of twofold אני הוא statements to denote the all-encompassing activity of God is an exegetical technique already encountered in midrashic comments on Deut. 32:39 (Chapter 4 §§4, 5, 6), and it links together the two parts of the divine claim to symbolize the continuity between his past and future acts.

The interpretative strategy adopted in most of these midrashic traditions is the development of innovative אני הוא declarations from a biblical lemma or proof-text containing the formula 'I am the Lord' or simply the pronoun אנכי/אני.[31] A striking illustration of this exegetical technique, developed from the use of אני, occurs in LevR 1:9 in a discussion of God's calling of Moses from the tent of meeting.[32] Whereas Abraham was called by the angel of the Lord (Gen.

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[30] For further examples of אני הוא ש־ pronouncements with no אני or אנכי pronounced by God in the biblical lemma, see Appendix (B.2a).

[31] Several אתה הוא declarations are also developed from אתה in the base text. See, e.g., NumR 15:5 where Ps. 18:29 (כי אתה תאיר נרי) leads Israel to address God with the words 'You are the light of the world' (אתה הוא אורו של עולם). For additional examples, see Appendix (B.4).

[32] An interesting tradition occurs, in this respect, in Mek 'Amaleq 1 (Horovitz-Rabin, 193), which interprets the אני pronounced by Jethro (Exod. 18:6) as representing the divine אני, highlighted in the exposition with the aid of such innovative declarations as: 'I am he who spoke and the world came into being' (אני הוא שאמרתי והיה העולם), as well as 'I am

22:15) before God spoke to him (v. 16), Rabbi Abin (PA4/5) comments that God himself did both the calling and the speaking during his encounter with Moses (cf. Lev. 1:1: ויקרא אל משה וידבר ה' אליו). This interpretation subsequently receives divine endorsement in the midrash: 'I am he who calls and I speak (אני הוא הקורא ואני המדבר)', followed by the citation of Isa. 48:15 as proof-text (אני אני דברתי אף קראתיו). This Deutero-Isaianic statement is apt not only because it represents God's own claim to be the subject of both דבר and קרא, but its doubling of אני is viewed as highlighting both divine modes of communication and self-revelation. Of particular significance, moreover, is the focus within this exegetical portion on the fact that God alone, without angelic mediation, communicates to Moses; it may even account for the application of אני הוא in the first clause of the explanatory comment ('I am he who calls'), but its absence from the second. This implies that an element of contrastive emphasis can be detected in this אני הוא formulation, as demonstrated by the following paraphrase: '*I* am the one [not the angel, as in Abraham's case] who calls [Moses], and I speak [to both Abraham and Moses]'.

Self-declaratory or self-revelatory declarations, particularly 'I am the Lord', also give rise to a variety of statements attributed to God in midrashic texts,[33] one of the earliest extant examples of which occurs in Mek Bahodesh 6:

> כך אמר המקום לישראל אנכי ה' אלהיך - לא יהיה אלהים אחרים אמר להם אני הוא שקבלתם מלכותי עליכם במצרים אמרו לו כן וכשם שקבלתם מלכותי עליכם קבלו גזרותי

> And so God said to Israel: 'I am the Lord your God - you shall have no other gods' (Exod. 20:2-3). He said to them: 'I am he whose kingship you accepted upon yourselves in Egypt'. They said to him: 'Yes'. 'And as you have accepted my kingship upon yourselves, accept [also] my decrees'.[34]

The central message of this midrash, whose line of argumentation is subsequently applied in virtually identical form to the Sinai event with the aid of Lev. 18:2-3, is that Israel's acknowledgement of God's kingship as revealed in Egypt must be accompanied by the acceptance of his commandments. Exod. 20:2-3 is cited as an illustration of this principle, for its self-declaratory

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he who brought Jethro near...' (אני הוא שקרבתי את יתרו) which is presented as a paraphrase of the אני statement pronounced by God in Jer. 23:23 (cf. also ExR 27:2). For further examples, see Appendix (B.2b, 3a).

[33] For a complete list of examples, see Appendix (B.2c, 3b).

[34] *Mechilta,* ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 222. The same tradition appears in a shorter form in Sifra Ahare Mot 13:3 on Lev. 18:2 (85d). See further Ego, 'Gottes Weltherrschaft', 278-80; Avemarie, *Tora und Leben,* 174-80.

pronouncement, interpreted as God's proclamation of his unique kingship, is followed by a commandment prohibiting the worship of other gods. The extended אני הוא statement that immediately follows the scriptural citation evidently offers an interpretative paraphrase of אנכי in Exod. 20:2 (cf. Chapter 4 §5), and, in syntactic terms, forms a cleft sentence which highlights the divine use of אני and the exclusive nature of the claim ('*I* [and no other god] am he whose kingship you accepted'). The people have reaped the benefits of God's exclusive sovereignty on the occasion of their deliverance from Egypt, and they must now reciprocate by worshipping him as their only king.

The citation of Exod. 20:2 in defence of the unity and exclusiveness of God is also reflected in ExR 29:1, where a debate with *minim* on the implications of the plural אלהים in the phrase 'the voice of God' (Deut. 4:33) leads to an argument attributed to Rabbi Levi (PA3) that the divine voice - due to the devastating effect of its power (Ps. 29:4) - was disguised to sound as though many voices spoke to those gathered at Sinai. The decisive argument is presented with the aid of Exod. 20:2:

> אמר הקב"ה לישראל לא בשביל ששמעתם קולות הרבה תהיו סבורין שמא אלוהות הרבה יש בשמים אלא תהיו יודעים שאני הוא ה' אלהיך שנא' אנכי ה' אלהיך

> The Holy One, blessed be he, said to Israel: 'Do not [misinterpret] because you have heard many voices [and state] that there are many gods in heaven, but know that I am the Lord your God, as it is said: 'I am the Lord your God' (Exod. 20:2)'.[35]

The form of argumentation adopted in this tradition closely resembles the texts examined in Chapter 4 §2.2 (PesR 21:6; PesK 12:24; TanB Yitro §16), where the citation of Exod. 20:2 is preceded by the twofold interpretative statement אני הוא שבים אני הוא שבסיני to combat, as in ExR 29:1, the claims of *minim*. While most innovative divine אני הוא statements in midrashic traditions take the form of cleft sentences which seek to explain or add further dimensions of meaning to God's self-declaratory formula, the 'I' pronouncement recorded in ExR 29:1 represents a close rendering in Rabbinic Hebrew of the concluding proof-text (אנכי ה' אלהיך). And in view of the decisive role played by Exod. 20:2 in a number of rabbinic traditions as God's own proclamation of his singularity,[36] the representation of אנכי as אני הוא in its anticipatory paraphrase

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[35] *Midrash Rabbah*, ed. Mirqin, VI:23.

[36] See Chapter 4 §2.1 (Mek Bahodesh 5 on Exod. 20:2); §2.2 (PesK 12:24; TanB Yitro §16 on Exod. 20:2); §5 (SER 24); Chapter 5 §2.2 (ExR 29:5).

accounts for the contrastive-emphatic force of the expression, as required by the midrash: '*I* [alone] am the Lord your God'.[37]

The citation of the formula אנכי ה׳ אלהיך to underline the exclusiveness of God is therefore substantiated in both Mek Bahodesh 6 and ExR 29:1 with the aid of a divine self-declaration introduced by אני הוא. This interpretative method of presenting God as one who elucidates his own pronouncements in Scripture is also applied in the Talmudim, where divine אני הוא statements are, in fact, only encountered in comments on the biblical self-declaratory formulas. The two cases in Talmud Yerushalmi (j.Bik 3:3 [65c] and j.RH 1:3 [57b]) and the four in Talmud Babli (Ber 38a; Hag 12a; BM 61b; Men 44a) thus focus on the theological implications of the divine 'I' pronouncements.[38] An innovative statement can take the form of an Aramaic paraphrase to precede the citation of the formula (b.Ber 38a: דאנא הוא דאפיקית יתכון ממצרים), while other talmudic traditions offer expansive and creative interpretations governed by a central halakhic or haggadic theme.[39] In b.BM 61b it is the importance of Torah obedience which is stressed with the aid of declarations made by God:

אמר רבא למה לי דכתב רחמנא יציאת מצרים ברבית יציאת מצרים גבי ציצית יציאת מצרים במשקלות אמר הקב״ה אני הוא שהבחנתי במצרים בין טפה של בכור לטפה שאינה של בכור אני הוא שעתיד ליפרע ממי שתולה מעותיו בנכרי ומלוה אותם לישראל ברבית וממי שטומן משקלותיו במלח וממי שתולה קלא אילן בבגדו ואומר תכלת הוא

Raba said: Why does Scripture mention the Exodus from Egypt [in connection] with interest, fringes and weights? The Holy One, blessed be he, said: 'I am he who distinguished in Egypt between a firstborn and a non-firstborn. I am he who in the future will punish the one who ascribes

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[37] A similarly formulated paraphrase occurs at the end of ExR 29:2: 'Do not [misinterpret] because you have seen many faces [the angels who descended with God on Sinai] that there are many gods in heaven; know that I am the one Lord (דעו שאני הוא ה׳ אחד), as it is said: "I am the Lord your God" (Exod. 20:2)'.

[38] In b.Hag 12a the self-revelatory declaration אני אל שדי is interpreted as: 'I am he who said to the world "Enough!"' (אני הוא שאמרתי לעולם די). Cf. GenR 5:8; 46:3 TanB Lekh lekha §25 [40b]; MidTeh 26:2 [108b]; see also Reiss, 'Zur Deutung von אל שדי in der rabbinischen Literatur', 65-75.

[39] The two passages in Talmud Yerushalmi (j.Bik 3:3 [65c]; j.RH 1:3 [57b]; cf. LevR 35:3) record parallel versions of the same tradition. j.Bik 3:3 (65c) reads: 'The Holy One, blessed be he, has said: "You shall rise before the hoary head and honour the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God. I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:32). I am he who was the first to observe the [law of] standing up before an old man (אני הוא שקיימתי עמידת זקן תחילה)'. This exegetical comment is phrased in the form of a divine response, and it interprets the formula אני ה׳ as the sealing of the preceding commandment and as assurance that God will be the first to execute his own decree (cf. GenR 48:7; 49:7).

his money to a Gentile and lends it to an Israelite on interest or who stores his weights in salt or who attaches [threads dyed in] vegetable blue to his garment and claims that it is [real] blue'.

The introductory question posed by Raba (BA4) presupposes the fact that each one of the three commandments about interest (Lev. 25:36-38), fringes (Num. 15:38-41) and weights (Lev. 19:36) concludes with the words 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt'. Although this formula is not explicitly cited in Raba's exposition, it clearly accounts for the two אני הוא statements that immediately follow in the form of a divine response. The first declaration by God on his ability to distinguish between a firstborn and non-firstborn (Exod. 12:12) expresses the central theme of this midrash, namely that God knows things that are hidden from human beings and can therefore distinguish between correct and incorrect practices with regard to halakhic matters. Past activity (אני הוא שהבחנתי) is paradigmatic of future actions undertaken by God to identify and punish those who circumvent his commandments (אני הוא שעתיד ליפרע).[40] As the self-declaratory formula pronounced by God in connection with these three laws describes Israel's deliverance from Egypt, this midrash declares that genuine obedience to the commandments is the correct expression of one's acknowledgement of God's past salvific acts (cf. Mek Bahodesh 6 on 20:3).[41]

2.2 *Bipartite אני הוא Declarations Pronounced by God*

A few 'I' declarations attributed to God in midrashic traditions can be defined as bipartite expressions, in the sense that the expression אני הוא is not followed by, or is separable from, a third component. The meaning and possible significance of these statements is dependent on being able to determine whether they form self-contained statements or are syntactically linked to a declaration belonging to their immediate context. The latter definition is

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[40] Two traditions in Sifra on Leviticus also contain interpretative אני הוא statements, developed from אני ה׳ אלהיכם, which correlate past and future divine acts. i) Sifra Ahare Mot Par. 9:1-2 on Lev. 18:2 (85c): 'I am he who punished the generation of the Flood and the men of Sodom and the Egyptians, and in the future I will punish those who act as they acted' (cf. LevR 23:9); ii) Sifra Behuqqotai 3:4 on Lev. 26:13 (111b): 'I am he who performed wonders for you in Egypt; I am he who in the future will perform for you all these wonders'.

[41] The repetition of the formula אני ה׳ אלהיכם (Num 15:41) leads to a twofold comment in b.Men 44a on the punishments or rewards awaiting those who are obedient or disobedient to the Torah: 'I am he who in the future will punish; and I am he who in the future will give reward'. The opposite roles described in this comment relate to the interpretation of the two divine names in Num. 15:41 as denoting the attributes of mercy and justice.

appropriate in the case of a tradition recorded in TanB Behar §6 (53b), where an innovative divine declaration taking the form אני הוא is clearly bound to the preceding question מי הוא גואלו ('who is his redeemer?') based on Lev. 25:25 (ובא גואלו). God accordingly responds with the words 'It is I' or 'I am he (his redeemer)' and אני serves as the new element introduced into the exposition. The function of אני הוא as an expression of self-identification in this concise piece of midrash is confirmed by the subsequent proof-text drawn from Jer. 50:33-34: 'Thus says the Lord...their redeemer is strong (גאלם חזק); [the Lord of hosts is his name]'.

Further examples of אני הוא in its bipartite form are found in a tradition attributed to Rabbi Yohanan (PA2) in b.RH 17b, which interprets Exod. 34:6 as an anthropomorphic description of God drawing his robe around him like a reader and showing the order of prayer to Moses, saying: 'Whenever Israel sin, let them carry out this service before me, and I will forgive them'. The service in question is the list of thirteen attributes described in Exod. 34:6-7, a Torah passage whose recitation by the congregation is viewed as amounting to an expression of repentance.[42] The divine response to human repentance is forgiveness, as declared by God in an interpretative comment on the opening words of the Torah passage:

ה' ה' אני הוא קודם שיחטא האדם ואני הוא לאחר שיחטא האדם ויעשה תשובה אל רחום וחנון

'The Lord, the Lord' (Exod. 34:6). I am he before a man sins, and I am he after a man sins and repents. 'A God merciful and gracious' (*ibid.*).

The declaration focuses on the centrality of the theme of divine forgiveness by drawing attention to, and seeking to account for, the doubling of the divine name in Exod. 34:6. The stages before and after human sinful acts become the basis for the twofold framework, and the statement, due to the rabbinic association of the tetragrammaton with the divine attribute of mercy, stresses that God remains merciful even when faced with the capricious nature of his subjects. But what is the relationship between the two occurrences of the tetragrammaton in the lemma and the subsequent divine assertions, and how can the function and status of אני הוא be defined? The expression אני הוא is certainly separable from the adjoining elements ('I am he - before a man sins..'), whereas הוא, on both occasions, is resumptive and represents the twofold occurrence of the tetragrammaton in the biblical lemma, particularly as

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[42] See Urbach, *The Sages*, 468f.

both clauses focus on the theme of God's mercy. It is however noteworthy that this divine self declaration does not take the form [...קודם שיחטא] אני הוא ה', either because the rabbinic exegete is eager to present a more rhythmic interpretative comment or because הוא is regarded as a designation which effectively conveys the central theme of the exposition that God, regardless of human sinfulness, always remains the same. Indeed, the content of the two innovative clauses clearly echo the emphasis on divine immutability already firmly established in relation to אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, particularly in Isa. 46:4.[43] Thus, while [אני] הוא can be understood as fulfilling an anaphoric role in this brief midrash, the form of divine self-expression it employs also represents the changeless aspect of God's attitude in his dealings with human beings.

Finally, in a statement closely resembling the midrash in ExR 29:1, a tradition recorded in PesK 12:25 offers an interpretative paraphrase of Exod. 20:2 in its depiction of God addressing those gathered at Sinai:

אמר להם הקב"ה לא מפני שאתם שומעי' קולות הרבה אלא היו יודעים שאני הוא אנכי י"י אלהיך

> The Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'Do not [misinterpret] because you have heard many voices, but know that I am he. "I am the Lord your God"'.[44]

In this particular case the expression אני הוא is not resumptive since there is no obvious antecedent. Moreover, the possibility that הוא fulfils a cataphoric role and presupposes the content of the concluding words [אנכי] ה' אלהיך does not adequately account for its inclusion as an anticipatory interpretation of Exod. 20:2a. This occurrence of the expression can therefore be understood as an assertion that all the voices heard at Sinai belong to God ('It is I'), although in its role as the content of recognition and in view of its status as an interpretative rendering of Exod. 20:2a, אני הוא also serves as an effectively succinct claim by God which possesses the same exclusive force as אנכי of the proof-text.[45] This exposition in PesK 12:25 thus uses the bipartite phrase as an expression of God's claim to be the only one experienced by his people at Sinai; the 'voices' heard at Sinai do not belong to other deities, but to the one God.

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[43] See also the rabbinic traditions considered in Chapter 5 §3 above.

[44] *Pesikta de Rav Kahana*, ed. Mandelbaum, I:224. The text appears in identical form in *Pesikta, die älteste Hagada*, ed. Buber, 110b.

[45] Braude and Kapstein, *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana*, 250, offer the interpretative rendering 'I am He who is one and the same'

3. Evaluating the Rabbinic Evidence

A variety of material, from diverse traditions and different historical periods, has been assembled here in an attempt to determine the meaning and function of אני הוא and אתה הוא statements, as well as their Aramaic counterparts, in rabbinic traditions. All the statements considered in the preceding two sections can be defined as belonging to one of three syntactic structures.

In the case of those statements where אני הוא or אתה הוא is fastened to a third constituent (either a substantive, participle or adjective) to form a simple nominal construction, הוא gives particular prominence to the preceding אני or אתה which, according to some grammarians,[46] serves as the predicate of the clause. To this category belong such statements as אם אני הוא הטמא (m.Naz 8:1), אתה הוא עקיבא בן יוסף (b.Yeb 16a) and אני הוא ה׳ אלהיך (ExR 29:1). A clear line of continuity can thus be detected, in syntactic terms, between such declarations as כי אני הוא המדבר (Isa. 52:6) and אני הוא הקורא (LevR 1:9), as also between אתה הוא האלהים (II Sam. 7:28) and אתה הוא אורו של עולם (NumR 15:5).

Most innovative אני הוא formulations in rabbinic texts take the form of a declaration in which אני הוא ש־ (or אתה הוא ש־) is followed by a verbal component to form a cleft sentence; these declarations are bound together by their central purpose of underlining the words or acts of the one who speaks or is addressed. Hence, Rabbi Samuel announces: אני הוא שעליתי שלא ברשות (b.Sanh 11a: 'I am he who came up without permission'), and God declares: אני הוא שעשיתי לכם ניסים במצרים (Sifra Behuqqotai 3:4: 'I am he who performed wonders for you in Egypt').

The phrase אני הוא or אנא הוא is also used in its bipartite form as an expression of self-identification, in which הוא is anaphoric and represents an element from its immediate context. Thus, Raba identifies himself with the aid of the words אנא הוא in response to the remark made by Rabbi Joseph that the cup of wine reminds him of the mixing of Raba (b.Erub 54a), and God is attributed the words אני הוא in response to the question 'who is his redeemer' based on Lev. 25:25 (TanB Behar §6 [53b]).

Statements belonging to the first two syntactic patterns are attested in a variety of traditions ranging from the earlier rabbinic texts to talmudic traditions and later exegetical midrashim. However, the bipartite construction in Aramaic

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[46] See §1.1 above.

(אנא הוא), as pronounced by beings other than God, occurs predominantly in narrative traditions in Talmud Babli (Ket 63a; BB 4a; Erub 54a; cf. Shab 31a) and in exegetical and homiletical midrashim (GenR 35:2; PesK 11:15; MidTeh 126:1), while its Hebrew counterpart only occurs in late midrashic collections (NumR 10:5; cf. MidTeh 1:20). This evidence for the rabbinic application of the two-member אנא הוא (or אני הוא) therefore leads to three main conclusions.

First, although the distribution of bipartite אנא הוא (or אני הוא) statements in rabbinic material belongs to the Amoraic period onwards, it does not enable one to infer that this syntactic construction only entered general parlance in the post-Tannaitic period (cf. Dan. 4:19). The absence of the two-member expression in a non-divine context in early rabbinic traditions does not necessarily mean that this idiom represents a later linguistic phenomenon. The concentration of extant examples in later texts may be due to the nature of the available evidence; self-identification statements in which an individual declares אנא הוא or אני הוא are more likely to occur within narrative traditions - as is invariably the case in Talmud Babli - than in halakhic discussions (the main focus of the Mishnah and Tosefta) or expositions of biblical texts (Tannaitic midrashim).

Secondly, the above survey of available evidence leads one to conclude that it is extremely unlikely that the expression אני הוא was regarded, even by early sages, as too sacred to be pronounced. Proposals relating to the sanctity of these two words,[47] and the suggestion that אני הוא may represent the *shem hammeporash*,[48] fail to take into account the bipartite examples of this expression in Hebrew and Aramaic in later texts, attributed by their compilers to such well-known rabbis as Aqiba (b.Ket 63a) and Simeon ben Yohai (GenR 35:2), as well as the existence of tripartite formulations in relatively early traditions (m.Naz 8:1). If the expression was as sacred as some have claimed, rabbinic authorities would have prohibited its use by all speakers, even in its non-bipartite form. Thus, arguments defending the sanctity of the expression due to the scarcity of new examples of the 'absolute' אני הוא in declarations pronounced by God and the lack of concrete references to its use or misuse do not find support in these rabbinic texts.[49]

Thirdly, such considerations indicate that the key factor when attempting to evaluate the meaning and application of אני הוא in its bipartite form in rabbinic

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[47] See especially Daube, 'The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 327f.

[48] Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 93f.

[49] Daube, 'The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 327: 'the Rabbis found it [אני הוא] dangerous and were afraid of abuse .... they eliminated the expression as far as possible'.

traditions, particularly when comparing its usage by such figures as rabbis in narrative traditions with its application to God in midrashic expositions, is the manner in which the expression is employed within specific contexts. All examples of the bipartite phrase pronounced by individual figures like Rabbi Aqiba can be termed anaphoric (§1.2), in that הוא represents an element expressed in an earlier statement, and this definition is certainly applicable to the innovative divine response recorded in TanB Behar §6 [53b]) and, in all likelihood, to the interpretative comment attributed to God in b.RH 17b. The midrashic use of אני הוא as an explanation of the subsequent citation of Exod. 20:2 in PesK 12:25 does point to its role as a self-contained statement which serves to accentuate the claim that it was God, and no other, who was experienced on Sinai, whereas the twofold formulations encountered in b.RH 17b not only signify that הוא represents the tetragrammaton, but are reminiscent of the emphasis on God as the one who eternally remains the same (Isa. 46:4; cf. Ps. 102:28). Indeed, the midrashic traditions considered in the previous two chapters attest the citation of Deut. 32:39 and analogous Deutero-Isaianic declarations as decisive proof-texts in which אני הוא [אני] is viewed as a self-contained expression with no referent identifiable from its immediate context.[50] Thus, despite the fact that it is virtually impossible, on the basis of the available evidence, to infer that אני הוא in its bipartite form was recognized in rabbinic circles as a pronouncement that belonged exclusively to God, this is not to deny that it can represent a solemn self-declaration by God in certain contexts.

A further inevitable result of this examination of extant rabbinic traditions, particularly from the perspective of issues relating to syntax, is that extended, or non-bipartite, אני הוא pronouncements attributed to God cannot be viewed as distinctive with regard to form. Once again, it is the nature of the divine claims made with the aid of nominal constructions or cleft sentences that imbues them with theological significance. These declarations are presented in midrashic expositions as representations of God's own claims or as interpretations of his formula 'I am the Lord (your God)'. They become the vehicle for assertions made by God relating to his activity in the past,[51] and for twofold expressions of the dynamic continuity between divine intervention in the past, present and

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[50] This applies to all the traditions analysed in Chapters 4 and 5, although one possible interpretation of the Deutero-Isaianic proof-texts cited in Sifra Ahare Mot 13:11 is that the tetragrammaton (Lev. 18:4) serves as the referent of הוא [אני].

[51] j.Bik 3:3 (65c); j.RH 1:3 (57b); b.Ber 38a; b.Hag 12a; Mek 'Amaleq 1 on Exod. 18:6; Mek Bahodesh 6 on Exod. 20:3; MRS on Exod. 6:2 (Epstein-Melamed, 4); Sifra Ahare Mot 13:3 on Lev. 18:2 (85d); ExR 27:2; LevR 35:3.

future,[52] reminiscent of midrashic expositions of the doubling of אני in Deut. 32:39a.[53] This correlation between past and future divine acts is encountered in particular in relation to the theme that Israel's acknowledgement of God's sovereignty - in virtue of his salvific acts during the Exodus events - must be reflected in Torah obedience;[54] the merciful and judging aspects of God's activity are thus highlighted as his responses to obedience and disobedience.

Certain aspects can also be highlighted which relate directly to the use of the expression אני הוא in innovative, non-bipartite, declarations attributed to God in rabbinic traditions. These statements attest in particular the effective interplay of divine claims and their mode of expression. The uniformity of the application of syntactic structures in which nominal constructions (ExR 29:1: אני הוא ה' אלהיך) and cleft sentences (b.Hag 12a: אני הוא שאמרתי לעולם די) highlight the אני of the speaker point to the emphatic, and indeed exclusive, nature of the divine self-declarations pronounced with the aid of אני הוא in midrashic expositions; when God emphatically identifies himself as the one who speaks or acts in the way described, he asserts that he alone is God. In this respect, the claim to divine exclusiveness - so deeply entrenched in midrashic interpretations of Deut. 32:39 - is highlighted with the aid of innovative אני הוא declarations which can also provide a divine speech with its unified structure.

A further possibility is that the pervasiveness of non-bipartite אני הוא statements in midrashic units which seek to interpret the self-declaratory formula אני ה' [אלהיכם] reflect a tendency to avoid using the tetragrammaton in declarations other than those belonging to the biblical texts themselves. Since the tetragrammaton occurs very rarely in non-scriptural statements attributed to God in rabbinic expositions,[55] divine pronouncements introduced by אני הוא are clearly intended as interpretative expressions of the various dimensions of meaning attributed by the sages to God's self-declaration 'I am the Lord'.

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[52] Divine judgement/punishment (b.BM 61b; Sifra Ahare Mot 9:1-2 on Lev. 18:2 [85c]); past and future wonders (Sifra Behuqqotai 3:4 on Lev. 26:13 [111b]). Cf. also LevR 23:9; ShirR 4:4:9 (25c).

[53] See Chapter 4 §§2, 4, 5, 6.

[54] See especially Mek Bahodesh 6 on Exod. 20:2-3 and b.BM 61b.

[55] One such exception occurs in ShirR 5:16:4 (32d): אני ה' נאמן לשלם שכר טוב לכם. See further Chapter 3 §3 (and the secondary literature cited in nn. 84, 85) for the targumic use of אמר יי [כדן] instead of אני יי.

4. אני הוא in the Passover Haggadah

A midrashic interpretation of the pronouncement 'I am the Lord' (Exod. 12:12) also serves as the setting for the use of אני הוא in the Passover Haggadah. The expression occurs within the central section of the Haggadah in its detailed commentary on Deut. 26:5-8; each component of this biblical passage is expounded with the aid of interpretative comments, and is followed by the citation of a thematically related scriptural statement. The opening words of Deut. 26:8 are thus interpreted in the Haggadah as follows:

ויוצאנו יי ממצרים לא על ידי מלאך ולא על ידי שרף ולא על ידי שליח
אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא בכבודו ובעצמו שנאמר ועברתי בארץ מצרים
בלילה הזה והכיתי כל בכור בארץ מצרים מאדם ועד בהמה ובכל
אלהי מצרים אעשה שפטים אני יי

ועברתי בארץ מצרים אני ולא מלאך והכיתי כל בכור אני ולא שרף
ובכל אלהי מצרים אעשה שפטים אני ולא השליח אני יי אני הוא ולא אחר

'And the Lord brought us out of Egypt' (Deut. 26:8) not by means of an angel, and not by means of a seraph, and not by means of a messenger, but the Holy One, blessed be he, in his glory and by himself. As it is said: 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements; I am the Lord' (Exod. 12:12).
'For I will pass through the land of Egypt': I, and not an angel. 'And I will smite all the first-born': I, and not a seraph. 'And on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements': I, and not the messenger. 'I am the Lord': I am he, and no other.[56]

The division of this passage into two sub-sections demonstrates that the Passover Haggadah in its present form does not limit its interpretation of Deut. 26:8a to midrashic comments on this lemma and the use of Exod. 12:12 as a proof-text, but also elaborates on the four clauses of the second biblical text in order to highlight its role as God's own proclamation of his direct intervention in Egypt. The various constituents of the stylized formula initially applied to Deut. 26:8a are also inserted after each of the three acts enumerated in Exod. 12:12 in the form of 'I' statements, as well as to follow its climactic declaration 'I am the Lord'; the presence of אני in the concluding biblical formula therefore provides this second comment with its distinctive framework. Evidently, the concluding phrase אני הוא ולא אחר cannot be interpreted in isolation from the

[56] *Die Pessach-Haggada*, ed. Goldschmidt, 54; Kasher, *Haggadah Shelemah*, 43-45.

central theme of the tradition, namely the denial that God was aided by intermediaries when Israel was delivered from Egypt.[57]

The earliest extant example of the use of the stylized denial of angelic participation in order to highlight the direct salvific intervention of God can be found in LXX Isa. 63:9. While MT refers to the agency of מלאך פניו (Ketib: בכל צרתם לא צר ומלאך פניו הושיעם), the LXX reads οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς κύριος ἔσωσεν αὐτοὺς. According to this Greek rendering, the phrase בכל צרתם is linked to the preceding statement (καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτοῖς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως), צר ('afflicted') is read as צִיר ('messenger') and פניו is rendered as αὐτὸς κύριος (cf. LXX Exod. 33:14f.; Deut. 4:37).[58] The two biblical passages which form the basis of the traditions in the Passover Haggadah, Deut. 26:8 and Exod. 12:12, are also expounded with the aid of this formula in certain rabbinic traditions. A virtually identical parallel to the first half of the Haggadah passage on Deut. 26:8a occurs in MidTann,[59] whereas a tradition, possibly of Tannaitic origin, in Mek Pisha 7 on Exod. 12:12 reads: "'And I will smite all the first-born". I might understand that [he will do this] by means of an angel or by means of a messenger. [But] Scripture teaches: "and the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt" (v. 29) - not by means of an angel and not by means of a messenger'.[60] The relationship between these rabbinic traditions and the twofold section in the Passover Haggadah will be considered below in connection with attempts at dating this passage.

The linking together of the two sub-sections in this Haggadah passage involves a shift from a third person narrative (Deut. 26:8) and its accompanying comments to God's own affirmation (Exod. 12:12) and its explanatory embellishments. This can be detected in particular in the transition from the words 'in his glory and by himself' (בכבודו ובעצמו) to the concluding declaration pronounced by God (אני הוא ולא אחר). LXX Deut. 26:8a is also significant in this respect, for its innovative reading καὶ ἐξήγαγέν ἡμᾶς

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[57] Emphasis on the personal and unmediated activity of God has already been encountered in certain midrashic expositions of biblical אני הוא pronouncements; see Chapter 4 §§4, 6, and Chapter 5 §4.2

[58] See Prijs, *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta*, 107; Winter, 'Isa. lxiii 9 (Gk) and the Passover Haggadah', 439.

[59] בכבודו is absent from MidTann on Deut. 26:8. For an assessment of the value of MidTann as a witness to the development of rabbinic traditions, see Chapter 4 n.68.

[60] *Mechilta*, ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 23. The same interpretation is found in Mek Pisha 13 (Horovitz-Rabin, 43) and MRS on Exod. 12:29 (Epstein-Melamed, 28).

κύριος ἐξ Αἰγύπτου αὐτὸς ἐν ἰσχύι μεγάλῃ contains two elements unparalleled in MT (αὐτός and ἐν ἰσχύι μεγάλῃ) and they have probably been influenced by LXX Deut. 4:37c where בפניו is rendered as αὐτός.[61] Thus, LXX Deut. 26:8a declares that God himself with great power brought Israel out of Egypt. As the reference to ἐν ἰσχύι μεγάλῃ in LXX Deut. 26:8 forms a loose parallel to בכבודו in the Haggadah text, it can also be proposed that αὐτός conveys that which would be rendered in Hebrew as בעצמו.[62] In other words, the initial comment in the Haggadah stresses the active and sovereign role of God with the aid of בכבודו and בעצמו (a parallel to αὐτός in LXX Deut. 4:37; 26:8; Isa. 63:9), and this is conveyed in the second comment with the aid of the words אני הוא ולא אחר.[63]

To what extent, therefore, do these preliminary remarks contribute to our understanding of the statement אני הוא ולא אחר? There is no doubt regarding the emphatic nature of this construction, but Daube goes further and defines this occurrence of אני הוא as an expression of 'the personal presence of the redeeming God'.[64] He also seeks to establish a link between אני הוא and the subsequent exposition of the phrase ובמרא גדל (Deut. 26:8b) as a description of 'the manifestation of the Shekinah' (זו גלוי שכינה), for which biblical support is provided by ובמוראים גדלים in Deut. 4:34.[65] According to Daube, both the comment on ובמרא גדל and the use of אני הוא reflect the Haggadah's emphasis on the direct manifestation of God during the Exodus.

The main purpose of this concluding comment is to present the phrase as God's own declaration that he alone secured the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. This is supported by the earlier declaration that God acted in his glory (בכבודו) on his own (בעצמו) and by the repetition of the formulaic denials of the participation of intermediaries. The emphatic nature of this declaration could

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[61] Cf. Prijs, *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta*, 106. LXX Deut. 4:37c: καὶ ἐξήγαγέν σε αὐτὸς ἐν τῇ ἰσχύι αὐτοῦ τῇ μεγάλῃ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου (MT: וַיּוֹצִאֲךָ בְּפָנָיו בְּכֹחוֹ הַגָּדֹל מִמִּצְרָיִם).

[62] See further j.Sanh 2:1 (20a) and j.Hor 3:2 (47a), both attributed to Resh Laqish (PA2): 'When the Merciful One came to redeem Israel, he did not send a messenger or an angel, but he himself, as it is written: 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt' (Exod. 12:12)'.

[63] The comment on divine vengeance in SifDeut §325 is also significant in this respect (אני נפרע מהם בעצמי לא על ידי מלאך ולא על ידי שליח), for the twofold stylized formula and the word בעצמי are introduced due to the syntactic positioning of the preposition לי [נקם ושלם] for emphasis in Deut. 32:35; in N/FT-VNP this emphatic force is conveyed by the use of the construction ואנה הוא דמשלם.

[64] 'The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 325, 327.

[65] *Ibid.*, 328. The Haggadah interprets the term as מַרְא ('manifestation') rather than מוֹרָא ('terror') as in MT. Cf. LXX Deut. 4:34; 26:8: ἐν ὁράμασιν μεγάλοις (and O/N/PsJ).

be conveyed by a rendering such as 'I myself', but that would be more appropriate if the Hebrew phrase read אני ולא אחר, and it does not reflect the differences in terms of form and function between this self-declaration by God and the preceding formulaic denials. The positioning of אני הוא immediately after the biblical lemma points to the role of this concluding declaration as an interpretation of the self-declaratory formula 'I am the Lord', and it highlights the significance of the biblical formula as an assertion of divine sovereignty.[66] The function of אני הוא cannot therefore be defined in terms of a substitute phrase, for the expression is presented as an explication of the self-declaratory formula; it encapsulates the message of the individual components of the repeated 'I' clauses in order to express the claim that God alone carried out the acts described in Exod. 12:12. The exclusive nature of the claim, and its role as an interpretation of the biblical formula אני ה', indicate that it warrants the rendering 'I am the one' or 'I am he'. Echoes of the usage of אני הוא in biblical traditions can, accordingly, be detected in this midrashic comment, particularly as the declaration אני הוא ולא אחר is reminiscent of the sequence אני אני הוא followed by ואין אלהים עמדי in Deut. 32:39ab.[67] The tradition also closely resembles the emphasis on the personal and unmediated activity of God already encountered in midrashic interpretations of biblical אני הוא statements (Chapter 4 §§2, 4, 6), as well as the numerous declarations by God presented in rabbinic traditions as interpretative clarifications which accentuate the exclusiveness and uniqueness of God's activity implied by אני ה' in the biblical lemma (§2 above).

This leads to a consideration of the literary history of this two-part tradition. In an attempt to date the Haggadah's commentary on Deut. 26:5-8 to the late third or early second centuries BCE, Finkelstein claims that it amounts to 'a propagandist tract' composed within priestly circles,[68] and that its rejection of angelic participation during the Exodus events reflects the views of patricians who denied the existence of angels. Finkelstein also argues that the focus on the visible appearance of God (גלוי שכינה) reflects an early controversy between patricians and plebeians (Sadducees and Pharisees respectively), for the latter

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[66] Cf. b.Mak 21a where a discussion of the issue of writing down the name of an idol leads to the following interpretation of אני ה' ולא אחר in Lev. 19:28: אני ה' ולא אחר.

[67] Interestingly, Maimonides appears to interpret the phrase אני הוא ולא אחר in the light of Deut. 32:39ab: שהוא אחד ואין אלוה עמו למחות על ידו ('for he is one and there is no god with him to destroy by his hand'). See Kasher, *Haggadah Shelemah*, 45.

[68] 'The Oldest Midrash', 293, 298. See further *idem*, 'Pre-Maccabean Documents in the Passover Haggadah', 291-332, 1-38.

rejected the claim that God made himself visibly manifest.[69] He thus concludes that the commentary on Deut. 26:5-8 was compiled by a patrician before the Pharisees had gained sufficient authority to prevent such views from being expressed in liturgical works. The two arguments presented by Finkelstein do not, however, prove the pre-Maccabean dating of this passage. First, the exposition does not deny the existence of angels as such, for the main issue is whether they were responsible for the deliverance from Egypt. Secondly, these exegetical comments closely resemble the emphasis in rabbinic traditions on God's direct intervention in Egypt (Mek Pisha 7 on 12:12; Mek Pisha 13 on 12:29). The use of the formula ..לא על ידי מלאך is attested in Tannaitic midrashim,[70] while several traditions demonstrate that rabbinic exegetes had no difficulty with the notion that God made himself manifest during the Exodus and Sinai events (see Chapter 4 §2.1). Indeed, denials of angelic participation and the assertions of God's direct manifestation indicate that the comments recorded in the Passover Haggadah belong to a period when these themes were already well-established in rabbinic circles.[71] The Passover Haggadah, in its role as a compilation of traditions drawn from various sources, is employing exegetical comments whose origin can be traced back to late Tannaitic or early Amoraic emphasis on the unmediated activity of God during the Exodus events. Nevertheless, although it may be possible to make proposals regarding the date of the original strand of traditions cited in the twofold comment, it does not help us determine when they were incorporated into the Haggadah text.

The status of the interpretative section on Exod. 12:12 is even more uncertain. It has been argued by some interpreters that this exegetical tradition was secondarily inserted to follow the comments on Deut. 26:8a at a later stage in the textual history of the Haggadah,[72] and attention its drawn to its absence from the oldest extant witnesses to the Passover Haggadah, including the Siddur of Sa'adiah Gaon, the Code of Maimonides and the Yemenite rite. Finkelstein responds by claiming that the section on Exod. 12:12 was

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[69] 'The Oldest Midrash', 309-12.

[70] Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 49.

[71] See Sarason, 'On the Use of Method in the Modern Study of Jewish Liturgy', 116f.

[72] Goldschmidt, *Die Pessach-Haggada,* 54f.: 'Der offensichtlich nicht hierher gehörige kleine Abschnitt ist eine reine Wiederholung des Vorangehenden mit spielerischer Zerlegung des soeben ausgesprochenen Gedankens'; Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen,* 49 n.58; Stemberger, 'Pesachhaggada und Abendmahlsberichte', 153: 'Der Parallelabschnitt zu Ex 12,12 ist offensichtlich eine Verdoppelung'.

deliberately omitted from certain versions,[73] because its rejection of angelic participation during the Exodus events contradicts the testimony of other biblical statements (e.g., Num. 20:16). Some versions, including the Siddur of Sa'adiah and the Baghdad and Yemenite rituals, seek to establish a compromise by inserting a comment describing the myriads of angels that accompanied God, but when they asked whether they could wage war against the Egyptians, God responded with the words: 'I will not be satisfied until I myself descend and seek vengeance upon Egypt'.[74] At this point the Yemenite ritual adds a declaration similar to the Passover Haggadah's concluding comment on Exod. 12:12: אני בכבודי אני בגדולתי אני בקדושתי אני ה' אני הוא ולא אחר.[75]

Arguments for the view that the Haggadah's comment on Exod. 12:12 was secondarily inserted into the text are, nevertheless, more persuasive. First, although this comment is preserved in all other rites, these represent European rites whose earliest manuscripts are relatively late.[76] Secondly, there are clear signs within the Haggadah text that this second tradition forms a supplement, particularly as it is the only section in the exegesis of Deut. 26:5-8 which adds an interpretative comment to its biblical proof-text (Exod. 12:12). Even the attempt at determining the source of this exegetical comment on Exod. 12:12 is impeded by the fact that no exact rabbinic parallel can be identified.

These factors must be taken into account when assessing Daube's proposal that the use of אני הוא in the Passover Haggadah, described by him as the only example of its kind,[77] is to be regarded as important evidence that the evangelists are following a 'rabbinic model' in their use of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι.[78] Not only must one concede that, if this particular tradition is late, one

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[73] 'The Oldest Midrash', 297 n.14.

[74] Cf. ExR 17:5: '"For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians" (12:23). Some say by means of an angel; and others say the Holy One, blessed be he, by himself (בעצמו)'.

[75] See Goldschmidt, *Die Pessach-Haggada*, 111. The use of this extended אני proclamation in the Yemenite rite argues against Daube's proposal ('The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 328) that it is the pronouncement of the words אני הוא that accounts for the omission of this section from versions of the Passover Haggadah, as stipulated in the Shibbole ha-Leqet (Buber, 97a).

[76] Of all the versions of the Passover Haggadah I have consulted in the British Library (including the Italian, Spanish, Franco-German-Polish rites and other medieval editions), only the Yemenite rite omits this section.

[77] Daube does not mention b.RH 17b and PesK 12:25, nor does he consider the significance of the rabbinic expositions of biblical אני הוא passages, particularly Deut. 32:39.

[78] 'The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 325, 326 n.4, 327.

cannot speak of it as a 'model',[79] but this study has sought to demonstrate that one aspect of the rabbinic usage of אני הוא as pronounced by God, particularly in the form of biblical proof-texts, is as a succinct expression of God's claim to exclusiveness and uniqueness. It has also been proposed that some of the relevant midrashic expositions can be interpreted as employing divine אני הוא statements in direct response to Christian claims.

The possible polemical motives of this tradition in the Passover Haggadah have been considered in several studies. It has been interpreted as a response to Hellenistic Jewish claims made about the Logos or Wisdom (cf. Wisdom 18:15-16), particularly as some Genizah sources insert the clause לא על דיבר or לא על ידי הדיבר into the first section on Deut. 26:8.[80] The fact that the comment on Exod. 12:12 refers to השליח, whereas the definite article is not used for מלאך or שרף, has led several interpreters to propose that the designation 'the messenger' forms an allusion to Christian claims about Jesus.[81] Certain parallels have also been noted between the Passover Haggadah and the *Peri Pascha* homily, in which Melito of Sardis presents the biblical Passover as an anticipation of the new 'Exodus' deliverance brought about by Christ,[82] and it is claimed that the God who became incarnate in Jesus is the one at work in such acts as the deliverance from Egypt.[83] Hall demonstrates that the second part of *Peri Pascha* (46-105) corresponds in structure to an exposition of Deut. 26:5-9, and notes that, 'at the point where Melito states most fully his incarnational theology', the Haggadah stresses that the Lord of Deut. 26:8 is none other than God himself.[84]

The view that the Haggadah's comments on Deut. 26:8 and Exod. 12:12 form a direct response to Christian claims is, however, difficult to confirm and substantiate. Arguments based on the reference to השליח in the second comment must take into account the fact that some versions of the text employ

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[79] The term 'model' is used quite loosely in this respect, for Daube later proposes that the tradition reflects an anti-Christian polemic (*ibid.*, 326f.).

[80] Pines, 'From Darkness into Great Light', 50. On the Genizah sources, see Abrahams, 'Some Egyptian Fragments of the Passover Haggada', 41-51 (T.-S. H2-114, 138, 140).

[81] See especially Meyer, "Die Pessach-Haggada und der Kirchenvater Justinus Martyr", 84-87. Cf. Ben-Chorin, *Narrative Theologie des Judentums anhand der Pessach-Haggada*, 76f.

[82] See Hall, 'Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah', 29-46; Flusser, 'Some Notes on Easter and the Passover Haggadah', 52-60.

[83] See *Peri Pascha* 14, where Jesus declares: ἰδοὺ γάρ, πατάσσω Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἐν μιᾷ νυκτὶ ἀτεκνωθήσεται ἀπὸ κτήνους ἕως ἀνθρώπου, with obvious allusions to Exod. 12:12, 23 (cf. *Peri Pascha* 68-69).

[84] 'Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah', 39 (with reference to *Peri Pascha* 66).

the definite article for all three components of the formula.[85] Moreover, the Passover Haggadah was still a fluid text when the second-century homily *Peri Pascha* was composed,[86] whereas the inclusion of the comment on Exod. 12:12 occurred at an even later stage of textual development. It may also be the case that the section on Exod. 12:12 was not even intended as a polemical response, for a compiler could have inserted this second exposition into the text because of its striking thematic resemblance to the already existing explanation of Deut. 26:8a.[87] If this comment was incorporated purely for exegetical purposes, the main purpose of אני הוא ולא אחר is to serve as a midrashic interpretation of the self-declaratory formula 'I am the Lord', reminiscent of innovative 'I' declarations included in the rabbinic traditions considered in earlier sections of this chapter. The expression אני הוא is therefore employed in this additional comment to emphasize that God himself, without the aid of intermediaries, carried out the decisive acts in Egypt that led to the deliverance of his people.

5. אני והוא and the Liturgy of Sukkot

The obscure expression אני והו[א] occurs in a Tannaitic tradition set within the context of the Sukkot festival (m.Suk 4:5).

> בכל יום מקיפים את המזבח פעם אחת ואומרים אנא יי הושיעה נא
> אנא והושיעה נא רבי יהודה אני והוא והושיעה נא אני והוא
> והושיעה נא אותו היום מקיפים את המזבח שבע פעמים

> Each day [the first six days of the feast] they would go around the altar once and say: 'O Lord, deliver now, we beseech you; O deliver now, we beseech you. R. Yehudah [says]: 'אני והוא, and deliver now; אני והוא, and deliver now'. On that day [the seventh] they would go around the altar seven times.[88]

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[85] E.g., T.-S. H2-141. Cf. de Lange, *Greek Jewish Texts from the Cairo Genizah*, 69.

[86] Hall notes that *Peri Pascha* 46-105 is not necessarily based on Deut. 26:5-9 or offers an imitation of a Jewish Haggadah; he suggests that 'a tradition of Christian paschal Haggadah already existed, a tradition ultimately derived from a Jewish source which was itself based on Deut. 26:5-9' ('Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah', 41). For a balanced assessment of these issues, see Lieu, *Image and Reality*, 222-28.

[87] For the view that the application of the stylized formula 'not by an angel..' in the first comment on Deut. 26:8a was itself the result of an exegetically motivated interest in the phrase ויוצאנו יי ממצרים, see Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens*, 93f.

[88] This version is taken from Ms. Kaufmann (Beer, 142). For variations in other Mishnah manuscripts, see especially Bornhäuser, *Die Mischna: Sukka (Laubhüttenfest)*, 115f., 181f.

In this depiction of the daily procession around the altar during the willow-branch ceremony of Sukkot, two views are expressed about the wording of the liturgical invocation pronounced during that ceremony. According to the first opinion, this refrain amounted to a citation of the well-known prayer in Ps. 118:25a, but Rabbi Yehudah bar Ilai (T3) declares that " אנא was in fact pronounced as אני והוא (or possibly אני והו).[89] This concisely presented mishnaic tradition raises several questions. It is, for example, not made clear whether all worshippers or the priests alone were envisaged as taking part in this ceremony and proclaiming the liturgical petition,[90] while attempts at establishing the meaning and original *Sitz im Leben* of the phrase אני והו[א] must contend with the fact that Yehudah's comment considerably post-dates the circumstances it purports to describe. Furthermore, the existence of different textual traditions with regard to the actual form of this alternative invocation must be taken into account.

The most appropriate point of departure is to consider the rabbinic views on אני והו[א] expressed in the *gemara* of Talmud Yerushalmi. In j.Suk 4:3 (54c) the citation of this formula, attributed to Rabbi Abbahu in the name of Rabbi Yohanan, and its subsequent interpretation are based on an understanding of the phrase as taking the form אני והוא ('I [Israel] and He [God]'). Four exegetical illustrations and a detailed discussion of Exod. 24:10 are presented as providing scriptural proof that Israel's deliverance from distress involves God's own deliverance.[91] Thus, in the case of the first illustration, also attributed to Rabbi Abbahu, it is stated that לכה in Ps. 80:3 (ולכה לישעתה לנו: 'come and save us') should be read as לך ('save you [and us]'). In addition, the words אני והוא הושיעה נא are interpreted in this *gemara* as a liturgical petition for the joint deliverance of Israel (אני) and God (הוא). As j.Suk 4:3 (54c) preserves the Amoraic versions of theological discussions whose roots

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[89] The expression takes the form אני והוא in Mss. Kaufmann, Paris, Parma, Cambridge (Add 470.1) and the Mishnah text of j.Suk (54b), although it is written as אני והו in most printed editions of the Mishnah and also in LevR 30:5. See further below.

[90] The view expressed in b.Suk 44a is that only priests could have walked in procession around the altar (cf. Bornhäuser, *ibid.*, 115). Cf. Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud,* 148, who proposes that m.Suk 4:5 reflects the Temple custom of encouraging worshippers to participate in the ceremony by reciting the liturgical supplication after 'numerous short petitionary sentences'.

[91] For other rabbinic traditions which describe the joint suffering and deliverance of God and Israel, see the texts and secondary literature cited in Chapter 4 n.24.

can be detected in traditions attributed to such prominent figures as Aqiba,[92] some modern interpreters have speculated that Aqiba's pupil, Rabbi Yehudah, understood [א]נא והו (m.Suk 4:5) in a similar manner,[93] although there is no conclusive evidence that enables one to establish a direct link between Aqiba's views on divine self-deliverance and Yehudah's recollection of liturgical practices during Sukkot.

The expression [א]נא והו is also encountered in another branch of exegetical traditions, for a saying attributed to Abba Saul - a contemporary of Rabbi Yehudah - develops an undeclared pun from the word ואנוהו (Exod. 15:2) to form the expression אנא והו, which leads to the following interpretation: 'I shall be like him; as he is gracious and merciful, so may you be gracious and merciful'.[94] Whereas the tradition attested in j.Suk 4:3 (54c) emphasizes the theme of solidarity between God and Israel, the comment attributed to Abba Saul represents an ethical plea for God's people to model their lives on his attributes. Both strands of midrashic interpretation clearly understand [א]נא והו as signifying 'אנא (Israel) and הוא (God)', but it should be borne in mind that these are later attempts at interpreting the obscure expression and it does not necessarily follow that the comment attributed to Rabbi Yehudah also assumes that the formula originally represented a prayer for the joint deliverance of the worshipper and God. The exegetical traditions attributed to Abbahu and Abba Saul do not, moreover, enable one to identify the factors and circumstances which, according to m.Suk 4:5, led to the view that " אנא was in fact pronounced as [א]נא והו, nor do they enable one to determine whether Yehudah's comment reflects genuine pre-70 CE liturgical practice.

As the tradition in m.Suk 4:5 implies that [א]נא והו acted as an alternative form of, even as a replacement for, " אנא in the liturgical petition pronounced during the Temple ceremony, the possibility must be considered that it reflects the practice of avoiding the pronunciation of the tetragrammaton due to the recognition of its immense power and sanctity. Certain mishnaic traditions indicate that the utterance of the divine name with its letters was prohibited

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[92] See especially Mek Pisha 14 on Exod. 12:41 (Horovitz-Rabin, 51): 'R. Aqiba says: If it were not written in Scripture, it would be impossible to say so. As if it were possible, Israel said to God: "You have redeemed yourself' (עצמך פדית)".

[93] See Bornhäuser, *Sukka* 117; Ayali, 'Gottes und Israels Trauer', 223.

[94] Mek Shirta 3 on Exod. 15:2 (Horovitz-Rabin, 127). Cf. also j.Peah 1:1 (15b); Shab 133b; SifDeut §49; Rashi: ולשון אנוהו אני והוא אעשה עצמי כמותו לדבק בדרכיו. See further Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, II:149, 175f.; Marmorstein, "The Imitation of God', *Studies in Jewish Theology*, 111; Avemarie, *Tora und Leben*, 232f.

(m.Sanh 7:5; 10:1), although other traditions state that it was pronounced by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (m.Yom 3:8; 4:2; 6:2),[95] as well as by the Temple priests during the daily pronouncement of the blessing of Num. 6:24-26 (m.Sot 7:6).[96] There is certainly no evidence to support the hypothesis that [א]והו אני was viewed in rabbinic circles as the *shem hammeporash,*[97] but m.Suk 4:5 may reflect the practice of using a substitute for the tetragrammaton, one which takes the form [א]והו and is combined with אני to represent the invocative אנא. If, moreover, this mishnaic tradition presupposes that all worshippers were in some way involved in this ceremony, the expression [א]והו אני may have been the form of the liturgical refrain that they were permitted to pronounce or, alternatively, it was the version that the priests could proclaim in the presence of worshippers. In order to explore these issues in more detail, evidence for the possible role of [א]והו אני as a surrogate version of " אנא is be considered, and an attempt must be made to determine the meaning of its two individual components.

In two quite recent contributions Baumgarten draws attention to a possible parallel to [א]והו אני in a liturgical prayer to be recited by a priest during the expulsion ceremony, as described towards the end of the Damascus Document in 4Q266 (fragment 11, lines 8ff.):[98]

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[95] Cf. m.Tam 3:8; t.Yom 2:2; j.Yom 3:7 (40d); b.Yom 39b.

[96] Cf. b.Sot 38a; b.Qid 71a; SifNum Naso §§39, 43 (Horovitz, 43, 48). For discussions of the use of the divine name, see especially Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God. Vol. 1,* 17-40; Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era,* I:424-29; Cohon, 'The Name of God', 144-66; Hruby, 'Le yom ha-kippurim ou jour de l'expiation', 166-69; Alon, 'By the (Expressed) Name', 235-51; Janowitz, *The Poetics of Ascent,* 25-28.

[97] As proposed by Klein, *Der älteste christliche Katechismus,* 44-61, 243. This theory is based on very speculative proposals. i) Klein argues that the comment on the pronunciation of the divine name in SifNum Naso §§39, 43 (כה תברכו את בני ישראל בשם המפורש) presupposes that אני והו is the *shem hammeporash* with which Israel is to be blessed, because it possesses the same numerical value (78) as the three occurrences of the tetragrammaton (26 x 3) within the priestly blessing (Num. 6:24-26). But this tradition simply presupposes that the שם המפורש occurs within the blessing, and no suggestion is made that it amounts to anything other than the tetragrammaton. ii) As only the chief witness is allowed to pronounce the Name openly in a case regarding blasphemy (m.Sanh 7:5), Klein proposes that the words 'I also heard the like' to be declared by the second and third witnesses attest the practice of swallowing the Name אני והו (אף אני כמוהו). It is far more likely that this pronouncement simply functions as a *Bestätigungsformel* to validate the words of the chief witness. Klein's arguments are, moreover, severely weakened if one accepts אני והוא, found in all Mishnah mss., as the original form of the expression.

[98] 'A New Qumran Substitute for the Divine Name and Mishnah Sukkah 4.5', 1-5; *idem,* 'את הו הכול - אונ הו הכול: A Reply to M. Kister', 485-87.

וידבר בו הכוהן המוסמך ע]ל הרבים וענה

ברוכ את

[וא]מר אונ הו הכול ובידיך הכול ועושה הכול אשר יסדתה

[ע]מים למשפחותיהם

The priest appointed over the many shall speak [and s]ay: '<Blessed are you>, אונ הו of everything, in your hand is everything and who makes everything. You have established [pe]oples according to their families..'.[99]

The supralinear addition of ברוכ את indicates that the opening words introduce a liturgical blessing, and because a *berakhah* formula in Qumran texts is usually followed by some form of the divine name,[100] Baumgarten claims that the words אונ הו function as a substitution for the tetragrammaton in the divine epithet אונ הו הכול.[101] He interprets הו as representing the tetragrammaton, and, having considered the possibility that the more ambiguous אונ possesses the meaning 'power' (cf. Isa. 40:26), he comes to the conclusion that אונ הו, due to its resemblance to m.Suk 4:5, results from 'the ancient practice of disguising the divine name by blending it with the invocative אנא'.[102] In response to Kister's critique of his interpretation of this formula in 4Q266,[103] Baumgarten acknowledges that אונ may in fact stand for אדון,[104] although he still favours the view that it acts as a syllable or prefix intended to hide the tetragrammaton and relates it to the practice of 'swallowing' the Name (cf. t.Ber 7:23). This fragment is thus viewed by Baumgarten as a particularly

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[99] *The Damascus Document (4Q266-273)*, ed. Baumgarten (DJD 18), 76f. Baumgarten comments that 4Q266 is the earliest of the Cave 4 copies of the Damascus Document and describes its script as representing a Hasmonean semi-cursive hand from the first half or middle of the first century BCE (*ibid.*, 2, 26).

[100] In addition to the examples cited by Baumgarten, 'A New Qumran Substitute', 3, see Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry*, 75-80; Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, 23f., 27-29, 83f.

[101] Baumgarten, *The Damascus Document*, 77, renders אונ הו הכול as 'Almighty God'. Cf. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, 27, 231: '[Blessed be you], Lord of all'.

[102] 'A New Qumran Substitute', 3.

[103] Kister, 'On a New Fragment of the Damascus Document', 249-51, notes that אונ is problematic in syntactic and morphological terms; Kister prefers the reading את הו הוכל (cf. Sirach 43:27: וקץ דבר הוא הכל ['And the conclusion of the matter is: He is all']), although he does not comment on the status of the supralinear addition ברוכ את.

[104] See 'אונ הו הכול', 487, and *idem*, *The Damascus Document*, 10f., where attention is drawn to examples of the epithet אדון הכול in Qumran texts (11QPs[a] 28 7; 4Q409 1 6, 8), as well as in the *'Alenu* prayer which also expresses the themes of God as universal creator and the election of Israel from among the nations. For the view that the *'Alenu* prayer belongs to the Second Temple period, see Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud*, 272f. For a further possible Qumran parallel, see the blessing formula in 4Q403 1 i 28: ברוך [ה]אד[ו]ן מל[ך ה]כול.

important discovery; אונ הו serves in this text as a variant of אני והו and it authenticates m.Suk 4:5 as a valuable witness to the Temple practice of disguising the divine name.

The significance of this fragment cannot be overestimated, particularly in view of its apparent use of אונ הו as a substitution for the divine name. What is less certain, however, is whether אונ הו should be regarded as a close parallel to אני והו[א] of m.Suk 4:5. With regard to the original purpose of 4Q266, Baumgarten notes that the manuscript contains an unusually high number of scribal deletions and corrections, and proposes that it was a copy intended for personal rather than public use, possibly even as an early draft of the text.[105] These factors should certainly be taken into account when attempting to assess the unusual forms אונ and הו, as well as their status in relation to the supralinear addition of ברוכ את. As Baumgarten himself acknowledges, the word אונ may in fact be an abbreviated form of אדון, for which there are several Qumran parallels (אדון הכול), rather than function as an unparalleled representation of the invocative אנא. Moreover, the relationship between הו (4Q266) and והו[א] (m.Suk 4:5) remains unclear. If הו in the Qumran fragment denotes the tetragrammaton rather than the personal pronoun הוא,[106] the formula in 4Q266 could be cited as evidence to support the view that והו also signifies the middle component of the tetragrammaton in m.Suk 4:5.[107] But it should not be ruled out that the second word in the liturgical refrain described by Rabbi Yehudah actually represents the pronoun הוא;[108] this is the form found in the Mishnah manuscripts, and it clearly underlies later rabbinic interpretations of the phrase (e.g., j.Suk 4:3 [54c]). Attention can also be drawn to a wide range of evidence for the distinctive use of הוא as a divine designation, a phenomenon

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[105] *The Damascus Document*, 2. The numerous scribal corrections in 4Q266 are discussed by Tov, 'Correction Procedures in the Texts from the Judean Desert', 237f., 246, 248-50, 253, 257.

[106] הוא and הואה are the pronominal forms employed elsewhere in this manuscript (see, for example, 4Q266 3 iii 19; 6 i 8; 7 iii 7). The use of the pronominal form הו is rare in Qumran texts; apart from the appearance of הו in such compound forms as אפהו (IQH 10:3; 12:31), it does occur in 3Q15 x 10: הו הפתח ('it is the entrance').

[107] Cf. b.Shab 104a: ה"ו זה שמו של הקב"ה. See Blau, *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen*, 134 n.2; Lauterbach, 'Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton', 42 n.15; Urbach, *The Sages*, 127f.: "*Anî wa-Hô* is simply a mumbled version of *'Anna* and the Name'.

[108] This is the interpretation favoured by Yalon, in *Kiryat Sefer* 28, 1952, 71; Greenberg, 'The Hebrew Oath Particle', 38f.; Ben-Chorin, 'Ich und Er', 267-69; Rubenstein, *The History of Sukkot*, 112f. The form אני והו accounts for Rashi's interpretation of the formula, but the final א may have been omitted to meet the requirements of *gematria* (אני והו and אנא יהוה each possesses the numerical value of 78).

whose origins can already be detected in some biblical traditions (Chapter 1 §2.10) and whose development is attested in Qumran texts (Chapter 2 §2) and several rabbinic traditions.[109] The suggestion has also been made in this present chapter that one of the possible functions of innovative אני הוא formulations in rabbinic expositions, most of which are admittedly later than m.Suk 4:5, could have been to avoid excessive use of the tetragrammaton.

Although the form אני is adopted by all textual witnesses for the first component of the invocation in m.Suk 4:5, there are several possible interpretations of its intended meaning. As already noted, אני can simply be viewed as a replacement for אנא or even as an abbreviation of אדני, for which the *berakhah* formula in 4Q266 could again be cited as a possible parallel. The other possibility is that אני represents the first person pronoun, and that it either already denotes the worshipper (cf. j.Suk 4:3 [54c]) or acts as a designation for God himself.[110] Only limited evidence can be adduced for the use of אני as a distinctively divine epithet,[111] although some attempts have been made at assembling rabbinic traditions which point to the role of אני as a divine designation in connection with the festival of Sukkot. Attention has been paid in particular to a saying attributed to Hillel the elder (b.Suk 53a), set within a narrative describing how he used to rejoice at the place of water-drawing and declare to those gathered: אם אני כאן הכל כאן ואם איני כאן מי כאן. These words have been explained by several ancient and modern commentators as a riddle in which אני serves as a designation for God ('If "I" is here, all is here; and if "I" is not here, who is here?'),[112] devised by Hillel to make his audience consider the true significance of Sukkot. This is immediately followed in b.Suk 53a by yet another saying attributed to Hillel, whose version in t.Suk 4:3 reads: 'If you will come to my house, I will come to your house'. Once again, this declaration has been interpreted as an example of Hillel speaking in God's name (אני), because the accompanying proof-text is God's pronouncement in Exod. 20:24 ('In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will

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[109] Cf. m.Abot 4:22; GenR 37:3; EstherR 1:2 (3a); LamR Petihta §34 (9c); 1:57 (19d); PesK 13:9; 16:11; PesR 21:8; 33:13. Cf. also N/FT-P on Exod. 3:14.

[110] For the view that אני acts as a divine designation in m.Suk 4:5, see, e.g., Greenberg, 'The Hebrew Oath Particle', 38f.

[111] Mek Bahodesh 5 on Exod. 20:2 employs אני as pronounced by God within a midrashic exposition, but it does not necessarily serve as a divine designation in this tradition, whereas other possible examples belong to a much later period (LamR Petihta §34 [9c); PesR 21:6)

[112] See, e.g., Rashi (on b.Suk 53a); Landau, *Die dem Raume entnommenen Synonyma für Gott,* 8; Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel,* 331f.; Stauffer, *Jesus,* 33f.

come to you..').[113] However, the obscure nature of both these sayings leaves open the possibility that the 'I' in question is Hillel himself;[114] the inclusion of Exod. 20:24 as a proof-text in t.Suk 4:3 (and parallels) may amount to a later interpretative addition, in which case the אני denoting the human speaker of the proverb is transferred to God in later rabbinic traditions. These considerations, together with the fact that all extant versions of the sayings attributed to Hillel are much later than the pre-70 CE celebration of Sukkot and that their linking to that festival may itself be a secondary development,[115] mean that these sayings cannot be cited as firm evidence that the first component of אני ודו[א] represents the divine 'I' within a liturgical context. Since past attempts at elucidating the enigmatic formula in m.Suk 4:5 have resorted to citing equally obscure sayings attributed to Hillel, the one conclusion regarding אני ודו[א] that can be drawn with a degree of confidence is that its second component (ודו[א]) serves as a designation for God, whereas the phrase in its entirety is perceived within this mishnaic tradition as an alternative representation of the invocation אנא " addressed to God within the context of the Temple liturgy.

These guarded comments concerning the intended meaning of אני ודו[א] inevitably colour one's assessment of the possible links between this enigmatic expression and the divine self-declaration אני הוא as encountered in biblical texts and cited in proof-texts in later midrashic traditions. Maimonides claimed that the liturgical acclamation described by Rabbi Yehudah was indeed derived from Deut. 32:39,[116] a view which has prompted more recent scholars to define אני ודו[א] as a kind of 'mutation' of אני הוא,[117] even as a *Geheimformel.*[118] It has thus been claimed that, although the priests had the authority to pronounce the 'theophanic' אני הוא, they attempted to disguise it with the addition of ו.[119] But the material analysed in this chapter does not point to an awareness, at least on the part of rabbinic exegetes, that the utterance of the words אני הוא was to be discouraged, and even relatively early traditions permit the use of the expression in everyday contexts, albeit in tripartite constructions (m.Naz 8:1;

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[113] See also ARNB 12 and ARNB 27 (Schechter, 55).

[114] Str-B II:807; Dietrich, 'Das religiös-emphatische Ich-Wort', 306; Flusser, 'Hillel's Self-Awareness and Jesus', 31-36; Safrai, 'The Sayings of Hillel', 330-34.

[115] Rubenstein, *Sukkot,* 135f., draws attention to the 'idealized' depiction of rabbis as the leaders of Sukkot festivities in t.Suk 4:2-3.

[116] See Ben-Chorin, 'Ich und Er', 268; Horowitz, *Sukkah: Die Festhütte,* 71 n.25, paraphrases the formula as follows: 'Du, der du gesagt hast "Ani hu' .... hilf doch"'.

[117] Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 350.

[118] Stauffer, *Jesus,* 134.

[119] *Ibid.*

m.Sanh 5:5). The rabbinic traditions considered in this study indicate that the expression אני הוא, when it occurs in God's own pronouncements in scriptural proof-texts or innovative explanations (b.RH 17b; PesK 12:25), can function as a succinct self-declaration of divine sovereignty. There is, however, no evidence to support the view that אני הוא (without ו) served as an appellation to be employed by worshippers when addressing God within a liturgical context. Terminological similarities between the two expressions cannot be denied, but, without a clear picture of the original form and meaning of אני והו[א] as recorded in m.Suk 4:5, it proves difficult to determine the nature of its formal resemblance to אני הוא. While הוא in its role as a designation for God can certainly account for והו[א] in this mishnaic tradition, it is possible to interpret the initial אני in one of several ways, since it could represent either אנא or אדני or אני as a divine epithet. At most it can be proposed that the distinctive usage of אני הוא in Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah may have been a significant factor in the development of the use of הוא as a designation for God during the Second Temple period, and that this development contributed, in turn, to the formulation of אני והו[א] as an interpretation of אנא.

Chapter Seven

The Interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Gospel of Mark

An analysis of the Markan use of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form centres on three pronouncements (6:50; 13:6; 14:62). This chapter will seek to examine these declarations, as well as their Synoptic and, in the case of Mark 6:50, Johannine counterparts. Particular attention will be paid to the issue of whether the use of אני הוא as a divine self-declaration, often rendered in the Septuagint as ἐγώ εἰμι, can provide the interpretative key to one or more of these traditions.

1. Jesus Appears to the Disciples as One Walking on the Sea

The Synoptic accounts of Jesus walking on the sea (Mark 6:45-52; Matt. 14:22-33) record the only example of ἐγώ εἰμι with a clear Johannine parallel (6:20). A comparison of these sea-walking narratives should, therefore, aid one in the task of determining the significance attributed by the three evangelists to the words ἐγώ εἰμι,[1] as well as identifying uniquely Johannine elements which disclose key aspects of the Fourth Gospel's interpretation of this phrase.[2] The most significant variations occur at the beginning and end of each pericope, which has led some to view John's briefer account as directly dependent on Mark 6:45-52.[3] But the differences between the two narratives, not all of which

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[1] On Luke's omission of the sea-walking narrative as resulting from 'die große Lücke' (Mark 6:45-8:26), see, e.g., Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit,* 41-44; Pettem, 'Luke's Great Omission', 35-54.

[2] See Chapter 8 below. Among those who stress that John 6:16-21 functions as a sea-*crossing* rather than sea-walking narrative are Giblin, 'The Miraculous Crossing', 96, and Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessor,* 82.

[3] Barrett, *St. John,* 43-45, 279-81; Konings, 'Pre-Markan Sequence in Jn. VI', 168-70.

can be explained as the result of Johannine theological interpretation, indicate that the fourth evangelist, while possibly acquainted with Mark's narrative, is using a source which does not, for example, include the storm-stilling motif. This implies that both evangelists are drawing from different versions of a tradition in which the feeding and sea-walking accounts were already linked together.[4] The more developed version presented by Matthew heightens the miraculous element within the narrative, and although the central section of 14:22-33 is an adaptation of Mark's account, redactional activity is evident in the additional scene of Jesus' encounter with Peter (vv. 28-31).

All three versions set the scene by stressing Jesus' separation from his disciples as he remains alone on the land (Mark 6:47; Matt. 14:23: μόνος). This motif is graphically highlighted by John, who, having already noted the late timing of the crossing (v. 16), adds the theologically motivated comment καὶ σκοτία ἤδη ἐγεγόνει (v. 17b) to indicate that the disciples' departure across the sea involves their temporary movement within the realms of darkness.[5] In addition, the remark that Jesus had not yet come to the disciples (v. 17c: καὶ οὔπω ἐληλύθει πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς), linked to the subsequent description of a great wind swelling the waves by means of τε (v. 18),[6] serves to anticipate the imminent drawing near of Jesus (v. 19: καὶ ἐγγὺς τοῦ πλοίου γινόμενον). The Johannine narrative does not stress the unfavourable conditions to the same extent as its Synoptic counterparts (Mark 6:48; Matt. 14:24), but the reference to a wind swelling the waves plays an important role within the pericope even if its actual ceasing is not described. The stormy weather motif was, in all likelihood, already present in the sources employed by the evangelists, but Mark has concluded his narrative with a reference to the stilling of the wind (v. 51; cf. Matt. 14:32) in order to highlight the element of rescue, a theme which accounts for the widespread definition of the Markan and Matthean passages as 'sea-rescue epiphanies'.[7]

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[4] E.g., Bultmann, *Johannes*, 155. For more detailed discussions, see Brown, *John*, I:238f., 252-54; Painter, 'Jesus and the Quest for Eternal Life', 63-67. On the distinctively Johannine elements in 6:16-25, see Grigsby, 'The Reworking of the Lake-Walking Account', 295-97.

[5] On the Johannine σκοτία motif (v. 17b), see Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, II:34f.; Schwankl, *Licht und Finsternis*, 187-90; Madden, *Jesus' Walking on the Sea*, 108f.

[6] Giblin, 'The Miraculous Crossing', 97.

[7] Theissen, *Urchristliche Wundergeschichten*, 106, 109, 186f.; Kratz, *Rettungswunder*, 277f., 289, 292; Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea*, vii, 17. Although the Markan and Matthean accounts do not indicate whether the disciples are in real danger, the highlighting of the element of distress and lack of progress caused by stormy conditions does suggest that Jesus' coming to the disciples is interpreted as involving their rescue.

John speaks of the position of the boat in terms of the distance travelled (v. 19) rather than its location (Mark 6:47) when Jesus is seen walking ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης. The disciples, according to the two Synoptic narratives, believe that they are encountering a ghost or apparition (Mark 6:49; Matt. 14:26), whereas the Johannine phrasing seems to imply that they actually recognize the figure as Jesus (θεωροῦσιν τὸν Ἰησοῦν περιπατοῦντα).[8] All accounts agree that the words pronounced by Jesus to his disciples are ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε, which probably stem from the core tradition, but are preceded by θαρσεῖτε in Mark 6:50 (cf. Matt. 14:27). The possibility must therefore be considered, when attempting to determine the significance of Jesus' utterance, that ἐγώ εἰμι was attributed a different meaning in the underlying source(s) from its shaping and interpretation in the Markan, Matthean and Johannine accounts. The evangelists may also have viewed the actual function of Jesus' response quite differently from each other, although it clearly performs a pivotal role in all three narratives. For Mark, Jesus' words to the disciples act as a watershed, because key themes and motifs preceding the declaration are now reversed; Jesus, no longer separated from the disciples, gets into the boat πρὸς αὐτοὺς (v. 51) and the storm disappears. Matthew introduces a form of symmetry into the narrative (particularly the use of εὐθέως/εὐθύς in vv. 22, 27, 31), and the addition of the Peter scene means that the words ἐγώ εἰμι now occur in the middle of his account.[9] John uses the distinctive technique of narrating the episode from the perspective of the disciples (vv. 16-19, 21), and Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncement is the only point within the account where he becomes its 'handelndes Subjekt'.[10]

But to what extent is it possible to determine the significance attached by the three evangelists to Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι declaration? Several commentators propose that the phrase serves as a form of self-identification, particularly in the Markan and Matthean passages: 'Take heart, it is I (not the ghost you believe that you saw); do not be afraid'.[11] To interpret ἐγώ εἰμι as the means by which Jesus assures the disciples of his identity is certainly a plausible explanation of these

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[8] *Pace* Barrett, *St. John*, 279; Sanders and Mastin, *St. John*, 183: 'the disciples had not recognised him (after all, it was at night)'.

[9] Gerhardsson, *The Mighty Acts of Jesus*, 57; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, II:496.

[10] Kratz, *Rettungswunder*, 313, 316.

[11] E.g., Hajduk, '*Ego eimi* bei Jesus', 56f.; Howard, *Das Ego Jesu*, 84f.; Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 31. For the view that ἐγώ εἰμι in John 6:20 functions as an expression of self-identification (cf. 9:9), see especially Lindars, *John*, 247, 344; Barrett, *St. John*, 279, 281 (see, however, *idem*, *St. John*, 1955₁, 234); Painter, 'Jesus and the Quest for Eternal Life', 74.

examples of its Synoptic usage. In contrast to extant cases of the bipartite ἐγω εἰμι (e.g., TestJob 29:4; 31:6; **LXX II Sam. 2:20;** John 9:9) and later rabbinic examples of אנא הוא (אני הוא) where an antecedent from an earlier statement or question is implied,[12] none can be derived or is indeed required from the immediate context of Jesus' utterance to the disciples ('It's me'). Some formal resemblance can be detected between Jesus' declaration and Luke 24:39, where the risen Jesus reassures his disciples that they are not seeing a ghost (vv. 37, 39: πνεῦμα), but declares ἴδετε τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός.[13]

Even if one adopts the view that ἐγώ εἰμι serves primarily as an expression of self-identification in these accounts of Jesus' approach on the sea, certain issues must be taken into consideration. First, the importance of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Markan and Matthean narratives is suggested by the fact that Jesus, by means of this phrase, informs his disciples that they are truly seeing him walking on the sea. He does far more than refute the notion that he is a ghost. Heil thus remarks that ἐγώ εἰμι demonstrates that Jesus is identifying himself 'with the revelation of Yahweh's will to save, which is now taking place in his action of walking on the sea'.[14] Secondly, it is inappropriate to regard ἐγώ εἰμι simply as a recognition formula in John's narrative. Not only does the wording of the Johannine text imply that the disciples' fear stems from seeing Jesus walking on the sea, thereby making a declaration of his identity redundant ('It is I'), but the φάντασμα motif is also absent (v. 19). Consequently, while ἐγώ εἰμι in the Synoptic and Johannine narratives can, on one level, be interpreted as a form of self-identification, the revelatory character of Jesus' appearance and words should also be given due consideration.[15]

To determine whether Jesus' pronouncement functions as his medium of

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[12] See further §3 below on Mark 14:62.

[13] According to some textual witnesses (G W 579 *pc* vg), the words ἐγώ εἰμι, μὴ φοβεῖσθε also occur in Luke 24:36, but this appears to be the result of secondary assimilation to Mark 6:50 par. For the view that the declaration ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός in Luke 24:39 relates closely to the absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι, see Geiger, 'Die ἐγώ εἰμι-Worte', 467f., although it is more likely that its primary significance is to stress that the risen Christ is to be identified with Jesus. See further Evans, *Saint Luke*, 919: 'not declarative but probative'; Marshall, *Luke*, 902.

[14] Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea*, 80.

[15] See, e.g., Richter, *'Ani Hu'* und *Ego Eimi'*, 64; Stauffer, *Jesus*, 137; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, II:36, 61, 68; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I:362; Luz, *Matthäus*, 408 ('mehrdimensional'); Blackburn, *Theios Anêr*, 151.

self-revelation,[16] one must enquire whether the words ἐγω εἰμι are revelatory in the sense that they are the vehicle for the disclosure of a new aspect of Jesus' true identity and activity, or should be viewed as a self-revelatory formula closely linked to ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος and similar declarations (e.g., Gen. 17:1; 26:24; Exod. 3:6). Defining the three narratives as depictions of an epiphany, which draw on biblical and ancient Jewish motifs rather than Hellenistic θεῖος ἀνήρ traditions,[17] is often regarded as strengthening the case for interpreting ἐγώ εἰμι as an expression of divine self-revelation. It has been proposed, for example, that an epiphanic motif can be identified in Jesus' act of withdrawal to a mountain (Mark 6:46; Matt. 14:23) to echo the motif of God's descent (cf. Deut. 33:2; Judges 5:4f.; Hab. 3:3),[18] although it has been noted, in response to this suggestion, that the mountain in fact serves as the locale of Jesus' prayer to God, and neither Synoptic narrative highlights Jesus' actual descent to the sea.[19] Furthermore, the enigmatic comment καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς (Mark 6:48), presumably omitted by Matthew, is interpreted by some commentators as a significant aspect of the Markan portrayal of this event as reminiscent of theophanies in which παρέρχομαι denotes God's self-revelation in terms of going past Moses (Exod. 33:19, 22; 34:5f.) and Elijah (I Kings 19:11).[20] However, the 'theophanic' connotations of παρέρχομαι in this passage are rejected by those who regard the Markan secrecy motif or the narrative's focus on deliverance as the key to this comment.[21]

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[16] The following commentators are among those who interpret Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι in the sea-walking narratives as an expression of divine self-revelation:

Mark 6:50: Lohmeyer, *Markus,* 131, 134; Schenke, *Die Wundererzählungen,* 247; Gnilka, *Markus,* I:270; Ritt, 'Der "Seewandel Jesu"', 81; Blackburn, *Theios Anêr,* 148.

Matt. 14:27: Grundmann, *Matthäus,* 368; Kratz, *Rettungswunder,* 296; Davies and Allison, *Matthew,* II:506.

John 6:20: Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 345; Brown, *John,* I:254f.; Schulz, *Johannes,* 98; Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel,* 134.

[17] Betz, 'The Concept of the So-Called "Divine Man"', 278-84; Blackburn, *Theios Anêr,* 145-51. For the view that both Jewish and Greek traditions contributed to the formation of the pre-Markan narrative, see Yarbro Collins, 'Rulers, Divine Men, and Walking on the Water', 207-27.

[18] E.g., Pesch, *Markusevangelium,* I:360.

[19] Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea,* 33 n.5; Blackburn, *Theios Anêr,* 146.

[20] See especially Lohmeyer, 'Und Jesus ging vorüber', 206-24; Berg, *Die Rezeption alttestamentlicher Motive,* 108-44, 328-31; Blackburn, *Theios Anêr,* 149.

[21] Snoy, 'Marc 6,48', 347-63, proposes that it should be viewed as a Markan redactional remark linked to the 'messianic secret'. For an attempt at highlighting the significance of this comment in salvific terms, see Fleddermann, 'And He Wanted to Pass by Them', 389-95. See further van Iersel, 'καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς', 1065-76 (see n.25 below).

But the one motif which, above all others, has been understood as pointing to the Synoptic and Johannine interpretations of this episode as an occasion for divine self-manifestation is Jesus' act of walking on the sea. To view this episode as a demonstration of divine power and authority is suggested by a variety of traditions, for the image of God walking on water expresses his sovereign control over the sea (LXX Job 9:8: καὶ περιπατῶν ὡς ἐπ' ἐδάφους ἐπὶ θαλάσσης; cf. 38:16; Hab. 3:15). Jesus' act can then be understood as an appropriation of God's power, whereas the stormy conditions presuppose the motif of subduing the waters,[22] made explicit by the stilling of the wind (Mark 6:51; Matt. 14:32) and suggested by the sudden arrival of the boat at its destination (John 6:21).

The image of divine authority over the sea also leads one to consider the possible influence of Exodus traditions on the sea-walking narratives, particularly as the fourth evangelist establishes a Passover setting for the feeding of the multitude (6:4).[23] Certain motifs encountered in Exod. 14-15 are echoed in all three accounts, including the strong wind (Exod. 14:21; cf. Mark 6:48; Matt. 14:24; John 6:18), the Israelites' fear (14:10, 31; cf. Mark 6:50; Matt. 14:26; John 6:19) and possibly ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος (LXX Exod. 14:4, 18).[24] Moreover, the Johannine focus on Jesus crossing the sea to enable the disciples to arrive ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (6:21) is reminiscent of the description of the Israelites' rescue in terms of their reaching the other side (cf. Exod. 15:13, 17).

But the most striking similarities exist between Exod. 14-15 and the Markan account, also adopted by Matthew from Mark 6:45-52. Parallel features include the use of θαρσεῖτε (LXX Exod. 14:13; cf. Mark 6:50; Matt. 14:27), the timing ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ τῇ ἐωθινῇ (Exod. 14:24; cf. Mark 6:48; Matt. 14:25) and the location ἐν μέσῳ τῆς θαλάσσης (Exod. 14:29; 15:8, 19; cf. Mark 6:47). Mark may even have been influenced by LXX Exod. 15:16 in his choice of terminology for the phrase καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς (6:48), since the poem describes the fear experienced by the enemy when the people of Israel pass by on the sea (ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ λαός σου, κύριε). This would imply that παρέρχομαι is attributed salvific rather than epiphanic significance in Mark's narrative; Jesus intends to 'pass by' his disciples in order to lead

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[22] Cf. the application of traditional epiphanic motifs in the vision of the man who rises from the sea in 4 Ezra 13:1-13. See Stone, 'The Question of the Messiah in 4 Ezra', 212-14; Hayman, 'The "Man from the Sea" in 4 Ezra 13', 1-16.

[23] For the view that a Passover setting may be implied by the phrase ἐπὶ τῷ χλωρῷ χόρτῳ (Mark 6:39), see Stauffer, *Jesus*, 137; Bammel, 'The Feeding of the Multitude', 219.

[24] See Betz and Grimm, *Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Wunder Jesu*, 55-57, 83f.

them across the sea, but, due to their fears and suspicions (6:49f.), he offers assurance by climbing into the boat.[25]

The distinctive character of the Exodus motifs encountered in Mark's narrative, many of which are absent from the Johannine account, suggests that the evangelist, or a pre-Markan version of this narrative, has consciously incorporated certain terms and motifs from Exod. 14-15 into his presentation of the event.[26] This does not mean that the scene is viewed by Mark as a precise re-enactment of the Exodus events, although certain striking parallels between these narratives do suggest that Mark depicts Jesus as exhibiting the salvific power of God, a power already made manifest on the occasion of the dividing of the Reed Sea, when he walks on the water and rescues his disciples. It is also noteworthy that Exod. 15 portrays the deliverance at the Sea with the aid of an image of God leading his people (v. 13: ὡδήγησας τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου τὸν λαόν σου τοῦτον ὃν ἐλυτρώσω), and related biblical traditions recall the event by speaking of God creating a path through the sea (Ps. 77[76]:20: 'Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were not known'). The image of God leading Israel could evoke the notion of his personal presence, as indeed becomes apparent in several Jewish traditions.[27] The inclusion of motifs firmly established in traditions relating to Israel's crossing of the Sea can, therefore, be regarded as integral to Mark's attempt to present Jesus' act of walking on the sea in terms of a new Exodus.

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[25] Van Iersel, 'καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς', 1074f., proposes that Jesus' aim in 'passing by' was to walk ahead and lead the disciples on. This is interpreted by van Iersel as an attempt by Jesus to take up his position in front of the disciples once more (cf. 8:34; 10:32; 14:28), but it may be the case that Mark seeks to portray Jesus' original intention as passing by in order to guide the disciples to the other side.

[26] Stegner, 'Jesus' Walking on the Water', 217-24, seeks to demonstrate that 'key words, phrases, emotions and structural parallels from the Old Testament story are reused and reenacted' in a pre-Markan version of the narrative (*ibid.*, 215). Exod. 14-15 is also regarded as the interpretative key to the Markan sea-walking narrative by Aus, 'Walking on the Sea', 51-133. While Stegner argues that the Markan account displays a familiarity with LXX Exod. 14-15, Aus identifies sixteen motifs and expressions which he believes are drawn from Palestinian Jewish Christian interpretations (in Hebrew and/or Aramaic) of Exod. 14-15.

[27] For example, Wisdom is described as having brought Israel 'over the Red Sea' and as having 'led them through much waters' (Wisdom 10:18-19). Midrashic traditions, probably of Tannaitic origin, interpret the crossing of the Sea as an occasion for the visible self-manifestation of God: כשנגלה הקב"ה על הים (Mek Shirta 3 on 15:2 [Horovitz-Rabin, 127]). See also the traditions discussed in Chapter 4 §2 (Mek Shirta 4; Mek Bahodesh 5; MRS on Exod. 15:3; PesR 21:6; PesK 12:24; TanB Yitro §16 on Exod. 20:2) and the additional texts noted in Chapter 4 n.20. The following tradition is recorded in the much later PRE 42: 'And they saw the Holy One, blessed be he, walking before them, but the heels of his feet they did not see', followed by a citation of Ps. 77:20.

Images of God enabling his people to cross the sea also figure prominently in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, which brings us to an issue of central concern for this study, namely whether one or more of the sea-walking accounts in the Gospel traditions betrays the influence of certain Deutero-Isaianic images and, in particular, whether Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι can be related directly to the use of this expression in LXX Isaiah to render אני הוא (41:4; 43:10; 46:4; cf. 45:18).[28] Two Deutero-Isaianic themes or motifs are of direct relevance to this discussion. First, Jesus' reassuring words as he approaches his disciples across the sea resemble the use of μὴ φοβοῦ or μὴ φοβεῖσθε to represent אל תירא within oracles of salvation (LXX Isa. 40:9; 44:2, 8; 54:4), even in contexts where אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) declarations occur (41:10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5). Secondly, God proclaims אני הוא on two occasions in Isa. 43 (vv. 10, 13), as well as in the expanded formulation אנכי אנכי הוא מחה פשעיך (ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἐξαλείφων τὰς ἀνομίας σου) in v. 25. Within the same chapter God expresses his promise that he will deliver his people in a way reminiscent of the Exodus: 'When you pass through the waters I will be with you' (Isa. 43:2), for it is he 'who makes a way in the sea (ὁ διδοὺς ὁδὸν ἐν θαλάσσῃ), a path in the mighty waters' (43:16). References to the destruction of the chariot and horse (43:17) also allude to events at the Sea, and the description of God as one guiding his people across the sea is offered as assurance that he will presently do a 'new thing' (v. 19). The promise expressed in Isa. 51:12 (ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ παρακαλῶν σε) is also prefaced by a reminder of past divine activity, including the drying up of the תהום רבה (v. 10a); this leads to the fusion of mythological and historical elements, for the next line speaks of God making 'the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over' (cf. 63:13; Ps. 106:9). As LXX Isaiah adopts ἐγώ εἰμι to render אנכי in 51:12, it is certainly possible that early Christians could have interpreted the strange and rather unstylistic doubling of ἐγώ εἰμι (51:12; 43:25) as indicating that particular significance should be attributed to the second occurrence of the phrase.[29]

The task of determining the role and significance of ἐγώ εἰμι in each of the three sea-walking narratives thus inevitably leads one to consider the extent to

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[28] Although many define Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι as he walks on the sea as a 'self revelatory formula' (see n.16 above), only a few commentators seek to link it directly with the divine pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) in LXX Isaiah. See Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea*, 59; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, II:506; Blackburn, *Theios Anêr*, 148, 151; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 183f.; O'Day, 'John 6:15-21', 155.

[29] See discussions of the use of ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι in Chapter 2 §1 and Chapter 8 §3.

which their use of the expression ἐγώ εἰμι could have prompted one or more of the evangelists to develop their narratives in the light of the Deutero-Isaianic usage of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι), as well as to interpret this expression as a divine self-revelatory formula.

With regard to the Markan presentation of the sea-walking account, it can be noted that Isaianic influence on Mark's Gospel has been analysed in some detail in recent scholarship, including attempts at demonstrating that the evangelist's familiarity with Isaianic traditions was a decisive factor in the formation of his christology.[30] Marcus, for example, proposes that the key role played by Isa. 40:3 in the prologue (Mark 1:1-3) leads to the interlocking of the 'way of the Lord', namely 'Yahweh's triumphal march through the wilderness to Zion in a saving act of holy war on behalf of his people',[31] with the way of Jesus towards his suffering, death and resurrection in Jerusalem. The theme of 'the way', certainly prominent in 8:22-10:52, is not identified by Marcus as having contributed directly to the shaping of the Markan sea-walking narrative, although he does remark that the words καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς may relate to the evangelist's emphasis on the inability of the disciples to prepare Jesus' way and on their helplessness unless he goes before them.[32] Marcus does, moreover, draw attention to the possible influence of 'divine warrior' imagery (cf. Isa. 43:16; Pss. 65:7; 77:16, 20; 107:25-30) on Mark 6:45-52:

> When Jesus quells the power of the sea, strides in triumph across the waves, and announces his presence to the disciples with the sovereign self-identification formula 'I am he' (4:35-41; 6:45-52), he is speaking in and acting out the language of Old Testament divine warrior theophanies, narratives in which Yahweh himself subdues the demonic forces of chaos in a saving, cosmos-creating act of holy war.[33]

Once again, Marcus does not draw the conclusion that Mark's sea-walking narrative relates specifically to the image of the divine warrior in Isa. 43:16 above all other possible biblical and ancient Jewish parallels, nor does he seek to associate ἐγώ εἰμι (6:50) directly to the Deutero-Isaianic use of אני הוא. Hence, in view of the prominence of Exodus motifs in Mark 6:45-52, one possible scenario is that ἐγώ εἰμι was understood by Mark, or already by his

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[30] See especially Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 12-47, 186-96; idem, 'Mark and Isaiah', 449-66. See also Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*, who goes much further than Marcus by claiming that the overall conceptual framework of Mark's Gospel has been modelled on the Isaianic 'new Exodus'.

[31] *The Way of the Lord*, 200.

[32] *Ibid.*, 42f. n.115.

[33] *Ibid.*, 144f.

underlying tradition, as echoing the link established in the poetry of Deutero Isaiah between the divine proclamation of אני הוא and the promise of the exiles' deliverance through the waters as the enactment of a new Exodus. And while there are notable similarities between the statement in Mark 6:50 and the use of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) in LXX Isaiah, an assessment of this phrase as a deliberate reflection on the Deutero-Isaianic pronouncements should not be isolated from the immediate narrative function of Jesus' words to the disciples, nor does it rule out a reading of Mark's narrative as conveying the significance of Jesus' act with the aid of motifs drawn from Exod. 14-15. Indeed, the enigmatic nature of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι declaration lends itself to the evangelist's strategy of presenting the disciples as failing to comprehend the true significance of Jesus' acts of feeding the multitude and walking on the sea (v. 52).[34]

This leads one to consider whether ἐγώ εἰμι is interpreted in Mark 6:50 as a divine self-revelatory formula. In view of the striking resemblance between distinctive phrases and motifs in the Markan pericope and the description of Israel's deliverance through the Sea in Exod. 14-15, it could be the case that the evangelist interpreted ἐγώ εἰμι as an echo of the self-declaration ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος (Exod. 14: 4, 18), although this is quite different from proposing that κύριος has been deliberately omitted by the evangelist.[35] Some caution is, nevertheless, required when describing ἐγώ εἰμι of Mark 6:50 as '*die* alttestamentliche Offenbarungsformel',[36] for the commentators who make such

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[34] See further §2 below.

[35] Aus, 'Walking on the Sea', 90f., suggests that ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 6:50 is directly dependent on the Aramaic renderings of Exod. 14:4 and 18 as " אנא הוא ארום, interpreted as meaning 'that it is I, the Lord'. The divine name was omitted by the Jewish Christian author of the narrative underlying Mark 6:45-52, and this in turn led to the wording אנא הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι). In response to Aus' proposal, it should be noted that the targumic renderings of Exod. 14:4 and 18 cited by him as supporting evidence (FT-P, PsJ: " אנא הוא ארום) are much later than the NT narratives, whereas the same statements are rendered without הוא in O Exod. 14:4 and O/N 14:18. Aus' interpretation is also dependent on explaining the relationship between הוא and " in appositive terms ('I am he, the Lord'), but the grammatical function of this syntactic pattern can also be explained in other ways (see Chapter 3 §3 and Chapter 6 §1). Moreover, Aus does not offer a detailed comparison of the Markan and Johannine usage of ἐγώ εἰμι, nor does he consider the possibility that their underlying sources may have understood ἐγώ εἰμι in isolation from Exod. 14, possibly as an expression of self identification.

[36] See, e.g., Gnilka, *Markus*, I:270; Kratz, *Rettungswunder*, 286; Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 351. These commentators are dependent, in this respect, on Zimmermann's central thesis: 'Das absolute ἐγώ εἰμι im Munde Jesu ist die alttestamentliche Offenbarungsformel' ('Das absolute 'Εγώ εἰμι'', 270). Zimmermann's claim is based on the particular importance he attaches to the fact that LXX Isa. 45:18 renders the underlying אני יהוה as ἐγω εἰμι (see, however, Chapter 2 §1).

claims fail to take into account the variety of divine 'I' formulas found in the Hebrew and Greek Bibles (e.g., Gen. 26:24; Exod. 3:14; 20:2); the central purpose of the divine pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι (אנכי הוא) in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is to convince the exiles of the uncontested sovereignty of Yahweh, more appropriately defined as a divine self-declaration than as a self-revelatory formula.[37] In addition, the presence of the name κύριος immediately points to the role of the statement ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος as a divine self-declaratory formula, but the bipartite expression ἐγώ εἰμι can possess other functions with which Mark is evidently acquainted (cf. 14:62).[38] Thus, regardless of the possibility that Mark interprets Jesus' pronouncement in the light of divine 'I' declarations in biblical traditions (Exod. 14:4, 18; Isa. 43:10, 13), the fact that the expression ἐγώ εἰμι enables Jesus to make himself known as the one who exercises God's power to walk on the sea does suggest that this is a statement of profound significance in the Markan account.

Many of the issues raised with regard to the intended meaning of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark's narrative also apply to its Matthean counterpart, although it is even more difficult to define its precise significance for Matthew due to his adherence to the wording of Mark 6:50.[39] To view 14:27 as an expression of divine self-revelation would, nevertheless, amount to the only such interpretation of the phrase in Matthew's Gospel, for the ἐγώ εἰμι declaration of Mark 13:6 is interpreted by Matthew as a messianic claim (24:5) and Jesus' response to the high priest (Mark 14:62) becomes a more guarded σὺ εἶπας (26:64). Since these Markan instances of ἐγώ εἰμι were clearly at Matthew's disposal, why - if he recognized ἐγώ εἰμι of Mark 6:50 as a revelatory formula - did he modify the other statements?[40] Due to the actual structure of the Matthean sea-walking pericope the declaration ἐγώ εἰμι occurs at its centrepoint, and it must be evaluated in the light of the additional scene between Jesus and Peter, as well as the disciples' climactic confession (v. 33). The three stages within the Matthean narrative (Jesus' act of walking on the sea, his encounter with Peter, the final confession) are linked together by three similarly formulated statements: ἐγώ εἰμι (v. 27), εἰ σὺ εἶ (v. 28) and ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ (v. 33). Peter's εἰ σὺ εἶ (v. 28) certainly echoes the immediately preceding ἐγώ εἰμι, but it could

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[37] See Chapter 1 §§2, 3.

[38] See §3 below.

[39] Cf. Davies, 'A Different Approach to Jamnia', 394 n.2.

[40] Furthermore, ἐγώ εἰμι serves as a form of self identification in Matt. 26:22 (μήτι ἐγώ εἰμι, κύριε) and 26:25 (μήτι ἐγώ εἰμι, ῥαββί), whose antecedents are εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με (v. 21) and ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος (v. 24) respectively.

simply mean 'it is you' rather than represent a confessional response to ἐγώ εἰμι. Jesus' demonstration of his ability to rescue Peter and to calm the wind prompts the disciples to make a confession of faith, thereby demonstrating that the Matthean redaction of Mark 6:45-52 brings about a certain shift of focus in order to make the worship (cf. 28:17) of Jesus as θεοῦ υἱὸς the high point of the narrative. In other words, the Matthean sea-walking account is intended to exemplify the divine authority and salvific power of Jesus as the Son of God, and it clearly prepares the way for Peter's confession in 16:16 (σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος).[41] What is more difficult to determine, however, is whether Matthew has consciously interpreted Jesus' declaration of ἐγώ εἰμι in the light of the divine pronouncement of אני הוא.

This leads one finally to consider the meaning of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Johannine pericope. With regard to the flow of the narrative, the phrase could certainly be described as a form of self-identification, a syntactic function with which John is also evidently familiar (cf. 9:9). But a certain amount of ambiguity surrounds this occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι, which, in view of the fourth evangelist's capacity for double meanings, suggests that it performs other functions within his sea-crossing account. The absence of the φάντασμα motif, as well as the strong possibility that the narrator assumes that the disciples recognize the approaching figure as Jesus, lead one to suspect that the adoption of the declaration ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε from his tradition prompted the evangelist to isolate it as a statement of particular importance. O'Day's proposal that the depiction of the disciples' response (6:19: ἐφοβήθησαν) is suggestive of fearful awe in the presence of the divine rather than terror at the sight of a 'ghost' (Mark 6:50; Matt. 14:26: ἐταράχθησαν) also supports the view that the Johannine account interprets Jesus' words as an expression of divine self-manifestation.[42] And despite the warning expressed by Barrett that the reading of this pronouncement in the light of other Johannine occurrences of the 'absolute' ἐγώ εἰμι (especially 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19) should be resisted,[43] an overly atomistic approach can also lead to the isolation of 6:20 from those statements where the

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[41] See, for example, De Kruijf, *Der Sohn des lebendigen Gottes*, 76-80; Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, 40-127; Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, 35-37, 97-100.

[42] O'Day, 'John 6:15-21', 154.

[43] *St. John*, 281

theological potential of the expression is more explicitly developed.[44] The possibility should not, therefore, be prematurely ruled out that John's creative handling of the declaration ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε yields important insights into the overall significance of the expression in the Fourth Gospel.

The presence of ἐγώ εἰμι in the traditional material known to the fourth evangelist may, accordingly, have inspired him to develop an interpretative strategy which involves understanding the phrase in the light of its Deutero-Isaianic usage as a form of divine self-expression, and this, in turn, could have led to the introduction of other Isaianic motifs into the sea-crossing account. Some uniquely Johannine elements within the narrative can be understood as betraying Isaianic influence, including the portrayal of Jesus' drawing to his disciples as an act of guidance through darkness.[45] But it is the concluding features of the narrative that are of greatest relevance, because the depiction of this event as a sea-crossing bears closest resemblance, as will now be demonstrated, to an image of the new Exodus primarily associated with the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah.

The Johannine account portrays the outcome of events on the sea in a quite different manner from its Synoptic counterparts, for the disciples suddenly find that they have reached the other side (v. 21). Both Mark (6:53) and Matthew (14:34) note the eventual arrival of the boat at its destination, but they choose to focus on the stilling of the wind, after Jesus joins the disciples in the boat, as the immediate consequence of his approach. Should the sudden landing be viewed as a kind of miraculous appendage to John's narrative, or is it presented as the direct result of the encounter between Jesus and his disciples and their response to that encounter? This final scene is frequently compared with Ps. 107(106):29-30 ('he [God] made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed; then they were glad because they had quiet, and he brought them

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[44] See further Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 179-81; Brinktrine, 'Die Selbstaussage Jesu', 35; Betz, 'Der Name als Offenbarung des Heils', 404; Madden, *Jesus' Walking on the Sea*, 112.

[45] In view of the earlier reference to σκοτία (v. 17b), it is significant that the themes of darkness/light and divine guidance are combined in Isa. 42:16: 'And I will lead the blind in a way that they know not, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground'. Once again, the images of light and darkness figure prominently in Isaianic passages (e.g., 9:1; 42:6-7; 49:9; 58:10; 59:9; 60:1-3), which could have influenced the Johannine use of this imagery. See further Bauckham, 'Qumran and the Fourth Gospel', 277f.

to their desired haven'),[46] but no firm terminological parallels exist between this Psalm text and John 6:21, whereas the image of stilling the storm is not even expressed in the Johannine account. The description of the disciples' arrival, with no reference to Jesus having climbed into the boat, may rather have been influenced by the Deutero-Isaianic portrayal of God as one who creates a path or way through the sea and who guides his people to their destined land (43:16; 51:10). The assurance of God's personal presence with his people (LXX Isa. 43:2: καὶ ἐὰν διαβαίνῃς δι' ὕδατος, μετὰ σοῦ εἰμι; cf. v. 5: μὴ φοβοῦ, ὅτι μετὰ σοῦ εἰμι) is also reminiscent of the close link established in John's narrative between the drawing near of Jesus (v. 19) and the immediate outcome of his presence with the disciples. Thus, in the same way as God's presence with his people as they cross the waters cannot be isolated from the manifestation of his unique ability to guide and deliver to safety, it can be proposed that John depicts Jesus' approach in terms of making the sea crossable for his followers and leading them ashore.

The Johannine presentation of the sea-crossing narrative attributes a distinctively salvific significance to the episode, and, in this respect, it discloses a key aspect of the evangelist's overall understanding of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι (as will be demonstrated in Chapter 8). The narrative should not be viewed as a theophany which displays no interest in the element of rescue,[47] for Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι also serves to disclose his saving presence. And although the struggle against stormy conditions is not made as explicit here as in the Synoptic narratives (Mark 6:48: βασανιζομένους ἐν τῷ ἐλαύνειν; cf. Matt. 14:24), the reference to a great wind causing turbulence on the sea (v. 18) contributes to the depiction of the disciples' separation from Jesus as an experience of insecurity and darkness (cf. 12:46), dramatically transformed as a result of his approach with the words ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε. This may once again suggest the influence of the Deutero-Isaianic understanding of אני הוא as an assertion of God's presence and salvific activity (41:4; 43:10-13; 46:4; 48:12). God defends his sovereignty by reminding the exiles of his past acts of deliverance and by expressing his promise of future salvation, and Jesus' proclamation of ἐγώ εἰμι conveys a form of divine self-manifestation which cannot be divorced from his power to deliver those who believe in him. This explains why Jesus' declaration is immediately followed by the sudden arrival

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[46] E.g., Lindars, *John*, 248; Soards, 'The Psalter in the Text and the Thought of the Fourth Gospel', 264. Cf. Testament of Naphtali 6:9.

[47] *Pace* O'Day, 'John 6:15-21', 153f., 155.

of the boat ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, for it echoes the image of Israel's God as one who guides and saves his people by creating a way 'for the redeemed to pass over' (Isa. 51:10). The Johannine Jesus walks on the sea in order to create a way for his disciples to the other side, a way made possible through, and cannot be separated from, the drawing near of his presence.[48]

The salvific significance attached to this event is also made apparent by the fact that the Johannine description of the disciples' response to Jesus' words (v. 21a) is followed by a reference to the sudden landing at their intended destination (v. 21b). Both statements are joined together by καὶ εὐθέως, indicating that the disciples reach the land immediately after they express their desire to take Jesus into the boat (ἤθελον οὖν λαβεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον). Although this remark could be interpreted as meaning that 'they were glad to take him into the boat' (cf. 1:43; 5:35), it is probably intended as an expression of unfulfilled intention on the part of the disciples; 'they wanted to take him into the boat' (cf. 7:44; 16:19), but found that they had already reached the shore.

John's choice of vocabulary to describe the disciples' reaction points to their eagerness to receive him (λαβεῖν αὐτὸν) - a term frequently used to convey a positive response to Jesus (cf. 1:12; 5:43; 13:20) - and this stands in sharp contrast to the crowd's desire to take him by force to make him king (v. 15: καὶ ἁρπάζειν αὐτὸν). The immediate result of this acceptance is the arrival of the boat on the shore, a narrative feature described by Giblin as implying that both Jesus' self-declaration (ἐγώ εἰμι) and the willingness to receive Jesus enable his followers to reach their destination.[49] This description of a safe arrival, presented as the direct outcome of Jesus' self-revelation and saving presence, strongly indicates that the sea-crossing narrative is already designed by the fourth evangelist as one which anticipates the primary function of the 'absolute' ἐγώ εἰμι in subsequent narratives as a succinct expression of Jesus' identity as the one who offers the Father's gift of eternal life to those who receive him.

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[48] Witkamp, 'Some Specific Johannine Features in John 6:1-21', 51-56, seeks to interpret the Johannine sea-crossing narrative as a reflection of the situation of the post-Easter church. He pays particular attention to the way in which this account echoes Jesus' reassuring statements to his disciples in the Farewell Discourse, and identifies a possible link between the phrase εἰς ἣν ὑπῆγον (6:21) and such declarations as ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς (14:6). Indeed, it is possible that the Johannine use of ὁδός (cf. 1:23; 14:4, 5), even as a self-designation for Jesus, is a further example of Isaianic influence on the Fourth Gospel (cf. LXX Isa. 8:23; 40:3; 42:16; 43:16, 19; 48:17; 51:10).

[49] 'The Miraculous Crossing', 98.

2. Many will come in my name, saying ἐγώ εἰμι

The second occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark's Gospel appears in the opening section of the eschatological discourse, where Jesus issues a series of warnings about future events. The repetition of βλέπετε is meant to signify that the end is not yet (13:5-8, 9-13, 21-23), but there is need for vigilance (13:33-37). The first 'event' depicted in all three Synoptic versions of this discourse is the appearance of deceivers proclaiming the words ἐγώ εἰμι (Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8b), a declaration phrased by Matthew as ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ χριστός (24:5). Striking correspondence between Matt. 24:4-8/Luke 21:8-11a and Mark 13:5-8 points to Matthean and Lukan dependence on Mark's discourse, for, apart from the addition of ὁ χριστός by Matthew and ὁ καιρὸς ἤγγικεν by Luke (21:8),[50] only minor variations separate their versions from the Markan statement, which reads: πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν. Determining the meaning of this declaration is evidently dependent on acquiring a proper understanding of the phrases ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου and ἐγώ εἰμι, and it seems that the one cannot be explained in isolation from the other. Previous analyses of Mark 13:6 have led to several explanations of these two phrases, of which the following are among the most significant.

First, it has been proposed that ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου means 'under my authority', and the statement refers to figures claiming to be sent by Jesus and speaking in his name.[51] The referents in v. 6 are consequently viewed as Christians whose claims reflect a situation similar to the one depicted in II Thessalonians 2, which warns against the excitement caused by the declaration of false teachers that the end has arrived (2:2: ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου). ἐγώ εἰμι, according to Manson, represents the claim made by certain Christian believers that the parousia has arrived and 'the Messiah has come': 'The' Εγώ....is not the ἐγώ of the individual speaker, but the ἐγώ of Jesus Christ'.[52] However, the suggestion that ἐγώ εἰμι could be uttered by individuals with reference to Jesus rather than themselves is problematic, as this interpretation of the phrase would probably be too veiled for Mark's readers,

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[50] The concluding remark in Mark 13:6 (καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν) is also transformed into a direct admonition in Luke 21:8: μὴ πορευθῆτε ὀπίσω αὐτῶν. On the relationship between Mark 13:5-8 and Luke 21:8-11, see Zmijewski, *Die Eschatologiereden des Lukasevangeliums*, 98-128; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1324-29.

[51] Manson, 'The ἐγώ εἰμι of the Messianic Presence', 138-40.

[52] *Ibid.*, 139.

particularly as all other occurrences of the bipartite ἐγώ εἰμι in Gospel traditions are declarations made by the speaker about himself.[53]

Secondly, the proposed role of ἐγώ εἰμι as the vehicle for an individual's self-claims accounts for the alternative interpretation of ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου as 'claiming to be me' or 'requisitioning my name/title'.[54] This is the view adopted by most interpreters, although some envisage a non-Christian context and others regard Mark 13:6 as a warning against deceivers claiming to be the returning Jesus. The latter view presupposes that ἐγώ εἰμι acts as a formula of self-identification with reference to Jesus, and reflects a situation which arose within the Christian community (cf. Acts 20:29f.; I John 2:18).[55] But no clear evidence can be adduced for the appearance of such Christian pretenders, for Acts 20:30 offers a description of ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα without making a specific reference to people claiming to be Jesus, nor is there any indication in Mark 13:6 that only Christian believers are among the 'many' who will be led astray.[56]

A further possibility is that Mark 13:6 depicts those who will present themselves as independent figures and attempt to usurp that which Jesus claims for himself ('with my name'), the title 'Messiah'.[57] It would then follow that ἐγώ εἰμι functions as a declaration in which ὁ χριστός is implied, as supported by the Matthean reading (24:5). This interpretation points to Jewish rather than Christian pretenders, and the description bears close resemblance, due to the prominence of πλανάω in both contexts, to the warnings expressed in vv. 21-22 against listening to those who exclaim ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός and against being led astray by ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται who

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[53] See further Taylor, *St. Mark,* 504; Kümmel, *Verheißung und Erfüllung,* 92 n.40; Hooker, *St. Mark,* 307.

[54] See especially Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu,* 63. Cf. also Cranfield, *Saint Mark,* 395; Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse,* 96-100; Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days,* 391.

[55] Schweizer, *Markus,* 153f.

[56] Yarbro Collins, 'The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13', 15, also argues that to view this statement as one attributed to early Christian prophets fails to account for the natural progression from this first warning to the prediction of wars and famine. Hooker, *St. Mark,* 307f., also states that vv. 7-8 can be interpreted as a description of the inevitable consequences of Jewish messianic uprisings (v. 6)

[57] Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 185 n.1; Pesch, *Markusevangelium,* II:279, 437. Cranfield, *Saint Mark,* 395, paraphrases the declaration as follows: 'Many shall come arrogating to themselves the name and prerogatives of the Messiah, which by right are mine, and claiming to be Messiah'.

perform signs and wonders.[58] Important evidence for the existence of such Jewish claimants to messianic and prophetic status is provided by Josephus (as will be noted below) and by some early Christian traditions (Acts 5:36; 21:38). The term πολλοί also implies several pretenders, possibly a series of individuals who appeared over an extended period of time; this statement (and vv. 21-23) may even reflect the present threat posed by such figures, whereas the phrase ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου expresses their usurpation of claims which, from the perspective of Mark and his readers, belong exclusively to Jesus.

It seems pertinent at this point to assess the widespread proposal that ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 13:6 means 'I am he, the Messiah'. This interpretation assumes that the phrase ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου reflects a specific name or title, and that, in view of the similarities between this declaration and subsequent references to ψευδόχριστοι (vv. 21-22), the title in question is ὁ χριστός. The possibility should, nevertheless, be considered that the wording of this formulation as ἐγώ εἰμι is not intended to relate to an individual title. The πολλοί of v. 6 may well offer a general depiction of those mentioned in vv. 21-22, but this second passage describes the appearance of ψευδόχριστοι and ψευδοπροφῆται, and it cannot be ruled out that pseudo-prophetic figures were also regarded as fitting into the scheme of deceivers declaring ἐγώ εἰμι. In addition, Matthew's reading (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ χριστός) represents a subsequent attempt at clarification of the Markan statement,[59] and the assumption that Mark 13:6 implies the title ὁ χριστός involves an interpretative elaboration not borne out by its immediate context. Mark's aim may have been to present ἐγώ εἰμι as an expression of the deceivers' claim to messianic status, but the absence of an explicitly stated name or title can also point to a deliberate strategy on the part of the evangelist, in the sense that this enigmatic ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form is assigned a particular function in relation to the disclosure of Jesus' identity and authority.

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[58] See Taylor, *St. Mark*, 502; Howard, *Das Ego Jesu*, 120f. The close links between vv. 5b-6 and vv. 21-23 have been interpreted as forming an *inclusio* (see Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse*, 168f.; Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, 109), while Yarbro Collins, 'The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13', 28, argues that the discourse contains a three-stage eschatological sequence (vv. 5-13, 14-23, 24-27) and proposes that 'the two predictions [vv. 5b-6, 21-23] do not concern the same persons, the same events, or the same historical situation, but that the experiences upon which the first is based, along with tradition, provide a model for the second'.

[59] Luke 21:8 does not modify the words ἐγώ εἰμι (Mark 13:6), but the addition of ὁ καιρὸς ἤγγικεν suggests that Luke understands the ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncement as denoting a claim made by those who believe that their appearance signifies the drawing near of ὁ καιρός. See further Zmijewski, *Die Eschatologiereden des Lukasevangeliums*, 100f., 106f., 114-19.

If those of whom Jesus warns are attempting to usurp his name or authority, how should their use of the words ἐγώ εἰμι be interpreted? A possible clue may lie in the preponderance of apocalyptic motifs which can be identified in vv. 5-8,[60] since Jesus declares that all will occur according to God's plan (v. 7: δεῖ γενέσθαι; cf. LXX Dan. 2:28f.; 8:19; Rev. 1:1; 22:6); the disciples are not to be alarmed by such events, for τὸ τέλος is not yet (cf. Dan. 12:4, 9, 13). The leading astray of many is also a well-established apocalyptic motif,[61] especially as a characteristic trait of the anti-messianic figure. This has led Hartman, who proposes that significant portions of Mark 13 (vv. 5b-8, 12-16, 19-22, 24-27) originally formed a kind of 'midrash' on the book of Daniel, to claim that the ἐγώ εἰμι declaration in v. 6 has been inspired by descriptions of the self-exaltation of the horn (Dan. 7:25; 8:11-12, 25; 11:36-37),[62] and that it belongs to a long line of apocalyptic traditions in which the eschatological adversary presents himself as divine.[63] Danielic influence on Mark 13 cannot be denied, but certain issues with regard to the inclusion of ἐγώ εἰμι within the proposed apocalyptic scenario of the discourse need to be explored.

First, it must be noted that apocalyptic traditions consistently depict an individual figure as making blasphemous claims, but Mark 13:6 draws attention to the appearance of several deceivers. The solution offered by Hartman is that the discourse presents the eschatological adversary as made up of three phenomena whose appearance will precede the coming of the Son of man (v. 26), namely the πολλοί (v. 6), τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v. 14) and false messiahs and prophets who will perform σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα (v. 22).[64] But this proposal is dependent on the combination of three Markan statements to form a single and coherent image. Secondly, no Jewish or early Christian apocalyptic tradition can be identified in which the anti-messianic figure seeks to assert his divinity by means of the bipartite ἐγώ εἰμι. It has been suggested that a close parallel to Mark 13:6 occurs in the *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:6-7, where the leading astray of many by Beliar is described as closely

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[60] For a detailed discussion of the motifs in Mark 13 that are characteristic of apocalypses, see Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 23-101.

[61] II Thess. 2:11; Rev. 2:20; 13:14; SibOr 3:68f.; TestMoses 7:4. See Braun, 'πλανάω', 242, 247-50.

[62] *Prophecy Interpreted*, 159-62.

[63] Cf., e.g., II Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5-6; Did. 16:4; SibOr 5:33-34. On these traditions, see Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend*, 160ff.; Ernst, *Die eschatologischen Gegenspieler*, 35-40.

[64] Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 202-5, 235. Cf. also Stauffer, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 194f.

linked to his blasphemous claims: 'He will act and speak like the Beloved, and will say, 'I am God, and before me there was no one'; and all men in the world will believe in him'.[65] However, Beliar's claim takes the form 'I am God' rather than the equivalent of ἐγώ εἰμι in the surviving Ethiopic version of this passage. But Hartman interprets the Danielic image of self-exaltation echoed in Mark 13:6 has having been fused with blasphemous 'I' declarations attributed to Babylon (Isa. 47:8, 10: אני ואפסי עוד; LXX: ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἑτέρα) and Nineveh (Zeph. 2:15),[66] for although Deutero-Isaiah distinguishes between the divine pronouncement of אני הוא and Babylon's attempt at imitation (אני), both forms are rendered as ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah.

The suggestion that ἐγώ εἰμι is viewed as a false claim to divinity means that close attention must be paid to the function of this phrase in Mark 13:6. The meaning attributed to ἐγώ εἰμι clearly cannot be divorced from the immediately preceding ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου; if the πολλοί are depicted as endeavouring to compete with Jesus for his unique role, one must seek to establish whether his own utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι could be interpreted here as representing a claim to divinity. In other words, if Babylon's use of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני) imitates God's own pronouncement (אני הוא), is it conceivable that Mark interprets the deceivers' declaration of ἐγώ εἰμι as an usurpation of Jesus' own claim to 'the divine revelatory formula',[67] one which ultimately takes the form אני הוא?[68] It can be remarked, in immediate response to this question, that not all declarations in Mark's eschatological discourse are necessarily dependent on apocalyptic motifs, particularly if it means resorting to the citation of Babylon's blasphemous claim as the interpretative key to the use of ἐγώ εἰμι by a group of human deceivers. One must moreover ask whether firm evidence can be adduced for the interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) as an *Offenbarungsformel* in Mark 13:6, particularly as it occurs in isolation from other themes which could betray Deutero-Isaianic influence and strengthen a link with אני הוא. The previous section sought to demonstrate that ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 6:50 is theologically significant not necessarily because it must be viewed as a divine

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[65] See especially Stauffer, *Jesus*, 138.

[66] *Prophecy Interpreted*, 160f. See Lohmeyer, *Markus*, 270 n.4; Feuillet, 'Les *ego eimi* christologiques', 224.

[67] This is the interpretation favoured by Lohmeyer, *Markus*, 270f.; Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 185; Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, 110f. (but cf. *idem*, *Markusevangelium*, II:279, where he concludes that ἐγώ εἰμι in 13:6 amounts to an 'Identitätsproklamation'); Gnilka, *Markus*, II:186f.

[68] Stauffer, *Jesus*, 137; Daube, 'The "I Am" of the Messianic Presence', 325; Klein, 'Vorgeschichte und Verständnis', 124f.

revelatory formula with parallels in biblical traditions, but because it is the medium whereby Jesus identifies himself as one who possesses unique power and authority to walk on the sea. If, moreover, the statement in v. 6 is closely related to vv. 21-22, one may also enquire whether Mark presupposes actual experiences of such figures and, if problems caused by specific historical circumstances are being addressed,[69] whether independent evidence can be adduced which casts light on the nature of the claims made by first-century pretenders to messianic and prophetic status.

Josephus' descriptions of the leaders of popular prophetic and messianic movements are most valuable in this respect, for despite the lack of specific information in Mark 13:21-22 about the claims or activity of those described, recent analyses have shown that Josephus distinguishes clearly between these two groups of figures. He speaks of the appearance of sizeable movements after the death of Herod the Great (4 BCE) and during the turbulent years of the first Jewish war (66-70 CE) led by figures whose claims were reportedly expressed and popularly recognized in terms of kingship.[70] And, despite Josephus' avoidance of traditional messianic language (including the title χριστός) in his portrayal of these figures, the identification of certain 'Davidic' features in his depiction of their origins and military activity, particularly in the case of Simon bar Giora, implies that they assumed for themselves the role of the anointed king of Israel.[71]

Josephus' accounts also include reports of the activities of several prophetic figures who, during the middle years of the first century CE, acquired a significant number of followers.[72] Claims to prophetic status are made explicit

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[69] For the view that vv. 5b-6, 21-23 reflect historical events associated with the first Jewish war, see especially Marcus, 'The Jewish War', 446-48; Yarbro Collins, 'The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13', 6f., 15-18, 28.

[70] The three individuals linked to the period after 4 BCE, and who claimed for themselves the title 'king', are Judas the son of Hezekiah (*Ant.* 17.271-72), Simon (17.273-77) and Athronges (17.278-85). Royal pretensions are also associated with Menahem the son of Judas the Galilean who, during the summer of 66 CE, returned to Jerusalem 'as a king' (*BJ* 2.434) and later appeared in the Temple dressed in royal robes (*BJ* 2.444). Those who followed the Jewish leader Simon bar Giora are, furthermore, said to have 'obeyed him like a king' (*BJ* 4.510), while the description of his appearance in white tunics and a purple mantle when he was captured by the Romans (*BJ* 7:29-31) suggests that he arrayed himself in royal garments. On Josephus' depiction of these 'messianic' figures, see Horsley, 'Popular Messianic Movements', 471-95; *idem*, '"Messianic" Figures and Movements', 285-93.

[71] See Horsley, *ibid.*, 286, 288; cf. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, 304-6.

[72] See Barnett, 'The Jewish Sign Prophets', 679-97; Horsley, 'Like One of the Prophets of Old', 454-63; *idem*, 'Popular Prophetic Movements', 3-27; Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine*, 112-44.

in the case of Theudas (προφήτης γὰρ ἔλεγεν εἶναι, *Ant.* 20.97) and the Egyptian (προφήτης εἶναι λέγων, 20.169); both figures and certain unnamed individuals are negatively assessed by Josephus as ψευδοπροφῆται and γόητες.[73] Theudas is described as a γόης who called upon many to follow him to the Jordan river, which, by his command, would miraculously part to allow them to cross to the other side (*Ant.* 20.97). Thus, whereas God acted through Moses and parted the sea during the Exodus from Egypt and, through Joshua, divided the Jordan river to secure entry into the promised land, Josephus depicts Theudas as seeking to present himself as God's chosen agent by re-entering the land from the other side of the Jordan to secure the deliverance of the Jews from Roman oppression. Josephus' portrays other prophetic figures leading their followers into the desert,[74] especially 'the Egyptian' who called a large group to follow him to the Mount of Olives (*Ant.* 20.169). According to the parallel account in *BJ* 2.261-63, the wilderness is the Egyptian's point of departure, for, having gathered a crowd in the countryside, they are said to have accompanied him from the desert (περιαγαγὼν δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐκ τῆς ἐρημίας) to the Mount of Olives (cf. Acts 21:38). Only the *Antiquities* narrative states that he promised to cause the walls of Jerusalem to fall down (20.170), which again suggests that the promise of participation in the city's liberation is patterned on the conquest of Jericho (Josh. 6:20). Hence, Josephus' accounts of the activities of Theudas and the Egyptian as modelled on past events include references to their initial gathering in the wilderness.

Other popular prophets, but not Theudas and the Egyptian, are described as promising to carry out miraculous signs. A group of unnamed figures who were active during the procuratorship of Felix reportedly claimed to be able to perform τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα in anticipation of divine deliverance (*Ant.* 20:168), and a parallel report describes their promises that God would give 'signs of freedom' in the desert (σημεῖα ἐλευθερίας, *BJ* 2.259).[75] Josephus

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[73] In addition to Theudas and the Egyptian, the following characters are described as ψευδοπροφῆται, γόητες or πλάνοι ἄνθρωποι: i) a nameless group who were active during the time of Felix (*BJ* 2.259; *Ant.* 20.167); ii) an unnamed impostor during the time of Festus (*Ant.* 20.188); iii) a figure who led people to the Temple shortly before its destruction (*BJ* 6.285).

[74] Cf. *BJ* 2.259; 7.438; *Ant.* 20.167, 188. See also Trumbower, 'The Historical Jesus and the Speech of Gamaliel', 513 n.38.

[75] Cf. *BJ* 6.285 where Josephus states that the death of six thousand people in Jerusalem was caused by a ψευδοπροφήτης who proclaimed that God was commanding the people to go up to the Temple court to receive 'the signs of deliverance' (τὰ σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας). Josephus also gives an account of the activity of a refugee from Palestine

also employs 'signs' vocabulary to describe some of the miracles performed by Moses (*Ant.* 2.274, 327; cf. *Ap.* 2.145, 161), but Gray has recently shown that Josephus uses the term σημεῖα in his accounts of the Exodus to denote 'authenticating prophetic signs' rather than the miraculous acts performed at the Sea and in the wilderness;[76] this specific application of the term can also illuminate Josephus' depiction of first-century prophets who promised to carry out σημεῖα as proof that their *message* of imminent liberation came from God. However, the absence of references to σημεῖα in connection with the activities of Theudas and the Egyptian, as well as the fact that they alone are depicted by Josephus as claiming the title προφήτης and modelling themselves on individual figures from the past, is taken as evidence that they are described as actually promising to bring about rather than simply announcing deliverance.[77] In the same way as Moses and Joshua acted as God's agents by securing freedom from Egypt, creating a way through the wilderness and entry into the promised land, Josephus describes Theudas and the Egyptian as attempting to pattern their activities on these decisive events and as claiming to initiate a new Exodus and/or conquest of the land.

To what extent, therefore, can Josephus' descriptions of the leaders of messianic and prophetic movements illuminate the admonitions about the future appearance of deceivers declaring ἐγώ εἰμι (Mark 13:6) and those performing σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα (13:22)? It is significant that the Markan designations ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται accord, at least in broad terms, with the two first-century groups whose activity is commented upon by Josephus. But caution is needed when citing his stylized portrayals, for they are influenced by his own historiographical concerns and coloured by his negative assessment of these figures. Recent scholarship may have demonstrated that two different types of leadership are described in Josephus' accounts, namely 'messianic' figures claiming to be kings, but to whom no signs are attributed, and 'sign

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named Jonathan (after 70 CE), who is reported to have led his followers from Cyrene into the wilderness in order to show them σημεῖα καὶ φάσματα (*BJ* 7.438).

[76] Gray, *Prophetic Figures,* 125-30, notes that the term σημεῖα is employed by Josephus for the three miracles taught to Moses at the burning bush (*Ant.* 2.274-86), but such great miracles as the parting of the Sea are described by him as ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ θεοῦ and παράλογος σωτηρία (*Ant.* 2.339). This is quite different from the LXX usage of σημεῖα (and τέρατα) to describe the whole complex of miracles associated with the Exodus (e.g., Deut. 4:34; 7:19; 26:8). Thus, Josephus uses the term σημεῖα for prophetic signs that are meant to convince others of one's role as the agent sent by God (cf. also *Ant.* 8.230-45; 10.28). See further Betz, 'Miracles in the Writings of Flavius Josephus', 223-25.

[77] *Prophetic Figures,* 131f.

prophets' whose activity involved retreating into the wilderness,[78] but Mark attributes σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα to messianic and prophetic pretenders without outlining their distinguishing features. And even if Josephus, as proposed by Gray, differentiates between 'prophets' acting as messengers and those, like Theudas and the Egyptian, who claimed to bring about the awaited deliverance, it does not necessarily follow that Mark applies the same distinction when referring to those making claims for themselves (13:6) and those carrying out miraculous acts (13:22), although this possibility should not be totally ruled out. The compound phrase σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα may well denote authenticating signs in v. 22, but if Mark was familiar with episodes relating to Theudas and the Egyptian, he could also have viewed their activities modelled on past acts of deliverance as constituting false σημεῖα.

Certain aspects of the information provided by Josephus do, nevertheless, suggest that Mark 13:5b-6 and 21-22 reflect concrete experiences of such movements. Consistent references by Josephus to messianic pretenders and pseudo-prophets as having attracted a large following are reminiscent of the warning that 'many' will be led astray (v. 6). In addition, Josephus' negative assessment of such figures (ψευδοπροφῆται and γόητες), whose overthrow by the Romans meant that they failed in their aims and could not have been God's messengers, accords with Mark's description of the activities of pretenders in terms of πλανάω (13:5b-6, 22). Although Mark 13:21 provides no details when it is predicted that there will be rumours about the appearance of ὁ χριστός (ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, ἴδε ἐκεῖ, μὴ πιστεύετε), Matthew's version of the parallel Q logion inserted into his eschatological discourse does specify that such events are associated with the wilderness (24:26: ἰδοὺ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐστίν, μὴ ἐξέλθητε),[79] and 'the Egyptian' is described in Acts 21:38 as having led people out into the wilderness.

A significant aspect of Josephus' accounts, at least from the perspective of this study, is that they may provide some valuable clues with regard to the description of pretenders proclaiming ἐγώ εἰμι (Mark 13:6). Josephus' portrayals of claimants to kingship point to their attempt to fulfil Davidic

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[78] As part of his attempt to gather first-century Jewish evidence for the view that the Davidic Messiah was expected to perform 'signs and wonders', Blackburn (*Theios Anêr*, 250) notes that the intention of the Egyptian, according to Josephus, was to rule over the people (τοῦ δήμου τυραννεῖν) after entering Jerusalem (*BJ* 2.262).

[79] For the view that Matt. 24:26 is closer to the original form of the Q logion than its Lukan counterpart where no specific locale is mentioned (17:23: ἰδοὺ ἐκεῖ, ἢ ἰδοὺ ὧδε), see Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 200.

messianic hopes and false prophets are said to have acted 'under the pretence of divine inspiration' (προσχήματι θειασμοῦ, *BJ* 2.259), but there is no suggestion that the leaders of popular messianic and prophetic movements claimed to be divine. This is not to deny that they could have sought to attract followers by making self-claims concerning their authority, for Josephus, who rarely cites individuals' pronouncements in direct speech, provides only the briefest of descriptions of their movements and activity. Some NT commentators have even attempted to gather supporting evidence for the 'I' claims of pretenders on the basis of Acts 5:35-36, where Gamaliel, in his comparison of Jesus with others who eventually met their death, firstly draws attention to Theudas 'giving himself out to be somebody' (λέγων εἶναί τινα ἑαυτόν). A textual variant in Codex Bezae adds μέγαν, although this is probably due to the influence of the comment that Simon Magus had previously practised magic in Samaria λέγων εἶναί τινα ἑαυτὸν μέγαν (Acts 8:9). It has been proposed that, if both these remarks were transformed into direct statements, they could represent 'I' declarations - ἐγώ εἰμι in the case of Theudas and ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μέγας in the case of Simon.[80] Later sources certainly depict Simon Magus as exalting himself with the aid of ἐγώ εἰμι statements,[81] although it does not necessarily follow that the same kind of declarations already lie behind Acts 8:9. The statements in Acts 5:36 and 8:9 may simply have been formulated according to the Greek idiom εἶναί τι/τις (cf. I Cor. 3:7; Gal. 2:6; 6:3),[82] an idiom which does not inevitably presuppose an underlying claim to divinity. Proposals based on descriptions of Theudas and Simon Magus in the book of Acts do not, therefore, bring us closer to the intended meaning of the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark's eschatological discourse.

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[80] See Stauffer, 'ἐγώ', 345; Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 41, 187-89. Cf. also Betz, 'Das Problem des Wunders bei Flavius Josephus', 405. For the view that the crowds' acclamation in Acts 8:10 (οὗτός ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη) may point to an underlying 'I' claim, see Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, I:274; Thyen, 'Ich-Bin-Worte', 190f.

[81] According to Jerome (*in Matt.* 24), Simon said: *Ego sum sermo Dei....ego omnipotens, ego omnia Dei* (cf. Justin, *Apol.* I:26, 56; *Dial.* 120.6). Cf. also the legend in the Pseudo-Clementines which notes how Dositheus declares to Simon: 'If you are the Standing One, I too will worship you', to which Simon responds ἐγώ εἰμι (*Hom* II:24:6). As Dositheus is reported to have fallen and worshipped Simon, some propose that ἐγώ εἰμι functions here as a divine formula (e.g., Stauffer, *Jesus*, 171 n.97; Fossum, *The Name of God*, 124-29; *idem*, 'Sects and Movements', 376-78). But ὁ ἑστώς probably serves as the antecedent of this I-proclamation, as noted by MacRae, 'The *Ego*-Proclamation', 122f.

[82] Bauer, τὶς, *Lexicon*, §§1aζ, 1bε; Conzelmann, *Apostelgeschichte*, 42; Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 293f., 406.

The lack of firm evidence to support the view that ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 13:6 represents a false claim to divinity means that its significance within the discourse still remains unclear. Its role as an expression of self-identification by claimants to messianic and prophetic status is widely acknowledged, but the decision undertaken by Mark to highlight ἐγώ εἰμι and present it in direct speech with the recitative ὅτι leads one to suspect that the statement is attributed a particular function within the discourse. Attempts at identifying the 'source' of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 13:6 by drawing attention to a variety of biblical and apocalyptic traditions have proved inconclusive, but another possibility can now be considered. The claims of future deceivers may have been presented in this manner because ἐγώ εἰμι is viewed by Mark as a distinctive expression used by Jesus to disclose his own unique identity. If the words λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι are interpreted from an intratextual perspective, Jesus' prediction that many will come ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου signifies their attempt to compete with him for the kind of status and authority belonging to him alone. On two of the rare occasions in Mark's Gospel that Jesus does disclose his true identity, the expression used by him is ἐγώ εἰμι. Two possible, not necessarily mutually exclusive, interpretations can therefore be proposed, namely that the opening section of Mark's eschatological discourse presupposes Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι as he walks on the sea (6:50) and/or looks ahead to Jesus' use of the same expression in his dramatic response to the high priest (14:62).[83]

The proposal that the role of ἐγώ εἰμι as the vehicle for Jesus' disclosure of his identity to the disciples (Mark 6:50) elucidates his warning about the claims of future deceivers (13:6) may also find support in Josephus' descriptions of first-century claimants to prophetic status. As already noted, these figures, especially Theudas and the Egyptian, reportedly patterned their movements on past acts of deliverance associated with the Exodus and conquest of the promised land. Josephus states that they drew large crowds to the wilderness and promised to bring about a liberation initiated by such acts as dividing the Jordan river, reminiscent of the parting of the Reed Sea. It is significant, in this

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[83] Adopting a perspective of this kind could even lead one to proceed further and assess the words λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι as a Markan redactional element added to a statement that took the form πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν (cf. Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse*, 96; Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, 108-12). It may be the case that the warning expressed in Mark 13:6 originally referred to Christian prophets (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου), but that Mark inserted the phrase λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι in view of the threat posed by messianic and prophetic pretenders.

respect, that the Markan sea-walking narrative, in which Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι plays such a important role, is preceded by an account of the miraculous feeding of those crowds who followed Jesus after he retreated with his disciples to a 'desert place' (6:31-32, 35: ἔρημος τόπος; cf. 8:4: ἐπ' ἐρημίας), a setting which recalls the provision of manna and quail in the wilderness (Exod. 16).[84] Some significant parallels between the description of the parting of the Sea in Exod. 14-15 and the Markan sea-walking account have also been highlighted in the previous section of this study. The prominence of Exodus motifs in Mark 6:45-52 signifies that Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι expresses his identity to the disciples, not simply as Jesus ('It's me'), but as the one whose dramatic act of walking on the sea expresses his role as the true eschatological agent of a new Exodus. When Jesus later issues a warning about the appearance of πολλοί who will proclaim ἐγώ εἰμι, it can be proposed that Mark has in mind those figures who seek, but fail, to present themselves as the ones who will bring about a new deliverance.[85] While these figures promise their followers that they, like Moses and Joshua, will guide them through the divided waters, Jesus, the deliverer who truly exercises divine power and authority, fulfils and transforms this act by walking on the sea. It also proves unnecessary to search for specific 'I' claims made by first-century figures, since Mark's primary aim is to focus on their futile attempts to compete with the uniquely authentic and sovereign power of Jesus made manifest when he declares ἐγώ εἰμι to his disciples (6:50). It may even be the case that Mark distinguishes between those who seek to re-enact salvific events of the past, and whose attempt to exercise a form of authority belonging exclusively to

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[84] The wilderness setting of the two Markan feeding stories (6:30-44; 8:1-10) leads Blackburn to propose that they can be understood as 'Mosaic signs' (*Theios Anêr*, 251f.). See further Betz and Grimm, *Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Wunder Jesu*, 58-60. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 23-26, also draws attention to the 'wilderness' motif, but interprets it against an Isaianic background (40:3; 48:20-21; 51:3).

[85] Marcus, *ibid.*, 11, 22f., proposes that the programmatic function of 'the way of the Lord' (Isa. 40:3) in Mark's Gospel, and particularly the wilderness theme, forms a response to the interpretation of this Isaianic passage by such figures as Theudas and the Egyptian, whose actions were 'in large measure motivated by the hope that God would fulfil the ancient promises of eschatological victory in the wilderness contained in the scriptures, notably in Isaiah 40' (*ibid.*, 23). There is, however, no clear evidence in Josephus' accounts that these leaders sought to act out 'the way of the Lord' as described in Isa. 40:3, for they are more likely to have been influenced by the Exodus/conquest traditions (as recently emphasized by Longenecker, 'The Wilderness and Revolutionary Ferment', 324-28). But it cannot be denied that Mark may have *perceived* the prophetic figures' retreat to the wilderness as an attempt to realize the promise of deliverance expressed in Isa. 40:3.

Jesus is summed up in the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι (13:6), and those ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται (13:21-22) who, possibly at a later stage, offer the kind of authenticating signs (σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα) that Jesus himself refused to perform (cf. 8:11-12).

This attempt at determining the significance of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 13:6 hinges upon interpreting this expression in the light of its function in the sea-walking account. It is readily acknowledged that a proposal of this kind largely depends on viewing the activities and promises of such figures as Theudas and the Egyptian, particularly as depicted by Josephus (cf. Acts 21:38), as providing a key to the connection between the two Markan scenes (6:50; 13:6). However, even if one were to evaluate these two occurrences of ἐγώ εἰμι quite separately from each other, it is clear that the expression functions in both cases as a decisive self-declaration of identity which cannot be isolated from the significance attached by the speaker to his activity and authority.

It has already been noted that the words attributed to the deceivers in Mark 13:6 appear open-ended, whereas the lack of a title or designation after ἐγώ εἰμι may be part of a deliberate Markan strategy in relation to the disclosure of Jesus' true identity.[86] Indeed, if this part of the discourse echoes the use of ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus in 6:50, it is striking that an element of ambiguity surrounds the words even on that occasion. Although the disciples ultimately recognize Jesus as the one who approaches them on the sea, the episode concludes with the remark that their utter astonishment results from their not having understood the true meaning of the feeding of the multitude: οὐ γὰρ συνῆκαν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄρτοις, ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία πεπωρωμένη (6:52). As on other occasions (4:35-41; 8:14-21), the disciples fail to comprehend the significance of these events as manifestations of Jesus' divine authority (4:41: τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν;). Even in the eschatological discourse, where Jesus predicts future events in the presence of his disciples, his description of the claims to be made by various pretenders remains elusive and without a specific 'content'. Only in Mark 14:62, where ἐγώ εἰμι occurs for the third and final time, does Jesus unequivocally affirm the true nature of his status and identity.[87]

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[86] Cf. Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology*, 59.

[87] Very few NT interpreters identify possible links between Mark 13:6 and 14:62, but Hooker, *St. Mark*, 306, comments as follows on 13:6: 'There is Markan irony here, for the claim "echoes" that of Jesus himself in 14:62: but whereas his claim will be rejected, that of the 'false Christs and false prophets' (cf. vv. 21f.) will be believed'. Cf. *ibid.*, 361: 'In contrast to the claims of false messiahs proclaiming "I am" (13:6), Jesus' words will be substantiated'.

3. Jesus' Response to the High Priest's Question

The Gospel accounts of Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin are among the most thoroughly analysed narratives of the New Testament, and innumerable monographs and articles have sought to address the important historical and theological questions raised by the various accounts. This present section is primarily concerned with the Markan presentation of the Sanhedrin trial, while issues relating to underlying sources and the authenticity of individual features within this narrative will only be considered to the extent that they illuminate and relate to the meaning and function of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι response to the question posed by the high priest (Mark 14:62).

All three Synoptic versions agree that the main purpose of this meeting of the Sanhedrin was to gather testimony against Jesus, although only Mark (14:57) and Matthew (26:61) record the initial attempt to seek admissible evidence based on a statement about the Temple. It is the failure of the witnesses to provide valid testimony that causes the high priest to take matters into his own hands (Mark 14:60), and he attempts to make Jesus convict himself by posing a question involving christological claims.[88] The high priest's question may seem unexpected, although several interpreters propose that its apparent abruptness becomes explicable if the Temple charge reflects a hidden messianic claim to which the high priest promptly responds.[89] While most Jewish texts depicting the Messiah as the builder of the eschatological Temple stem from a later date,[90] and earlier Jewish traditions portray God himself as the builder,[91] Betz argues that II Sam. 7:13-14 (cf. Zech. 6:12-13) can be understood as providing a biblical basis for the belief that the Davidic Messiah would fulfil this role.

The possible messianic connotation of the Temple charge is also important when considering the form of the high priest's question in Mark 14:61: σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ (Matt.: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ). The title ὁ

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[88] Luke attributes the questioning, in which the christological issue is divided into two parts (22:67, 70; cf. John 10:24, 36), to members of the Sanhedrin. For the view that Luke 22:66-71 is largely derived from a non-Markan source, see Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus*, 183-203.

[89] See, for example, Schweizer, *Markus*, 188; Juel, *Messiah and Temple*, 170-209; Betz, 'Probleme des Prozesses Jesu', 626-28, 631-33 (see also n.96 below).

[90] E.g., TIsa. 53:5; TZech. 6:12; TIISam. 7:13-14; LevR 9:6; NumR 13:2. See also SibOr 5:414-33, and the useful discussion of this and other relevant passages by Chester, 'The Sibyl and the Temple', 47-56.

[91] Tobit 14:5-6; I Enoch 90:28-29; Jubilees 1:17, 27, 29. On 4Q174 (4QFlor) 1:10, see Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran*, 178-93.

υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητου possesses an appositive function in order to supplement the identification supplied by ὁ χριστός, but the relationship between the two titles requires further elucidation. Recent studies attach particular significance to texts which may attest the use of the designation 'son of God' as a messianic title in pre-Christian Judaism. 4Q246 has received considerable attention in this respect, since, despite its fragmentary nature, the first line of its second column points to the titular usage of the expression 'son of God': 'He shall be proclaimed son of God (ברה די אל), and they shall call him son of the Most High (ובר עליון)'. A reading of this text in eschatological rather than historical terms has led to the proposal that this figure represents the Messiah,[92] one whose depiction may even amount to an early interpretation of 'one like a son of man' (Dan. 7:13-14).[93] That this text describes a messianic figure is questioned by others, not only because of the absence of the title משיחא,[94] but due to the ambiguity surrounding the relationship between ברה די אל and the 'people of God' whose coming is subsequently described in the fragment.[95] Other Qumran evidence, particularly the messianic reading of II Sam. 7:13-14 encountered in certain texts (4Q174 1:10-13; 1QSa 2:11-12),[96] does support the anchoring of the high priest's question within a Jewish context, in the sense that Jesus is being asked whether he is the anointed Davidic king treated by God as his own son. In the Markan narrative, however, the attribution of the designation ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ to Jesus clearly goes beyond traditional Jewish expectations, for it is a title that 'carries a nuance transcending Davidic

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[92] See Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, II:437; Collins, 'The *Son of God* Text', 67f., 76-82.

[93] Kim, *'Son of Man'*, 21f.; Collins, 'The *Son of God* Text', 69f., 80-82. For a recent critique of Collins' proposal, see Dunn, '"Son of God" as "Son of Man" in the Dead Sea Scrolls?', 198-210.

[94] See Fitzmyer, '4Q246', 170f., 173f., who proposes that this line of the fragment describes 'a coming Jewish ruler, perhaps a member of the Hasmonean dynasty...a successor to the Davidic throne, but who is not envisaged as a Messiah'.

[95] Vermes, 'Qumran Forum Miscellanea I', 302f., suggests that the figure in question could be the last earthly ruler, one who usurps the 'son of God' title and whose appearance will be followed by a new period (as indicated by the scribal indentation in line 4) when 'the people of God' will come to establish peace and have eternal dominion over the whole earth (lines 4-9). Cf. also Puech, 'Some Remarks on 4Q246 and 4Q521', 545-551.

[96] E.g., Lövestam, 'Die Frage des Hohenpriesters', 95-97. Betz, 'Die Frage nach dem messianischen Bewußtsein Jesu', 29, 35-37, proposes that an interpretation of II Sam. 7:13-14 in messianic terms accounts for the sequence adopted in Mark 14:58-61, namely from the Temple charge (II Sam. 7:13) to the question about messianic status as 'son of God' (7:14). Cf. Hengel, *Der Sohn Gottes*, 71-73; Juel, *Messiah and Temple*, 110-12.

sonship'.[97] A strong element of irony, as noted by Juel, is thus introduced into the Markan narrative. The high priest, by asking Jesus whether he is ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ, unknowingly speaks the truth,[98] since the designations set out in his question can accord with his own Jewish perceptions of messiahship, but also, on another level, with the confession of Jesus as ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ by Mark and his community.

Jesus' initial reply, which takes the form ἐγώ εἰμι according to most textual witnesses, serves as the culmination and turning-point of the Markan trial narrative, and is widely interpreted as an affirmative expression corresponding in form to the interrogative σὺ εἶ: 'I am (the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed)'.[99] The declaration about the Son of man which immediately follows is presented by Mark as confirmation of Jesus' first response, demonstrated by the use of a simple καὶ (Matt. 26:64: πλήν; Luke 22:69: δέ) to link together the two statements: ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. As this brief exchange between Jesus and the high priest clearly encapsulates the central features of Mark's christology, the key role played by the words ἐγώ εἰμι requires close analysis, particularly in view of the claim made by some commentators that Jesus' answer represents none other than the divine use of אני הוא.

The first task, however, must be to determine the precise form of Jesus' initial response, for the alternative reading σὺ εἶπας ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι (θ fam[13] 472 543 565 700 1071 geo arm Or) is favoured by many as the original Markan statement.[100] This longer reading, explained as an evasive answer to maintain

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[97] Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 142. On the basis of his analysis of Mark 12:35-37, Marcus concludes that Mark does not regard the designation 'Son of David' as an adequate expression of Jesus' identity, because he is also 'the Son of God' (*ibid.*, 139-44). For the view that ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ in Mark 14:61 qualifies ὁ χριστός ('restrictive apposition') rather than being synonymous with it, see *idem*, 'Mark 14:61', 125-41.

[98] *Messiah and Temple*, 84f.; *idem*, *Messianic Exegesis*, 94f. Furthermore, Donahue, *Are you the Christ?*, 88, draws attention to the ambiguity of σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς in Mark 14:61, for although it is to be understood as an interrogative, it closely resembles the formulaic use of σὺ εἶ in Mark 1:11; 3:11; 8:29 (cf. 15:2).

[99] E.g., Kümmel, *Verheißung und Erfüllung*, 44; Linton, 'The Trial of Jesus', 259; Schweizer, *Markus*, 191; Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu*, 157; Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus*, 135; Perrin, 'The High Priest's Question', 81-83, 85; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, II:437; Gnilka, *Markus*, II:281; Betz, 'Probleme des Prozesses Jesu', 634; Gundry, *Mark*, 910f.

[100] Taylor, *St. Mark*, 568; Robinson, *Jesus and his Coming*, 49f.; O'Neill, 'The Silence of Jesus', 158; *idem*, *Who did Jesus Think He Was?*, 119f.; Dunn, 'Messianic Ideas', 375 n.22.

the 'messianic secret' (3:11-12; 8:30), bears some resemblance to Jesus' words before Pilate (Mark 15:2: σὺ λέγεις), but, more importantly, it is regarded as the original Markan text because its formulation could account for the Matthean and Lukan renderings of Jesus' answer to the high priest/Sanhedrin members. The meaning(s) of these parallel renderings can now be considered.

First, the use of σὺ εἶπας in Matt. 26:64 has been interpreted in a variety of ways, including as a strong affirmative ('*You yourself* have said it'),[101] and as an expression which conveys an element of contrast, either negatively ('I have not said it because I do not agree')[102] or in more qualified terms ('I have not said it because, although there is truth in it, I am not happy with the phrasing')?[103] It is unlikely that σὺ εἶπας functions as a completely negative statement in Matt. 26:64, for the Sanhedrin members later declare προφήτευσον ἡμῖν, χριστέ (26:68; cf. 27:40, 43). But, if read as a qualified affirmative, it signifies that Jesus displays a certain reticence without outrightly rejecting or accepting the high priest's choice of titles. Catchpole, moreover, proposes that a Semitic expression of affirmation (cf. t.Kel 1:6; QohR 7:1:11 [20b]) is adopted in Matt. 26:64, one which implies that 'more is needed for a complete understanding of Jesus, which indeed the kingly Son of Man saying immediately provides'.[104] This means that Matthew offers his own distinctive interpretation of Mark 14:62a (ἐγώ εἰμι), and that the longer Markan reading amounts to a scribal attempt at assimilation with the Matthean σὺ εἶπας.[105]

Secondly, Jesus' answer to the 'Son of God' question in Luke 22:70 (ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι) has been interpreted as an unequivocal declaration ('You say [well], for [indeed] I am')[106] or as a more guarded response ('It is you who say I am').[107] The Sanhedrin members certainly interpret Jesus' reply in a positive sense, for they immediately exclaim τί ἔτι ἔχομεν μαρτυρίας

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[101] Thrall, *Greek Particles in the New Testament*, 70-78.

[102] Cf. Cullmann, *Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments*, 118-20.

[103] These paraphrastic interpretations of σὺ εἶπας are set out by Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 489f. See further Catchpole, 'The Answer of Jesus to Caiaphas', 213-26

[104] Catchpole, *ibid.*, 221, also interprets πλήν as an expansion or qualification of the preceding statement, for the affirmation (σὺ εἶπας) requires further definition. Cf. Senior, *The Passion Narrative according to Matthew*, 176f.; Daube, 'Judas', 327: 'He declines to provide the prosecution with an explicit "Yes", comfortable for them'.

[105] Further striking examples of scribal additions, derived from a parallel Matthean verse to the Markan text are noted by Thrall, *Greek Particles*, 72 n.5. Cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 910: 'The argument that no Christian scribe would have changed an unequivocal "I am" to "you have said that I am"...underestimates the parallel influence of Matthew on scribes'.

[106] Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 492f.

[107] E.g., Marshall, *Luke*, 847, 851; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1463; Evans, *Saint Luke*, 838.

χρείαν; (v. 71). The source-critical analysis of Luke 22:70 undertaken by Catchpole offers a plausible explanation of its distinctive formulation, namely that Luke has combined two originally separate components, ἐγώ εἰμι from Mark 14:62 and the 'Semitically coloured' ὑμεῖς λέγετε from his own source.[108] Since the formation of the Matthean and Lukan renderings of Jesus' response can, therefore, be adequately explained without having to adopt the longer Markan reading (σὺ εἶπας ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι) as their underlying source, the shorter, and far more strongly attested, reading (ἐγώ εἰμι) can be accepted as the original text of Mark 14:62a.[109] Thus, the most plausible explanation of the interpretative renderings presented by Matthew (26:64) and Luke (22:70) is that both evangelists understood ἐγώ εἰμι of Mark 14:62 as an unequivocal acceptance by Jesus of his messianic status.

In an attempt to demonstrate that Jesus did not employ the expression ἐγώ εἰμι as an affirmation of his identity as ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ, a small group of scholars prefer to interpret ἐγώ εἰμι as Jesus' utterance of an *Offenbarungsformel* or even as a form of the divine name. The first clear exponent of this proposal was Gottlieb Klein, who claimed that the accusation of blasphemy brought against Jesus (v. 64) is only explicable if ἐγώ εἰμι represents אני והוא, the hidden name of God (m.Suk 4:5); the high priest's act of tearing his clothes in response to blasphemy would then accord with the stipulation expressed in m.Sanh 7:5 that a person is guilty of blasphemy if the Name is explicitly pronounced.[110] This view was adopted but modified by Stauffer, who, despite his earlier assessment of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62 as an affirmation by Jesus of his messianic status,[111] came to regard this proclamation of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) as Jesus' *hora revelationis,*[112] and he claimed that some rabbinic traditions provide independent support that Jesus' response was understood in ancient Jewish circles as a theophanic formula.[113] The explanation of ἐγώ εἰμι proposed by Klein and advanced by Stauffer has

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[108] 'The Problem of the Historicity of the Sanhedrin Trial', 64f.; *idem, The Trial of Jesus,* 196f.

[109] For a detailed critique of the view that the longer reading is more original, see Kempthorne, 'The Marcan Text of Jesus' Answer', 197-208.

[110] Klein, *Der älteste christliche Katechismus,* 44, 58f.; *idem, Ist Jesus eine historische Persönlichkeit?,* 40-43. Cf. also Schoeps, *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit,* 286-88, 292.

[111] See 'ἐγώ', 350.

[112] *Jesus,* 94, 137.

[113] 'Geschichte Jesu', 172; *idem,* 'Messias oder Menschensohn', 88 n.2.

gained some recent adherents,[114] and, since אני הוא plays a decisive role in their attempts to interpret the Markan trial narrative, their proposals can now be assessed in the light of the Jewish material already analysed in this study.

Various objections can immediately be raised with regard to the citation of individual rabbinic traditions to illuminate Mark 14:62. It is extremely doubtful, for example, whether the tradition recorded in m.Suk 4:5 is of direct relevance to the present discussion, particularly as there is no certainty that it reflects authentic pre-70 liturgical practice (see Chapter 6 §5). Although the precise meaning of אני והו[א] in this mishnaic tradition remains unclear, it cannot serve as the sacred divine name (*shem hammeporash*);[115] the formula consists of one (הוא), possibly two (אני), divine designations which, according to Rabbi Yehudah, were pronounced instead of the tetragrammaton (אנא יי) during the liturgy of Sukkot. Due to the role of אני והו[א] as a substitute invocation, and the possibility that all worshippers could pronounce this formula during the liturgy, the claim that it lies behind Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62 cannot account for the accusation of blasphemy (v. 64), even if the strict definition set out in m.Sanh 7:5 was already in force. Even more problematic is the fact that אני והו[א] does not form a close parallel to ἐγώ εἰμι,[116] nor is there any ancient Jewish evidence to link the formula אני והו[א] directly with אני הוא. Furthermore, the rabbinic traditions cited by Stauffer cannot be used as support that ἐγώ εἰμι represents the 'theophanic' אני הוא. The speculative nature of Stauffer's approach to j.Taan 2:1 (65b) has already been demonstrated (see Chapter 5 §2.2 above), for the presentation of Jesus' words (אל אני) in this Amoraic tradition amounts at most to Rabbi Abbahu's general assessment of Jesus' claims. Consequently, neither m.Suk 4:5 nor j.Taan 2:1 (65b) offers conclusive proof that Jesus' response should be understood as the utterance of the divine name or as a theophanic formula.

The interpretations of ἐγώ εἰμι proposed by Klein (אני והו) and Stauffer (אני הוא) adhere closely to the mishnaic ruling that 'the blasphemer is not guilty unless he pronounces the Name itself' (m.Sanh 7:5). Regardless of the fact that no ancient Jewish tradition supports the view that אני והו[א] and/or אני הוא were interpreted as the *shem hammeporash,* nor are they included among lists of

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[114] Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin"', 194; Lamarche, 'Le «blasphème» de Jésus', 82; Bammel, 'Erwägungen zur Eschatologie Jesu', 23 n.9; Brown, *John,* I:538; Hofrichter, 'Das dreifache Verfahren', 72f.

[115] See especially Chapter 6 n.97.

[116] As already noted by Wetter, 'Ich bin es', 233.

divine names in rabbinic traditions,[117] recent scholarship has shown that the narrow interpretation of blasphemy outlined in m.Sanh 7:5 belongs to a date closer to 200 CE, whereas an earlier tradition attributed to Eliezer ben Yose ha-Gelili (T3) offers a considerably wider definition: 'He who praises such a sinner [i.e. arbitrates after judgement] blasphemes the Place' (t.Sanh 1:2).[118] As several NT traditions also reflect a broader understanding of βλασφημία, particularly in contexts where Jesus is accused of appropriating God's authority and status (Mark 2:7; John 5:18; 8:58-59; 10:33), several aspects of his pronouncement in Mark 14:62 have been identified as prompting the high priest to declare ἠκούσατε τῆς βλασφημίας, both from the perspective of the historical trial proceedings and Mark's presentation of events. Individual elements regarded as accounting for the blasphemy charge include Jesus' affirmation of messianic status,[119] and, particularly in recent years, his statement about the Son of man.[120] This concluding declaration, based on a distinctive conflation of Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13, announces that, at the time of the parousia, the Son of man will be seen seated at the right hand of God and coming to earth with the clouds of heaven (cf. 13:26). The nature of the activity of this exalted figure is not explicitly stated, but it points to the judgement of those (ὄψεσθε) who refuse Jesus' self-testimony.[121] Later Jewish traditions,[122] and probably Luke's depiction of the violent response to Stephen's declaration in Acts 7:56 (ἰδοὺ θεωρῶ...τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν ἑστῶτα

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[117] See further Chapter 8 §3.

[118] Catchpole, 'You Have Heard His Blasphemy', 10f. See also Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu*, 152f., 207ff.; Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 520-27.

[119] Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu*, 159-62, 186-97; Gnilka, *Markus*, II:283; Betz, 'Die Frage nach dem messianischen Bewußtsein Jesu', 35; *idem*, 'Probleme des Prozesses Jesu', 636.

[120] E.g., Lövestam, 'Die Frage des Hohenpriesters', 107; Caragounis, *The Son of Man*, 141f., 204; Bock, 'The Son of Man', 186-91. Among those who specify that the 'blasphemy' charge stems from Jesus' claim to share the divine throne are Schaberg, 'Mark 14:62', 84-86, and Evans, 'In what Sense "Blasphemy"?', 419-21.

[121] Cf. Bammel, 'The Trial of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark', 65: '[v. 62] has a judicial meaning only in a general sense: the one who is to be executed will be received by God and those who take part in the act of condemnation will be confounded'.

[122] The closest parallels occur in rabbinic traditions (b.Sanh 38b; b.Hag 14a), where Rabbi Aqiba's statement that one of the thrones of Dan. 7:9 was set aside for David/the Messiah is condemned by Rabbi Yose as a 'profanation of the Shekinah'. Aqiba's interpretation was open to objection because it implied the exalted status of one seated on a throne in God's presence, and it also accounts for the later rabbinic condemnation of the view that a heavenly figure ('Son of man' or Metatron) can sit in the presence of God (b.Hag 14b-15a; 3 Enoch 16:2-4; cf. MidTeh 1:2 [1b]; 108:1 [232a]). See further Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 94f.; 209 n.73; Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 334-40; Evans, 'Was Simon ben Kosiba recognized as Messiah?', 204-11.

in Acts 7:56 (ἰδοὺ θεωρω...τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν ἑστῶτα τοῦ θεοῦ),[123] suggest that descriptions of a second figure enthroned beside God could be viewed as blasphemous in ancient Jewish circles. Within the context of the Markan trial narrative, the charge of blasphemy does not simply arise from the statement about the exalted state of the 'Son of man', but because the high priest recognizes that Jesus' claim points to his self-identification with this figure. Jesus pronounces that he, ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ, will be seen by his accusers coming in glory as eschatological judge.

Consequently, it is not necessary to view the βλασφημία charge as arising from Jesus' use of the words ἐγώ εἰμι. Indeed, the unexpected citation of the Name (ἐγώ εἰμι) would be an incongruous element in this question-answer exchange. This objection does not apply to the same extent if one interprets ἐγώ εἰμι as the Greek equivalent of אני הוא (LXX Deut. 32:39; Isaiah 41:4; 43:10; 46:4), for the phrase is employed in these biblical traditions as a distinctive expression of self-predication and can, in some of these passages, be interpreted as a solemn form of self-identification.[124] This study has, however, sought to highlight the importance of determining the context in which אני הוא (or אנא הוא) occurs, and this means that, in order to interpret ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62 as a theophanic formula, convincing arguments must be presented against viewing it as the vehicle for an affirmative reply. Two aspects require analysis in this respect, namely whether ἐγώ εἰμι forms a natural and appropriate response to a question introduced by σὺ εἶ and, if this is found to be the case, whether it accords with Mark's presentation of his christology.

In support of the proposal that ἐγώ εἰμι can be quite adequately explained as an affirmative response to the preceding question is the fact that a number of parallel examples of this syntactic formulation can be identified in Jewish and early Christian texts. Two particularly striking parallels occur in the *Testament of Job* (29:4; 31:6) which function as Job's reply to two questions posed by Eliphas about his identity. In the first case, the question-answer sequence takes the form σὺ εἶ Ιωβαβ ὁ συμβασιλεὺς ἡμῶν;.....ἐδήλωσα αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἐγώ εἰμι (29:3-4), while, in the second, a series of σὺ εἶ questions ending with σὺ εἶ ὁ ὡς ἡ σελήνη καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες οἱ ἐν τῷ μεσονυκτίῳ φαίνοντες; (31:5) leads Job to respond once more with the bipartite formulation ἐγώ εἰμι (31:6). Despite the lack of consensus regarding the date

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[123] For possible interpretations of ἑστῶτα, see Sabbe, 'The Son of Man Saying', 267-75; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 221-25.

[124] See especially Chapter 1 §2 above.

of the *Testament of Job*,[125] the σὺ εἶ....ἐγώ εἰμι pattern is already attested in LXX II Sam. 2:20 (καὶ ἐπέβλεψεν Αβεννηρ εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν Εἰ σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς Ασαηλ; καὶ εἶπεν' Εγώ εἰμι [MT: אָנֹכִי]).[126]

Jesus' reply can, moreover, be interpreted as a form of affirmation whose antecedent is located in the preceding question if one seeks to identify a Semitic idiom behind this particular occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι.[127] In order to demonstrate that אני הוא does not always 'carry overtones of the Divine Name', Catchpole cites a late exegetical tradition in LamR 1:45 where the tripartite form occurs (אנא הוא נשרא).[128] But it has already been demonstrated (Chapter 6 §1.2) that several examples of אנא הוא (and אני הוא) in its bipartite form are also attested in rabbinic texts, and that these two-component formulations, whose speakers include prominent rabbis, function as declarations of self-identification; in each case הוא possesses an anaphoric role and cannot be isolated from an earlier description (e.g., b.Ket 63a; NumR 10:5). Hence, if אני הוא (or the Aramaic אנא הוא) is the Semitic equivalent of ἐγώ εἰμι, הוא serves as a point of reference to 'the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed'. And although extant cases of the bipartite אנא הוא or אני הוא are found in rabbinic traditions significantly later than the first century CE, this syntactic phenomenon was, in all likelihood, being applied to Hebrew formulations at a much earlier stage, whereas the bipartite case of אנתה הוא in Dan. 4:19 already points to the use of this construction in Biblical Aramaic. Whether Mark 14:61-62 is viewed as conforming to a Semitic syntactic pattern or as closely related to the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in such traditions as LXX II Sam. 2:20, Jesus' initial response to the question posed by the high priest functions as a vehicle to confirm his identity as ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ.

To interpret ἐγώ εἰμι as a statement of affirmation means that now, for the first and only time, Jesus openly accepts those titles which play such an integral role in Mark's christology. The pairing of these two designations is only otherwise encountered in the introduction (1:1), provided the title υἱοῦ θεοῦ

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[125] Although a number of scholars date the Testament of Job to the first century BCE or first century CE (see the survey by Spittler, 'The Testament of Job', 23-32), Schaller, *Das Testament Hiobs*, 308, 311, proposes a date during the second century CE, while a date during the third or fourth century CE is favoured by Hengel, 'Setze dich zu meiner Rechten', 179f.

[126] ἐγώ εἰμι performs the same syntactic function, namely to affirm one's identity according to the terms set out in a preceding statement, in the following passages: Matt. 26:22, 25; John 9:9 (cf. 4:26); the Pseudo-Clementines (*Hom.* II:24:6; XIV:10:1; *Rec.* II:11); Acts of John 5.

[127] Cf. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, 65.

[128] *The Trial of Jesus*, 134f. Cf. also Borgen, *Bread from Heaven*, 73.

forms part of the original text,[129] but the Markan understanding of Jesus' messiahship is inextricably linked to his role as the unique ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, as proclaimed by the divine voice (1:11; 9:7), the demons (3:11; 5:7) and, following the crucifixion, by the centurion (15:39). Jesus' identity has been disclosed on these occasions with the aid of pronouncements introduced by σὺ εἶ (1:11; 3:11; cf. 8:29) and οὗτός ἐστιν (9:7; cf. 15:39), but now, in the presence of his opponents, he acknowledges the content of these predication statements with the words ἐγώ εἰμι.[130] Jesus' confession, which amounts to 'the formal disclosure...of the Messianic Secret',[131] demonstrates that the true nature of his role as ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ must be understood from the perspective of his suffering, death and resurrection. This dramatic encounter thus becomes the appropriate moment for Jesus to affirm his identity and status, since this confrontation with his accusers signifies the sealing of his fate.[132] His earlier predictions that he will be handed over to, and rejected by, his opponents (8:31; 9:31; 10:33) are accordingly fulfilled, thereby signifying that Jesus' command to silence following Peter's confession (8:29: σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός) can now be replaced by the unambiguous ἐγώ εἰμι (14:62).

4. Concluding Remarks

The attempt to determine whether the Markan interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι (6:50; 13:6; 14:62) can be understood as a form of divine self-declaration, particularly in the light of traditions in which God pronounces אני הוא, has led to a broader

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[129] The words υἱοῦ θεοῦ are included by several important textual witnesses (א[1] B D L W 2427 *pc* latt sy co), but not by others (including א* θ 28[c]). See further Taylor, *St. Mark*, 152; Head, 'A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1', 621-29.

[130] The fact that the identification of Jesus as 'Messiah' and 'Son of God' occurs at key points in Mark's Gospel, namely at the beginning (1:1, 11), middle (8:29; 9:7) and end (14:61f.; 15:39), is highlighted by Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus*, 135, and Gnilka, *Markus*, II:271.

[131] Perrin, 'The High Priest's Question', 81; cf. Hengel, 'Setze dich zu meiner Rechten', 163.

[132] See Räisänen, *The 'Messianic Secret' in Mark*, 227f., who stresses the significance of the conflict with the religious authorities as an integral part of Mark's explanation of Jesus' death (2:7; 14:61-62); he is condemned because of his christological claims. 'The same need to explain the passion, which led to his development of the secrecy theme, also made him stress the element of *openness* in Jesus' proclamation. In fact, emphasis on *public conflict* was necessary for Mark. Otherwise, Jesus would not have died for the right reason, i.e. for claiming divine authority and, in the end, openly confessing his identity' (*ibid.*, 247).

discussion of the meaning and significance attributed to this bipartite expression in Mark's Gospel. Of the three passages in which Jesus declares ἐγώ εἰμι, the closest parallels between its Markan application and the divine pronouncement of אני הוא, particularly in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, can be identified in the sea-walking narrative. Jesus' declaration to his disciples as he walks on the sea (θαρσεῖτε, ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε) undoubtedly resembles those passages where the divine proclamation אני הוא (and אנכי) is combined with the promise of the exiles' deliverance through the waters as a new Exodus (Isa. 43:1-25; 51:10-12). Nevertheless, the prevalence of several motifs and themes in Mark's narrative which can be linked specifically with Exod. 14-15 may indicate that these Exodus traditions, rather than those encountered in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, have been the primary source of deliberate, even midrashic, reflection in Mark 6:45-52. An attempt at establishing the significance of Mark 6:50 in the light of possible biblical and ancient Jewish parallels must also consider the likely presence and status of ἐγώ εἰμι in an earlier, pre-Markan, source, possibly intended at this stage of the tradition as Jesus' self-declaration of his identity. Even if Jesus' words are to be interpreted in isolation from divine 'I' statements (Exod. 14:4, 18; Isa. 43:10, 13; 51:12), this does not detract from their pivotal within the narrative. This pronouncement does not simply serve as Jesus' expression of self-identification to allay the disciples' fears and assure them that he is not a ghost ('It's me'), but rather functions as the vehicle which enables him to disclose his identity as the one who exercises God's power to walk on the sea.

It has also been proposed in this chapter that Jesus' solemn declaration to his disciples during the sea-walking episode sheds important light on the particularly enigmatic occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Markan eschatological discourse (13:6). Previous attempts at interpreting the warning about the future appearance of pretenders by drawing attention to a variety of biblical and apocalyptic traditions, especially those which include false claims to divinity, cannot be regarded as providing the key to a proper understanding of Jesus' statement. A consideration of the possibility that Mark 13:6 can be understood as reflecting concrete historical experiences of individual figures rather than in terms of the evangelist's application of a traditional apocalyptic motif leads to a search for the identity of these deceivers. This is illuminated by the subsequent references in the discourse to ψευδόχριστοι and ψευδοπροφῆται (vv. 21-22), and, above all, by the evidence provided by Josephus, who depicts the leaders of popular first-century movements, particularly such claimants to

prophetic status as Theudas and 'the Egyptian' (cf. Acts 5:36; 21:38), as ones who sought to initiate a new deliverance patterned on the Exodus and/or conquest of the land. References to the initial gathering of these movements in the wilderness, and the promise expressed by their leaders to divide the waters of the Jordan or cause the walls of Jerusalem to fall down, indicate that figures like Theudas attempted to model themselves on Moses and Joshua and present themselves as God's chosen agents of a new Exodus.

However, from the perspective of Mark and his community, the one who actually fulfils God's promises and brings about deliverance is Jesus himself, as highlighted in particular by the Markan presentation of the feeding and sea-walking accounts in the light of Exodus themes and motifs. It is therefore proposed that the event(s) described at the beginning of Jesus' eschatological discourse (13:5-6) reflect Mark's awareness of the actual claims and activities of first-century figures, and that their depiction as those who will proclaim ἐγώ εἰμι is intended as a warning that they will seek to usurp a status and authority belonging exclusively to Jesus. They will fail in their attempt to enact a new Exodus, and this stands in stark contrast to Jesus' dramatic demonstration of sovereign power as he walks on the sea and reveals his identity with the words ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε. It does not necessarily follow that first-century claimants to prophetic and messianic status actually expressed their claims with the aid of ἐγώ εἰμι, for Mark's aim is to demonstrate that such figures cannot compete with the one who made use of these distinctive words as he walked on the water, an act which confirms Jesus' unique identity and authority. Indeed, the elusive character of ἐγώ εἰμι in 13:6, a statement which defies attempts at supplementing it with a specific name or title, forms part of the evangelist's strategy of assigning a particular role to these words in relation to the unfolding of Jesus' true status.

The 'content' of ἐγώ εἰμι is made apparent when Jesus, for the first and only time in Mark's Gospel, publicly affirms his true identity (14:62). The view that this occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι represents Jesus' utterance of the divine name, or the 'theophanic' אני הוא, cannot be substantiated with reference to ancient Jewish exegetical and liturgical traditions, nor is it, in view of contemporary definitions of blasphemy, the only plausible explanation of the high priest's reaction to Jesus' pronouncement. The utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus during his trial is most appropriately defined as his affirmative response to the high priest's question, a syntactic pattern for which a number of Jewish and early Christian parallels can be adduced. The significance of this initial part of Jesus'

response in Mark 14:62 lies precisely in the fact that, by means of ἐγώ εἰμι, he unequivocally affirms his identity according to the christological categories set out in the preceding question, for the combination of designations employed by the high priest (ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ) sums up the Markan understanding of Jesus' true status and identity. It is at this moment, in the presence of those who are about to condemn him to death, that Jesus can openly accept his role as 'the Messiah, Son of God' and announce that, following his death and resurrection, he will return as the exalted Son of man.

Chapter Eight

The Interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Gospel of John

In addition to Jesus' declaration to the disciples as he walks on the sea (John 6:20), ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form is found in the Fourth Gospel in a series of sayings in the eighth chapter (vv. 24, 28, 58), as well as in Jesus' prediction of his imminent betrayal (13:19).[1] Previous studies of the Johannine use of ἐγώ εἰμι are, on the whole, quite content to define these four occurrences of the expression as absolute or self-contained statements, although this present chapter will also consider the more debatable utterances of ἐγώ εἰμι occurring in Jesus' discourse with the Samaritan woman (4:26) and in the arrest narrative (18:5, 6, 8). The only other Johannine example of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form is pronounced by the healed blind man (9:9). Since this declaration clearly forms a response to a question posed by the man's neighbours (v. 8: οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθήμενος καὶ προσαιτῶν;), and consequently possesses an antecedent, it cannot be defined as a self-contained declaration.[2] This

[1] As the declaration ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε in 6:20 is drawn from traditional material, this statement is sometimes viewed as the basic source of the Johannine instances of ἐγώ εἰμι for which there are no Synoptic parallels. See, for example, Harner, *'I Am'*, 35, 62; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, II:68f.; IV:85f. Cf. also Lindars, 'The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology', 42-45.

[2] *Pace* Parsons, 'A Neglected ἐγώ εἰμι Saying in the Fourth Gospel?', 167, who claims that 'the Man Born Blind utters the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι in his representative role of disciple and the church, which reveals the soteriological purposes of God through Jesus in the absence of Jesus'. This present chapter will, however, seek to demonstrate that the Johannine use of ἐγώ εἰμι points to Jesus' unique role as the revelatory and salvific presence of God. If the blind man's response possesses similar theological significance, certain issues need to be addressed: i) why do his neighbours respond as though he had simply identified himself as the blind man who had been healed (v. 10)?; ii) why should he, but not other followers of Jesus, pronounce ἐγώ εἰμι? The man serves as a witness to Jesus rather than as an agent of salvation, and his use of ἐγώ εἰμι represents a form of self-identification.

statement in 9:9 does, nevertheless, serve as a reminder that the utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι in itself does not necessarily amount to a solemn expression, for it is the way in which ἐγώ εἰμι is employed and the contexts in which it occurs that imbues it with theological significance. The Septuagintal usage of ἐγώ εἰμι can provide significant parallels in this respect, for, in addition to the attribution of this expression to God in LXX Isaiah and Deut. 32:39, the phrase can serve as an affirmation of identity within a narrative context (cf. LXX II Sam. 2:20). Furthermore, the analysis of Jewish, albeit later, material in earlier chapters of this study has demonstrated that אני הוא, and its Aramaic counterpart אנא הוא, can act as a form of self-identification,[3] but also, in midrashic traditions, as a self-declaration by God to express his unique sovereignty.[4] This chapter will not, however, analyse those ἐγώ εἰμι statements followed by an image or metaphor,[5] for the primary aim is to trace the possible influence of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) on those Johannine pronouncements in which the bipartite form of the expression is employed.

The starting-point of possible comparisons must be those divine pronouncements of אני הוא which are rendered in the Septuagint as ἐγώ εἰμι (Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10; 46:4; cf. 52:6). To these examples can be added LXX Isa. 45:18, where the self-declaratory formula אני יהוה is represented by ἐγώ εἰμι, and those statements where the use of אנכי הוא אנכי bound to a participial form leads to the distinctive Septuagintal rendering of the twofold אנכי as ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι (43:25; 51:12; cf. 45:19). Drawing attention to these particular statements does not rule out the possibility that the remaining Deutero-Isaianic statements whose occurrences of אני הוא have no Septuagintal equivalent (43:13; 48:12) could have influenced the Johannine application of ἐγώ εἰμι, particularly if the author, or the traditions from which he draws, also reflected on the use of this Hebrew expression in the Jewish Scriptures.[6]

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[3] See Chapter 6 §1.2.

[4] See especially the traditions analysed in Chapter 4.

[5] John 6:35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12 (9:5); 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5. Many detailed studies of these pronouncements have been published; see especially Schweizer, *Ego Eimi*, 64-112, 113-67; Kundzins, 'Zur Diskussion über die *Ego-eimi*-Sprüche', 95-107; Schulz, *Komposition und Herkunft der johanneischen Reden*, 70-131; Wilkens, 'Das *Ego eimi* Jesu', 89-99; Bühner, *Der Gesandte und sein Weg*, 166-80; Thyen, 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt', 32-46; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 67-110, 119-36, 204-54.

[6] On the influence of the LXX on the Fourth Gospel, see Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel*, who also notes that John's use of the LXX 'does not exclude an occasional recourse to the Hebrew text' (*ibid.*, 205). Cf. also Frey, '"Wie Mose die Schlange in der Wüste erhöht hat...."', 195f.

As well as considering the immediate function of the bipartite ἐγώ εἰμι within individual discourses and narratives (4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8), this chapter will seek to identify other key themes and motifs associated with אני הוא in biblical traditions, also elaborated upon in certain Jewish (targumic and rabbinic) traditions, whose Johannine application can elucidate several aspects of the interpretative process encountered in relation to the pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus in the Fourth Gospel.[7] Identifying possible linguistic, thematic and structural parallels between these ἐγώ εἰμι declarations and divine אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) pronouncements, especially in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah and the Song of Moses, can strengthen the case for viewing the Johannine interpretation of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι as amounting to a deliberate reflection on the biblical and Septuagintal use of this expression and the contexts in which it occurs, as already attempted in connection with John 6:20 in the previous chapter of this study.

1. Jesus' Encounter with the Samaritan Woman (4:26)

Jesus' first pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι within the Fourth Gospel represents the only occurrence of the expression communicated to an individual, for in all other cases he addresses either his disciples (6:20; 13:19) or his opponents (8:24, 28, 58; 18:5, 8). This utterance also functions as a vital component of the gradual disclosure of Jesus' identity within the narrative of John 4:4-42 in its present form, and it has long been recognized that this disclosure coincides with the Samaritans' progression of faith.[8] The woman, at first, refers to Jesus as Ἰουδαῖος (v. 9), addresses him as κύριε (vv. 11, 15, 19) and then acknowledges that he is a προφήτης (v. 19). To these titles one may add her challenge to Jesus in the form of the question μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰακώβ; (v. 12), whereby she unknowingly pronounces the truth (cf.

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[7] See also Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 177-203, who stresses the importance of demonstrating the way in which the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah is applied in the Fourth Gospel. References will be made below to those cases where Ball draws similar conclusions on the basis of the Isaianic material.

[8] See Schmid, 'Die Komposition der Samaria-Szene', 152f. For analyses of John 4:1-42 that adopt a synchronic approach to the narrative, see especially O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel*, 49-92; Okure, *The Johannine Approach to Mission*, 58-64; Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel*, 64-97. For a recent attempt at identifying the different layers of tradition and redaction in 4:1-42, see Link, *'Was redest du mit ihr'*, 325-54.

8:53).[9] The same principle applies to the woman's declaration about the Μεσσίας (v. 25), as well as to her reflections on the earlier conversation with Jesus at the well (v. 29: μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός;). Finally, the Samaritans, in the light of their own personal encounter with Jesus, unequivocally declare: καὶ οἴδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου (v. 42).

Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι utterance is positioned at the centre of these various stages or scenes.[10] His discourse with the Samaritan woman can be divided into two units, for Jesus firstly speaks in terms of giving τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν (vv. 7-15) and then focuses on the correct τόπος of worship (vv. 16-30). It is within the second unit that the woman, due to Jesus' accurate description of her marital history and present situation (vv. 17-18), recognizes his prophetic powers and places before him the controversial issue of Samaritan and Jewish worship (v. 20). Jesus speaks, however, of a new kind of worship ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ (v. 23f.), and his pronouncement about the arrival of the eschatological 'hour' prompts the woman to declare: οἶδα ὅτι Μεσσίας ἔρχεται ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός· ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα (v. 25). This statement amounts to a clear example of the much favoured Johannine technique of misunderstanding, for although the woman discerns the eschatological perspective of Jesus' words, she does not as yet identify him as 'the one who declares all things' (cf. 11:23-27).

Commentators sometimes claim that 4:25 reflects the Samaritan belief in the appearance of the Taheb, a prophetic figure who was expected to restore true worship at the end time and is portrayed in *Tibat Marqe* as the one who 'will reveal the truth' (ויגלי קשטה).[11] The suggestion that eschatological themes expressed in *Tibat Marqe* were already current in the first century CE is problematic, especially in view of the fact that some distinguished scholars in the field of Samaritan studies now opt for a much later date and more complex history of composition for *Tibat Marqe* than the fourth century CE proposed in

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[9] See Olsson, *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel*, 180; Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 69-73. The use of irony in 4:4-42 is analysed in detail by O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel*, 55-92.

[10] Okure, *The Johannine Approach to Mission*, 126, 178, suggests that ἐγώ εἰμι functions as a watershed in the discourse, since it looks backwards to τίς ἐστιν (v. 10b) and forwards to μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν (v. 29b) and ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν (v. 42).

[11] E.g., Bowman, 'Samaritan Studies', 299f.; Brown, *John*, 172f. On the Samaritan Taheb, see Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans*, 362-71; Dexinger, 'Die frühesten samaritanischen Belege der Taheb-Vorstellung', 224-52; *idem*, 'Der Taheb', 1-172.

recent decades.[12] As these depictions of the Taheb are dependent on the earlier Samaritan preoccupation with the 'prophet like Moses' (Deut. 18:18-22),[13] it is possible that the woman's declaration is meant to represent an authentic Samaritan belief in the appearance of an eschatological figure modelled on the 'prophet like Moses'. And although it could be argued that the use of the Jewish title Μεσσίας also reveals the author's lack of familiarity with Samaritan beliefs,[14] he may be deliberately employing a title with which his own audience would have been familiar, one which is also explained for the benefit of his Greek-speaking readers.[15]

Jesus offers an immediate response to the woman's declaration in the form of the statement ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι (v. 26). The most obvious, and widely held, interpretation of these words is that Jesus is affirming the truth of her declaration and is identifying himself with the Μεσσίας: 'I who am speaking to you am he [the Messiah]' or 'It is I, (the one) who is speaking to you'.[16] This has led some commentators to interpret this statement as the positive counterpart of earlier emphatic denials of messianic status by the Baptist (1:20: καὶ ὡμολόγησεν ὅτι ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ὁ χριστός; cf. 3:28).[17] A comparison of the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in 4:26 with other Johannine and non-Johannine examples of the bipartite phrase reveals that it forms an appropriate and natural expression of affirmation, serving either as a reply to a question introduced by σὺ εἶ (cf. LXX II Sam. 2:20; Mark 14:62) or to a statement which does not necessarily call for a direct form of response (cf. John 9:9).[18]

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[12] For the view that *Tibat Marqe* was composed during the fourth century CE, see Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans,* 42; Purvis, 'The Fourth Gospel and the Samaritans', 163-68. On recent analyses of issues relating to the composition of *Tibat Marqe*, see Excursus in Chapter 2 ('The Interpretation of Deut 32:39 in Samaritan Traditions').

[13] Dexinger, 'Die frühesten samaritanischen Belege der Taheb-Vorstellung', 236f. See also Link, *'Was redest du mit ihr?'*, 285-91.

[14] Cf. Pamment, 'Is There Convincing Evidence of Samaritan Influence?', 223. The title משיח does not occur in Samaritan sources prior to the 16th century (see Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge,* 303 n.218).

[15] Meeks, *The Prophet-King,* 318 n.1; Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah,* 168 n.117.

[16] See, e.g., Richter, *'Ani Hu* und *Ego Eimi'*, 64; Lindars, *John,* 191; Barrett, *St. John,* 228, 239, 359 (but see *idem, St. John,* 1955₁, 200); Freed, *'Egô Eimi* in John 1:20 and 4:25', 288-91; Haenchen, *Johannesevangelium,* 245. Link, *'Was redest du mit ihr?'*, 287-91, proposes that ἐγώ εἰμι (4:26), in its role as an expression of self-identification, already existed in the 'Grundschrift' from which the Fourth Gospel was developed.

[17] See Freed, *'Egô Eimi* in John 1:20 and 4:25', 288-91; Hinrichs, *'Ich bin'*, 18-22; Link, *'Was redest du mit ihr?'*, 289.

[18] *Pace* Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel,* 179, who asks 'why Jesus' words were formulated in such a strange way. Why did he not say simply ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ χριστός?'

The syntactic pattern reflected in the second category also parallels later rabbinic examples of אני הוא (or אנא הוא) in which הוא performs an anaphoric role.[19] However, these grammatical considerations do not deter other commentators from claiming that the distinctive usage of ἐγώ εἰμι encountered in other Johannine narratives (8:24, 28; 13:19) should also be taken into account when assessing Jesus' response to the Samaritan woman. Thus, while Jesus' reply can be understood as an affirmation of his messianic status, this, it is argued, is not the only possible interpretation of the declaration.[20] O'Day goes further and defines ἐγώ εἰμι of v. 26, the 'most direct statement of the dialogue', as an absolute occurrence totally independent of Μεσσίας, one which enables Jesus 'to identify himself as God's revealer, the sent one of God'.[21] A similar strategy of isolating ἐγώ εἰμι from the content of the preceding declaration is adopted by Moloney, who interprets the phrase as a Johannine title or designation for Jesus which can be rendered as 'I AM HE (is) the one speaking to you'.[22] Whether one can totally separate ἐγώ εἰμι from the woman's statement is debatable, but if Jesus' words, in addition to their role as an affirmative reply, are intended to take the conversation to a different level and, indeed, to its climax, to what extent can it be argued that John has shaped this exchange with an eye to the use of ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah? O'Day makes no attempt to determine the conceptual background of the words ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι, but Stauffer presents six arguments to support his claim that the words אני הוא lie behind the use of the expression in 4:26:[23]

i) On no other occasion does Jesus claim to be the Messiah in the Fourth Gospel.[24]

ii) The use of ἀναγγέλλω to describe the activity of the awaited Messiah (v. 25) parallels its use in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah to portray God's unique ability to proclaim or predict events (e.g., 41:22-23, 26; 42:9), often in contexts where אני הוא is pronounced (43:9, 12; 48:14).

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[19] See Chapter 6 §1.2, especially nn. 26-27, 29.

[20] E.g., Bernard, *St. John*, I:151; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, I:474, 476f.; Sanders and Mastin, *John*, 148f.; Olsson, *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel*, 193; Botha, *Jesus and the Samaritan Woman*, 153.

[21] *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel*, 72f.

[22] *Belief in the Word*, 155.

[23] *Jesus*, 59, 139f.

[24] See also *idem*, 'Messias oder Menschensohn?', 91-93, where Stauffer analyses other passages that point to a certain reticence on the part of the Johannine Jesus to speak about his messianic status (1:51; 6:15; 10:25). Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (17:3) is to be regarded as 'eine vulgärkirchliche Glosse' (*ibid.*, 93).

iii) IQIs[a] 52:6 (כי אני הואה המדבר הנני) is virtually identical to John 4:26.

iv) Patristic texts cite a similar declaration by Jesus ('I am he who speaks; behold here am I'),[25] which may represent an independent logion and confirm the influence of Isa. 52:6 on John 4:26.

v) Jesus responds to Nathanael's declaration (1:49: σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ) with a statement about the Son of man (v. 51), whereas this Μεσσίας statement prompts Jesus to announce the 'theophanic' אני הוא.[26]

vi) Since the woman persists in her messianic thinking (v. 29), ἐγώ εἰμι remains a *mashal.*

Some of Stauffer's arguments contribute little to the discussion. The fourth proposal is of limited relevance, for Epiphanius does not record an independent Jesus logion, but is citing the word πάρειμι from LXX Isa. 52:6 (HT: הנני) to depict Jesus as the one who speaks 'in the prophets': ὅτι ὁ λαλῶν ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, ἰδοὺ πάρειμι (*Pan.* 23:5:5). Indeed, each one of Stauffer's proposals has been subjected to detailed scrutiny by Catchpole as part of his attempt to refute the argument that a 'theophanic' אני הוא lies behind Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 14:62.[27] In response to Stauffer's claim that the Johannine Jesus makes no messianic self-affirmations, Catchpole draws attention to Jesus' reply to Pilate in 18:37 (σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεύς εἰμι; cf. Mark 15:2; Matt. 27:11; Luke 23:3) and, more importantly, to the fact that similarities between the syntactic structure of 4:26 (ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι) and the statement in which Jesus acknowledges that he is the Son of man (9:37: ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν) 'suggests that one, like the other, affirms the previously mentioned title'.[28] In addition, Catchpole refutes the notion that the meaning of ἐγώ εἰμι remains a mystery to the woman, for her later exclamation (v. 29: μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός;) presupposes that she understands Jesus' earlier response as an affirmation of his messianic status. These counter-arguments serve to highlight the obstacles which lie in the path of those who isolate ἐγώ εἰμι from its immediate context and deny that it forms a direct response to the woman's statement. But while Catchpole's main concern is to demonstrate that ἐγώ εἰμι functions as an expression of self-

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[25] Epiphanius, *Pan.* 23:5:5; 41:3:2; 66:42:8; *Ancor.* 53:4.

[26] De Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God,* 50f., 83, notes that προφήτης, βασιλεύς and χριστός are often interpreted and supplemented by John with the more central titles ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ or ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (e.g., 9:17, 35-38; 11:27; 12:34; 20:31).

[27] *The Trial of Jesus,* 134; *idem,* 'You Have Heard His Blasphemy', 15f.

[28] *The Trial of Jesus,* 134.

affirmation in Mark 14:62, it can be proposed that Jesus' declaration in John 4:26, even in its role as a formula of self-identification, takes the woman's words to a level that she clearly does not comprehend (v. 29).

In order to investigate the other possible narrative dimensions that may be at work in the dialogue between Jesus and the woman, attention can be paid to the distinctive description of the awaited Μεσσίας as the one 'who will declare to us all things' (ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα). This represents the first of five occurrences of the verb ἀναγγέλλω in the Fourth Gospel (5:15; 16:13, 14, 15); its Johannine application possesses no Synoptic parallels, and the fact that it is used to describe the future activity of the Paraclete implies that this is not an insignificant term for the fourth evangelist. In this respect, the concentration of examples of ἀναγγέλλω in LXX Isaiah may shed some light on the Johannine phraseology adopted to convey the Samaritan woman's expectations.[29] Deutero-Isaiah frequently proclaims the uniqueness of God by stressing that his decisive acts in history are a fulfilment of his earlier promises to Israel; Yahweh is the truly incomparable God because of his unique ability to 'announce/reveal' events before they occur (e.g., Isa. 43:12; 46:10; 48:3, 5). The Hebrew verb used for this purpose (הגיד) is consistently rendered as ἀναγγέλλω in LXX Isaiah, both when God challenges the pagan gods to display their power by announcing future events (Isa. 44:7: καὶ τὰ ἐπερχόμενα πρὸ τοῦ ἐλθεῖν ἀναγγειλάτωσαν ὑμῖν; cf. 41:26; 43:9; 47:13; 48:14) and in statements which assert the sovereignty of Israel's God (46:10: ἀναγγέλλων πρότερον τὰ ἔσχατα πρὶν αὐτὰ γενέσθαι). The fact that Yahweh's announcement of deliverance was fulfilled in the past (43:12: ἀνήγγειλα καὶ ἔσωσα) is thus offered as assurance of his future intervention. The God who delivers is the one who proclaims righteousness and truth (45:19: ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος λαλῶν δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἀναγγέλλων ἀλήθειαν).

Several aspects of the usage of ἀναγγέλλω in LXX Isaiah are of significance when seeking to interpret the final part of the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, for, in its role as a response to the woman's statement, ἐγώ εἰμι serves to affirm Jesus' status as the Μεσσίας who will declare or reveal all things. First, the revelatory perspective attributed to ἀναγγέλλω in 4:25-26 plays an important role in a dialogue which discusses

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[29] See especially Young, 'A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel', 224-27; Sabugal, 'El título Μεσσίας–Χριστός', 92f. The verb ἀναγγέλλω occurs over 40 times in LXX Isaiah, and 21 examples are found in Isa. 40-48 alone.

the theme of revelation on several levels.[30] The woman expresses her belief in the appearance of a messianic figure who will declare all things (v. 25), but Jesus' self-affirmation clearly goes beyond the woman's perception of messiahship. By announcing the words ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι, Jesus in fact confirms the central theme of the narrative; he declares or reveals all things because true worship of the Father 'in spirit and truth' is encountered in his person (vv. 23-24) and is fulfilled through his complete obedience to the divine will (v. 34). The revelatory dimension of Jesus' response to the woman is further accentuated by the inclusion of ὁ λαλῶν σοι after ἐγώ εἰμι to convey his role as the eschatological agent who communicates divine truth (cf. Isa 45:19).[31] Attention can also be paid to the fact that the frequent use of ἀναγγέλλω in LXX Isaiah in relation to the sovereignty of the God who can predict and control future events is reminiscent of the Johannine presentation of Jesus' prediction of his betrayal (13:19) and its fulfilment in the garden (18:1-11). The verb ἀναγγέλλω does not occur in these two passages, but Jesus' utterance of the words ἐγώ εἰμι undoubtedly connects the two scenes in order to demonstrate his complete control over his hour of glorification (see §§4-5).

Secondly, the use of ἀναγγέλλω in LXX Isaiah links together the announcements made by God and his acts of deliverance, for God seeks to convince the exiles of his claim to exclusive divinity by presenting his salvific acts in the past (41:4; 43:12; 51:10) as the basis for his future manifestation as their deliverer (41:14; 43:3, 13; 46:4). The Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus as the one who proclaims ἅπαντα cannot, moreover, be perceived in isolation from his role as the one who presently offers salvation (v. 23). Jesus declares that he himself offers the salvific gift from the Father, for he alone gives the living water that quenches all thirst and leads to eternal life (vv. 10, 14).[32] Following Jesus' conversation with the woman, it is the Samaritan

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[30] Cf. also the description of the future activity of the Paraclete who will 'declare' the things to come (16:13: τὰ ἐρχόμενα; cf. LXX Isa. 41:23; 44:7: τὰ ἐπερχόμενα).

[31] On the revelatory aspect of ὁ λαλῶν σοι, see Olsson, *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel*, 192, who draws particular attention to the fact that Jesus speaks *to* rather than *with* the woman: 'a 'revelation discourse' in dialogue form' (cf. v. 10: ὁ λέγων σοι). See further Ibuki, *Die Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium*, 47-53. It is also indicative that λαλέω plays a key role in connection with Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι in John 8:25, 26, 28, as does λέγω in 6:20, 13:18-20, 18:4, 5, 6, 8.

[32] Cf. 6:35; 7:37. The description of the gift of salvation in terms of ὕδωρ ζῶν is also reminiscent of Deutero-Isaianic terminology, for the promise of deliverance is often pronounced with the aid of the image of God providing water to quench the thirst of the weary exiles (43:20; 44:3; 49:10; 55:1). For these and other biblical traditions which may have

people who recognize the force of νῦν ἐστιν and readily accept his offer of salvation (v. 42: οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου).[33]

Thirdly, to view the words ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα against an Isaianic background can offer support for the interpretation of Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι in 4:26 as an integral part of the Johannine two-level narrative strategy. This does not involve depriving Jesus' words of their role, on one level, in relation to the categories set out by the woman, for one of the central functions of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah is to convey Yahweh's assertion of his true identity in the light of evidence presented in earlier parts of his speech (e.g., 41:2-4; 43:8-13), with the aim of convincing the exiles that he alone can announce and carry out deliverance on behalf of his people. The nations and their gods cannot respond to the challenge presented by God (43:9: τίς ἀναγγελεῖ ταῦτα;), which provides his own people with the opportunity, in virtue of their role as witnesses to their past experiences of God's sovereignty, to acknowledge his unique and exclusive divinity (43:10: πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), again confirmed by Yahweh with reference to his activity on their behalf (43:12: ἀνήγγειλα καὶ ἔσωσα). Thus, within the context of a trial speech (43:8-13) which seeks to determine the identity of the true God, Yahweh proclaims that, since he alone can both predict and control events, Israel must acknowledge that he is the all-powerful God, as summed up in his self-declaration אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι).[34] Such passages point to the effective interplay already established by Deutero-Isaiah between אני הוא as the vehicle which enables Yahweh to assert his identity and also expresses his claim to be

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influenced John 4:14, see, e.g., Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium,* I:465; Lindars, *John,* 183.

[33] Catchpole, *The Trial of Jesus,* 134, claims that ἀναγγέλλω (John 4:26) is not necessarily related to LXX Isaiah, particularly as the verb is used in 5:15 to describe the paralytic who told (ἀνήγγειλεν) 'the Jews' that it was Jesus who healed him. Attention can, however, be paid to the following considerations: i) To view the paralytic's act as one of betrayal is not the only possible interpretation of the statement, for the intention within the narrative may have been to describe him as reporting his cure to the authorities. ii) The fact that some important textual witnesses read εἶπεν (ℵ C L) or ἀπήγγειλεν (D K Δ) in 5:15 possibly reflects an attempt at restricting the use of ἀναγγέλλω to Jesus and the Paraclete. iii) The verb ἀναγγέλλω, like ἐγώ εἰμι (cf. 8:24, 28 and 9:9), can be interpreted as possessing different levels of meaning. iv) Interestingly, LXX Isaiah also uses the verb ἀναγγέλλω to describe the call on Israel to declare that her salvation is from God (Isa. 48:20: φωνὴν εὐφροσύνης ἀναγγείλατε....λέγετε Ἐρρύσατο κύριος τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ Ιακωβ).

[34] Cf. LXX Isa. 45:18-19, where God announces: Ἐγώ εἰμι (MT: אֲנִי יְהוָה), καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι, followed by the declaration: ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος λαλῶν δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἀναγγέλλων ἀλήθειαν.

the one and only God. A similar form of interplay, as already demonstrated in relation to the sea-crossing narrative (6:20), performs a key role in the interpretative strategy adopted in John 4:26, one which allows ἐγώ εἰμι to function as Jesus' affirmative response to the woman's statement, as demanded by the immediate context of the narrative, but also as a declaration which points to his claim to be the unique revelatory and salvific presence of God.[35]

The sequence identified in such passages as Isa. 43:8-13 thus leads one to enquire whether it is necessary, as proposed by Stauffer, to draw the conclusion that Jesus' words in John 4:26 bear closest resemblance to, and may even have been patterned on, Isa. 52:6. While it is true that אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) is linked with an act of speech in Isa. 52:6, the expression is related to a participle (המדבר) in such a way that its function is to stress that God is the one who will speak ('I am he who speaks...'). However, the phrase ὁ λαλῶν σοι stands in apposition to, and can be separated from, ἐγώ εἰμι in John 4:26 ('I am he, [the one] who is speaking to you'), and the syntactic differences between the two statements are made apparent by the rendering provided in LXX Isa. 52:6: ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτὸς ὁ λαλῶν.[36] This is not to deny that Isa. 52:6 plays a significant part in the Johannine understanding of ἐγώ εἰμι,[37] but it is unnecessary to isolate one particular Septuagintal occurrence of the expression as providing the interpretative key to its use in John 4:26.

The identification of thematic links between John 4:25-26 and LXX Isaiah in terms of their vocabulary of revelation and salvation indicates that there is a strong case for arguing that the fourth evangelist is deliberately playing on the two-level meaning of ἐγώ εἰμι when Jesus pronounces these words for the first time during his ministry.[38] ἐγώ εἰμι remains an enigmatic expression

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[35] On the prominence of *Doppelbedeutung* in the Fourth Gospel, see especially Cullmann, 'Der johanneische Gebrauch doppeldeutiger Ausdrücke', 360-72; Leroy, *Rätsel und Mißverständnis*, 49-155, 157-95; Wead, *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel*, 30-46; Richard, 'Expressions of Double Meaning', 96-112.

[36] A closer Johannine parallel to LXX Isa. 52:6, at least in syntactic terms, occurs in 8:18 (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ). Cf. also Rev. 2:23: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἐραυνῶν νεφροὺς καὶ καρδίας.

[37] For the view that LXX Isa. 52:6 may illuminate the depiction of the voice from heaven in John 12:28, see Evans, 'The Voice from Heaven', 407f.; *idem*, 'Obduracy and the Lord's Servant', 233f.

[38] This two-level perspective can also be identified in Jesus' subsequent discourse with his disciples (especially vv. 32-33). The view that 4:4-42 works on two levels in order to express Jesus' dynamic self-revelation is forcefully argued by O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel*, 49-92. Cf. also Okure, *The Johannine Approach to Mission*, 95, 187, 289f.; Botha, *Jesus and the Samaritan Woman*, 153.

which is, probably intentionally, open to different levels of interpretation at this point in the Fourth Gospel, and its meaning and function as Jesus' self-claim will be more clearly explicated as the purpose of his mission is gradually unveiled. Indeed, the elusive nature of ἐγώ εἰμι becomes apparent from its immediate context in John 4. Jesus' identity is perceived on a seemingly superficial level by the woman (vv. 11, 12, 15), and ἐγώ εἰμι is understood by her as Jesus' affirmation of his messianic status (vv. 25, 29).She fails to recognize the true nature of Jesus' claim, and the force of his affirmative response to her declaration (ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα) is greatly diminished when, during her reflection on this encounter, she calls on her fellow-Samaritans to come and see the man whose powers to declare 'all' she perceives solely from the perspective of her own experiences (v. 29: ὃς εἶπέν μοι πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα, repeated in v. 39). But for the readers of this narrative, Jesus' first utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι already points to his role as the one in whom the divine promises of revelation and salvation are being fulfilled.

2. Jesus' Confrontation with 'the Jews' (8:24, 28)

Previous discussions of the interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι in John's Gospel have, quite understandably, focused on its three striking occurrences in John 8. This chapter, together with the seventh, contain a series of dialogues in which Jesus' origin, identity and authority are discussed; both chapters are set during the last day of Tabernacles, although the story of the adulteress (7:53-8:11) interrupts the flow of Jesus' continued confrontation with 'the Jews' (7:37-52; 8:12f.).[39] At the beginning of the discourse Jesus presents himself to his audience as the universal life-giving light (8:12), a theme well-established within the context of Tabernacles (e.g., Zech. 14:7; m.Suk 5:2-4).[40] But the φῶς image is immediately linked in the Johannine discourse to the theme of judgement, because a key function of 'the light' is to expose truth and falsehood, belief and unbelief (cf. 12:46-48); the revelatory presence of Jesus as 'the light of the

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[39] On the many thematic links between John 7 and 8, see particularly Ibuki, *Die Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium,* 66-75.

[40] Isaianic imagery may also have influenced John 8:12, since the declaration ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κοσμου echoes several passages in which 'light' serves as an image of salvation (Isa. 9:1; 42:6, 16; 49:6; 50:10; 51:4; 60:1, 3). Cf. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums,* 164-66; Thyen, 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt', 38; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel,* 215-24. See also Chapter 7 n.45 above.

world' is thus a challenge that inevitably provokes decision. The sharp dualistic contrast between light and darkness (v. 12b) sets the scene for the introduction of further pairs of opposites, focusing on human and divine judgement (v. 15 and vv. 16, 26, 50), testimony (vv. 13, 17 and vv. 14, 18), truth and lies (vv. 14, 26, 32, 45-46 and v. 44). Fundamental differences between Jesus and his opponents are also exposed in terms of knowledge (vv. 14, 19, 55) and origin from above/below (vv. 23, 47), while a distinction is also established between Jesus' offer of freedom and their bondage to sinfulness (vv. 32-36).

This vast array of contrasts illustrates the intensification of the opposition to Jesus as his true identity is gradually disclosed to 'the Jews', and it becomes clear that Jesus' pronouncement of the words ἐγώ εἰμι (8:24, 28, 58) plays a decisive role in his opponents' progression from incomprehension to an attempt to kill him (v. 59). The first declaration of ἐγώ εἰμι occurs within the second unit of dialogue in this chapter (vv. 21-30), and it arises directly from Jesus' announcement of his imminent departure, intended as a warning to his audience (v. 21; cf. 7:33-36). Misunderstanding characterizes the response of 'the Jews' to the statement that they cannot follow Jesus, and their supposition that he is to take his own life accentuates the polarity between his origin ἐκ τῶν ἄνω and theirs ἐκ τῶν κάτω (v. 23). It is at this point that Jesus discloses how they can avoid death: 'For unless you believe that I am (he), you will die in your sins' (v. 24b: ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ πιστεύσητε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν). Only death in a state of sinfulness can stem from the refusal to believe Jesus' claim expressed as ἐγώ εἰμι. The one path to deliverance is outlined in this warning, for those who fail to accept Jesus' true identity will remain in darkness and continue to be ἐκ τῶν κάτω.

Jesus' opponents, due to their lack of belief, evidently fail to comprehend the meaning of ἐγώ εἰμι (v. 25). The question σὺ τίς εἶ suggests that 'the Jews' assume that something is missing from ἐγώ εἰμι,[41] either because the expression is understood by them as incomplete ('I am') or because they recognize that no antecedent can be identified from its immediate context ('I am he'). Consequently, the declaration appears incomprehensible to Jesus' audience. Another case of Johannine *Doppelbedeutung* can be detected in this

[41] Cf. Lindars, *John*, 321; Barrett, *St. John*, 342. Robert, 'Le malentendu sur le nom divin', 281f., makes the innovative suggestion that the misunderstanding stems from the use of ὅτι in v. 24, to be interpreted as πιστεύσητε ὅ τι ἐγώ εἰμι ('unless you believe that which I am'); this leads to the question '*Who* are you', and is picked up by Jesus in v. 25: τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. According to Robert, the same confusion about ὅτι occurs in v. 28, but not in v. 58.

part of the debate (vv. 24-25), one which serves as an illustration of the limited perception of Jesus' opponents, although Schnackenburg proposes that σὺ τίς εἶ is to be understood as expressing a refusal on their part to accept Jesus' self-declaration about his identity ('Who *are* you?'). In other words, 'the Jews' do realize that Jesus is making a profound claim, and σύ is emphatic and implies rejection.[42] However, this proposal does not allow for the deliberately open-ended character of Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι at this point, for the force of Jesus' claim only becomes clear to his perplexed audience in v. 58. Thus, from the perspective of this series of dialogues (8:12-59), the motif of misunderstanding is intentional in order to give Jesus the opportunity to offer clarification and proceed further with the aid of statements which are similar in terms of their basic claim (ἐγώ εἰμι), but introduce new elements into his declaration (vv. 28, 58). However, Jesus' immediate reaction to his audience is expressed in a statement which has been described as 'the most obscure sentence in the Gospel'.[43] Some commentators interpret the words τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν (v. 25) as a question expressing Jesus' frustration ('Why do I talk to you at all!').[44] But Jesus continues to speak with 'the Jews' (v. 26a: πολλὰ ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν), thereby supporting the views of other interpreters who draw attention to the temporal sense of the adverbial accusative τὴν ἀρχήν ('What I have been telling you from the beginning') and interpret it as a reference to the beginning of Jesus' ministry.[45] The temporal meaning of τὴν ἀρχήν is maintained in another proposed rendering of the phrase which also takes into account the present tense of λαλῶ: '[I am] from the beginning what I tell you'.[46] This interpretation would accordingly convey the more profound Johannine understanding of ἀρχή as a term to describe the pre-existence of Jesus (1:1). Miller's variation on this rendering ('[I am the One] *at* the beginning, which is what I keep telling you')

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[42] *Johannesevangelium*, II:254.

[43] Beasley-Murray, *John*, 125. This statement is analysed in some detail by Miller, 'The Christology of John 8:25', 257-65; cf. also Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 115-17.

[44] E.g., Bultmann, *Johannes*, 268; Blank, *Krisis: Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie*, 227f.; Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 133f.

[45] Brown, *John*, 347f.; Nicholson, *Death as Departure*, 117. However, Miller, 'The Christology of John 8:25', 262, notes that, for this particular rendering to be acceptable, one would expect the more characteristically Johannine phrase ἀπ'/ἐξ ἀρχῆς (cf. 6:64; 15:27; 16:4) and εἶπον or λελάληκα (cf. 16:4) rather than the present tense λαλῶ.

[46] τὴν ἀρχήν understood as 'from the beginning' (cf. LXX Gen. 41:21; 43:18, 20; Dan. 9:21), and ὅ τι maintained. See, e.g., Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel*, 294f.; Barrett, *St. John*, 343; Lindars, *John*, 321.

seeks to account for the use of τὴν ἀρχήν rather than ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, and this, he believes, sustains the *who* rather than the *when* of the question (v. 25a).[47] It is again probable that John intended Jesus' reply to appear ambiguous,[48] for while Miller's rendering of the phrase in terms of pre-existence serves to anticipate the climactic conclusion of this discourse (8:58), the proposal forwarded by Barrett and others allows the possibility that this statement can be interpreted on more than one level.

Important clues with regard to the meaning and significance of the Johannine use of ἐγώ εἰμι (8:24, 28) are provided in v. 26, for Jesus now stresses his unity with, and dependence on, the Father: 'And I declare to the world what I have heard from him (v. 26c: κἀγὼ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον (cf. 8:38, 40; 12:49). Since 'the Jews' again fail to comprehend that he is speaking about his unique relationship with God (v. 27), this prompts Jesus to declare the words ἐγώ εἰμι for a second time: 'When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am (he)' (v. 28: ὅταν ὑψώσητε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι). The focus turns to the future, to events linked to the 'lifting up' of Jesus on the cross, interpreted as his exaltation (cf. 3:14; 12:32) and elsewhere described as his glorification (12:23; 13:31-32).[49] This is when Jesus' opponents, who will in fact be instrumental in his death (ὑψώσητε), will gain knowledge of, or come to understand, the meaning of his claim expressed in terms of ἐγώ εἰμι. The manner in which Jesus' exaltation will actually affect those who now carry out their own form of judgement is not specified, thus prompting Thüsing to ask: 'Ist es ein Erkennen zum Heil oder zum Unheil?'[50] Will they know, after Jesus' departure, that they are condemned for rejecting him,[51] or will they again be given the opportunity to accept Jesus and the life-giving power of the

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[47] 'The Christology of John 8:25', 263.

[48] Robert, 'Le malentendu sur le nom divin', 282-87, proposes that John is deliberately playing on the two possible meanings of τὴν ἀρχήν, namely 'à l'origine' and 'avant tout'. Cf. *idem*, 'Étude littéraire de Jean viii, 21-59', 72f., 79f.

[49] Many interpreters regard the Johannine language of exaltation and glorification as drawn directly from the description of the Servant of the Lord in Isa. 52:13 (LXX: ἰδοὺ συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα); the use of the future tense for both verbs is therefore read as pointing to Jesus' own fate. See especially Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 247; Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund*, 174-76; Evans, *Word and Glory*, 155f., 180; Frey, '"Wie Mose die Schlange in der Wüste erhöht hat..."', 188f.; Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 49-51, 63-67 (see further n.143 below).

[50] *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu*, 15.

[51] Bultmann, *Johannes*, 265f.; Brown, *John*, 351.

cross?[52] No answers are provided at this point, but the statement implies that 'the Jews' will again be confronted with a choice, since Jesus' 'lifting up' is the key moment of the κρίσις which effects the separation of believers from unbelievers.[53] What is clear is that Jesus again stresses his dependence on the Father: 'And I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father has taught me' (v. 28b: καὶ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ποιῶ οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατὴρ ταῦτα λαλῶ). He does not act or speak of himself (cf. 5:19, 30; 7:28; 8:42), but only what he sees or hears the Father doing and saying. And as Jesus' acts are an expression of his obedience to the Father (v. 29c: ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε), his unity with the Father will be made manifest by the fact that he will not be abandoned when he is 'lifted up' (v. 29ab). This second ἐγώ εἰμι claim therefore provides some illumination with regard to its intended meaning, but an aura of mysteriousness still surrounds the expression.

To what extent can an attempt at establishing the significance of ἐγώ εἰμι in the light of its use in other traditions shed light on the key role it evidently plays in this series of dialogues? Since ἐγώ εἰμι is presented in both statements as the object of belief and knowledge (vv. 24, 28), to speak of its function in terms of an expression of self-identification ('It is I') is clearly inadequate. In addition, interpretations of the phrase as a statement whose antecedent can be identified from its context bristle with difficulties. The self-designation τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου is, as often noted, too far removed to be echoed in v. 24, and there is no evidence to suggest that the discourse focuses on Jesus' messianic identity and claims.[54] Perhaps a stronger case can be advanced for regarding ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as the antecedent of ἐγώ εἰμι in v. 28,[55] but, as Brown appropriately remarks, 'it does not fit John's thought that the ultimate insight into the exalted Jesus would be that he is Son of Man'.[56]

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[52] E.g., Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu*, 15-17; Sanders and Mastin, *John*, 225 n.6. On the possible implications of the citation of Zech. 12:10 in John 19:37 for an understanding of the statement in 8:28, see Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu*, 19-22; Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift*, 318-25.

[53] Cf. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, 138: 'The promise of v. 28a is about neither salvation nor condemnation, but rather the possibility of both'.

[54] As proposed by Freed, '*Egô Eimi* in John 8:24', 163-67.

[55] Bultmann, *Johannes*, 265f.; Freed, 'The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel', 405f.; Harner, *'I Am'*, 44.

[56] *John*, 348; cf. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 368. Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, I:416, II:256, rejects the implicit addition of 'Son of man' in v. 28 because i) it shatters the link with v. 24 where no predicate can be supplied; ii) the Johannine

The main issue, evidently, is what the fourth evangelist believed that 'the Jews', as well as his own readers, would have heard in these ἐγώ εἰμι statements. To propose that אני הוא lies at the heart of these pronouncements certainly does not amount to a new exegetical insight, for recognition of the absolute force of ἐγώ εἰμι in vv. 24 and 28, and its indebtedness to the use of the expression in LXX Isaiah, is widely recognized. The terminological relationship between the Johannine and Septuagintal use of ἐγώ εἰμι has primarily been identified on the basis of LXX Isa. 43:10 (ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), where it also represents the object of belief (cf. John 8:24) and knowledge (cf. 8:28). Indeed, Isa. 43 has been described in some fairly recent studies as a key interpretative source for the language and thought patterns of John 8,[57] but the extent to which the meaning attached to ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isa. 43:10 is carried forward in the Johannine discourse requires some consideration. Furthermore, a proper assessment of the significance of this expression in Isa. 43:10 cannot be conducted in isolation from the meaning it acquired in its original Deutero-Isaianic context nor from its interpretation in LXX Isaiah. And, as was suggested in relation to John 4:26, the scope of this analysis should be extended beyond Isa. 43:10 and its immediate context in order to include other Deutero-Isaianic passages in which ἐγώ εἰμι occurs (41:4; 43:25; 46:4; 51:12; 52:6), as well as the more neglected statement pronounced by God in LXX Deut. 32:39 (ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι). Indeed, the striking similarities between the divine self-declarations of Deutero-Isaiah and Deut. 32:39 in terms of their form, content and context in the Hebrew and Greek Bibles could have prompted the fourth evangelist to apply the exegetical principle of *gezerah shawah* to this pentateuchal statement and its prophetic counterparts.

For this reason, it is necessary to consider the extent to which the bipartite ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) and the contexts in which it occurs can illuminate the ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements of 8:24 and 28, and the discourses in which they appear. Their analogous settings provides an appropriate point of departure, because John presents this series of dialogues as an occasion for confrontation between the two opposite poles represented by Jesus and 'the Jews'. This setting is

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Jesus never directly says 'I am the Son of man'; iii) the title is associated with exaltation and glorification in the first part of the statement (cf. 3:14; 12:34), but the main clause stands on its own. 'Die Erhöhung des 'Menschensohnes' gibt nur den Zeitpunkt (τότε) an, zu dem den ungläubigen Juden diese Erkenntnis des Wesens Jesu kommen wird' (*ibid.*, I:416).

[57] See especially Coetzee, 'Jesus' Revelation in the *Ego Eimi* Sayings in Jn 8 and 9', 170-77; Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel*, 119-22; Thyen, 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt', 24f.

reminiscent of the opposition between God and the foreign nations and their gods established by Deutero-Isaiah with the aid of the literary trial speech (41:1-4; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; cf. Deut. 32:37-42),[58] in which both parties confront each other in the presence of witnesses who are gathered to establish the identity of the supreme God. The correlation between confrontation and testimony figures prominently in the dialogue leading to Jesus' first ἐγώ εἰμι declaration, for, in language characteristic of John's dualistic framework, the polarity between Jesus and 'the Jews' is illustrated by their contrasting views about μαρτυρία. Jesus defends the validity of his testimony by claiming that the Father bears witness to him (vv. 14, 18; cf. 5:37),[59] and this acquires particular significance in the light of the innovative reference to God as one who also acts as witness in LXX Isa. 43:10 (κἀγὼ μάρτυς; cf. 43:12).

In view of the 'judicial' setting of John 8:12-59 and a number of Deutero-Isaianic passages, the validity of the testimony provided by those gathered is of particular importance. Jesus defends himself (v. 14) against the earlier remark that his own μαρτυρία is not reliable (ἀληθής), which is reminiscent of Isa. 43:9 where Yahweh calls upon the nations to gather witnesses who will verify the claims made on behalf of their gods and declare: 'It is true' (HT: אמת; LXX: ἀληθῆ). But the use of such terminology, even within the context of Isa. 43:8-13, suggests a far more profound theological statement than one of judicial verification, for the issue at stake is the identity of the true God. Thus, if God himself is true (ἀληθῆ), his salvific promises can also be described as ἀλήθεια. Isa. 45:19 expresses this conviction with the claim that God proclaims the truth (LXX: καὶ ἀναγγέλλων ἀλήθειαν), which follows a self-declaratory formula (אני יהוה) also taking the form ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Isaiah (45:18).[60] The dialogues in John 8:12-59 in fact shift from the issue of the

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[58] See Chapter 1 n.43. The 'trial' context of these Deutero-Isaianic and Johannine passages was recognized by Blank, *Krisis*, 199f., but the theme has been analysed in some depth by Trites, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 35-47, 78-127, and, more recently, by Lincoln, 'Trials, Plots and the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel', 20-24.

[59] ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περι ἐμαυτοῦ in v. 18 may well form a deliberate expansion of ἐγώ εἰμι (cf. LXX Isa. 43:25; 51:12; 52:6). Charlier, 'L'exégèse johannique d'un précepte légal', 513, suggests that it would otherwise take the form ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ. It should be borne in mind that John 8:18 fulfils a different function from 4:26 (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ λαλῶν σοι), for ἐγώ εἰμι, in the former case, does not possess an appositive role.

[60] LXX Isa. 45:19 provides another point of contact with John 7-8, for God declares: οὐκ ἐν κρυφῇ λελάληκα (cf. 48:16). Jesus goes to Jerusalem ἐν κρυπτῷ (7:10) and then withdraws (8:59: ἐκρύβη), but the interim discourses (7:16-8:58) are pronounced openly (7:26: παρρησίᾳ). See also 18:20: καὶ ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν.

validity of Jesus' self-testimony (vv. 13-14, 16-17) to his pronouncement that God is true (v. 26: ἀληθής; cf. 3:33). Belief in Jesus thus leads to knowledge of the truth (τὴν ἀλήθειαν) and the freedom it brings (v. 32), for he speaks the truth (vv. 40, 45, 46). While Deutero-Isaiah announces that God himself pronounces and brings about the deliverance of his people, John 8 declares that the Father's plan of salvation, his ἀλήθεια (v. 40), is now decisively revealed in Jesus (cf. 18:37). A correlation between an understanding of ἀλήθεια as revealed salvation and the use of ἐγώ εἰμι to express Jesus' role as the one in whom eschatological salvation becomes a reality is further implied by the parallel structure of his declarations in v. 28 (γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι) and v. 32 (γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν).[61]

Furthermore, this discourse highlights Jesus' relationship with his Father by noting that he acts as both witness and judge,[62] for Jesus judges as a result of his unity with the Father (v. 16; cf. 5:27, 30). According to several Deutero-Isaianic passages, God not only gives testimony (41:2-4; 43:10-13; 45:21), but acts as judge in the 'trial' proceedings (41:21; 43:14-17; 45:20). The verdict secured by Yahweh in these speeches is that he alone is the all-powerful God, and the aim is to convince the exiles that it is he who secures the deliverance of Israel, which, at the same time, involves the downfall of Babylon (41:1-5; 43:13). A judicial setting is therefore used by Deutero-Isaiah as the literary vehicle which leads to the acknowledgement of Yahweh's sovereign power. The dual aspect of divine supremacy is, moreover, colourfully illustrated in Deut. 32:39-43, for God announces his unique divinity (ἴδετε ἴδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι) before proclaiming that he will intervene both on behalf of his people and against his adversaries. Indeed, in both the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah and the Song of Moses, it is emphasized that the sovereignty of God and his all-embracing activity will be made manifest to all. Despite the surface framework of John 8:12-59 as a further example of Jesus being put on trial by his opponents, this discourse demonstrates that his testimony in fact becomes judgement. In accordance with the Johannine concept of κρίσις, Jesus' self-testimony leads to a separation of believers, for whom eternal life becomes a reality, from unbelievers who must face death and condemnation (cf. 3:17-19;

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[61] Cf. LXX Isa. 43:19 where God speaks of doing new things (καινὰ; salvific acts) and then declares καὶ γνώσεσθε αὐτά.

[62] The intended link between μαρτυρία and κρίσις in John 8 is strengthened by the insertion of statements about judgement (vv. 15-16) between declarations about testimony (vv. 13-14, 17-18). See Lincoln, 'Trials, Plots and the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel', 7f., 13f.

12:46-48).[63] This 'either-or' situation permeates the eighth chapter, for the choice is between light or darkness (v. 12), knowledge or ignorance (v. 19), life or death (vv. 21, 24, 51), descent from above or below (v. 23), freedom or bondage (vv. 32, 36), descent from Abraham or the devil (v. 44).

This Johannine discourse highlights Jesus' role as the agent of salvation for believers, but also demonstrates that his rejection will lead to condemnation, and the two ἐγώ εἰμι declarations (vv. 24, 28) indeed emphasize that the response to Jesus' claim provokes self-judgement. Some of the terminology used by John to describe the consequences of the acceptance or rejection of Jesus is reminiscent of the way in which Deut. 32:39 explicates the initial self-declaration (אני אני הוא) with the aid of God's announcement that he alone possesses the power to cause death and give life. The claim 'I make alive' (v. 39c: ואחיה) was understood in relatively early Jewish traditions as a reference to the resurrection of the dead (cf. IV Macc 18:18-19),[64] and its Septuagintal rendering as ζῆν ποιήσω, together with II Kings 5:7 (ζωοποιῆσαι) and Neh. 9:6 (II Esdras 19:6: σὺ ζωοποιεῖς), provide significant biblical parallels to the succinct expression of Jesus' power to bestow eternal life found in John 5:21 (οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οὓς θέλει ζῳοποιεῖ). ἐγώ εἰμι expresses Jesus' power to give life, but, within a discourse focusing on confrontation, it is also stressed that the refusal to accept his offer of life can only lead to death and condemnation (8:21, 24; cf. 5:24).

An understanding of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncement, especially 8:24, in terms of the κρίσις it provokes can, therefore, be viewed in the light of the use of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) by God as a succinct declaration of his unique divinity and all-embracing activity. The primary focus of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι claim, as indeed in the case of אני הוא in biblical traditions, is clearly his role as the one who secures salvation (cf. 6:20). And it is the future-oriented perspective of divine promises of deliverance associated with אני הוא in both Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaiah (41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12; 52:6; cf. 43:25; 51:12) - a perspective also adopted and developed in several midrashic expositions of these texts[65] - that leads to the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the one in whom these promises are now fulfilled. While Jesus warns his audience that

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[63] On the importance of the theme of κρίσις in Johannine theology, see in particular Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 208-12; Blank, *Krisis;* Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* 220-32. The term κρίσις is also used within the context of a trial speech in LXX Isaiah (41:1, 21).

[64] See Chapter 3 §1.2 and Chapter 4 §1.

[65] See Chapter 4 §§1, 2.1, 4, 6; Chapter 5 §§1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.

they will die in their sins unless they believe that he reveals the Father and accomplishes his salvific plan (8:24), Jesus' declaration also indicates that belief in him will lead to the forgiveness of their sins (cf. Isa. 43:25) and to the bestowal of eternal life. Similarly, the lifting up of Jesus, by means of which his unity with the Father will be made manifest (vv. 28b-29), is to lead to the recognition that ἐγώ εἰμι expresses his unique identity as the manifestation of God in the world, the revelation of the divine δόξα.[66] And when the hour of glorification approaches, Jesus will again use ἐγώ εἰμι to demonstrate that it is through his death that his power to give life is truly made known (cf. 13:19; 18:5-8).

3. Before Abraham was, ἐγώ εἰμι (8:58)

The atmosphere of confrontation continues after Jesus' pronouncement of the words ἐγώ εἰμι in John 8:24 and 28, for its third occurrence in 8:58 concludes a scene held together by the figure of Abraham (8:31-59), one which gradually moves from an argument about descent from the patriarch to an outright accusation that Jesus is a Samaritan and is demon-possessed (v. 48). However, Jesus returns in v. 51 to a theme already voiced in v. 24: 'Whoever keeps my word will never see death' (ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). This again provokes incomprehension, for Jesus' opponents believe that he is speaking of deliverance from physical death, and they remark that death is an experience from which even their father Abraham and the prophets could not escape (vv. 52-53). In response to their question τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς; (v. 53), Jesus speaks of his glorification by, and knowledge of, the Father (vv. 54-55); even Abraham rejoiced that he would see his 'day' (v. 56), for the patriarch recognized that his hope for eschatological salvation was being realized in Jesus.[67] The confrontational

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[66] John indeed interprets Isaiah's call vision in the Temple (6:1-5) as a vision of the glory (cf. TIsa 6:1, 5) of the pre-existent Christ (12:41). The glory in his possession before the creation of the world (17:5) is made manifest during Jesus' earthly ministry (1:14; 2:11; 11:4, 40; 17:22) and he also returns in glory to the Father (17:1, 5). Attention can also be paid in this respect to the rabbinic tradition, probably of Tannaitic origin, analysed in Chapter 4 §1 above which interprets the divine self-declaration ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא (Deut. 32:39a) in terms of the future manifestation of God's glory to 'all flesh' (Isa. 40:5).

[67] Jewish traditions about Abraham's visions of the future are analysed by Evans, *Word and Glory*, 162-64.

atmosphere is thus sustained to the end, since Jesus implicitly states that 'the Jews' cannot claim to be the children of Abraham, for true descent involves believing, like their father, in Jesus. Their lack of perception again leads 'the Jews' to remark that to have seen Abraham is an impossibility, to which Jesus responds: ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμι (v. 58).

The solemnity of this pronouncement is suggested by its introductory formula, but its meaning is far from clear. In a general sense, Jesus is testifying to his precedence over Abraham, and this is often identified as resulting from the deliberate distinction established in the statement between the patriarch who came into existence at a particular moment in history (γενέσθαι; cf. 1:3, 6, 10, 14) and the absolute form of being claimed by Jesus (εἰμι; cf. 1:1-4).[68] Although the statement can be defined as Jesus' claim to timeless existence,[69] more seems to be implied by ἐγώ εἰμι, particularly if elements binding these climactic words to the declarations in vv. 24 and 28 can be identified.

Jesus' statement undoubtedly conveys a different nuance from the earlier examples of ἐγώ εἰμι in the discourse, thus leading some interpreters to propose that whereas the divine expression אני הוא accounts for ἐγώ εἰμι in vv. 24 and 28, it is אהיה of Exod. 3:14 that explains v. 58.[70] Schnackenburg, for example, argues that a revelation of God's metaphysical nature is offered in Exod. 3:14 and that it serves as God's promise to Moses that he will protect his people (v. 12); moreover אהיה, but not אני הוא, was regarded in Jewish (rabbinic) circles as a divine name, which would explain why 'the Jews' react so negatively after Jesus' third ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncement, but simply express bewilderment in v. 25.[71] If this Johannine terminology has been borrowed from the Septuagint, as seems likely in the case of 8:24 and 28, it should be noted that LXX Exod. 3:14 represents a nominal clause (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν) in which ὁ ὤν plays the dominant role, as demonstrated by its rendering of אהיה

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[68] For an analysis of the Johannine application of ἐγώ εἰμι (absolute and predicative) in relation to 1:1-18, see Harris, *Prologue and Gospel,* 130-54.

[69] Cf. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Jean,* 256: 'ἐγώ εἰμι ne marque pas seulement la préexistence, pour laquelle ἦν eût suffi; c'est l'existence sans modalité de temps'. The notion of pre-existence, however, forms the basis of Freed's attempt to interpret 8:58 as a claim to messiahship in the light of Jewish, often much later, traditions about the pre-existence of the Messiah ('Who or What Was Before Abraham in John 8:58?', 52-59).

[70] See Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel,* 308-10; Fossum, 'Sects and Movements', 377 n.33; *idem,* 'In the Beginning was the Name', 127f.; Probst, 'Jésus et Yahvé', 45.

[71] *Johannesevangelium,* I:301; II:64, 224.

in v. 14b: Ὁ ὢν [ἀπέσταλκέν με πρὸς ὑμᾶς].[72] However, it cannot be ruled out that ἐγώ εἰμι of v. 58 may represent John's favoured rendering of אהיה directly from the Hebrew text of Exod. 3:14, whereas another possibility is that the many examples of אני הוא rendered as ἐγώ εἰμι in the Septuagint prompted the fourth evangelist to view this bipartite Greek expression, without ὁ ὤν, as also encapsulating the meaning of the divine name disclosed to Moses. Thus, rather than attempting to refute the possible influence of Exod. 3:14 on John 8:58, a more fruitful exercise would be to consider whether an understanding of ἐγώ εἰμι in the light of the divine self-declaration אני הוא can provide an appropriate explanation of Jesus' words.[73]

The first aspect to be considered is whether אני הוא in its original Deutero-Isaianic context, and ἐγώ εἰμι as its Septuagintal counterpart, can function as an expression of God's eternal existence. As part of the prophetic attempt to convince the exiles that the God who promises deliverance will act in accordance with his past activity, Deutero-Isaiah establishes a close link between the divine self-predications אני ראשון/אני אחרון and אני הוא (48:12; cf. 41:4). God can declare אני הוא because his sovereignty extends from the beginning to the end, and his future presence is highlighted by LXX Isa. 46:4 (ἕως γήρους ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ ἕως ἂν καταγηράσητε ἐγώ εἰμι). Even גם מיום of Isa. 43:13 becomes ἔτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς in LXX Isaiah,[74] although a rendering for the occurrence of אני הוא that immediately follows in MT is curiously absent. But even if ἐγώ εἰμι of 43:13 had not been included in the Septuagint version of Isaiah known to John, its prominence in v. 10 is sufficiently close at hand to have enabled him to recognize a link between the two statements, although he would also, in all likelihood, have consulted the Hebrew text. In addition, the use of ἀπ' ἀρχῆς in LXX Isa. 43:13, as well as

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[72] As stressed by Dogniez and Harl, *La Bible d'Alexandrie: Le Deutéronome*, 339, when they note that ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX Deut. 32:39a is 'différent du nom créé en Ex 3,14, *ho ôn*, «Celui qui est», «l'Étant». Cf. also Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel*, 85. McKay, '"I am" in John's Gospel', 302f., draws attention to this difference between LXX Exod. 3:14 and the Johannine use of ἐγώ εἰμι, but, in an attempt to demonstrate that the expression is simply a form of self-identification, he fails to mention 8:24, 28 and 13:19, and the possible influence of LXX Isaiah on the Johannine usage.

[73] Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel*, 307f., translates v. 58 as קודם שנברא אברהם אני הוא (although see n.70 above). Cf. also the constructions which reflect the poetic technique of swapping in the Hebrew texts of Isa. 41:4d; 43:13a; 46:4a.

[74] On the possible relevance of LXX Isa. 43:13, cf. Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 196. See further Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, 327-29. Moreover, the phrase πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι resembles LXX Isa. 46:10: πρὶν αὐτὰ γενέσθαι.

ἐξ ἀρχῆς in 41:26 and 43:9, can strengthen a possible thematic link between Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι declarations in 8:24 and 58,[75] particularly if Jesus' reply to 'the Jews' in v. 25 is interpreted as: '[I am] from the beginning what I tell you'. Also significant in this respect are renderings of Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא statements provided by TIsa, for on three occasions this expression, translated as אנא הוא, is followed by the interpretative rendering: 'I am he that is from the beginning, even the ages of the ages are mine, and apart from me there is no god' (TIsa 43:10; 44:6; 48:12).[76]

To interpret ἐγώ εἰμι exclusively in terms of timeless divine existence does not, however, convey the full force of the expression in 8:58. If אני הוא is the ultimate 'source' of this Johannine pronouncement, the inextricable link between God's eternal presence and his salvific activity must also be taken into account. Deutero-Isaiah pronounces that God is both 'first' and 'last' because his creative and salvific acts extend from beginning to end. Similarly, ἐγώ εἰμι of John 8:58 is not only concerned with establishing Jesus' pre-existence or his precedence over Abraham, but it serves as the basis for his overall promise of salvation. Thus, as effectively noted by Lindars, if the Johannine Jesus is to be presented as the giver of eternal life, it must be shown that he himself possesses a life with no such limitations as a beginning and an end (1:4; 5:26; 6:57; 14:19).[77] This part of the discourse includes Jesus' promise that those who keep his word will never see death (v. 51), thereby signifying that they can receive eternal life, and the scene concludes with the claim that the Father's plan of salvation, which caused Abraham to rejoice, is revealed in his Son. Abraham is thus depicted as a witness to the revelation of divine salvation in Jesus (v. 56: καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐχάρη). In the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, the patriarch is presented as one who has already experienced God's power to deliver (Isa. 51:2; cf. 41:8), and this offers assurance to the exiles of their own future deliverance. Innovative readings found in TIsa 43:10 and 12 develop this theme in relation to the divine self-declaration אני הוא (אנא הוא): 'I am he that is from the beginning, the everlasting ages are mine...I declared to Abraham your father what was about to come, I saved you from Egypt, just as I swore to him between the pieces'. This targumic rendering interprets the statement in Isa.

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[75] See Lindars, *John*, 321; *idem*, 'The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology', 44.

[76] See Chapter 3 §2, including the discussion of Chilton's proposals in favour a Tannaitic dating for the initial exegetical framework of TIsa. See further the rabbinic traditions which use the self-predications 'I am the first and I am the last' as a form of exegetical clarification of אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39a (Chapter 4 §§2.1, 3).

[77] 'Discourse and Tradition', 120, 126.

43:10ef in terms of God's eternal presence rather than as a monotheistic self-declaration that no god has preceded or will succeed him (HT), but it is also followed by a pronouncement which elaborates upon the concisely formulated Hebrew declaration (MT: אָנֹכִי הִגַּדְתִּי וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי) by stating that Abraham received from God the promise of future salvation.[78]

The fact that this Johannine scene of heightened opposition concludes with a description of 'the Jews' lifting stones to throw at Jesus leads one to enquire about their perception of, and response to, his statement in 8:58. The different reactions to Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι in vv. 24 and 28, on the one hand, and to his words in v. 58, on the other, do not necessarily rule out אני הוא as providing the interpretative key to the concluding part of this discourse. The ambiguity surrounding the first two occurrences of the phrase can be regarded as an integral part of a strategy which links ἐγώ εἰμι to the technique of misunderstanding; the full implications of Jesus' claim are only gradually disclosed in order to heighten the confrontational tension between Jesus and his opponents, and it reaches its culmination with the fiercely negative attitude exposed in v. 59. The detection of *Doppelbedeutung* in the discourse also helps to clarify the interrelationship of the three statements, for whereas v. 24 leaves open the possibility that ἐγώ εἰμι serves, on one level, as a declaration of identity whose antecedent 'the Jews' seek to establish (v. 25), a gradual unfolding of its significance (vv. 25b, 28) means that, due to the distinctive form of the final declaration in v. 58, its absolute force cannot be missed. The cumulative effect of these three pronouncements is emphasized by Ashton, who states that the expected reaction - to blasphemy - *does* occur when ἐγώ εἰμι is uttered for the third time.[79]

But if 'the Jews' are depicted in this discourse as finally recognizing Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι as his claim to the divine self-declaration אני הוא, the actual motivation for their subsequent actions needs to be explored. According to Brown, Jesus' opponents seek to stone him for blasphemy (cf. Lev. 24:16; m.Sanh 7:4) because his pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι in its absolute form belongs to the portrayal of the Johannine Jesus as one who bears the divine

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[78] TIsa also changes the reference from Cyrus to Abraham in 41:2, and God's promises of deliverance is directed at 'the children of Abraham' in TIsa 46:11 (cf. also 43:12; 48:15-16). The relevance of some of these targumic traditions for the interpretation of John 8:58 was first noted by Stauffer, *Jesus*, 141; cf. also Harner, *'I Am'*, 40f.

[79] *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 141 n.30, 368. Cf. Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel*, 62.

name.[80] This argument is developed, in part, on the basis of distinctively Johannine references to Jesus as the one who manifests God's name to his own (17:6: ἐφανέρωσά σου τὸ ὄνομα; cf. v. 26),[81] and who has kept his disciples in the name which the Father has given him (vv. 11, 12).[82] Jesus comes and works in the Father's name (5:43; 10:25) and Jesus' hour of glorification also amounts to the glorification of God's name (12:28). Brown thus proposes that the name manifested to the disciples is ἐγώ εἰμι (cf. 6:20; 13:19) and it is by means of its power that they are protected in the garden (18:5-8).[83] This view has also been taken up in more recent studies of the descriptions of a principal angelic intermediary in apocalyptic and visionary-mystical traditions; it is proposed that the idea reflected in these traditions about God's Name-bearing agent (cf. Exod. 23:21) possessing divine authority has influenced the fourth evangelist's depiction of Jesus as the emissary who bears the divine name (ἐγώ εἰμι).[84] It cannot be conclusively demonstrated that a particular name is implied by Jesus' statements in John 17,[85] which means that evidence for the Johannine interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι as a divine name must be sought before it can be linked to the ὄνομα of the Father.

The connection between Jesus' declaration in 8:58 and the response it receives can, in fact, be interpreted in a number of ways and on different levels. It may, for example, not be necessary to view ἐγώ εἰμι as a divine name if, as already noted in connection with Mark 14:62, the restriction of the

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[80] *John*, 533-38, 755f. Cf. also Zickendraht, 'ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ', 167; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 93-96, 377; Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt*, 52f., 213-20; Meeks, 'Equal to God', 315, 317; de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives on the Death of Jesus*, 59, 196, 209.

[81] For the view that Isaianic influence (52:6; 55:13; 62:2; 66:15-16) can be detected in the Johannine emphasis on Jesus as the one who comes in God's name and makes it known, see Young, 'A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel', 222-24.

[82] Brown, *John*, 754-56, consequently favours the strongly attested reading ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι for 17:11, 12. Cf. also *ibid.*, 11, where he claims that τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ in 1:12 (cf. 2:23; 3:18) points to belief that Jesus bears the divine name. For later traditions concerning Jesus' possession of the 'Name', see Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 147-63; Fossum, *The Name of God*, 95-98, 106-10.

[83] *John*, 764.

[84] See especially Meeks, 'Equal to God', 317f.; Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 142-47; Morray-Jones, 'Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition', 14f.; Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 270-93. See further Ashton, 'Bridging Ambiguities', 71-89; Fossum, 'In the Beginning was the Name', 127-29.

[85] For the view that τὸ ὄνομα denotes 'the revealed character and nature of God' rather than a specific name in 17:6, 11 and 12, see Bultmann, *Johannes*, 380f.; Lindars, *John*, 521, 524, 533; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, III:199; Barrett, *St. John*, 505, 507, 515.

βλασφημία charge to the utterance of the divine name (m.Sanh 7:5) occurred at a later period than the date of the composition of the Fourth Gospel. Jesus' words could be denounced as blasphemy because his audience interpreted the statement πρὶν' Αβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι as a claim to equality and unity with God. This explanation accounts for the Jewish response in John 10; Jesus declares ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἕν ἐσμεν (v. 30) and his opponents lift stones (v. 31) and announce ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν (v. 33; cf. 5:18; 19:7). Jesus' statement in 8:58 could be regarded as blasphemous for similar reasons, particularly as it goes beyond his earlier assertions of working with the Father (5:17, 19) and acting in accordance with the Father's will (6:38; 8:26).

In order to ascertain whether it is conceivable that Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) in 8:58 could have been interpreted as a divine name, two issues call for consideration. First, to what extent is John presupposing that Jesus' use of the Hebrew expression אני הוא or it Aramaic counterpart אנא הוא would have been interpreted as his pronouncement of a divine name in first-century Jewish circles? If one adopts the view that the name whose utterance is prohibited is in fact the tetragrammaton, אני הוא cannot be defined in such terms. In addition, rabbinic evidence points to an assessment of אהי"ה, but not אני הוא, as a divine name,[86] and the fact that this expression can be employed by human beings in such forms as אם אני הוא הטמא (m.Naz 8:1) certainly weakens the force of the argument that אני הוא represents a formula too sacred to be pronounced.[87]

It has, however, been frequently noted in previous chapters of this study that determining the actual status and significance of אני הוא is dependent on assessing its intended function and considering the contexts in which it occurs. Thus, in the case of Deut. 32:39 and the Deutero-Isaianic passages, אני הוא serves as a succinct expression of God's sovereignty, consisting of אני, by means of which he identifies himself, and הוא as the element that conveys his exclusive and unique divinity. Certain midrashic traditions continue and, indeed, heighten the role of אני הוא as God's own assertion of his unity and exclusiveness, particularly when the relevant scriptural passages are cited as proof-texts in polemics against such groups as the 'two powers' heretics. It

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[86] E.g., j.Meg 1:9 (71d); b.Shebu 35a; Mek Kaspa 4 on Exod. 23:13 (Horovitz-Rabin, 332); ARNA 34:2; ARNB 38. See further Chapter 4 §1 (on TanB Wa-era §5 on Exod. 6:3 [11a]; PesR 22:7; MidTeh 91:8 [200b]), where it is demonstrated that אני הוא cannot have been interpreted in rabbinic circles as the *shem hammeporash.*

[87] See Chapter 6 §3. In addition to these factors, see the assessment of the use of rabbinic traditions for the interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι as a divine name in Mark 14:62 (Chapter 7 §3).

could therefore be proposed that John envisages the kind of situation where Jesus' pronouncement of אני הוא would be defined as blasphemous by his audience because it contains the divine designation הוא, already interpreted in at least some Jewish circles as a substitute for the tetragrammaton. This development, whose origins can be detected in certain traditions in the Hebrew Scriptures, is attested in texts discovered at Qumran,[88] in various rabbinic traditions and in the liturgical invocation [א]והו אני (m.Suk 4:5).[89] Once again, to recognize הוא in its role as a distinctive designation for God would clearly be dependent on the setting of its usage. If Jesus, according to John 8:58, was accused of blasphemy for usurping the divine הוא, it would have to be clear from the context of his pronouncement that this was its intended function. There is certainly no possibility of finding an antecedent for ἐγώ εἰμι in 8:58, a factor which distinguishes this statement from the use of the expression by Jesus in Mark 14:62 and from those אנא הוא (אני הוא) declarations attributed to sages in later rabbinic traditions. Jesus has, moreover, been making pronouncements throughout the discourse that would be viewed as claims to divine authority by his opponents, and to speak of himself in relation to the patriarch Abraham with the words πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι could quite plausibly have prompted his Jewish audience to interpret אני הוא as his claim to a divine name. Hence, if Jesus' words were taken to mean 'before Abraham came into being, אני הוא', it would have amounted to blasphemy in the eyes of his opponents.

Secondly, it may the case that ἐγώ εἰμι was interpreted by the fourth evangelist as a divine name in the light of his reflection on its distinctive usage in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah. Although it was emphasized in Chapter 2 of this study that certain factors can argue against the view that the translator(s) of LXX Isaiah interpreted ἐγώ εἰμι as a divine name, the translational technique of rendering אנכי as ἐγώ εἰμι meant that such strange formulations as ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ παρακαλῶν σε (51:12) were created. If this doubling of ἐγώ εἰμι prompted early Christians, including the author of the Fourth Gospel,

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[88] See Chapter 2 §2, especially on הואהא (1QS 8:13).

[89] As both John 8:58 and m.Suk 4:5 are set within the context of Sukkot, Davies, *The Gospel and the Land,* 295, proposes that, according to John, Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι indicates that the Divine Presence now resides in him rather than the Temple. However, some of the difficulties encountered when seeking to determine the precise meaning of the invocation [א]והו אני in m.Suk 4:5 have been highlighted in Chapter 6 §5 above.

to interpret its second occurrence as a divine name or designation,[90] this, in turn, would have led to further reflection on other examples of ἐγώ εἰμι in these Septuagintal passages. The fact that ἐγώ εἰμι performs the function of a solemn self-declaration in several cases (e.g., Isa. 41:4; 43:10; 46:4; Deut. 32:39), but, within the same text, can have the appearance of a 'divine name' (Isa. 43:25; 51:12; cf. 45:19), provides a plausible explanation of the different usages and levels of meaning detectable in John 8, as well as the prominence of Isaianic themes and motifs in the discourse.

4. Jesus Predicts His Betrayal (13:19)

The intimate setting of Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι declaration in 13:19, now addressed to his own (v. 1), stands in stark contrast to the atmosphere of confrontation in John 8. In its present form 13:1-30 fulfils the twofold role of interpreting the significance of the footwashing (vv. 6-10a, 12-17) and exposing the identity of the betrayer (vv. 2, 10b-11, 18-30). The connection between vv. 10b-11 (ἀλλ' οὐχὶ πάντες...ὅτι οὐχὶ πάντες καθαροί ἐστε) and v. 18 (οὐ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν λέγω) suggests that statements about Judas' betrayal were disrupted by the insertion of a second interpretation of the footwashing (vv. 12-17), but linked together by editorial additions (v. 11).[91] The announcement of betrayal (vv. 18-19) is marked by identifiable Johannine motifs, including the choosing of the disciples (6:70) and the theme of prediction and fulfilment (14:29), thus leading Moloney to draw the conclusion that vv. 18-20 forms the theological centrepiece of a scene whose climactic statement is ἐγώ εἰμι.[92]

A repetition of the veiled reference to Judas (v. 18) serves as the middle constituent of the gradual disclosure of the betrayer's identity (vv. 10, 18, 21, 26a, 26b). The notion that Judas has been deliberately chosen with the other disciples is already established in 6:70 (οὐκ ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς τοὺς δώδεκα ἐξελεξάμην; καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολός ἐστιν), and the prominence in

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[90] See, for example, Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 94 (who, however, claims that this was already the intention of the LXX translators). Cf. also Brown, *John,* 536; Jaubert, *Approches de l'Évangile de Jean,* 164f.; Thyen, 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt', 26; Fossum, 'In the Beginning was the Name', 127 n.81.

[91] Richter, *Die Fußwaschung im Johannesevangelium,* 308f.; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium,* III:7, 10f., 26, 30.

[92] 'The Structure and Message of John 13:1-38', 1-16; *idem,* 'A Sacramental Reading of John 13:1-18', 247f.

both contexts of the theme that Jesus chose his disciples already prepares for the integral role of Judas' deeds during the 'hour' of Jesus' glorification. To demonstrate that Judas' act accords with the divine plan, the betrayal is now described as a fulfilment of scriptural prophecy (cf. Matt. 27:9-10/Zech. 11:13; Acts 1:20/Ps. 69:26). The words ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον found in the citation from Ps. 41:10b take on particular significance due to the fact that Jesus, now facing the imminent act of betrayal, takes the initiative and gives τὸ ψωμίον to Judas (v. 26; cf. 13:27; 18:4).[93]

Judas' act fulfils Jesus' own predictions (v. 19) as well as scriptural prophecy, thus providing further proof that the betrayal is in accordance with the divine will. Already in 6:64 it has been emphasized that Jesus knows beforehand (ἐξ ἀρχῆς) that he will be betrayed (cf. 13:1, 10-11, 21), but this foreknowledge now takes a new direction as Jesus openly predicts the event 'so that you may believe and know that I am (he)' (ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅταν γένηται ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι). The prediction is thus aimed at strengthening rather than weakening the disciples' faith and, as in the case of a particularly close parallel in 14:29, the well-attested aorist subjunctive indicates a coming to complete faith despite adverse circumstances. The presentation of ἐγώ εἰμι as the content of belief is reminiscent of 8:24, but, once again, attempts at determining a possible antecedent from the context of Jesus' declaration have proved inconclusive.[94] In view of the results of the earlier analysis of the ἐγώ εἰμι statements in John 8, a search for possible links between 13:19 and the use of אני הוא and its accompanying motifs may yield more positive results.

Without doubt, the most striking link between these statements is the focus on their speaker's ability to predict events.[95] Deutero-Isaiah applies this theme predominantly, but not exclusively, within the context of trial speeches, where Yahweh challenges the pagan gods to demonstrate their predictive powers. The lack of response provides him with the opportunity to announce: 'Former things I declared long ago...then suddenly I did them and they came to pass'

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[93] The form of Ps. 41:10 cited in John 13:18 is closer to MT than LXX (40:10). See especially Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel,* 123-38; Obermann, *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift,* 255-71.

[94] Bultmann, *Johannes,* 365 n.2: 'der Offenbarer'; Sanders and Mastin, *John,* 311: 'the Christ'; Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel,* 84: 'that Jesus is their teacher and Lord, who knows whom he has chosen'; Michaels, 'Betrayal and the Betrayer', 468: 'I am [what I claim to be]'.

[95] Cf. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund,* 166f.; Trites, *The New Testament Concept of Witness,* 88.

(Isa. 48:3; cf. 42:9; 45:21; 46:10; 48:5); this is then followed by the promise that God's present prediction of future salvific acts will also be realized (46:11; 48:6). It is immediately after such a challenge that God pronounces אני הוא in Isa. 43:10 (LXX: ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), which has led several commentators to conclude that the correlation between Jesus' prediction of imminent events and ἐγώ εἰμι finds its closest parallel in Isa. 43:9-10.[96] This may well be true, but the broader implications of this prophetic argument concerning divine prophecy and fulfilment, as well as the possibility of identifying specific verbal links between John 13:19 and other Deutero-Isaianic passages,[97] should also be taken into consideration.

The implications of finding echoes of Deutero-Isaianic themes and motifs in 13:18-19 go far beyond their use of similar terminology, and, if ἐγώ εἰμι corresponds to אני הוא, a more profound message is also communicated than the presentation of Jesus as one who has the ability to predict future events. Indeed, within the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, the highlighting of God's ability to declare that which is to come cannot be divorced from the overall argument about his exclusive divinity and sovereignty.[98] Hence, when Jesus announces to his disciples that his prediction of betrayal should lead them to believe his ἐγώ εἰμι claim, his intention is to enable them to recognize that the Father has 'given all things into his hands' (v. 3), and that the path leading to Jesus' death is one that he openly accepts. As the inevitable consequence of the Deutero-Isaianic line of argumentation, which also applies to Deut. 32:37-42, is the proclamation that Yahweh, not the pagan deities, is the only true God (אני הוא), the highlighting of the involvement of Satan in Judas' act of betrayal (13:2, 27) offers clues that Jesus' prediction of this act and its fulfilment, linked together by his pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι, is perceived by the fourth evangelist as set within the context of the eschatological conflict between God and Satan and its final outcome.[99] Jesus' unity with the Father will demonstrate that he, not Satan, will be triumphant (cf. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). This will be made apparent during Jesus' arrest in the garden, the event predicted in 13:19, when the

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[96] E.g., Stauffer, *Jesus*, 88, 141; Barrett, *St. John*, 445.

[97] For example, the phraseology adopted in John 13:19 (πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι) resembles LXX Isa. 44:7 (πρὸ τοῦ ἐλθεῖν) and 46:10 (πρὶν αὐτὰ γενέσθαι). Cf. also Isa. 42:9: πρὸ τοῦ ἀνατεῖλαι.

[98] See the discussion of the Johannine use of ἀναγγέλλω (§1 above).

[99] See further §5 below. For an analysis of the Johannine interpretation of Jesus' death as one that brings about the judgement of the world and the victory over Satan (12:31-32), see especially Kovacs, 'Now Shall the Ruler of this World be Driven Out', 227-47.

soldiers and Judas, the διάβολός of 6:70 whom Satan has now entered (13:27), encounter the one who declares to them ἐγώ εἰμι (18:5-6).

The presence of the disciples during these two events is consequently of utmost significance, and their depiction as τίνας ἐξελεξάμην (13:18) is also the phrase used in LXX Isaiah to describe Israel as God's elect (41:8-9; 43:10; 44:1-2; 49:7).[100] Those chosen by Yahweh are to bear witness to his past acts of salvific intervention in history (43:10, 12), whereas the Johannine application of the term ἐξελεξάμην, used exclusively of Jesus' disciples (6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19), also indicates that one of the roles attributed to those who have been chosen by Jesus is to bear witness to him (cf. 15:27), which, within the setting of the 'hour' (13:1), involves being witnesses to Jesus' prediction of his betrayal and its fulfilment. In the trial speeches of Deutero-Isaiah, the main purpose of the calling of Israel to act as witnesses is to strengthen their faith in Yahweh as the truly incomparable God (אני הוא), whose activity on their behalf in the past will, once again, fill the exiles with hope for imminent deliverance. Similarly, in view of the connection established between Jesus' prediction of his betrayal (13:18-19) and the arrest that leads to his passion and death (18:1-11), the acceptance of his ἐγώ εἰμι claim will signify the disciples' belief in his identity as the one who, by means of his death and resurrection, fulfils God's earlier promises of eschatological salvation. Indeed, both Israel, in the Deutero-Isaianic passages, and Jesus' disciples, in John 13:19, are called upon to act as witnesses because they will themselves experience divine salvation. Jesus has already informed 'the Jews' in converse terms of the life they will receive if they accept his ἐγώ εἰμι claim (8:24), and he has already predicted his 'lifting up' on the cross (8:28; cf. 3:14; 12:32). But this present declaration occurs as the 'hour' begins to unfold, and it follows a prophetic act symbolic of the salvific significance of Jesus' death (13:8, 10). He therefore foretells the event that will play a decisive part in the process leading to his death (cf. 13:31), thus enabling the disciples to believe that the Father uniquely bestows upon his Son the power to give life to others.

Jesus, by pronouncing ἐγώ εἰμι, emphasizes that he has been sent as God's representative (cf. v. 3: ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθεν) to make eschatological

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[100] Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 199f., notes the relevance of this term in Isa. 43:10, and assesses its possible implications in John 13:18 in the light of Jesus' earlier words to his disciples: 'In Isaiah, Israel is seen as the servant of the Lord. In John, the disciples are called to follow Jesus' example [v. 15] and to do what he has done because they are servants while he is the master [v. 16]').

salvation a reality for believers. This is confirmed by the 'Synoptic' logion included in v. 20 (cf. Matt. 10:40; Luke 10:16), which, despite no obvious links with the earlier announcement of betrayal, stresses that the union between Jesus and his disciples is a reflection of his union with the Father (τὸν πέμψαντά με). As in 8:24-26 and 8:28-29, the use of ἐγώ εἰμι by the Johannine Jesus expresses the unity that exists between the sender and the one sent, demonstrated by Jesus' complete obedience to his Father's will.

5. The Arrest of Jesus (18:5, 6, 8)

Considerably less attention has been paid in studies of the Fourth Gospel to the two final utterances of ἐγώ εἰμι pronounced by Jesus on the occasion of his arrest (18:5, 8), and this is because they are largely interpreted as examples of everyday usage possessing no particular christological significance. However, an attempt will now be made to demonstrate that these two ἐγώ εἰμι statements in fact serve as the centrepoint of a narrative in which key aspects of the Johannine understanding of this enigmatic expression are crystallized.

The Johannine arrest scene, at least in terms of its overall outline, accords with its Synoptic counterparts (Mark 14:43-50; Matt. 26:47-56; Luke 22:47-53). All four narratives describe Judas' arrival with a group of armed men to arrest Jesus, and all include an account of how one of the bystanders struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear before Jesus was taken into custody. Significant differences between this narrative and the Synoptic accounts point, nevertheless, to the fourth evangelist's use of an independent tradition.[101] Moreover, motifs and themes characteristic of Johannine theology, particularly the statement about Jesus' foreknowledge of events (v. 4) and the comment that the securing of the disciples' freedom amounts to a fulfilment of Jesus' own words (v. 9), indicate that the author has subjected his source to substantial theological elaboration.

John's Passion narrative thus opens with a description of Jesus crossing the Kidron valley with his disciples and entering a garden (v. 1). It is noted that

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[101] See Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, 67-81; Brown, *John*, 814-17; *idem*, *The Death of the Messiah*, 78, 81-85. Striking differences in the Johannine account include the absence of the name 'Gethsemane', the presence of Roman soldiers with the Jewish officers, no betrayal by Judas with a kiss, as well as the naming of both Peter and Malchus.

Judas, in full awareness of the existence of this garden (v. 2), heads an arresting party consisting of a cohort of Roman soldiers and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees (v. 3). This introductory section focuses, therefore, on the two groups involved in this decisive scene; Jesus and his disciples, on the one hand, and Judas and the arresting party, on the other. Their actual encounter begins in v. 4 with Jesus coming out of the garden and asking: 'Whom do you seek?' (τίνα ζητεῖτε;). The captors state that they are looking for Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον, to which Jesus responds with the words ἐγώ εἰμι (v. 5). Upon hearing his answer, the arresting group draws back and falls to the ground (v. 6: ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἔπεσαν χαμαί). Jesus then asks the same question and offers the same answer (vv. 7-8) before requesting that his disciples be allowed to go free. Two questions are of primary concern for this study: what is the significance of Jesus' twofold utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι in this scene, and why do the captors fall to the ground following the first pronouncement?

An attempt at removing all hints of ambiguity from the utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι in v. 5 accounts for one, and possibly two, groups of variant readings. Some manuscripts read ὁ Ἰησοῦς between λέγει αὐτοῖς and ἐγώ εἰμι [ℵ A C L W Θ Ψ], and although this variant could indicate that Jesus' answer should be read as ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐγώ εἰμι, it is more likely that ὁ Ἰησοῦς is understood as belonging to the previous clause (λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς); this is the interpretation favoured by the Nestle-Aland and UBS editions, one for which there are innumerable parallels in the Fourth Gospel. Another textual variant does bear directly on Jesus' response, for Codex Vaticanus and one Latin witness (Vercelli) insert the word Ἰησοῦς immediately after ἐγώ εἰμι.[102] Certain factors do, however, suggest that this longer reading represents a scribal attempt at clarification. First, Codex Vaticanus serves as a virtually isolated witness to the inclusion of Ἰησοῦς in v. 5, and no comparable textual evidence exists for the repeated occurrences of ἐγώ εἰμι in vv. 6 and 8. Secondly, the utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form has been shown to be an acceptable form of self-identification when its antecedent has been supplied in a previous statement or question (cf. 4:26; 9:9). Hence, when Jesus comes

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[102] It should be noted that scribes usually contracted the name Ἰησοῦς to IC; if the occurrence of εἰστήκει in the next clause was written as ἱστήκει, an additional ισ could have been inserted as a result of dittography. Cf. Lindars, *John*, 541; Barrett, *St. John*, 520.

forward and identifies himself to his opponents with the words ἐγώ εἰμι, it can mean: 'I am the Jesus of Nazareth for whom you are searching'.[103]

An assessment of Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι purely in terms of his self-identification to the soldiers and officers does, however, set certain limits when attempting to analyse this narrative, for other features should also be taken into consideration. It is, for example, indicative that Jesus' response is highlighted in v. 6; if ἐγώ εἰμι means nothing more than 'I am he, Jesus' or 'It is I', how does one account for the conscious preservation of this utterance in the form of an indeclinable citation (ὡς οὖν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐγώ εἰμι) rather than in the form of indirect speech? The statement, it seems, is being deliberately highlighted by John, for, as noted by Dodd, it is 'given a special importance by a repetition which is sufficiently unnatural to draw the reader's attention'.[104] There is no doubt that to view ἐγώ εἰμι as an expression of self-identification is, on one level, an adequate explanation of Jesus' words within the scene, but it is curious that v. 6 is phrased in such a manner as to give the impression that the captors' reaction is inextricably linked to Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι response. Why do they respond so dramatically? Their withdrawal and stumbling to the ground cannot - either literally or figuratively - convey their astonishment at having found Jesus, for that was their sole intention as they approached the garden.[105] The deliberate focus on Jesus' words and the unexpected response of the arresting group justify a search for additional levels of meaning in order to establish whether these final occurrences of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Fourth Gospel possess a force which accords 'mit jenem vollen göttlich-hoheitsvollen Klang, der mit dieser Formel verbunden ist'.[106]

In order to determine the meaning and function of ἐγώ εἰμι in the arrest scene, the relationship between its initial utterance and the response it receives must be explored. The falling back of the adversaries is interpreted in several commentaries as a reaction to divine revelation, with the result that ἐγώ εἰμι

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[103] See, e.g., Westcott, *St. John*, II:9, 268; Bernard, *St. John*, 586; Bultmann, *Johannes*, 167f. n.2, 494 n.12; Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel*, 83. Even Stauffer, *Jesus*, 171 n.99 [*idem*, ἐγώ, 350], regards this statement as a 'bürgerliche Selbstvorstellung'.

[104] *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, 75 n.2.

[105] This enigma is not explained by Stibbe's suggestion that the reaction is one of amazement, because 'after all their seeking, the Jews finally find the elusive Messiah' (*John's Gospel*, 28). Cf. McKay, '"I am" in John's Gospel', 302: 'The dramatic reaction of the arresting party in 18:6 is readily explained if we note that the confident authority of Jesus' presence was such that he defeated the merchants in the temple (2:15)'.

[106] Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, III:253. Cf. Brown, *John*, 534, 818; Harner, *'I Am'*, 45; Haenchen, *Johannesevangelium*, 518; Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 149.

functions as Jesus' vehicle of self-manifestation.[107] This would indicate that a motif prevalent in biblical, and particularly apocalyptic, traditions has left its mark on the Johannine narrative. And although the objection has been raised that the captors will remain Jesus' enemies and do not behave as people who have received a revelation,[108] it has been demonstrated that this motif can cover both involuntary and voluntary responses.[109]

Other commentators have searched for more precise terminological parallels and have focused in particular on the use of both πίπτω and εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω in the Septuagint version of certain Psalms to depict the recoil and overthrow of those who oppress the suffering righteous. LXX Psalm 26:2, for example, speaks of the enemy becoming weak and falling (οἱ ἐχθροί μου αὐτοὶ ἠσθένησαν καὶ ἔπεσαν), whereas the plea in LXX Ps. 34:4 is for God to act decisively against evildoers and turn them back (ἀποστραφήτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ καταισχυνθήτωσαν οἱ λογιζόμενοί μοι κακά).[110] Similarly, LXX Ps. 55:10 expresses confidence in God's power to intervene and cause the enemy to turn back (ἐπιστρέψουσιν οἱ ἐχθροί μου εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἐν ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπικαλέσωμαί σε),[111] although this psalm subsequently gives thanks to God for deliverance from death (v. 14), which contrasts with the Johannine depiction of Jesus in the arrest narrative as one who possesses power over his enemies and boldly awaits his fate rather than as one who prays for deliverance from death (18:11). The idioms encountered in these passages are certainly similar, but it is difficult to draw the conclusion, solely on the basis of such parallels, that the language of these psalms is deliberately echoed in the Johannine arrest scene, particularly as several other Septuagintal texts use the expression εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω and the verb πίπτω to describe the effects of God's intervention on his opponents.

A different explanation of the captors' response has been proposed in the light of evidence from within the Fourth Gospel itself. Giblin, who highlights the confrontational elements within the narrative, follows Sabbe's suggestion

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[107] E.g., Bultmann, *Johannes,* 495; Lindars, *John,* 541.

[108] Dauer, *Die Passionsgeschichte im Johannesevangelium,* 42.

[109] Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy,* 121-23, divides the evidence into the following categories: i) an involuntary response when one faints out of fear 'as one dead' (cf. Rev. 1:17; 3 Enoch 1:7; possibly Dan. 8:18; 10:8-9); ii) a voluntary prostration when one bows out of reverence (cf. Num. 22:31; Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 19:10; 1 Enoch 71:11).

[110] Dodd, *Historical Tradition,* 76f.; Haenchen, *Johannesevangelium,* 518; Wilckens, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes,* 271.

[111] Barrett, *St. John,* 520; Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel,* 201.

that v. 6bc possesses only one exact Johannine, indeed biblical, parallel, namely the statement in 6:66 that Jesus' teaching made many of his disciples draw or turn back (ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω) so that they 'no longer went about with him'.[112] The reference to Judas (18:5c) is also viewed as an allusion to 6:66, for although he does not withdraw with the others at this early stage of Jesus' ministry, he is already described in that context as the betrayer (6:64, 71).[113] The scene in 18:1-11, in which Judas now aligns himself with the opposing party, illustrates his complete withdrawal from Jesus and the disciples, and Giblin proposes that the language of the sixth chapter is deliberately echoed in order to express Judas' rejection of Jesus. The terminological resemblance between the two passages is striking, but there is no preparation in 6:66 for the depiction of unbelievers withdrawing and falling to the ground.

The reference to ἔπεσαν χαμαί (v. 6) leads Stibbe to focus on an otherwise overlooked link with 11:10 (ἐὰν δέ τις περιπατῇ ἐν τῇ νυκτί, προσκόπτει, ὅτι τὸ φῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτῷ), although the terminology is noticeably different in both passages.[114] The arrest account in its present form incorporates elements from several well-established Johannine themes, including the way in which it contrasts Jesus the true light (8:12; 9:5) with those opponents who are led by one who has already entered into the night (13:30).[115] It is thus conceivable that John intends to sustain this dualistic contrast by illustrating that when Jesus' captors fall to the ground, the true light defeats the powers of darkness.

Whether one searches for an explanation from the Psalms or from other Johannine narratives and discourses, none of the interpretations so far considered establishes a specific link between the falling of the arresting group and Jesus' declaration of ἐγώ εἰμι. For this reason, a different line of enquiry has been pursued by those who draw attention to a legend recorded in the fragments of Artapanus. These fragments represent a Jewish composition of Egyptian provenance written around 2nd century BCE, but which have only been preserved by Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* IX:27:22-26) and partly by Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* I:23:154:2-3).[116] In the third fragment,

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[112] Giblin, 'Confrontations in John 18,1-27', 219; Sabbe, 'The Arrest of Jesus', 218f.

[113] As already noted by Sanders and Mastin, *John*, 199; cf. also Brownson, 'Neutralizing the Intimate Enemy', 50f.

[114] *John as Storyteller*, 171f.

[115] See especially Brown, *John*, 817; Giblin, 'Confrontations in John 18,1-27', 217.

[116] *Fragmenta pseudepigraphorum*, ed. Denis, II:191-93.

which consists of a 'romanhafte Mose-biographie',[117] Artapanus depicts Moses' imprisonment by the Egyptian king following his attempt to secure the release of the Jews, and describes events one evening when all the prison doors are miraculously opened (αὐτομάτως). Upon entering the royal chambers, Moses wakes the king who, in his astonishment, bids him to utter the name of the god who has sent him. When Moses bends forward and pronounces the Name, the king falls down speechless (πεσεῖν ἄφωνον) and only revives (πάλιν ἀναβιῶσαι) when Moses intervenes (*Praep* 27:24-5). The presence of the motif of falling down in both narratives has led to the proposal that when Jesus utters ἐγώ εἰμι in the presence of his captors, he is in fact pronouncing the divine name.[118] Fossum draws attention to rabbinic traditions about the pronouncement of the Name by the high priest during the ritual of the Day of Atonement, traditions which note how the priests standing near him would fall on their faces.[119] It is claimed that John 18:6 also reflects this Jewish custom of prostrating upon hearing the divine name, thus prompting Fossum to remark: 'Jews did not fall to the ground for a mere man. The mention of the divine name, however, made people drop'.[120] If the reaction of the soldiers and officers does bear resemblance to Artapanus' description of the encounter between Moses and Pharaoh, it should be noted that neither reaction amounts to the reverential response proposed by Fossum in the light of rabbinic traditions. Pharaoh is overcome but then revived by Moses, and John 18:6 suggests the powerful overcoming of opponents which include Jews and Romans. The Artapanus legend may, in addition, illuminate the second utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus (v. 8), for this Jewish text implies the protective force of the Name, which enables Moses to walk through prison doors, causes some guards to die and others to sleep, breaks weapons (*Praep* 27:23) and strips Pharaoh of the power that could lead to Moses' downfall (27:24; *Strom* 154:3).

It is unlikely that the Artapanus fragment represents the literary *Vorlage* of John 18:5-8, for, in addition to its different provenance (Alexandria) and the lack of further points of contact between the two texts, the utterance of God's

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[117] Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus,* 167.

[118] First suggested by Bury, 'Two Notes on the Fourth Gospel', 233. Cf. Brown, *John,* 818; Fossum, *The Name of God,* 127; *idem,* 'Sects and Movements', 376-78; *idem,* 'In the Beginning was the Name', 129.

[119] See j.Yom 3 (40d); b.Qid 71a; QohR 3:11:3 (11a). Fossum is indebted, in this respect, to Bartina, 'Yo soy Yahweh', 393-416.

[120] *The Name of God,* 127.

name in the Egyptian composition possesses a magical-miraculous potency,[121] whereas no syncretistic magical influence can be detected in the Fourth Gospel. But the protective power of God's name is already attested in biblical traditions like Prov. 18:10 (cf. also b.BB 73a; PesK 19:6), and even its destructive force is highlighted in later Palestinian Jewish traditions,[122] making it possible that John 18:5-6 reflects an early development of this theme.

Although Artapanus does not specify which name was pronounced by Moses, the tetragrammaton is probably implied. This again raises the question whether one can interpret Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι during his arrest as an utterance of the divine name. As the earlier section on John 8:58 has sought to demonstrate, the advantage of regarding אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) as the divine designation in question is that it accomplishes the twofold task of serving as a form of self-identification and as a succinct declaration of unique divinity and sovereignty. It could be the case that the fourth evangelist, as on other occasions (4:26; 6:20; 8:24, 28), is deliberately playing on the two possible levels of meaning that can be attributed to ἐγώ εἰμι. If, behind Jesus' response, there lies a solemn declaration echoing the use of אני הוא by God in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah and Deut. 32:39, additional evidence must be sought that strengthens the link between ἐγώ εἰμι and the Hebrew expression, including the extent to which the theological force attributed to אני הוא not only permeates Jesus' two ἐγώ εἰμι declarations, but other features within the arrest scene. In order to identify such links, four aspects or themes can be identified which are of direct relevance when seeking to interpret this Johannine narrative. The intention, therefore, is to demonstrate that Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι in 18:5 and 8 is not be regarded as the 'poor relation' of the absolute occurrences of this expression within the Fourth Gospel (8:24, 28, 58; 13:19), but forms an integral part, if not the culmination, of the distinctively Johannine interpretation and application of ἐγώ εἰμι.

As already noted in this study, the divine pronouncement of אני הוא, in both Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, occurs within contexts which assert that the God of Israel is the one who controls the events of history; God has called Israel into existence from the beginning, he has punished his chosen nation, but he now promises acts of deliverance and restoration which, according to Deutero-Isaiah, will be patterned on great salvific acts of the past. Similarly, in the Johannine arrest scene, arguably more so than in any other

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[121] See Tiede, *The Charismatic Figure as Miracle Worker*, 166-74.

[122] See j.Yom 3:7 (40d); ExR 1:29-30. See Urbach, *The Sages*, 124-34.

narrative or discourse in which ἐγώ εἰμι occurs, Jesus is depicted as one who steers and controls events rather than as a helpless victim of fate.[123] He leads the disciples into a garden with which Judas is well-acquainted, thereby implying that a locale has been chosen by Jesus where he can be easily found (v. 1). He also takes the initiative by coming out towards Judas and the captors (v. 4), ruling out the need for the Synoptic kiss as a sign of identification. The narrative even offers an explanation of these acts in v. 4 (Ιησοῦς οὖν εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ' αὐτὸν); Jesus is not taken by surprise, for he has known the identity of his betrayer 'from the beginning' (6:64: ἐξ ἀρχῆς). The hour of glorification has now arrived (13:1), and Jesus possesses a foreknowledge of those events that will lead to his departure, thereby explaining why he permitted Judas to carry out the act of betrayal (13:27) and now goes out to meet him. As אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) is also pronounced by God when he emphasizes his unique power to predict events (cf. Isa. 43:10; 44:7), Jesus' prophecy of betrayal (John 13:19) is realized as Judas approaches the garden. The fact that the disciples act as witnesses to this betrayal and its consequences means that they are presented with the challenge to experience and believe Jesus' earlier declaration about his ἐγώ εἰμι claim.

The arrest account has, moreover, been composed in a way that heightens the confrontation between the two poles exemplifying the dualistic framework of the Fourth Gospel - Jesus and his disciples, on the one hand, and Judas and the arresting group, on the other. This image of opposition in relation to Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι has already been encountered in 8:12-59, where the Deutero-Isaianic image of a trial between God and the nations is transformed into a confrontation between Jesus who is ἐκ τῶν ἄνω and those ἐκ τῶν κάτω (8:23). Whereas the bitter exchange in John 8 leads Jesus to designate the unbelieving 'Jews' as ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου (v. 44), the arrest scene depicts an even more dramatic case of his encounter with those who become symbols of the world's opposition to God and now approach in darkness. The captors are guided towards the garden by Judas, earlier depicted as a διάβολός (6:70) subjected to Satan's will (13:2, 27), and described as the agent of the eschatological adversary (17:12). It is now, following Jesus' initial declaration of ἐγώ εἰμι, that the betrayer makes his final appearance in the Fourth Gospel: 'and Judas, his betrayer, was standing with them' (v. 5c: εἱστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῶν). This is no

[123] The Johannine motif of Jesus' control over events and other characters has recently been highlighted by Thatcher, 'Jesus, Judas, and Peter', 435-48.

superfluous editorial addition to the narrative,[124] but is a remark deliberately positioned before the description of the opponents' reaction (v. 6) in order to highlight the fact that Judas has submitted himself totally to the plan that will secure Jesus' death; together with those who represent the Jewish and Roman authorities, he experiences the formidable power of ἐγώ εἰμι.[125] The presupposition that Judas, in whom Satan has been dwelling, is among those who fall to the ground also points to this garden scene as a dramatic anticipation of the downfall of Satan, which decisively occurs when Jesus, as already predicted, is 'lifted up from the earth': νῦν ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω (12:31).[126] The devil has no power or authority over Jesus on the occasion of his arrest, because it is Jesus who is in control of the events that will lead to his death; his obedience to the divine will (cf. 3:14, 16) signifies that he does as commanded by the Father (cf. 14:30). Jesus' unity with the Father thus enables him, by means of his pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι, to make known to his captors the true force and origin of his authority.

The contrast between the power of the one who declares ἐγώ εἰμι and the utter powerlessness of his so-called opponents reveals yet another point of contact with traditions in which the divine self-declaration אני הוא plays an integral role (cf. Deut. 32:37-42; Isa. 43:13). Despite the lack of exact parallels in biblical אני הוא traditions to the image of opponents falling to the ground, God's triumph over his enemies is a key component of the demonstration of his sovereignty. In Deut. 32:35, for example, the downfall of God's adversaries is announced, because 'vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip'. In view, moreover, of attempts made by some interpreters to identify terminological parallels between John 18:6 and certain Psalms, it is worth noting that the same expressions, εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω and the verb πίπτω, occur in LXX Isaiah to contrast the powerlessness of the nations' gods with God's supremacy (42:17: αὐτοὶ δὲ ἀπεστράφησαν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω).[127]

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[124] *Pace* Bultmann, *Johannes,* 495; Brown, *John,* 810 (although see *idem, The Death of the Messiah,* 262 n.30).

[125] Cf. Billings, 'Judas Iscariot in the Fourth Gospel', 157; Lindars, *John,* 541; Charbonneau, 'L'arrestation de Jésus', 159f., 166f.

[126] Bultmann, *Johannes,* 494, states that Jesus' arrest becomes the moment of the arrival of the ruler of this world, to whose side belong Judas and the arresting party. Sproston, 'Satan in the Fourth Gospel', 308f., even proposes that it is Judas who is identified as ὁ τοῦ κόσμου ἄρχων in 14:30.

[127] Cf. Isa. 43:17: 'They [the images] lie down, they cannot rise'. The futility of pagan idols is closely linked to the Kidron valley in some traditions in the Hebrew Scriptures. According to II Kings 23:4, 6, 12 (II Chron. 15:16; 29:16), the altars and images of Baal and

Particularly significant is the image of the pathetic impotence of the Babylonian idols in LXX Isa. 46:1, which includes a description of the falling down of Bel (ἔπεσε Βηλ) where MT reads 'bows down (כרע)',[128] again contrasted with the God whose promise to carry Israel 'until old age' is expressed with the aid of אני הוא (46:4). The Johannine Jesus who pronounces ἐγώ εἰμι also demonstrates his superiority over those who come to capture him, for even their possession of torches and weapons cannot prevent them from falling to the ground. The power and authority revealed by Jesus in the garden indicates that he could have resisted arrest if that were his desire (cf. 19:11), but the ironical twist is that, while he has the ability to escape from his captors, Jesus chooses to commit himself voluntarily to them.

Finally, both the divine declaration of the words אני הוא and Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι convey the role of the speaker as the agent of salvation. The expression אני הוא, as frequently noted in this study, is found in contexts which offer assurance that God alone can secure Israel's future deliverance, for he alone controls past, present and future events. The salvific significance of Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι is brought to the fore by means of its second utterance in v. 8. One aspect of the divine power in his possession has already been made manifest (vv. 5-6), but Jesus now focuses on 'his own' and reveals the real purpose of his demonstration of that power. Having responded for the second time with the words ἐγώ εἰμι, Jesus secures the freedom of his disciples: 'So if you are seeking me, let these (men) go' (v. 8b). There is consequently no need for the disciples to escape (cf. Mark 14:50; Matt. 26:56), for the Johannine Jesus intervenes decisively on their behalf.

But what does this intervention signify? On a surface level, the disciples avoid arrest and possibly death, but a deeper meaning is also intended, as indicated by the remark that this amounts to a fulfilment of Jesus' words: 'Of those whom you gave to me, I have not lost one' (v. 9: οὓς δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπώλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα). Jesus' arrest thus fulfils at least two earlier predictions, both closely linked with the twofold utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι, namely the betrayal (13:19) and Jesus' prophecy that none of his disciples shall be lost. This second fulfilment forms a kind of flashback to a previous statement with no exact equivalent,[129] but three declarations are brought to mind

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Asherah were burned outside Jerusalem and their dust cast into the Kidron brook.

[128] Mein, 'A Note on John xviii.6', 286f., draws attention to the use of similar terminology in LXX Isa. 28:13b: ἵνα πορεύθῶσιν καὶ πέσωσιν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω.

[129] See especially Sproston, '"The Scripture" in John 17:12', 24-36.

(6:39; 10:28b; 17:12). Maybe only one of these pronouncements is thought to be 'fulfilled' in 18:9,[130] but all three contribute to a proper understanding of their enactment in the freeing of the disciples. 17:12 mentions Judas as the one exception who has been lost, and the absence of a reference to him in 18:9 can be explained as resulting from the fact that he has already sided with the powers of darkness; if one accepts the well-attested reading ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι - whose antecedent is τὸ ὄνομα - in 17:11 and 12, Jesus' declaration that he has guarded the disciples with the 'name' anticipates the protection it provides in 18:8-9.[131] Perhaps the one passage that most effectively illuminates the arrest scene is 10:28, for the confrontation between Jesus and his captors can be understood as an 'acted parable' of 10:1-30,[132] since Jesus' arrest highlights his control over his own fate (cf. 10:18) and exemplifies his role as ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός (10:11, 14) who gives his life to save his sheep (10:11, 15, 28). Stibbe, in a detailed study of 18:1-27 and its 'narrative echo effects' in relation to 10:1-21,[133] proposes that the enclosed garden conjures up the image of the sheepfold (10:1), Judas' approach echoes the thief who comes to steal and destroy (vv. 1, 10: καὶ ἀπολέσῃ), while Jesus' behaviour recalls the shepherd's protection of his sheep (vv. 27-29).[134] The key aspect highlighted by Stibbe, therefore, is that the image of the shepherd laying down his life anticipates the arrest of Jesus as the first event of the Passion.

Various elements within the arrest narrative unfold the significance of ἐγώ εἰμι (v. 8) as an expression which conveys Jesus' unique identity as the revealer of God's salvation. The sayings echoed in v. 9 declare that those given

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[130] Among those who favour 17:12 are Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 432; Sproston, '"The Scripture" in John 17:12', 32.

[131] As proposed, in particular, by Brown, *John*, 537, 764.

[132] Barrett, *St. John*, 435; cf. Dauer, *Die Passionsgeschichte im Johannesevangelium*, 38f.; Manns, 'Le symbolisme du jardin', 75; van Belle, 'L'accomplissement de la parole de Jésus', 623.

[133] *John as Storyteller*, 100-5.

[134] Jesus' portrayal as the shepherd offers a further possible echo of Deut. 32:39e and Isa. 43:13b ('and no one can deliver from my hand'): καὶ οὐχ ἁρπάσει τις αὐτὰ ἐκ τῆς χειρός μου (10:28, 29). Whereas the Hiph'il form מצ׳יל [ואין מי׳ד׳י] is understood in the two Hebrew statements as signifying that no one can 'deliver' God's enemies from his hand, the two Johannine declarations reflect the other possible meaning of מצ׳יל as 'to snatch' (cf. v. 12) in order to convey the theme that Jesus protects those who are in his hand and leads them to eternal life. If the statements in 10:28 and 29 do form deliberate allusions to Deut. 32:39e or Isa. 43:13b, it is of interest to note that the Johannine use of ἐκ τῆς χειρός μου for מי׳ד׳ more closely resembles the Hebrew versions of these statements than ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν μου of their Septuagintal counterparts.

to Jesus will not be lost (ἀπώλεσα), but will receive eternal life (6:39f.; 10:2). When Jesus offers himself to his captors and safeguards his disciples' freedom, their physical deliverance symbolically serves as a foretaste of Jesus' power to give life.[135] Thus, in the same way as Jesus' prediction of his betrayal (13:19) is linked to Judas' appearance with the soldiers (18:3, 5), Jesus' arrest becomes the decisive act which sets in motion the events that will lead to his death. The second ἐγώ εἰμι, declared for the benefit of his disciples, gives Jesus the opportunity to confirm his role as the bestower of eternal life.

The concluding description of Peter prepares for the part he plays in the ensuing scenes, and his twofold οὐκ εἰμι (18:17, 25) has even been viewed as the negative counterpart of Jesus' twofold ἐγώ εἰμι.[136] Peter's act of severing the servant's ear provides the occasion for Jesus to make a declaration drawn from traditional material (v. 11; cf. Matt. 26:52). Furthermore, Synoptic imagery about the cup of suffering (Mark 14:36; Matt. 26:42) becomes, in Johannine terms, that which has been given to Jesus by God (τὸ ποτήριον ὃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατὴρ οὐ μὴ πίω αὐτό), signifying the salvific mission that he is destined to accomplish. As in the case of other passages which include ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements (4:34; 8:26, 28; 13:20), the scene concludes with a focus on Jesus' obedience to the divine will.

The twofold pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι by Jesus, as presented in the arrest account, represents a condensed theological expression which provides the interpretative key to an understanding of the Johannine depiction of this event. Both utterances can be read as simple affirmative responses, but the deliberate highlighting of Jesus' words (v. 6), the strange response they receive, as well as their repetition in v. 8, strongly suggest that ἐγώ εἰμι possesses other dimensions or levels of meaning in this narrative. Links between the Johannine interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι and divine 'I' declarations are also made more explicit, for the application of אני הוא in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah and Deut. 32:39 confirms that God alone can predict and control events, and he alone possesses the power to fulfil the dual role of securing Israel's deliverance and exposing the utter powerlessness of his opponents. The fact that ἐγώ εἰμι occurs twice during the arrest scene is consequently of significance; the effect

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[135] See further Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 432f.; *idem*, *Historical Tradition*, 76; Barrett, *St. John*, 521; van Belle, 'L'accomplissement de la parole de Jésus', 622: 'l'action de Jésus au Jardin des Oliviers est un σημεῖον de l'action qu'il mène sur une plus vaste échelle et sur un plan plus élevé'.

[136] E.g., Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship*, 166; Brown, *John*, 824; Thatcher, 'Jesus, Judas, and Peter', 446.

of its first utterance is experienced by Jesus' captors, but the second demonstrates that it is pronounced for the benefit of 'his own'. Indeed, John 18:1-11 serves as a graphic exemplification of the κρίσις of which Jesus has already warned (8:24) and promised (13:19), for the two ἐγώ εἰμι declarations (vv. 5, 8) convey Jesus' relationship with the two groups that epitomize the separation and division caused by his ministry. His initial utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι, by means of its dramatic effect, highlights the theme that the true light cannot be overcome by darkness (cf. 1:5), but the second reveals its protective force and points to Jesus' salvific power, since the freedom secured by Jesus for his disciples symbolizes the eternal life he offers to believers.

6. Concluding Remarks

An analysis of the application of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form in the Fourth Gospel leads one to conclude that the key to a proper understanding of these Johannine declarations is the distinctive use of this succinct expression in LXX Isaiah as a rendering for אני הוא (41:4; 43:10; 46:4; cf. 45:18; 52:6), together with its doubling as ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι in Septuagintal renderings of divine statements introduced by אנכי אנכי הוא (43:25; 51:12; cf. 45:19). Indeed, the interpretative process encountered in connection with Jesus' absolute ἐγώ εἰμι statements can be described as an important witness to the fourth evangelist's familiarity with, and indebtedness to, Isaianic traditions, clearly extending far beyond the four direct citations taken from this prophetic book (John 1:23 = Isa. 40:3; 6:45 = 54:13; 12:38 = 53:1; 12:40 = 6:10). The strategic positioning of these Isaianic citations, identified by Obermann as forming the introduction and conclusion to Jesus' self-revelation ἐν παρρησίᾳ (1:23; 12:38, 40),[137] in itself attests the importance attributed by John to the testimony of the prophet whom he explicitly mentions by name four times (1:23; 12:38, 39, 41). In addition, the repeated themes, motifs and phraseology that dominate the book of Isaiah, especially Isa. 40-55, have played a particularly significant part in the shaping of several Johannine narratives and discourses,[138] and the influence of

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[137] *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift,* 108, 228f.

[138] See especially Young, 'A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel', 215-33; Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund,* 162-83; Evans, 'Obduracy and the Lord's Servant', 226-36; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel,* 265-69. The Nestle-Aland edition (27th), 789-93, notes 35 examples of possible allusions to Isaianic traditions in John's Gospel, to which several others are added by Reim (*ibid.*).

a number of Isaianic motifs can be detected in those passages which form the immediate context of Jesus' absolute ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements.[139]

Recent scholarship has focused on the issue of Isaianic influence on various aspects of Johannine christology, including the description of God sending the word which, by descending and returning to heaven, accomplishes the divine will (Isa. 55:1-3, 10-11; cf. John 1:1-18; 4:34; 6:26-65).[140] John, moreover, interprets the call vision described in Isaiah 6:1-5 as the prophet's vision of the pre-existent Word/Son enthroned in heavenly glory (12:41; cf. 17:5),[141] thus linking the manifestation of the divine δόξα to Isaiah with the revelation of the incarnate Logos and his glory (1:14, 18a). And as the Fourth Gospel's language of exaltation (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34) and glorification (7:39; 12:16, 23; 13:31) is widely viewed as drawn from LXX Isa. 52:13 (ἰδοὺ συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα),[142] a further implication of this Johannine correlation is that the divine δόξα encountered by Isaiah is climactically revealed in the 'lifting up' of Jesus.[143] Such distinctive interpretations of Isaianic traditions clearly relate to the Johannine application of

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[139] In addition to the Isaianic themes and imagery to which attention has been drawn in this chapter and in Chapter 7 §1 (including ὁδός, light and darkness, witness and testimony, judgement, truth, ἀναγγέλλω, the absence of secrecy), the influence of the following Isaianic themes on Johannine theology is widely acknowledged: the glory of God (Isa. 35:2; 40:5; 48:11; 58:8; 59:19) and the glorification of God (43:4; 44:23; 49:3).

[140] See Lausberg, 'Jesaja 55,10-11 im Evangelium nach Johannes', 131-44; Dahms, 'Isaiah 55:11 and the Gospel of John', 78-88. See also Swancutt, 'Hungers Assuaged by the Bread from Heaven', 218-51.

[141] E.g., Dahl, 'The Johannine Church and History', 130-32; Fossum, 'Kyrios Jesus as the Angel of the Lord', 226f.; Hengel, 'Die Schriftauslegung des 4. Evangeliums', 266.

[142] See n.49 above.

[143] The influence of Isaianic traditions is thus particularly apparent in John 12, which highlights the exaltation and glorification of Jesus (vv. 23, 28, 32-34) and draws on citations from Isaiah in the subsequent reflection on unbelief (vv. 38-40). See especially Evans, 'Obduracy and the Lord's Servant', 230-36; and Frey, '"Wie Mose die Schlange in der Wüste erhöht hat..."', 189: 'Die Verkündigung, die keinen Glauben findet, ist eben jenes Wort von der δόξα des am Kreuz Erhöhten, von der in Joh 12,20-36 die Rede war, und Jesaja, der den Unglauben gegenüber dieser Verkündigung weissagt, sah nach Joh 12,41 bereits "seine (d.h. Jesu) δόξα und redete von ihm"'. Frey also suggests (*ibid.*) that the exegetical principle of *gezerah shawah* as applied to Isa. 6:1 (MT: רָם וְנִשָּׂא) and 52:13 (MT: יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא) can explain the choice of Isa. 53:1 and 6:10 in John 12:38-40. See also Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 49-51, who proposes that the combination of these two Isaianic citations (6:1; 52:13) with the image of God in Isa. 57:15 as the high and lofty one (MT: רָם וְנִשָּׂא) who can also dwell with the lowly provides the key to the early Christian reading of the humiliation and exaltation of the Servant of the Lord as the revelation of God's glory and 'divine identity', particularly in John 3:14, 8:28 and 12:32-34, where Jesus' humiliation on the cross is depicted as his exaltation (*ibid.*, 63-67).

the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι; Isaiah's role as a witness to the glory of the Son (12:41) indicates that divine אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) declarations encountered in later parts of the prophetic book are interpreted by the fourth evangelist as an integral part of Isaiah's testimony that Jesus is the eschatological revelation of God.

These examples of possible Isaianic influence on the Fourth Gospel, to which several more could be added, demonstrate that several traditions from the book of Isaiah, including their interpretation in the Septuagint and certain early Jewish texts,[144] were a major factor in the development and presentation of Johannine christology. Theological reflection on the book of Isaiah therefore contributed significantly to the way in which John sought to communicate his christological message to readers, who, in all likelihood, were themselves equipped to recognize this particular aspect of the dynamic application of the Hebrew Scriptures in the Fourth Gospel. Hengel thus remarks: 'Der Autor ist ein Kenner des Alten Testaments und seiner Sprachformen. Dasselbe gilt auch für die Hörer der Schule, bei denen vorausgesetzt wird, daß sie seine Anspielungen verstehen'.[145]

This study's assessment of the Johannine use of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι leads one to propose that the author of the Fourth Gospel thoroughly engages with the significance attributed to the divine pronouncement of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) in the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah. This is not to be confined to the notion of terminological similarity between the two texts *via* the LXX, for this analysis has sought to demonstrate that the presentation and function of ἐγώ εἰμι in its bipartite form in the Fourth Gospel bear striking resemblance to the setting and purpose of אני הוא in its role as a succinct expression of unique divinity and sovereignty. However, the possibility of the combined influence of Deutero-Isaianic אני הוא passages and the analogous statement in Deut. 32:39 on the Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι declarations should not be dismissed out of hand, not only because Deut. 32:39 constitutes the only pentateuchal passage in which אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) occurs, but because some of its central themes, particularly the

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[144] In addition to the references made in this chapter to Jewish, particularly, targumic traditions which may reflect first-century exegesis of Isaianic passages, see also Young, 'A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel', 215-21, especially his analysis of Sirach 48:25 where it is stated that Isaiah 'showed what was to occur to the end of time' (ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος ὑπέδειξεν τὰ ἐσόμενα).

[145] 'Die Schriftauslegung des 4. Evangeliums', 288. Cf. Frey, '"Wie Mose die Schlange in der Wüste erhöht hat..."', 204f.; Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel*, 208: 'The treatment of OT quotations in the Fourth Gospel suggests that this gospel has been written by a Jewish Christian within and for a group that was able to understand his use of Scripture'.

divine act of giving life (v. 39c), reverberate in the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the one who offers salvation (cf. 5:21).

The study of individual Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι declarations has, consequently, identified several themes and motifs whose prominence in contexts where Jesus uses the expression lends support to an interpretation of ἐγώ εἰμι in the light of divine אני הוא pronouncements. The repeated use of ἀναγγέλλω as a succinct expression of divine revelation and promise of future salvation in LXX Isaiah illuminates and indeed clarifies the function of Jesus' initial use of ἐγώ εἰμι to affirm his unique identity as 'the one who declares all things' (4:26). The suspicion that this first example of ἐγώ εἰμι is multidimensional in terms of its theological significance is confirmed by its second occurrence, in the sea-crossing narrative, where ἐγώ εἰμι is set within an interpretative framework in which the portrayal of Jesus as guiding his disciples to the other side evokes the image of God creating a way across the waters (Isa. 43:2; 51:10). Clear echoes of Deutero-Isaianic trial speeches can, moreover, be identified in the scenes of heightened confrontation in John 8:12-59; the subject of μαρτυρία conveys Jesus' role as the giver of testimony (8:14, 18), whereas the validity (ἀληθής) of his self-testimony points to the truth (ἀλήθεια) proclaimed and revealed by him (8:32, 40, 45, 46). But the exchanges between Jesus and his opponents disclose that he is in fact both witness and judge (8:16, 26), for the different responses to Jesus exemplify the κρίσις which leads to the condemnation of those who reject him (8:24) but to an offer of salvation and eternal life to those who believe in him (6:20; 18:8). The focus on foreknowledge in relation to Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι (13:19) can also be interpreted in the light of the prominence of this theme in Deutero-Isaianic passages, for the fulfilment of an earlier prediction confirms Jesus' control over the events that will lead to his death and its life-giving power (18:1-11). The detailed exploration of these themes within the context of Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι thus enables the fourth evangelist to present this expression, as in the case of אני הוא in Isa. 43:10, as the content of knowledge (8:28) and belief (8:24; 13:19).

Since ἐγώ εἰμι (אני הוא) serves as a succinct expression of the unique and exclusive divinity of Yahweh in both Deut. 32:39 and the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah, its appropriation by Jesus in the Fourth Gospel demonstrates that John is expounding the central theme that Jesus is the definitive revelation of God,[146]

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[146] Cf. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* 168; Schnackenburg, *Johannes,* I:106; II:69, 254; de Jonge, 'Christology and Theology', 1848.

which signifies his unity with the Father. Indeed, each occurrence of ἐγώ εἰμι is complemented by a statement stressing the Son's dependence on, and unity with, the Father (4:34; 8:26, 28; 13:20; 18:11). The Johannine Jesus is presented as the authoritative revealer, the incarnate λόγος who communicates the invisible God to the world (1:18). He comes to reveal the Father and to manifest his words (cf. 7:16; 14:24; 17:8) and works (5:17, 30, 36; 17:4); his unity with the Father forms the basis of Jesus' claims that whoever sees him sees the Father (12:45; 14:9), and that to believe and know Jesus is to believe and know God (8:19; 12:44; 17:3). The Fourth Gospel therefore portrays Jesus as the one in whom and through whom God speaks and acts, not in the sense that he presents himself as an independent divine being, but because his mission is to accomplish his Father's works (5:19; 10:37-38; 14:10-11).

Finally, this chapter has shown that Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι is inextricably linked to the overall emphasis within the Fourth Gospel on God's revelation in Jesus as an offer of eschatological salvation. Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι encapsulates the power and authority in his possession to offer eternal life (cf. 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19), symbolically illustrated by his guiding of the disciples across the sea to their intended destination (6:20-21) and by the securing of their freedom on the occasion of his arrest (18:8). But the negative counterpart of this promise - the inevitable consequence of the κρίσις and self-judgement wrought by Jesus - is that those who reject him must face death in a state of sinfulness (8:24). It can also be noted that it is the salvific significance of Jesus' utterance of ἐγώ εἰμι that clarifies the relationship between this expression and the metaphorical ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements.[147] All the symbols and images attached to ἐγώ εἰμι are variations of the fundamental theme that Jesus has come to offer the life (10:10) which he himself possesses (5:26; 6:57). And in the same way as the focus on the exclusive nature of the divine claims made with the aid of אני הוא reverberates in the Johannine depiction of Jesus as the only effective agent of divine salvation, the metaphorical statements stress that he alone truly embodies the bread of life and the way to the Father. All Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements thus convey the message that God's saving promises are made visible and accessible in Jesus.

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[147] For the view that the form and content of these metaphorical statements have also been significantly, but not exclusively, influenced by Isaianic traditions, see Feuillet, 'Les *ego eimi* christologiques', 213-22; Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium*, II:66; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 215-24, 232-38, 243-46.

Summary and Conclusions

Texts and traditions spanning several centuries have been considered in this study, from the pre-exilic composition known as the Song of Moses to late midrashic compilations belonging to the seventh or eighth century CE, in an attempt to determine the significance of the use of אני הוא in the Hebrew Bible and trace its interpretative history in ancient Jewish and early Christian texts.

The bipartite expression אני הוא, only attested in the Hebrew Bible in poetic passages with God as its speaker and to whom is addressed the one occurrence of אתה הוא (Ps. 102:28), serves as a declaration of the unique sovereignty of Yahweh. The inability of foreign gods to respond to his challenge for them to display their power leads Yahweh to announce אני אני הוא (Deut. 32:39), for he alone, the God of Israel, can offer proof of his power to deliver his people and seek vengeance on his opponents, thus confirming that 'there is no god beside me'. Deutero-Isaiah, who may have been inspired by the self-proclamation that brings the Song of Moses to its climax, presents אני הוא as a succinct expression of Yahweh's uncontested claim to exclusive divinity. His unique capacity to predict and control events, having fulfilled his promises in the past (41:4; 43:10), serves as a guarantee to Israel that Yahweh will continue to support and deliver his people (43:13; 46:4), for he is the eternally active God, ראשון and אחרון (41:4; 44:6; 48:12), the Creator of all things (48:13). Neither Deut. 32:39 nor the poetry of Deutero-Isaiah thus interprets אני הוא as a variant of, or substitute for, אני יהוה; in its role as a sovereign self-declaratory formula it enables Yahweh (אני) to asserts his identity as the one true God (הוא).

Various attempts at conveying the distinctive nature of this concise Semitic expression are reflected in the Ancient Versions. The renderings principally favoured by the Septuagint (ἐγώ εἰμι) and the Vulgate (*ego ipse*) clearly seek to maintain the bipartite character of אני הוא in its role as a claim to uniqueness. The Vulgate's interpretative translation of Deut. 32:39a (*videte quod ego sim solus*) also points to an awareness of the efficacy of this opening statement as a divine declaration of exclusiveness, paralleled by most Versions' sharpening of its next clause into an unequivocal denial of the existence of other gods ('there is no [other] god apart from me'). Similarly, innovative elements incorporated into several targumic renderings seek to heighten the force of אני הוא as an expression of exclusive divinity in Deut. 32:39 and Deutero-Isaianic passages, particularly in the case of the formulaic self-designation introduced by Targum

Isaiah ('I am he that is from the beginning, even the ages of the ages are mine, and there is no god apart from me'), which is offered, on three occasions, as an explication of אנא הוא in its bipartite form (43:10; 44:6; 48:12).

The status of biblical passages in which God pronounces אני הוא as decisive monotheistic statements leads to them being singled out as key proof-texts in several midrashic traditions in their defence of the unity of God. Clear continuity can be detected in this respect between the arguments presented in early rabbinic traditions and the unfolding of new emphases in later rabbinic and targumic (PsJ) expositions. The declaration אני אני הוא in Deut. 32:39, the only pentateuchal passage where the divine אני is doubled, together with the citation of the self-predications אני ראשון and אני אחרון as a form of prophetic explication of the twofold אני, become effective scriptural weapons in Tannaitic traditions which seek to combat a 'two powers' heresy. Rabbinic arguments for the unity of God, who is known as יהוה and אלהים and experienced in various modes of self-manifestation, receive their ultimate endorsement in God's own claims to exclusiveness and everlasting unity. Even those rabbinic traditions that recognize the potential misinterpretation of the twofold אני as scriptural evidence for the existence of two powers or deities cite the accompanying monotheistic claims (Deut. 32:39b; Isa. 44:6) as a corrective, whereas certain targumic renderings of Deut. 32:39 seek to overcome this problem by omitting one אני (FT-VN) or by attributing the second to the Memra (N).

One or possibly several groups may be implied as the proponents of a 'two powers' heresy in Tannaitic passages, but responses directed specifically at Christians can be identified in Amoraic elaborations upon the theme of divine unity in the form of twofold interpretative embellishments, which, at the same time, maintain the formulaic character of אני הוא and its Aramaic counterpart as an emphatic and exclusive claim ('I am he of the Sea; I am he of Sinai'). It is, moreover, in order to refute Christian claims about the divine sonship of Jesus that a rabbinic argument attributed to Rabbi Abbahu is developed on the basis of the Deutero-Isaianic self-predication statements (ExR 29:5).

A further significant feature exhibited by a number of midrashic expositions is their interpretation of God's pronouncement of אני הוא as belonging to a future setting. The juxtaposition of Deut. 32:39a and Isa. 40:5 leads, for instance, to an understanding of אני אני הוא as the declaration to be made by God when he manifests his glory to all flesh (Mek Pisha 12). This particular exposition also offers a relatively early illustration of the widespread ancient Jewish interpretation of 'I kill and I make alive' (Deut. 32:39c) as denoting

death in this world and resurrection in the world to come. The future-oriented perspective already established in the Deutero-Isaianic application of אני הוא means that some midrashic traditions view the prophetic use of this expression and the extended pronouncement אנכי אנכי הוא מנחמכם (51:12) as the future, sometimes eschatological, counterpart of אני ה׳ אלהיך and אנכי ה׳ (Exod. 20:2) as already communicated to Israel in the past. These citations consequently express God's promise of his enduring presence and support, as well as his future self-manifestation as the one who offers deliverance and consolation

An analysis of Jewish exegetical traditions also reveals that divergent themes and emphases are developed in relation to the divine pronouncement of אני הוא on the one hand and אהיה אשר אהיה on the other. While formal similarities between the two expressions can be identified on the basis of their Septuagintal renderings, and the correlation of 'the great saying' (Deut. 32:39) and Exod. 3:14 figures prominently in Samaritan traditions, quite different interpretative comments are presented in the relevant targumic and rabbinic texts. Occasional examples of overlap, such as the emphasis on God's presence as embracing the past and the future, results from parallel exegetical attempts to account for cases of 'doubling' in biblical passages, and not because these Jewish expositions interpret Deut. 32:39 and the Deutero-Isaianic passages as deliberate reflections on אהיה אשר אהיה. The fusion of comments originally applied separately to Deut. 32:39 and Exod. 3:14, as attested in PsJ and late midrashic compilations, reflects a tendency among later exegetes to unify these diverse traditions.

A major concern of this study has been to extend the line of enquiry in order to determine the status of אני הוא in those traditions where it is employed other than for the purpose of citing or expounding the relevant biblical passages. The search for additional occurrences of אני הוא has yielded a far more significant number of examples than the passage from the Passover Haggadah usually cited in secondary literature, thereby providing a more comprehensive picture of the Jewish evidence. Whereas אהיה אשר אהיה is instantly recognizable as the name disclosed to Moses in the theophany of the burning bush (Exod. 3:14), it becomes apparent that the expression אני הוא (and אנא הוא) can be applied in a variety of ways in rabbinic and targumic texts. Its most widely attested use is as the first two components of cleft sentences where it is syntactically bound to a verbal form in order to convey focus. This construction is frequently encountered in rabbinic expositions of divine self-declaratory formulas, for it is the vehicle that enables God as speaker (אני) to identify himself as the one who speaks or acts in the manner highlighted in the midrash. As this same syntactic

structure is employed in halakhic and narrative traditions to draw attention to the identity, words or acts of all kinds of individuals in everyday contexts, its application in innovative divine speeches cannot be described as distinctive with regard to form, for it is the nature and content of the claims attributed to God that makes them theologically significant.

Examples of the bipartite usage of אני הוא, and especially אנא הוא, attributed to beings other than God have also been identified in rabbinic texts. These invariably function as statements of self-identification in which הוא performs an anaphoric role, for its referent is identifiable from the immediate context (b.Ket 63a: 'I am he [that great man]'). The fact that these particular statements are attested in material belonging to the Amoraic period does not, however, enable one to conclude that they represent a post-Tannaitic linguistic phenomenon, particularly as this syntactic structure is already attested in Biblical Aramaic (Dan. 4:19). If thus follows that past proposals regarding the sanctity of אני הוא as a divine name whose utterance was prohibited in rabbinic circles, or even as an exclusively theophanic formula, do not take into account the bipartite use of this expression nor its early application in tripartite nominal constructions in the Mishnah (Naz 8:1; Sanh 5:5). Consequently, the key factor when assessing the meaning and possible significance of the bipartite אני הוא in rabbinic texts is the manner in which it is employed and the contexts in which it occurs. אני הוא performs an anaphoric role in the statement attributed to God in b.RH 17b, but its immediate referent is the tetragrammaton (Exod. 34:6), whereas it is presented in PesK 12:25 as a self-contained assertion of exclusive divinity in anticipation of the monotheistic declaration in Exod. 20:2. Thus, while it cannot be claimed, on the basis of the rabbinic evidence, that אני הוא was interpreted as an exclusively divine expression in Tannaitic and Amoraic circles, it can function as a self-declaration of divine sovereignty, particularly in traditions where the relevant biblical statements are cited as decisive proof-texts.

Recognition of the various functions attributed to אני הוא and its Aramaic counterpart אנא הוא in Jewish sources, as also applies to the Septuagintal use of ἐγώ εἰμι, has significant implications for the analysis of Jesus' pronouncement of ἐγώ εἰμι in Markan and Johannine traditions. Of the three examples of ἐγώ εἰμι recorded in Mark's Gospel, the one that bears closest resemblance to the use of אני הוא (ἐγώ εἰμι) as a divine self-declaration occurs in the sea-walking account, for Jesus' words to the disciples can be interpreted as an echo of the use of אני הוא within the context of Yahweh's promise of deliverance through the waters as a new Exodus (cf. Isa. 43:1-25; 51:10-12). But even in isolation

from such possible intertextual echoes, the key function performed by ἐγώ εἰμι in Mark 6:50 is that it enables Jesus to inform the disciples that the one whom they encounter exercising God's power to walk on the sea is none other than Jesus himself. This scene, it is proposed, illuminates Jesus' warning that many deceivers will appear declaring ἐγώ εἰμι (13:6). Since Mark may be reflecting upon actual experiences of individual figures who sought to present themselves as God's agents of a new Exodus, their depiction as ones pronouncing ἐγώ εἰμι points to an assessment of their activity as an usurpation of the power and authority that belongs to Jesus, as already made manifest when he secured the rescue of his disciples at the sea. The distinctive nature of ἐγώ εἰμι, a phrase open to several interpretations (6:50) in the absence of an accompanying title or designation (13:6), forms part of the Markan strategy of highlighting its third pronouncement as the appropriate occasion for Jesus' public affirmation of his identity as ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητου (14:62), the two titles which encapsulate this gospel's christology. The primary significance of ἐγώ εἰμι for Mark lies in its role as the expression used by Jesus to disclose his true identity.

A quite different picture emerges from a study of the Johannine usage of ἐγώ εἰμι, for the Fourth Gospel offers a sustained theological reflection on the use of אני הוא in biblical traditions as an expression of God's unique and eternal sovereignty, particularly in the light of its Septuagintal rendering as ἐγώ εἰμι. John takes up a number of linguistic and structural patterns and key themes from Deutero-Isaiah and, on occasion, from the Song of Moses, to explore the theological potential of his distinctive presentation of Jesus as the one who proclaims ἐγώ εἰμι. It also becomes apparent that an awareness of the different possible nuances of ἐγώ εἰμι - as a form of self-identification, as an expression of God's self-declaration and even, on the basis of its repetition for the twofold אנכי (LXX Isa. 43:25; 45:19; 51:12), as a divine name - plays a decisive role in the Johannine interplay of its multilevel interpretation. It is perhaps more than mere coincidence that the ἐγώ εἰμι declaration most naturally tied to its context occurs during the early stages of Jesus' ministry (4:26), whereas the elusive character of ἐγώ εἰμι plays an integral part in the depiction of increasing opposition to Jesus' claims about his identity and origin (8:24, 28, 58). Jesus' prediction to his disciples, within the context of the 'hour', prepares them for the true significance of ἐγώ εἰμι (13:19), reaching its culmination in the arrest scene where themes expressed in earlier narratives and discourses with the aid of ἐγώ εἰμι are now intricately woven into a dramatic demonstration of Jesus' true power and authority as the revelatory and salvific presence of God.

Appendix

אני הוא Formulations in Rabbinic Texts

A. Bipartite Declarations

אנא הוא: b.'Erubin 54a (Raba bar Joseph bar Hama); b.Ketubbot 63a (Aqiba); b.Baba Bathra 4a (Herod); GenR 35:2 (Simeon ben Yohai); MidTeh 126:1 (256a) (Honi); PesK 11:15 (Simeon ben Yohai)
אני הוא: NumR 10:5 (angel of the Lord); MidTeh 1:20 (10b) (Israel)
אתה הוא: b.Shabbat 31a (Hillel)

B. Declarations by God

1. Bipartite Formulations

b.Rosh ha-Shanah 17b; TanB Behar §6 (53b); PesK 12:25; Passover Haggadah

2. Cleft Sentences in Hebrew (אני הוא ש־)

a) Formulated independently of אני or אנכי in a biblical statement: GenR 6:3; ExR 21:6; LevR 27:4; NumR 19:15; ShirR 4:4:9 (25c); 7:8:1 (37c); QohR 3:15:1 (11cd); TanB Noah §4 (15b); TanB Mesora' §9 (24b); MidTeh 31:2 (119a); 60:3 (153a); PesK 10:7; PesR 13:2; SER 7 (38); SER 14 (68); SER 18 (102f.)
Cf. also GenR 39:1 (אני הוא המנהיג); ExR 40:4 (אני הוא בצרכן)

b) Formulated as comments on אני or אנכי in a biblical statement: Mek 'Amaleq 1 on Exod. 18:6; MRS on Exod. 22:26; ExR 20:1; 27:2; 48:5; NumR 9:1; 14:1; LamR 3:1 (24c); TanB Naso §8 (15b); TanB Huqqat §36 (62a); MidTeh 14:1 (56b)
Cf. also LevR 1:9 (אני הוא הקורא)

c) Formulated as comments on divine self-declaratory formulas in a biblical statement: j.Bik 3:3 (65c); j.RH 1:3 (57b); b.Hag 12a; b.BM 61b; b.Men 44a; Mek Bahodesh 6 on Exod. 20:3; MRS on Exod. 6:2; Sifra Ahare Mot par. 9:1-2; 13:3; Sifra Behuqqotai 3:4; GenR 5:8; 46:3; LevR 23:9; 35:3; TanB Behar §2 (53a); TanB Lekh lekha §25 (40b); MidTeh 26:2 (108b)
Cf. also ExR 29:1 (שאני הוא ה' אלהיך); 29:2 (שאני הוא ה' אחד)

3. Cleft Sentences in Aramaic (אנא הוא ד־)

a) Formulated as comments on אני or אנכי in a biblical statement: ShirR 7:4:1 (36d)

b) Formulated as comments on divine self-declaratory formulas in a biblical statement: b.Ber 38a

4. Tripartite אתה הוא Statements Addressed to God

j.Ber 1:8 (3d); NumR 15:5; DeutR 2:20; ShirR 2:16:1 (19a); TanB Tesawweh §8 (51a); MidTeh 1:20 (11a); 6:5 (30b); 13:1 (55a); 23:4 (100b); 119:24 (248b); PesK 24:2

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