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**ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF MEDICINE
IN JEWISH LITERATURE FROM THE THIRD AND
SECOND CENTURIES BCE**

BY

MARIA CHRYSOVERGI

SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Attitudes towards the Use of Medicine in Jewish Literature from the Third and Second Centuries BCE

Maria Chrysovergi

Abstract

This dissertation examines the attitudes towards the use of medicine in Jewish traditions of the third and second centuries BCE. More specifically, I examine the references to medicine and healing found in the books of 1 Enoch (particularly in the Book of Watchers and the Epistle of Enoch), Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees. These texts participate in a debate about the appropriateness of medicine on the one hand, and on the consultation of physicians, on the other. By means of an examination of the multiple manuscript evidence for these texts, I aim to throw light on the earliest strata of the textual tradition. Furthermore, through a discussion on the picture of medicine as presented in Assyria-Babylon, Egypt and Greece—nations alongside which ancient Israel has lived for centuries—I attempt to explore the historico-cultural milieu that lies behind these texts, to offer some fresh insights and to account for the attitudes towards the use of medicine these present. My thesis is that there was no unified approach towards the use of medicine in the Jewish circles of the third and second centuries BCE; the authors of these literary compositions, each in his own unique way, ventured to create afresh medical awareness to his fellow Jews. The existence of opposing views towards medical practice should be understood as different ways to comprehend the multifarious Jewish identity of the Second Temple period. Finally, I suggest that the medical and healing material of the aforementioned writings may be considered as further literary evidence that can contribute to the broader understanding of the manifold medical situations in Hellenistic times.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis embodies the results of my own work, that it has been composed by me and that it does not include work that has been presented for a degree in this or any other university. All quotations and the work and opinions of others have been acknowledged in the main text or footnotes.

Maria Chrysovergi

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
<i>AION</i>	<i>Annali dell' Istituto Orientale di Napoli</i>
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Pharmacy</i>
<i>AM.</i>	Assyrian cuneiform tablets of Koujunjic. Thomson, Campbell R., 'Assyrian Medical Texts' (1924.)
AMD	Ancient Magic and Divination
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library
<i>Ann.</i>	<i>The Annals</i> , Tacitus
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
<i>ARG</i>	<i>Archiv für Religionsgeschichte</i>
AS	Assyriological Studies
ATD	Das Alt Testament Deutsch
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BCE	Before the Common Era
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs (eds.), <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix Containing The Biblical Aramaic: Based on the Lexicon of William Gesenius</i> . Oxford, 1979
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BKP	Beiträge der Klassischen Philologie
BRS	The Biblical Resources Series
BSGRT	Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
<i>BW</i>	<i>The Biblical World</i>
BW	Book of Watchers
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

BZWA	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC	The Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CCTC	Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries
CE	Common Era
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
<i>CPJ</i>	<i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i>
CSC	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum
<i>Cyr.</i>	Cyranides. Kaimakis, Dimitris (ed.), <i>Die Kyraniden</i> . Meisenheim am Glan, 1976
<i>DM</i>	<i>De Medicina</i> , Celsus
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
<i>EC</i>	<i>Ecloga Chronographica</i> , Syncellus
EMML	The Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library
1 En	1 Enoch
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
<i>EP</i>	<i>Enquiry into Plants</i> , Theophrastus
<i>EncRel</i>	<i>Encyclopedia of Religion</i> (ed. M. Eliade)
<i>ESM</i>	<i>Early Science and Medicine</i>
Eth	Ethiopic
FoSub	Fontes et Subsidia ad Bibliam pertinentes
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller
HB	Hebrew Bible
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
JAL	Jewish Apocryphal Literature
<i>JA</i>	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i> , Josephus
<i>JAAS</i>	<i>Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>

<i>JBAA</i>	<i>Journal for the British Astronomical Association</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
<i>JRSM</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine</i>
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
Jub	Jubilees
<i>JW</i>	<i>Jewish War, Josephus</i>
<i>LBAT</i>	<i>Late Babylonian Astronomical Texts</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LJLE	The Library of Jewish Law and Ethics
LXX	Septuagint
<i>MH</i>	<i>Medical History</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Materia Medica, Dioscorides</i>
<i>NH</i>	<i>Natural History, Pliny the Elder</i>
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i>
OT	Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
<i>PAAJR</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research</i>
<i>PAPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i>

<i>PDM</i>	Demotic Magical Papyri
<i>PGM</i>	Greek Magical Papyri
<i>PRSM</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine</i>
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
<i>RSE</i>	<i>Rassegna di Studi Etiopici</i>
RUSCH	Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities
SAM	Studies in Ancient Medicine
SBHM	Supplements to the Bulletin of the History of Medicine
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and its Literature
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SD	Studies and Documents
SJSJ	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
Sir	Ben Sira
<i>SL</i>	<i>Special Laws</i> , Philo of Alexandria
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
StPB	Studia post-biblica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigraphica
Syr.	Syriac
TAPSNS	Transactions of the American Philosophical Society New Series
Tob	Tobit
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
TUGALNF	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur Neue Folge
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
Vg	Vulgate
VL	Vetus Latina
<i>WuD</i>	<i>Wort und Dienst</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. PROLEGOMENA

This study seeks to examine the attitudes towards the use of medicine in Jewish literature of the third and second centuries BCE. The chronological framework is narrowed down to these centuries, as they are times when Near Eastern medicine was boosted with scientific advances, with clear indications of rational medical thought coming to the fore. Ancient Judaism was not unconcerned with the new medical situation, evidence for which are the different views that began to develop within Jewish circles of the third and second centuries BCE towards contemporary medical theory and practice. This is particularly evident in four Jewish writings from this period, namely the books of 1 Enoch,¹ Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees. The present study focuses on the medical attitudes attested in these four texts.

The domain of medicine is only part of the wide context of culture. When historical changes take place, culture is formed analogously. This consequently means that a new historical setting urges medical beliefs and ideas to change. Jewish medical thought gradually began to change with the beginning of the Hellenistic era. The death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE) marked the beginning of a new period, creating new circumstances for the populace of the ancient Near East. Contemporary Jews, living in the land of Israel or scattered in its environs and further, were not untouched by this change; rather they attempted to confront the new² cultural threat, aiming to keep their religious identity intact. The impact of Hellenism grew much stronger during the third and the second centuries BCE. It is not accidental that the first apocalyptic works date from this period and the notion of demonology starts to develop as a means of representing the new oppressors. Nevertheless, there are Jewish writings from this period that are conversant with, and even sometimes appear to embrace certain features of Greek culture. The

¹ From the Enochic corpus only the medical and healing material found in the Book of Watchers and the Epistle are examined, as these belong to the chronological scope of the present thesis.

² Of course, this was not the first time that the Jews came into contact with ancient Greek civilisation. However, with the beginning of the Hellenistic period the impact of Greek culture upon Jews became more systematic.

attitudes towards the use of medicine attested in the Jewish texts of the third and second centuries BCE serve as a good example of different views with regard to the cultural impact of Hellenism. In these texts, the references to medicine appear as divergent as the Jewish feelings about Hellenism were diverse. This is not to say that the Jews who appeared less aggressive towards Greek culture did actually accept Hellenism in its entirety. On the contrary, they adapted certain features of the Greek world in a way to fit their religious beliefs.

Long before Hellenism's appearance, ancient Israel lived for centuries alongside with the ancient civilisations of Assyria-Babylon and Egypt which shaped, to a certain extent, Jewish medical beliefs. This is to say that ancient Israel was already influenced by the medical culture of neighbouring countries, with Hellenism only being an additional impact. The Jewish literature under examination contains information that points not only to features of Hellenism, but also to Assyrian-Babylonian and Egyptian cultural elements. In fact, the references to medicine and healing found in these writings cannot be understood without taking into consideration Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Greek medicine. Therefore, throughout my analysis, I will often refer to the medical systems of these nations, in an effort to account for particular Jewish attitudes towards the use of medicine.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers have shown a great interest in ancient medicine and a great many monographs, collections of essays and journal articles has been written about the medical knowledge and practices of ancient civilisations, such as Sumer, Assyria-Babylon, Egypt and Greece. Although the interest in medicine of the aforementioned ancient cultures to date is vast, the interest in ancient Jewish medicine is less well attested.

What seems to be a reasonable explanation for the scarcity of secondary literature on ancient Jewish medicine is the paucity of the primary sources with respect to medicine. There are, in fact, no ancient Jewish medical texts and the references to aspects of medicine are interspersed. The biblical information on medicine may appear within a literary context that is often irrelevant to the topic of medicine. In other words, references to medicine in the HB are sometimes incidental. In addition, there is no mention by name of Jewish physicians or, as a matter of fact, of any other medical practitioners in the HB and the Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. This deficiency of information on medical aspects might mean that ancient Israel was not interested in medicine—at least not as a primary discourse. But such an explanation is certainly not satisfactory. Ancient Israel surely had an interest in medicine but it often appears to be hidden under the veil of the Israelite legislative system. Indeed, a great deal of biblical information on health issues is inextricably related to regulations on hygiene (e.g. Lev 14:34–47; Num 31:21–24; Deut 23:12–14). Moreover, although interspersed, there is a fairly abundant amount of medical references in the HB. In particular, these vary and often appear under the guise of information about skin disease diagnosis, purification rites and hygiene (Lev 13–15), injuries (Ez 30:21), herbal remedies (2 Kings 20:7), embalmers (Gen 50:2), apothecaries (Ex 30:22–36; 37:29; 40:9–15; 2 Chr 16:14; Eccl 10:1), midwives (Ex 1:15–21; 35:17; 38:27–30), etc. A lack of interest in medicine would certainly not explain the healing language—often metaphorical—attested throughout the HB. More importantly, it would not explain the image of God as the ultimate healer for Israel (Ex 15:26; cf. Gen 20:17; Num 12:13; Deut 32:39; 2 Kings 20:5, 8; Isa 19:22, 57:18–19; Jer 30:17, 33:6; Hos 6:1; Ps 103:2–3, 107:20,

147:3; Job 5:18; 2 Chr 30:20) and of his prophets as agents of divine healing (2 Kings 4:18–37; 20:7).

2.1. Ancient Jewish medicine and related literature

This section is an outline and assessment of the most influential works on ancient Jewish medicine from biblical times up to the rabbinic period. The studies below are essential, because they complement the overall picture of medicine in ancient Judaism, touching upon therapeutics, the medical profession, various types of medical practitioners, pharmacology and herbal medicine, magically oriented healing practices and the cross-cultural transmission of medical beliefs and ideas between ancient Israel and its neighbouring nations.

The first learned study on medicine in the Bible and Talmud was that of Julius Preuss' *Biblisch-Talmudische Medizin*.³ Preuss engages in a systematic overview of the medical information attested in the HB and the Talmud, providing the reader with a plethora of medical passages related to hygiene, dietetics, pharmacology and therapeutics. Alongside biblical and talmudic references, he often refers to medical references found in Greek and Roman medical authors, as well as to medicine from the Middle Ages up to modern times, aiming to offer a more general picture of medicine in different historical times. However, Preuss' study focuses more on talmudic than biblical medicine. This is sensible, as the references to medicine are abundant in the Talmud. Preuss devotes much space to comment on talmudic references to medicine, whereas the biblical references are only fairly discussed. The discussion about the medical material found in Tobit and Ben Sira is poor; Preuss simply refers to their content without further analysis. Nevertheless, his study is a good starting point for the student of ancient Jewish medicine.

Following Preuss' example, Fred Rosner worked on biblical and Talmudic medicine. In his recent work *Medicine in the Bible and the Talmud: Selection from Classical Jewish Sources*,⁴ he examines a number of medical issues emerging from the study of the Bible and the Talmud. The main body of this work is preceded by a

³ Julius Preuss, *Biblisch-Talmudische Medizin: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Heilkunde und der Kultur überhaupt* (Berlin: S. Karger, 1911).

⁴ Fred Rosner, *Medicine in the Bible and the Talmud: Selection from Classical Jewish Sources. Augmented Edition*, LJLE 5 (Hoboken NJ: Ktav Publishing House Inc./Yeshiva University Press, 1995).

brief but detailed section on *Medicine in Ancient Israel* and by a general introduction to Preuss' work *Biblisch-Talmudische Medizin*. Rosner's study covers a great number of medical matters, ranging from a list of common ailments, anatomy, physiology, dietetics and medical ethics to miscellaneous subjects such as dolphins in the Talmud. Rosner also devotes a chapter to medical ethics and well-known talmudic physicians. As in Preuss' work, the reader has the feeling that Rosner devotes more space dealing with the talmudic medical references rather than the biblical. Moreover, he often takes into account the talmudic interpretations of certain biblical passages that contain medical information in order to conclude which one should be the best interpretation for them.⁵ Finally, although his study does not deal at all with the medical material found in the texts under examination, the reader gains some insight, fundamental for the comprehension of ancient Jewish medicine.

Another study which examines medical practice in ancient Israel was written by Maurice B. Gordon: 'Medicine among the Ancient Hebrews'.⁶ Gordon discusses what ancient Israel thought about disease and death⁷ and, moreover, argues that the Egyptian medical system influenced that of ancient Israel.⁸ Throughout his study, Gordon makes mention of the OT and apocryphal passages that indicate medical knowledge in ancient Israel (e.g. contagious diseases, cures and healing treatments, embalming, hygiene, midwives, anatomy, the art of the apothecary, medicinal herbs, mental functions, insanity, visual problems).⁹ Although he claims fairly at the beginning of his paper that he will examine the source material 'up to the birth of Jesus',¹⁰ he does not make any mention of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha which contain medical and healing references and date from within his chronological framework. In his section *Pharmacy and Pharmacology*,¹¹ he could have included the reference to the angelic instruction of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs found in 1 Enoch 7:1; 8:3 and Jubilees 10:1–14. Also, his mention of the medical information attested in the apocryphal writings is very brief; he simply quotes Ben

⁵ For example, see *ibid.*, 165–171.

⁶ Maurice B. Gordon, 'Medicine among the Ancient Hebrews', *Isis* 33, no. 4 (1941), 454–485.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 456–457.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 461.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 459–480.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 454.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 477–478.

Sira's passage of the medical profession (Sir 38:1–15), as well as Tobit's account on the ineffective treatment of the physicians (Tob 2:10). Although this survey does not devote equal space and interpretation to the medical references found in the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical texts, it provides the student of ancient Jewish medicine with an outline of the wide range of medical aspects found in ancient Jewish sources.

Furthermore, there is a number of studies that focus on specific aspects of medical practice as attested to in the HB/OT and Second-Temple-period Jewish literature, and they in fact touch upon the medical evidence of the literary compositions under examination here. To begin with, in 'The Apothecary in the Bible and Religious Lore',¹² John E. Kramer gathers together all the references found in the HB about the apothecary and his craft. The biblical references to the apothecary are quite few and show that he was mainly engaged in the preparation of ointments and perfumes often for ritual use (e.g. Ex 30:22–38). Kramer also expands on the religious lore about the apothecary's profession that developed at different historical periods. His brief discourse offers the reader a glance at the apothecary's art in the HB, adding a small piece to the wider picture of medicine in ancient Judaism.

In his recent article 'The Physician in Ancient Israel: His Status and Function',¹³ Nigel Allan deals with the development of the medical profession in ancient Israel from biblical times to the very end of the Second Temple period (70 CE).¹⁴ He begins by discussing briefly the functions of the priests and prophets in ancient Israel concerning medicine and healing, and he occasionally mentions talmudic references to the medical profession. The main part of his study is devoted to the medical references found in 2 Chronicles, Tobit, the Book of Watchers, Jubilees and Ben Sira. Allan also makes brief mention of a number of other sources that draw on Jewish medicine, namely the medical practices of the Essenes as attested in Josephus, the medicinal knowledge of Solomon as presented in the Testament of Solomon, the medieval Hebrew Book of Asaf, the Christian Scriptures and Philo's and Josephus' accounts of physicians. Overall, his article offers an overview of the

¹² John E. Kramer, 'The Apothecary in the Bible and Religious Lore', *AJP* 105 (1933), 554–562.

¹³ Nigel Allan, 'The Physician in Ancient Israel: His Status and Function', *MH* 45 (2001), 377–394.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 377.

medical profession in ancient Israel and, in fact, he refers to the four texts under examination here. However, his discussion on Tobit's blindness and the physicians' unsuccessful treatment is insufficient. Allan does not comment on the reasons that prompted the author of Tobit to describe the physicians' treatment so negatively, but he limits himself to brief comments without attempting to explore the historical setting that lies behind the text. In addition, Allan's analysis of the medical material of the Book of Watchers and Jubilees is also insufficiently addressed. For 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3, he simply states that the cutting of roots and plants was associated with magic in antiquity. Moreover, he briefly discusses the medical material of Jubilees 10:1–14, but he does not attempt to explain the reasons for the different approaches with regard to the angelic instruction of herbal medicine attested in the Book of Watchers and Jubilees, respectively. His comments on Ben Sira 38:1–15 are more interesting but still analysis is missing in verse 8 about the apothecary's art. Finally, Allan does not compare the textual versions of the aforementioned texts. Despite these lacunae, Allan's study offers valuable remarks on the medical material of Jewish writings and maps out the different stages of Jewish thought with regard to the medical profession up to the end of the Second Temple period.

Another aspect of medicine that deserves attention is the use of herbal medicaments in the ancient world. A learned study on the understanding of the medicinal properties of plants is *The Healing Past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*.¹⁵ The scholars contributing to this edited volume offer a discussion on the pharmaceutical plants found in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean. Their discourse examines a range of themes, such as pharmacology as found in the Bible, Hellenistic Jewish authors and rabbinic literature, as well as the trade of medicinal plants in the biblical world and the affinities that biblical medicine shares with that of Mesopotamia and Egypt. These studies are essential for the understanding of the trade of herbal products between the land of Israel and its neighbouring countries and, in effect, the use of herbal products as medicaments in antiquity.

¹⁵ Irene and Walter Jacob (eds.), *The Healing Past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*, SAM 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

Turning now to the matter of healing, Larry Hogan, in *Healing in the Second Temple Period*,¹⁶ offers an outline and assessment of the healing material found in Jewish literature of the Second Temple period. More precisely, he deals with the medical and healing material examined in the present study but, as the time span of his research is quite broad, he does not sufficiently address the situation that lies behind the attitudes towards the use of medicine reflected in them. For instance, he explains inadequately the negative statement on physicians in Tobit 2:10 with the following:

‘The ... statement about the physicians may simply highlight the miraculous nature of the later healing or it may be a negative comment on bad medical care similar to the comment made about the healers who had treated the woman with a hemorrhage in the gospels of Mark (5.25) and Luke (8.43)’.¹⁷

His statement does not explain the situation that lies behind Tobit’s unfavourable view of the medical profession. In addition, he makes only sporadic and brief notes of comparison between the Greek and Latin versions of Tobit.¹⁸ Furthermore, his explanation of the legitimisation of the medical profession in Ben Sira 38:1–15 is deficient. He writes the following:

‘Affirmation of the medical profession may have been intended to counteract negative attitudes towards physicians. These attitudes were based partly on the understanding of God as healer to whom one turned first in illness (cf. 2 Chr 16.12) and by the association of physicians with magical practices in Babylon and in Egypt’.¹⁹

Also, he does not analyse at all why Ben Sira had to defend the use of herbal medicaments (cf. Sir 38:4).²⁰ Moreover, Hogan devotes only a few lines to explain the craft of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs in 1 Enoch 8:3 (cf. 1 En 7:1); his comment is restricted to that herbs and roots were used for healing and were related to magic in the ancient world.²¹ Finally, although he stresses the differences

¹⁶ Larry P. Hogan, *Healing in the Second Temple Period*, NTOA 21 (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30–32; 35.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 64.

with regard to the story of the Watchers between 1 Enoch and Jubilees, he does not reflect on why the author of Jubilees adopted a different approach towards medicine from that of the Enochic author.²² Nevertheless, Hogan's study prepared the ground for a more in-depth analysis of the references to medicine and healing found in the Jewish writings of the third and second centuries BCE.

A few years before Hogan's aforementioned study, another essay appeared on healing, spanning over an even wider chronological framework, namely that of Roger F. Hurding, entitled 'Healing.'²³ Hurding discusses healing as it is found in the OT with God as the supreme healer, and continues with the figure of Christ as a healer and a miracle-worker. He examines healing in the early Church and the relationship between the Church and medicine, and finally discusses the aspect of healing as it is conceived today. In other words, Hurding offers an outline of the depiction of healing from biblical times to the present, permitting the reader to have an overall picture of healing throughout the centuries. Although the chronological framework of his survey is very broad and one would expect that it would include some reference to the healing material of apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings, Harding limits himself to a brief comment on the positive attitude of the author of Ben Sira towards the medical profession (Sir 38:1–15).²⁴ Overall, his survey does not contain a cross-cultural analysis of the healing practices attested in ancient Jewish scriptures, an element which is essential for the understanding of ancient Jewish beliefs on healing.

Another matter addressed by modern scholarship is the connection between medicine and magic. This is introduced in the pioneer work of Gideon Bohak, entitled *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History*.²⁵ Bohak deals with the development of Jewish magical practices from the Second Temple period to rabbinic times, mapping out the cross-cultural impacts between Jews and non-Jews. Most interesting for the present study is the second chapter of his book, namely 'Jewish Magic in the Second Temple Period'.²⁶ There, despite the dearth of the 'outsider'

²² *Ibid.*, 84.

²³ Roger F. Hurding, 'Healing', in Bernard Palmer (ed.), *Medicine and the Bible* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1986), 191–216.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 195.

²⁵ Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 70–142.

and ‘insider’ evidence with regard to magical practices,²⁷ Bohak manages to reconstruct the picture of magic in Second Temple Judaism by means of a thorough examination of the historical sources. He identifies magical practices in the medical references of the Book of Watchers,²⁸ Jubilees²⁹ and Tobit.³⁰ Since early antiquity medicine was inextricably connected to magical practices. This is well attested in the medical practices of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece.³¹ The connection between medicine and magic found in the Jewish writings of the Second Temple period indicates the cross-cultural borrowings between ancient Israel and its neighbouring nations. Bohak’s study provides an insight into the cross-cultural transmission of magical knowledge in ancient Judaism and hence the context in which the student of ancient Jewish medicine can account for the magico-medical material found in the literature under investigation.

A further study that pushes forward the perception of magic in Second Temple Judaism is that of Armin Lange ‘The Essene Position on Magic and Divination.’³² Lange offers some valuable remarks on the forms of magic and divination found in the Second-Temple-period Jewish literature. Among the texts he examines are also the medical passages that are of particular interest here. Most notably, his brief remarks on these point to the influence of the cultural environment on the shaping of Jewish medical thought in the Second Temple period.³³

Indeed, the cultural environment within which Jewish medical thought began to take shape and develop plays an essential role in understanding the reasons for the existence of certain attitudes towards the use of medicine within the Judaism of the Second Temple period. A preliminary idea about medicine in the Bible and Israel’s neighbouring countries is given in the concise article of R. K. Harrison ‘Disease, Bible and Spade.’³⁴ Harrison addresses particularly the issue of illness and medical practice attested to in biblical, Mesopotamian and Egyptian literature. Throughout

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 70–71.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 81.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 81–82.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 89–90.

³¹ I will discuss this in greater detail in the penultimate section of the Introduction.

³² Armin Lange, ‘The Essene Position on Magic and Divination’, in M. Bernstein, F. García Martínez, and J. Kampen (eds.), *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies*, Cambridge, 1995, STDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill 1997), 377–435.

³³ *Ibid.*, 383–385.

³⁴ R. K. Harrison, ‘Disease, Bible and Spade’, *BA* 16, no. 4 (1953), 88–92.

his article, he devotes some space to a discussion of the medical practices in Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as, more briefly, of the relationship between medicine and magic in light of the Code of Hammurabi.³⁵ Moreover, he parallels the therapeutic treatments found in the Bible with similar remedies found in Ugaritic literature of northern Syria.³⁶

Along these lines is also the work of Wallis E. A. Budge, entitled *The Divine Origin of the Craft of the Herbalist*.³⁷ Budge discusses how the profession of herbalist and physician was conceived in different ancient nations, such as Sumer, Assyria, Babylon and Egypt. In the first half of his book, he deals with the divine origin of the craft of herb-doctor in the ancient past. His discussion focuses mainly on the description of myths and interpretation of material evidence (e.g. illustrations of Egyptian tombs, Mesopotamian clay tablets). In the second half of the book, he produces an overview of the most important herbals and their authors from Sumer to Ethiopia. In short, his main aim is to give an overall picture of herbal medicine in the ancient world.

Similarly, Donald J. Wiseman's lengthy article 'Medicine in the Old Testament World'³⁸ paints a picture of the cultural background in which ancient Jewish medical knowledge and practice began to flourish. He refers to the types of medical practitioners found in Egypt,³⁹ he discusses the similarity of the Babylonian ideal of health with that of ancient Israel⁴⁰ and, moreover, points out that the therapeutics found in the OT are not so different from those used in Babylon and Egypt.⁴¹ Wiseman concludes that the medical information of the OT shows that the Hebrews in Palestine were probably aware of the medical practices of contemporary physicians in Babylon, Syria and Egypt.⁴² His research scope is narrowed to the OT, analysing only briefly the medical material of Sir 38:1–15.⁴³ Nevertheless,

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 90.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

³⁷ Wallis E. A. Budge, *The Divine Origin of the Craft of the Herbalist* (London: The Society of Herbalists, 1928).

³⁸ Donald J. Wiseman, 'Medicine in the Old Testament World', in Bernard Palmer (ed.), *Medicine and the Bible* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1986), 13–42.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

Wiseman's survey is helpful, as it explores the cross-cultural connections with regard to the medical knowledge found in the OT.

To sum up, the aforementioned studies bring to the surface issues with regard to perceptions of healing and the medical situation in ancient Israel and in the ancient Near Eastern world that require further reflection and elaboration that this thesis attempts to investigate.

2.2. Literature on 1 Enoch, Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees

As already mentioned, the present thesis focuses on the attitudes towards the use of medicine found in the books of 1 Enoch, Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees. This section reviews monographs and commentaries, articles and essays on these writings that were used in and/or influenced the present study.⁴⁴

2.2.1. Monographs and commentaries

In 1985, Matthew Black published his work entitled *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes*.⁴⁵ There, he revises Charles' edition of 1 Enoch⁴⁶ but differs from it in a number of ways.⁴⁷ Although both his translation and commentary have been severely criticised,⁴⁸ Black's particular comments on the medical material in the Book of Watchers are helpful for a more in-depth cross-textual research.

In 2001, George Nickelsburg published a translation and commentary on 1 Enoch 1–36 and 81–108.⁴⁹ The commentary is preceded by a thorough introduction where Nickelsburg addresses issues, ranging from textual evidence, literary genre and

⁴⁴ I present the monographs, commentaries, articles and essays first on 1 Enoch, followed by those on Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees.

⁴⁵ Matthew Black, in consultation with James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes*, SVTP 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

⁴⁶ Robert H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch. Translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text, and Edited with the Introduction Notes and Indexes of the First Edition wholly Recast Enlarged and Rewritten; Together with a Reprint from the Editor's text of the Greek Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912).

⁴⁷ George W. E. Nickelsburg, review of *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes*, SVTP 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1985) by Matthew Black, in consultation with James C. VanderKam, in *JBL* 107, no. 2 (1988), 342.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 343–344.

⁴⁹ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis MN: Fortress, 2001).

theological issues to modern approaches to the study of 1 Enoch. His translation—which presumes an eclectic text of his own⁵⁰—takes into consideration the Ethiopic, Greek and Aramaic evidence and is followed by critical comments on the textual evidence. His commentary is quite detailed and often refers to parallel evidence found in other pseudepigraphical writings. His commentary proper on 1 Enoch 8:3 (cf. 7:1) is based on semantics, attempting to find the meaning of the key words that refer to the Watchers' instruction.⁵¹ Nickelsburg argues that, according to the context, the reference to root-cutting and the knowledge of plants (1 En 7:1; 8:3a) may refer to 'the preparation of magical potions';⁵² beyond this, however, he does not offer any more detailed discussion on this matter. Furthermore, his comments on the relationship of curses to healing in 1 Enoch 95:4 are restricted to the following: '... the author may be referring to magical practices for healing purposes'.⁵³ Moreover, his analysis of the healing reference of 1 Enoch 96:3 is also quite brief, omitting mentioning biblical or extrabiblical connections of healing with light.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, Nickelsburg's commentary assists in a preliminary understanding of the content of the passages of interest here and the way one needs to proceed to their examination.

Loren Stuckenbruck's commentary on *1 Enoch 91–108*⁵⁵ is the most recent extensive study of the fifth booklet of the Enochic corpus. Stuckenbruck divides 1 Enoch 91–108 into five literary units, namely the *Apocalypse of Weeks* (93:1–10; 91:11–17); *Exhortation* (91:1–10, 18–19); *Epistle of Enoch* (92:1–5; 93:11–14; 94:1–105:2); *Birth of Noah* (106:1–107:3); and *Eschatological Admonition* (108:1–15). Each section is preceded by an introduction which discusses the manuscript tradition and the literary connection to the other Enochic texts. The text is divided into little groups of about three verses. An English translation is offered followed by textual notes which provide a thorough look into the differences among the various extant witnesses for 1 Enoch 91–108 (i.e. Ethiopic, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and Coptic). Finally, each section concludes with a commentary proper. The present thesis is especially interested in the text and commentary for 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 197–198.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 198.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 464.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 465–466.

⁵⁵ Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, CEJL (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007).

that is, the passages that contain references to healing. Stuckenbruck notes that the pronouncement of curses mentioned in 1 Enoch 95:4 is reminiscent of the Watchers' oath (cf. 1 En 6:4–5) and has magical implications;⁵⁶ he finds, however, that the language of 1 Enoch 95:4 is closer to that of 1 Enoch 8:3a and argues that the author's milieu allows him to acknowledge the effectiveness of curses.⁵⁷ For 1 Enoch 96:3, Stuckenbruck explains the connection between healing and light, offering parallel paradigms from the Enochic corpus but also from biblical and Second Temple Jewish literature.⁵⁸

Several commentaries have been published for the Book of Tobit. The present thesis has consulted three commentaries on Tobit, namely *The Book of Tobit: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary* by Frank Zimmermann;⁵⁹ *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* by Carey Moore;⁶⁰ and *Tobit* by Joseph Fitzmyer.⁶¹ All three provide some comparison of the multiple textual evidence—though not in a systematic way—and offer some interesting insights about the cross-cultural impacts, particularly from Assyria-Babylon and Egypt, concerning healing treatments found in the book. However, the element missing from these commentaries is an analysis based on the historical background of the book. In other words, they do not account for the particular situation that prompted the author of Tobit to reject the pharmaceutical treatment of the physicians, while embracing the healing remedies of Raphael. For instance, all three commentators miss discussing sufficiently the well known passage about the incapacity of the physicians to cure Tobit's eye defect (Tob 2:10 S). Zimmermann comments only on the Vaticanus (B) version where there is no reference to physicians;⁶² Moore appears to be more concerned with the sparrows rather than the

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁵⁹ Frank Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, JAL 7 (New York: Haper & Brothers, 1958).

⁶⁰ Carey A. Moore, *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 40A (New York: Doubleday, 1996).

⁶¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, CEJL (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003).

⁶² Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 57; 59.

actual rejection of the physicians' medical care;⁶³ and Fitzmyer seems to be more interested in explaining the nature of the white spots on Tobit's eyes⁶⁴.

Alexander Di Lella, continuing the work of P. W. Skehan, published a translation and a commentary on the Book of Ben Sira.⁶⁵ The introduction, written solely by Di Lella, addresses a variety of subjects, ranging from the title, content and literary genre to versional evidence and the teaching of Ben Sira. The translation, taking into account the Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Syriac versions of Ben Sira, is an attempt to provide a text that can be as close as possible to the meaning of the original composition. The analysis of Ben Sira 38:1–15 about the legitimisation of the physician and his art are poorly discussed; it describes mainly the content of the text and offers some cross-textual references, but lacks any effort to explore the particular situation behind the text.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, this study offers a good grasp of the content and teaching of Ben Sira.

In 2000, Jacques van Ruiten published his work entitled *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1–11 in the Book of Jubilees*.⁶⁷ Van Ruiten examines how Genesis 1:1–11:19 is rewritten in Jubilees 2:1–10:36. Of interest to the present study is the examination of Jubilees 10:1–14. Van Ruiten holds that the Noah pericope is 'an addition with regard to the biblical text'.⁶⁸ His comments on the angelic instruction of herbal medicine,⁶⁹ though laconic, served as indicators of investigating the subject in the right direction.

The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology is Michael Segal's recent study on Jubilees.⁷⁰ Segal discusses topics like literary genre, date of composition, redaction, etc., and aims to show that Jubilees is not a unified writing. The examination of particular pericopes of Jubilees forms an

⁶³ Moore, *Tobit*, 130–131.

⁶⁴ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 137.

⁶⁵ Patrick W. Skehan, and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, AB 39 (New York; London: Doubleday, 1987).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 441–443.

⁶⁷ Jacques van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted. The Rewriting of Genesis 1–11 in the Book of Jubilees*, SJSJ (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

⁷⁰ Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, SJSJ 117 (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

important part of his study. Through such an examination Segal attempts to trace the worldview of the book. He comments on Jubilees 10:1–13 and points out cross-textual references.⁷¹ In particular, he holds that Jubilees 10:1–13 tries ‘to incorporate the Watchers tradition into a new theological construct’,⁷² and points out that a parallel story is found in the introduction of the medieval Book of Asaf⁷³ which, as Segal argues, depends on the tradition in Jubilees 10:1–14.⁷⁴ His comments, though brief, provide the ground for further reflection and research on the Noah pericope.

2.2.2. Articles and essays on medicine and healing in one of the four texts

In 1985, a short study appeared under the title ‘Remarks on Tobit’s Blindness’, co-authored by I. Papayannopoulos, J. Laskaratos and S. Marketos. This article examines from a medical viewpoint the kind of eye disease the sparrow droppings produced in Tobit (Tob 2:9–10) and whether the fish-gall ointment (Tob 11:8; cf. 6:9) can be an accurate remedy for eye afflictions. This essay provides a historical retrospective of the views of commentators and physicians that have been expressed from antiquity until modern times on Tobit’s eye illness.⁷⁵

Furthermore, two particular works engage with magic and medicine in the Book of Tobit. The first is a ten-page article of Bern Kollmann, entitled ‘Göttliche Offenbarung magisch-pharmakologischer Heilkunst im Buch Tobit.’⁷⁶ After some brief remarks on how magic and medicine were conceived in ancient Israel,⁷⁷ Kollmann detects the two forms of illness presented in the book and distinguishes the two types of treatment applied for their cure.⁷⁸ He also offers a detailed study on similar pharmacological remedies used in Mesopotamia and Egypt and found in medical authors and ancient magical textbooks.⁷⁹ Kollmann’s analysis errs in not taking into account the rich manuscript tradition for the Book of Tobit (e.g. he

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 169–174.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 169.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 171; 174.

⁷⁵ Ioannis Papayannopoulos, J. Laskaratos and S. Marketos, ‘Remarks on Tobit’s Blindness’, *Koroth* 9, no. 1–2 (1985), 181–187.

⁷⁶ Bernd Kollmann, ‘Göttliche Offenbarung magisch-pharmakologischer Heilkunst im Buch Tobit’, *ZAW* 106, no. 2 (1994), 289–299.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 289–290.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 292–293.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 289–297.

focuses on the BA witness, omitting the testimony of S). Finally, although he discusses the reasons why the author of Tobit attempted to legitimise magico-medical cures,⁸⁰ he does not offer any reflection on the negative attitude towards the physicians' pharmaceutical treatment in Tobit 2:10.

The second study that examines the relationship of medicine with magic is that of Loren Stuckenbruck with 'The Book of Tobit and the Problem of "Magic"'.⁸¹ Stuckenbruck sheds light on the character of the cures found in Tobit by means of an examination of the different readings found among the recensions of the book. The introduction is followed by two brief overviews, the first on the early Jewish traditions that are opposed to the use of medicines found in the HB, the DSS and apocryphal writings (e.g. Book of Watchers),⁸² and the second on early Jewish texts that legitimise the use of medicine, referring particularly to the medical tradition preserved in the Wisdom of Solomon, Ben Sira and Jubilees.⁸³ Stuckenbruck then examines the cures attested in Tobit, characterising them as 'medico-magical'. He offers a comparative textual analysis between the Greek recensions (BA, S) for Tobit 6:7–8; 11:8, 11, also referring to the testimony of the Tobit Qumran fragments (4Q196, 4Q197).⁸⁴ His essay is essential for the present study, as it demonstrates how the different readings of Tobit's recensions can affect the meaning of the text and, moreover, shows the need for a thorough examination of the manuscript tradition in an effort to gain access to the earlier strata of the book.

Turning to Ben Sira, two studies offer insights into the medical situation of his time. The first is a short chapter on Ben Sira 38:1–15 entitled 'Der Arzt bei Ben Sira: Zum Problem von Frömmigkeit und Fortschritt in Sir 38, 1–15', found in Johannes Marböck's *Weisheit in Wandel: Untersuchungen zur Weisheitstheologie bei Ben Sira*.⁸⁵ There, Marböck refers to the historical background that prompted Ben Sira to be positively disposed towards the medical profession. Although he raises

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 290; 299.

⁸¹ Loren T. Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit and the Problem of "Magic"', in Hermann Lichtenberger and Gerbern S. Oegema (eds.), *Jüdische Schriften in ihrem antik-jüdischen und urchristlichen Kontext*, JSHRZ 1 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2002), 258–269.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 258–261.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 261–262.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 265–267.

⁸⁵ Johannes Marböck, 'Der Arzt bei Ben Sira: Zum Problem von Frömmigkeit und Fortschritt in Sir 38, 1–15', in his, *Weisheit im Wandel: Untersuchungen zur Weisheitstheologie bei Ben Sira*, BZAW 22 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, [1971] new ed. 1999), 154–160.

important issues regarding medical progress in the Near East in the author's time, his discussion lacks a more detailed description of this situation. The second is Dieter Lührmann's article: 'Aber auch dem Arzt gib Raum (Sir 38, 1–15).'⁸⁶ In particular, Lührmann defines the influence of Hippocratic medical thought on the perception and shaping of medicine in Alexandria. However, he falls short of providing a more detailed description of Alexandrian medicine and its representatives, nor explains how Ben Sira could have been able to know about features of Alexandrian medicine.

Finally, in his paper 'The Demons in the Book of Jubilees',⁸⁷ James C. VanderKam examines the demonic appearances in Jubilees. He discusses Jubilees 10:1–14 in two places. In the first place, he compares the angelic teaching of herbal medicine in Jubilees to the illicit teaching of the Watchers in 1 Enoch.⁸⁸ In the second, he stresses the differences of the Noah pericope to the parallel story found in the Hebrew Book of Asaf.⁸⁹ Although he does not discuss in great detail the angelic instruction of herbal medicine, his comments offer a good starting point for a further examination of the subject.

The literature reviewed above contributes to the present study in two ways: first, the works on ancient Jewish medicine and related literature offer an insight into the overall picture of medicine in ancient Judaism; second, the literature that particularly focuses on 1 Enoch, Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees provides a better understanding of the worldviews and the teachings of these writings, as well as some valuable remarks that have been the starting point for a more in-depth research on the medical and healing material found in them.

It is evident from the above discussion that there is no detailed study of the medical and healing material in Jewish writings that date from the third and second centuries BCE. Most surveys focus on biblical and talmudic medicine without taking into account the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings that are vital to the

⁸⁶ Dieter Lührmann, 'Aber auch dem Arzt gib Raum (Sir 38, 1–15)', *WuD* 15 (1979), 55–78.

⁸⁷ James C. VanderKam, 'The Demons in the Book of Jubilees', in Armin Lange, Hermann Lichtenberger, and K. F. Diethard Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen: Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur in Kontext ihrer Umwelt. Demons: The Demonology of Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian Literature in Context of their Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 339–364.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 344; 348–350.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 354–355.

understanding of the development of Jewish medical thought. Some of the essays presented above mention random references on medicine and healing found in the aforementioned literature, offering brief comments, whereas others treat them as subordinate evidence to explore a completely different subject. Only Allan and Hogan have dealt partly with these texts but they examined them as literary evidence in a wider chronological framework. This is to say that their study does not investigate in great detail the cultural and historical milieu that triggered the particular attitudes towards medicine reflected in them. Furthermore, some studies address the cultural and historical conditions from which Jewish medical thought emerged, but they refer mainly to the cultural impact of Mesopotamia and Egypt, often ignoring the impact of Hellenism. Additionally, their research lacks a proper comparative analysis of the multiple textual evidence available today for these writings. In light of these considerations, a focused study on the attitudes towards the use of medicine in Jewish literature of the third and second centuries BCE is a desideratum. The goal of the present thesis is to cover the lacunae of previous scholarship, offering some fresh insights into the medical and healing material of 1 Enoch, Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees.

2.3. Outline of thesis

A separate chapter is devoted to the medical and healing material in each of the aforementioned writings. In the introduction of each chapter, I discuss topics ranging from date and authorship to manuscript tradition. As a prelude to my examination of the passages on medicine and healing, I offer a brief description of the narrative context where these occur. Following on from this, I give the textual evidence in the original together with the English translation, textual notes and a comparative analysis of the textual evidence. Then, I analyse and comment on the textual evidence where attention is directed to the historical and cultural setting from which these texts emerged. Overall, my analysis aims to throw light on the particular reasons that triggered specific attitudes towards the use of medicine among the Jewish circles of the third and second centuries BCE.

2.4. Methodology

I will make use of a range of methodological approaches. To begin with, I will carry out a philological analysis and address textual-critical issues. The multiplicity of

textual witnesses, as well as the fragmentary state of some of the manuscript evidence, necessitates some textual groundwork to be done. I will display the available textual evidence for each passage—together with the variant readings, where possible—and provide philological notes (e.g. grammatical and syntactical features). I will then compare them with each other and evaluate them in an effort to throw light on the earliest strata of the textual tradition. Furthermore, I will employ the religious-historical (*religionsgeschichtliche*) comparison⁹⁰ in an attempt to define the cross-cultural borrowings between Judaism and other cultures, and sketch the historical and cultural milieu within which Jewish medical attitudes were shaped and developed. In my religious-historical comparison, I shall apply both a diachronic and a synchronic approach,⁹¹ as I both offer insights into the pre-history of medical ideas and beliefs of the ancient Near Eastern world and their development over time, and explore the medical situation of a given point of time, that is, the period in which these literary works were written. As a tool for my synchronic approach, I will use textual-semantic analysis⁹² in an attempt to work out the meaning of a particular word, phrase or sentence on which the understanding of the passage depends (e.g. the word *φάρμακον* can mean both ‘poison’ and ‘medicine’) and thus to decode the meaning of the text. In addition, I will employ pragmatic analysis⁹³ in order to understand the particular aims of the texts. Finally, for my diachronic analysis, I will compare the medical and healing material of these works with parallel references to medical practice found in Jewish sources (e.g. HB, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, DSS, Jewish historians), as well as with medical (e.g. medical papyri, herbals, medical writers) and medically-

⁹⁰ Cf. Karlheinz Müller, ‘Die Religionsgeschichtliche Methode: Erwägungen zu ihrem Verständnis und zur Praxis ihrer Vollzüge an neutestamentlichen Texten’, *BZ* 29 (1985), 161–192; Gerald Seelig, *Religionsgeschichtliche Methode in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart: Studien zur Geschichte und Methode des religionsgeschichtlichen Vergleichs in der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft*, Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 7 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001).

⁹¹ On the relation between synchronic and diachronic analysis see James Barr, ‘The Synchronic, the Diachronic and the Historical: A Triangular Relationship’, in Johannes C. de Moor (ed.), *Synchronic or Diachronic?: A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis*, OtSt 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 1–14; cf. Lutz Doering, ‘Parallels without “Parallelomania”: Methodological Reflections on Comparative Analysis of Halakah in the Dead Sea Scrolls’, in Steven D. Fraade, Aharon Shemesh, and Ruth A. Clemens (eds.), *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 7–9 January, 2003*, STDJ (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 37–39.

⁹² On semantic analysis cf. Wilhelm Egger, *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology*, trans. P. Heinegg (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 84–111.

⁹³ On pragmatic analysis cf. *ibid.*, 125–137.

related (e.g. magical textbooks, testimony of Greek and Roman authors on medical practices) literary sources from cultures with which Judaism has been in constant contact for centuries (Assyria-Babylon, Egypt, Greece).

3. REMARKS ON ANCIENT MEDICINE

The ancient world was very interested in health issues, a fact that is evident from the plethora of early literary sources on medicine. Discourses on health, illness, injury, surgery, anatomy, biology, gynaecological medicine, diagnosis, prognosis, therapeutics, remedies, hygiene, dietetics, and sexual ethics are abundant in ancient medical texts. In the attempt to examine aspects of ancient medicine, the researcher should primarily reflect on how the ancient world thought of medicine and healing. Therefore, it is helpful to make some preliminary remarks on ancient medicine, addressing particularly the characteristic traits of medicine practised by nations with which ancient Israel was in contact, namely Assyria-Babylon, Egypt and Greece.

3.1. Medicine and the divine

The great civilisations of the past associated the art of medicine with the divine realm. They believed that the gods were the first physicians and herbalists who revealed the craft of healing to men.⁹⁴ The Sumerian god Ea was held to be the god of healing and the patron of herbalists and physicians.⁹⁵ The Babylonian goddess Gula was the goddess of healing.⁹⁶ Among the various epithets attributed to Gula descriptive of her healing properties,⁹⁷ the goddess is also called ‘herb grower’ (*šim-mû*), an epithet indicative of her association with medicinal plants.⁹⁸ The Egyptian gods Osiris and Isis were viewed as experts in the healing properties of herbal substances.⁹⁹ Anubis was regarded as the apothecary of the Egyptian gods.¹⁰⁰ But it was Thoth who was at the apex of healing deities in the Egyptian pantheon.¹⁰¹ Amun and Horus were also called physicians.¹⁰² Ta-urt or Thaouris was an Egyptian goddess, protectress of women in childbirth—she was therefore depicted as pregnant—and she was called ‘the good nurse.’¹⁰³ The Olympian god Apollo was

⁹⁴ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, v.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁹⁶ In the hymn of Bulluṣu-rabi, Gula characterises herself a physician who heals (L. 79). For the hymn see Wilfred G. Lambert, ‘The Gula Hymn of Bulluṣu-rabi’, *Or* 36 (1967), 121.

⁹⁷ For a summary of these epithets see Hector Avalos, *Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East: The Role of the Temple in Greece, Mesopotamia and Israel*, HSM 54 (Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1995), 105–106.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁹⁹ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 12.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁰¹ Paul Ghalioungui, *Magic and Medical Science in Ancient Egypt* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), 32.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 33–34.

considered to be the god of healing. His son, Asclepius, was the Greek god of medicine. From the latter, the *Asclepiads*, a prominent medical clan from which Hippocrates' family descended, claimed their origin. Also, Hygeia, daughter of Asclepius, was the Greek goddess of health.

3.1.1. Temple medicine

The association of medicine with the divine furthered the development of temple medicine. In ancient Egypt, the clergy performed medical duties. In particular, the priests of the goddess Sekhmet treated all diseases—except for eye-ailments¹⁰⁴—acting ‘as mere mediators between the patients and the goddess.’¹⁰⁵

Temple medicine was also prominent in ancient Greece and was connected with the cult of Asclepius. The most famous healing temples of Asclepius (*asclepieia*) were in Epidaurus and on the island of Cos. A large number of pilgrims visited the temples of Asclepius daily to be cured. They stayed there overnight and it was believed that the god came in their dreams and healed them.¹⁰⁶ When a physician was unable to cure an illness, the patient resorted to the *asclepieia* for a cure.¹⁰⁷

The picture of temple medicine in Mesopotamia is somewhat different from the one practised in the temples of Asclepius. The archaeological evidence for the temple of Gula at Isin—the most important temple of the goddess—does not suggest that patients resorted there and stayed overnight to be medically treated.¹⁰⁸ This is probably due to the fact that the primary loci of health care in Mesopotamia were the home, the river and the hut (*šutukku*).¹⁰⁹ Another reason might have been that Gula, unlike Asclepius, was not solely a healing deity; other non-healing duties

¹⁰⁴ The treatment of eye-diseases was performed by the priests of Douaou, an Egyptian deity who was thought to heal the eyes; *ibid.*, 31; 33.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰⁶ The tablets of Epidaurus (fourth century BCE) report that Asclepius operated directly and without intermediaries on his patients while sleeping; H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, ‘Asclepius and Temple Medicine in Aelius Aristides’ *Sacred Tales*’, in H. F. J. Horstmanshoff and M. Stol (eds.), in collaboration with C. R. van Tilburg, *Magic and Rationality in Ancient Near Eastern and Graeco-Roman Medicine*, SAM 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 325.

¹⁰⁷ Jacques Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 200; Horstmanshoff, ‘Asclepius’, 328.

¹⁰⁸ Avalos, *Illness*, 201.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 172–185.

were attributed to her.¹¹⁰ Also, there is only limited textual evidence that indicates that short-term treatment (i.e. non-residential treatment) was performed at the temple at Isin. This is found in *The Story of the Bitten Man from Nippur*, according to which a man bitten by a dog resorted to the temple of Gula at Isin where he was cured by the priest (*šangû*) who, after examining him, recited an incantation.¹¹¹ It appears thus that the temple in Mesopotamia had a therapeutic function limited in short-term healing treatments, such as ‘the application of material medica, exorcism, incubation’,¹¹² etc.

3.2. Medicine and magic: Archaic views on the cause of illness

The primitive man attributed anything that he could not understand and/or explain to supernatural agents. In the case of an illness, the latter was often understood to have been caused by a demonic spirit and the only appropriate remedy was its expulsion.¹¹³ The belief in the supernatural cause of an illness furthered the use of magical means in the healing process.¹¹⁴ Magic was/is thought to subjugate supernatural forces, such as demonic entities, angels, stars, gods.¹¹⁵ In the case of an illness caused by a demonic spirit, it was magic that could drive the demon away. Magical means such as the recitation of incantations and spells, charms, amulets, talismans and knotted knots, philtres and potions, are all prominent in ancient literature from Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece. The medical texts from Mesopotamia are a complex of medicine and magic, as the medicinal remedies are most often accompanied by magical formulae (e.g. the recitation of spells, the making of charms, etc.). The smooth coexistence between medicine and magic in Mesopotamia is also evident from the good collaboration of the physician or herbalist (*asû*) and the magical-expert (*āšipu*); the latter made the diagnosis and prognosis of an illness and recited incantations, whereas the former was preparing the medicines.¹¹⁶ The two professions were not antithetical but the one

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 191.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 212–213.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 194–195.

¹¹³ G. M. A. Grube, ‘Greek Medicine and the Greek Genius’, *Phoenix* 8, no. 4 (1954), 123–124; cf. Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 181.

¹¹⁴ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 36.

¹¹⁵ Yuval Harari, Joseph Dan, and Angel Saenz-Badillos, ‘Magic’, *EncJud* 13 (2nd ed. 2007), 342.

¹¹⁶ Erica Reiner, *Astral Magic in Babylonia*, TAPSNS 85, no. 4 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1995), 47–48; cf. *idem.*, ‘The Uses of Astrology’, *JAOS* 105, no. 4 (1985), 593. For the distinctive functions of the magical-expert and the physician in Babylonian magico-medical texts see Edith K. Ritter,

complemented the other, and even at times the activities of these two practitioners overlapped.¹¹⁷ This is evident in Gula's hymn of *Bulluṣu-rabi*—an illustrative text for the function of the Babylonian physician¹¹⁸—where the goddess names herself a physician (L. 79) who carries a sack containing healing incantations (L. 81).¹¹⁹ The reference to health-giving incantations suggests that the physician made use of them when treating the sick.¹²⁰ Hence, both the *asû* and the *āšipu* 'are providers of magical treatment.'¹²¹ The association of medicine with magic is also evident in a number of letters from the physicians' court which date from the time the Assyrian King Esarhaddon, where the prescription of herbal medicaments is associated with magical means of treatment.¹²² In ancient Egypt, both priests and magicians made use of methods that can be characterised as purely magical.¹²³ Furthermore, Pindar's (ca. 522–443 BCE) ode to Asclepius makes mention of therapeutic methods that apply both to magic and medicine, namely spells, potions, bandages and surgery. In the botanical treatise *Enquiry into Plants*, Theophrastus (371–ca. 287 BCE), along with information on the medicinal properties of plants, preserves a number of folk beliefs about the magical use of floral substances (e.g. amulets and charms). The above information indicates that medicine and magic went side by side in antiquity.

The gods were depicted not only as healers but also as magicians. In a cuneiform text (K 232) which constitutes a hymn in honour of Gula, the goddess is described as a 'magician-priestess of god and man' (obverse L. 12; cf. reverse L. 29), 'mistress of the spell' (obverse L. 14), and the one who 'shall give the incantation of alleviation and the spell of life' (reverse L. 27).¹²⁴ In the Ebers Papyrus (ca. 1550), Isis is addressed both as a healer and an enchantress from whom healing

'Magical-Expert (= *Āšipu*) and Physician (= *Asû*): Notes on Two Complementary Professions in Babylonian Medicine', in The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (ed.), *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965*, AS 16 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 299–321.

¹¹⁷ Robert D. Biggs, 'Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health in Ancient Mesopotamia', *JAAS* 19, no. 1 (2005) www.jaas.org/edocs/v19n1/Biggs-Medicine,%20surgery.pdf (8 September 2010), 1; cf. Avalos, *Illness*, 166–167.

¹¹⁸ Avalos, *Illness*, 110.

¹¹⁹ For the text see Lambert, 'The Gula Hymn', 120–121.

¹²⁰ Biggs, 'Medicine', 10.

¹²¹ Avalos, *Illness*, 166.

¹²² Biggs, 'Medicine', 12.

¹²³ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 35–36.

¹²⁴ Quotations are taken from C. J. Mullo-Weir, 'Four Hymns to Gula', *JRAS* 15 (1929), 11; 17.

from fatal diseases is asked.¹²⁵ She was actually considered the magicians' patroness.¹²⁶ The Egyptian god Thoth was both a physician and a magician.¹²⁷ He was thought to be 'the inventor of the exact sciences, of mathematics, arts, theology, occult sciences and magic, and the author of the secret healing formulae.'¹²⁸

Ancient peoples also believed that illness was divine punishment for wrongdoings.¹²⁹ The deity, who was believed to have sent the disease, was beseeched to intervene and drive the illness away. Magical means were used as it was a metaphysical entity that had to be compelled to provide assistance in healing. For instance, in ancient Egypt, sacerdotal practices—'priestly medicine properly speaking', as Ghalioungui puts it—involved the recitation of incantations and pronouncement of spells (when administering a medicine), aiming to supplicate for divine intervention in the treatment of illness.¹³⁰ Hence, magic was used so that divine intercession would be achieved in healing.

In summary, the belief in the supernatural causes of a disease (e.g. demons, gods) furthered the use of magic in healing in the ancient past. Ancient peoples believed in the effectiveness of magical healing practices and the latter were very popular throughout antiquity. The affluence of folk-healers, sorcerers and exorcists from early antiquity is a proof of this.

3.3. Medicine and divination

The practice of divination¹³¹ was often an integral part of the healing process in Mesopotamia. In Mesopotamian (magico-)medical literature, the reader encounters not only the *asû* and *āšipu* but also the *bārû*, namely the seer or the diviner.¹³² The work of the *bārû* involved the interpretation of various omens associated with the

¹²⁵ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 12–13.

¹²⁶ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 32.

¹²⁷ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 14.

¹²⁸ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 32.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 79; 132; Avalos, *Illness*, 129.

¹³⁰ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 36.

¹³¹ Divination is primarily concerned with the prediction of the future and is closely related to magic. The difference between the two lies in that 'divination only attempts to predict future events, while magic also professes to influence and change them for good or bad': Shmuel Ahituv, and Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, 'Divination', *EncJud* 5 (2nd edition 2007), 703.

¹³² Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 51.

patient and his/her near environment (e.g. the appearance of the patient, the posture of the patients' relatives who were standing in the room, etc.). On the basis of the diviner's omen-interpretation, the *āšipu* recited the most appropriate incantations and proceeded to the right diagnosis and prognosis. In other words, the art of divination was indispensable for the correct diagnosis and prognosis of the illness. Hence, the successful treatment of the patient was the outcome of the harmonious co-operation of herbalism, magic and divination. The three domains (i.e. medicine, magic and divination) coexist harmoniously in Gula who in the hymn of *Bulluṣurabi* describes herself as a physician, a diviner and an exorcist (L. 183).¹³³

3.4. Rationality in ancient medicine

All the above information demonstrates that medicine was inextricably connected to the magical realm in the ancient world. Nevertheless, ancient medicine also appears to have a more rational character, something that today might be called 'scientific.' In the Code of Hammurabi (ca. 1700 BCE), there are certain sections that favour medicine of a more rational character. In particular, these sections attempt to free empirical medicine from its magical implications.¹³⁴ Of the 879 prescriptions preserved in the Ebers Papyrus only twelve are magical remedies.¹³⁵ The rational element of ancient Egyptian medicine is even clearer in the Edwin Smyth Papyrus (ca. 2000 BCE) where only one prescription in the 'Treatise of Wounds' can be characterised as magical.¹³⁶ The latter papyrus shows the attempt to understand the cause of a disease and to treat an illness on rational grounds.¹³⁷ Ghalioungui points out that the medical science of the Egyptian priests and magicians 'was far more rational than would be supposed from what they demonstrated in public; but it was in large part kept secret. Otherwise, Plato and the many other Greek philosophers would not have wasted their time studying with them in Egypt.'¹³⁸

¹³³ Lambert, 'The Gula Hymn', 128.

¹³⁴ Harrison, 'Disease', 90. Nevertheless, the effect of magic in Mesopotamian medical thought and practice was so powerful that even though 'the Code separated empirical medicine as far as possible from its magical background, incantations were still required as adjuncts to therapy': *ibid.*, 90.

¹³⁵ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 40.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹³⁷ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, vi; Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 58.

¹³⁸ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 105. Furthermore, Ghalioungui notes that the oldest Egyptian medical papyri 'are the most devoid of magic, whereas the more recent ones have gradually peeled off their medical polish and kept only the superstitions': *ibid.*, 170.

Turning now to Greece, Greek medicine is considered to have been the first to reject openly any association of supernatural activity in illness and any implication of magic in medical treatment, so introducing rational thinking into medical practice.¹³⁹ The Hippocratic corpus, a collection of medical treatises that date from the second half of the fifth century to the end of the fourth century BCE, is an attempt by Greek physicians to free medicine from superstitions and magic and to explore the natural causes of a disease.

The Hippocratic physicians, also called *Asclepiads*, were not temple-physicians but members of a medical clan.¹⁴⁰ The difference between the temple-physicians of Asclepius and folk-healers, on the one hand, and the representatives of the medical schools, on the other hand, was that the former used to keep their medicine secret.¹⁴¹ The fact that the lay physicians in ancient Egypt were instructed into the art of writing in the so-called ‘houses of life’ and were often called ‘scribes’¹⁴² suggests that their medical art was not kept secret but was recorded. In fact, the ‘houses of life’ functioned as the meeting points of scholars of that time, as libraries and as places where practical teaching of the medical art was offered.¹⁴³ This is to say that the physicians’ medicine was far from being secret in both ancient Egypt and Greece.¹⁴⁴

Furthermore, the fact that the Greek physicians belonged to a medical clan suggests that they were medically trained in order to secure a place within the group and be accepted by the medical community. The medical training was usually obtained by

¹³⁹ James Longrigg, *Greek Medicine from the Heroic to the Hellenistic Age: A Source Book* (London: Duckworth, 1998), 28.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 48. The Asclepiad-doctors may have been members of the same family (e.g. sons, grandsons, etc.), but also non-family members. Geller points out that ‘only non-family members were required to swear the Oath, since family members were considered bound by heritage’: M. J. Geller, ‘West Meets East: Early Greek and Babylonian Diagnosis’, in H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, and M. Stol (eds.), in collaboration with C. R. van Tilburg, *Magic and Rationality in Ancient Near Eastern and Graeco-Roman Medicine*, SAM 27 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), 14.

¹⁴¹ Grube, ‘Greek Medicine’, 127.

¹⁴² Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 108.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁴⁴ This is somehow different in Mesopotamia mainly because the healing duties of the *asû* and the *āšipu* often overlapped, as noted above. It is true that the temple of Gula functioned as a library for healing practitioners (physician and magical expert) where medical texts were copied; Avalos, 218. Nevertheless, these medical texts were only available to the healers, not to the public; Avalos, *Illness*, 220.

observation of another physician while working.¹⁴⁵ Hence, there was a teacher-pupil relationship, the existence of which is also evident in the Hippocratic *Oath*.¹⁴⁶ Also, the fact that some Asclepiads were members of the same family indicates that they were taught the medical art by family members.¹⁴⁷ The physician's medical education is a further point of differentiation from the folk-healers. The fact that the folk-healers did not belong to a medical sect, as the *Asclepiads*, but worked individually, further suggests their lack of medical training. Indeed, the physicians were accusing the soothsayers and seers of being totally ignorant of the medical art.¹⁴⁸

The interest in scientific medicine did not stop with the Hippocratics but continued in the medicine of the Hellenistic times. In particular, the rational spirit of Hippocratic medicine found its natural successor in the scientists of third-century BCE Alexandria. There, prominent Alexandrian physicians such as Herophilus of Chalcedon (ca. 335–280 BCE) and Erasistratus of Cos (304–250 BCE), having the financial support of the Ptolemies,¹⁴⁹ were the first to perform dissection on the human body.¹⁵⁰ The medical advances of the Alexandrian scientists were not limited to anatomy but extended to pharmacology, pathology, gynaecology, midwifery, surgery, medical technology, etc.¹⁵¹

Nevertheless, although rational medicine made significant advances and had many followers from the elite of Classical and Hellenistic scientists, magical healing was never out of practice in antiquity. On the contrary, even when the Hippocratics rejected the use of magic in medical treatment and attributed natural causes to illness, or later the Alexandrian physicians recorded significant progress in many

¹⁴⁵ Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, and Nathan Sivin, *The Way and the Word: Science and Medicine in Early China and Greece* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2002), 113.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁴⁷ It is also likely that in ancient Egypt the lay physicians were instructed the art of medicine by their parents or by another member of their family; Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 107.

¹⁴⁸ Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 185.

¹⁴⁹ Royal patronage in favour of lay physicians is not new in Egypt. In the 'houses of life', as mentioned earlier, lay physicians 'enjoyed ... the high protection of the Pharaohs and of the State, to whom they rendered immense services in examining sacred animals, fixing the dates of feasts and seasons, composing official inscriptions, etc.': Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 108–109. The Pharaonic support of physicians echoes the later Ptolemaic support of scientists in the third-century-BCE Alexandria.

¹⁵⁰ Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, *Greek Science after Aristotle* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973), 75.

¹⁵¹ I will refer in more detail to the medical advances of the Alexandrian scientists in subsequent chapters.

medical fields, magical healing practices never fell out of use,¹⁵² as ancient peoples never stopped to be fascinated by magic.

3.5. Pluralism of medical groups in antiquity

The religious healers, lay physicians, magicians and diviners encountered thus far were not the only therapists in antiquity. In fact, there were other groups of medical practitioners that functioned either as aid-personnel of the aforementioned healers or acted independently. In ancient Egypt, there was a class of medical specialists (e.g. nurses, bandagists, etc.) named *wt*, who aided the work of religious healers, magicians and lay physicians.¹⁵³ The Hippocratic writings reflect the pluralism of medical groups in Greek medicine: religious healers at the temples of Asclepius (temple physicians), peripatetic folk-healers, seers and soothsayers, root-cutters and drug-sellers, vendors of charms and spells, purifiers, midwives and the rationally-oriented physicians.¹⁵⁴ The plurality of medical practitioners in antiquity is indicative of the heterogeneity of therapeutic methods (i.e. religious, magical, rational) in antiquity.

3.6. Magical healing and rational medicine

In light of the above observations, the student of ancient medicine needs to step back from the medical outlook which is inherited from the modern—especially western—world and take into consideration the way people in antiquity viewed illness and the character medicine possessed in antiquity. It might be helpful to define the terms ‘magical healing’ and ‘rational medicine’ here, as applied in this study. Magical healing belongs to the domain of folk-medicine. As the name suggests, it makes use of magic¹⁵⁵ (i.e. magical formulae, including spells, incantations, curses, etc.) in tending an illness, as the latter is considered the outcome of supernatural activity. Magical healing was practised by religious

¹⁵² Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 155.

¹⁵³ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 113.

¹⁵⁴ Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology: Studies in The Life Sciences in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 69–70; cf. Lloyd and Nathan, *The Way*, 92.

¹⁵⁵ It is a difficult task to define ‘magic’. Römer points out that ‘to define “magic” is as difficult as giving a precise definition of “religion”’: Thomas C. Römer, ‘Competing Magicians in Exodus 7–9: Interpreting Magic in the Priestly Theology’, in Tod E. Klutz (ed.), *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon*, JSNTSup 245 (London, New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 12. Broadly defined, magic is the human effort to subjugate supernatural forces. I work particularly here with Bohak’s definition of ‘magic’, according to which magic is ‘a set of beliefs and practices which aims to change reality by means which defy scientific explanation’: Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 63.

healers, magicians, soothsayers and seers, charlatans and quacks, root-cutters and drug-sellers.¹⁵⁶ Rational or scientific medicine is a form of medicine devoid of magic and superstition, practised by learned physicians, members of a medical clan, who considered an illness to have a natural cause. One should thus, when engaged in the study of ancient medicine, bear in mind this dual nature of medicine (magical and rational), as well as the different groups of healers in existence in antiquity.

¹⁵⁶ In the case of Mesopotamia, magical healing was not only in the hands of the magician but also of the physician, as noted above. In Mesopotamian medicine, magic and medicine was inextricably connected and the distinction between the two was/is often impossible to make.

4. MEDICINE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

Not a lot of information about medical thought and practice is preserved in the HB. This can be explained by the fact that ancient Israel believed that the source of health and sickness is God and, therefore, ‘one’s physical condition was correlative to one’s spiritual condition with God.’¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, there are a few, scattered medical references from which one can learn about the beliefs on illness and death, and the therapeutics practised in ancient Israel.

Ancient Israel viewed illness and death ‘as punitive measures inflicted upon the ungodly by an angry, vengeful deity.’¹⁵⁸ This view is evident in Exodus 15:26 (cf. Ex 4:6–7) and Deuteronomy 32:39, where God is depicted both as a sender of illness and death, and as a healer.

The right to receive therapeutic treatment in injury is found in the Mosaic Law (Ex 21:18–19).¹⁵⁹ Evidence for the existence of physicians in ancient Israel is found in Genesis 50:2, 2 Chronicles 16:12–13, Isaiah 3:7 and Jeremiah 8:22. The reference to the physicians’ work is not always a positive one. The Chronicler infers that King Asa died because he did not pray to God but consulted physicians (2 Chr 16:12–13).¹⁶⁰ Gordon argues that the Chronicles, written by the priesthood, indicates that the priests were in competition with the physicians.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, this priestly attitude towards the physicians appears to have been unjustified, as Moses said that the priests are to supervise only contagious diseases (Lev 13–15).¹⁶² Although the priests had a medically related role, they were not physicians,¹⁶³ but inspectors of skin diseases (e.g. leprosy) and responsible for hygiene matters.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ Harrison, ‘Disease’, 90.

¹⁵⁸ Gordon, ‘Medicine’, 456–457.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 458.

¹⁶⁰ A pejorative view towards the physician is also evident in Job 13:4 and Hosea 5:13. The LXX also appears to have a negative view towards the physicians. In Isaiah 26:14, it is said that ‘physicians will not rise’ (οὐδὲ λατροὶ οὐ μὴ ἀναστήσωσιν), translating רָפָאִים (‘shades’) with (‘physicians’). Again, in Isaiah 26:19, the LXX translates רָפָאִים (‘shades’) with ἀσεβείς (‘disrespectful’); cf. Julius Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, trans. and ed. Fred Rosner (Northvale NJ: Jason Aronson, 1993), 24.

¹⁶¹ Gordon, ‘Medicine’, 458–459.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 459.

¹⁶³ Preuss points out that neither is there any evidence that the priests practised medicine nor that they functioned as medical counsellors; Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, 18.

¹⁶⁴ On this see more in Fred Rosner, *Medicine*, 5.

Furthermore, the prophets appear to have had medical knowledge. The prophet Elisha is said to have improved the drinking water at Jericho by throwing salt into its spring (2 Kings 2:19–22). In 2 Kings 4:18–37, the same prophet is said to have restored to life a dead child (cf. 2 Kings 4:31). In 2 Kings 20:7, Isaiah is said to have cured King Hezekiah. The prophet Ezekiel also appears to be aware of treating fractured bones (Ez 30:21). Despite this knowledge, the prophets were never accorded the designation of רפאים (lit. ‘healers’).¹⁶⁵

There are also biblical passages that provide evidence for midwifery. In Genesis 35:17, the midwife is presented to know already before labour the sex of Rachel’s child. Again, in Genesis 38:27–30, the biblical author describes the midwife’s work while Tamar delivered her boy twins. Another reference to Hebrew midwives occurs in Exodus 1:15–21 where the author describes them as God-fearing women who did not obey Pharaoh’s command to kill the male children of the Hebrew women.

As well as midwives, HB also offers evidence for the apothecary’s work. The apothecary is responsible for the preparation of the anointing-oil, a blend of the finest spices and oil, to be used in religious practices (Ex 30:22–36; 37:29; 40:9–15). In 2 Chronicles 16:14, the apothecary is said to have prepared various kinds of spices to be put in the bier of King Asa. The apothecary’s work also involved the making of ointments (Eccl 10:1).

Moreover, ancient Israel appears to have had a good knowledge of anatomy. This is evident, according to Gordon, first from the biblical passages that refer to sacrifices (Ex 29:17), and second from the passages, mostly found in the poetical books, which make a metaphorical use of the names of the organs (Job 16:13; 21:24; Ps 69:4).¹⁶⁶

What is more, ancient Israel was well aware of the therapeutic properties of herbal substances. In 2 Kings 20:7, Isaiah applied a fig poultice to the boil of King

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶⁶ Gordon, ‘Medicine’, 471.

Hezekiah to cure him. In Jeremiah 8:22; 46:11; 51:8, the healing properties of balm are inferred.¹⁶⁷ Jacob suggests that, with regard to the pharmaceutical application of herbal substances, ancient Israel was influenced by the medical practices of the Near East.¹⁶⁸ Herbal medicaments were only one aspect of therapeutic treatment; others involved washings (2 Kings 5:7), oil-embrocations (Isa 1:6) and bandages (Jer 30:22, 24).¹⁶⁹ Finally, the therapeutic treatments attested in the HB are all of a rational character, as they do not contain any magical formulae.¹⁷⁰

To sum up, the HB presents God as the ultimate source of healing.¹⁷¹ It was due to this belief that the HB presents a dearth of information with regard to medical practice. The priests were responsible for hygiene, as the latter was connected with the state of cleanness required in religious practice. The prophets also appear to have had some knowledge of medicine. The biblical account offers evidence, though little, for the existence of physicians among ancient Israel, as well as for the practice of midwifery and pharmacy, and the knowledge of anatomy. Moreover, herbal medicines had their place among the therapeutic treatments attested in the HB. Overall, the medicine as presented in the HB is free of magic and superstition.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷ In particular, the first two passages refer to the Balm of Gilead (cf. Gen 37:25); cf. Fred Rosner, 'Pharmacology and Dietetics in the Bible and Talmud', in Irene and Walter Jacob (eds.), *The Healing Past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*, SAM 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 4–5.

¹⁶⁸ Walter Jacob, 'Medicinal Plants of the Bible: Another View', in Irene and Walter Jacob (eds.), *The Healing Past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*, SAM 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 30.

¹⁶⁹ Solomon R. Kagan, *Jewish Medicine* (Boston MA: Medico-Historical Press, 1952), 31; Wiseman, 'Medicine', 38; Rosner, *Medicine*, 9.

¹⁷⁰ An exception of this occurs in Numbers 21:8–9 where Moses is said to have constructed, after God's command, a serpent of bronze for the cure of poisonous snakebites; Rosner, *Medicine*, 8.

¹⁷¹ It is essential to bear in mind that the HB reflects primarily the religious views and practices of the Israelite elite. On this, Römer notes the following: '... the Hebrew Bible does not immediately reflect religious and ritual practices of the average Israelite of the first millennium BCE. The Hebrew Bible is to a large extent a literary product composed by intellectual elites from the Persian period in order to reorganize or even create Judaism out of the crisis of exile': Römer, 'Competing Magicians', 13.

¹⁷² Kagan, *Jewish Medicine*, 29; 30. This is probably related to the fact that the intellectual Israelite elite who authored the HB wished to wipe out any magical association from medical practice in an effort to distinguish ancient Israel from pagan nations.

I go on now to examine the medical and healing material found in the books of 1 Enoch (particularly in the Book of Watchers and Epistle), Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees. These works were written in times when the medical picture began to change, as pharmacological and scientific progress was recorded in the ancient Near Eastern world which, in turn, resulted in the first clear distinction between magical healing and rational medicine.

CHAPTER 2

REJECTION OF MAGICAL HEALING PRACTICES IN THE BOOK OF WATCHERS AND HEALING LANGUAGE IN THE EPISTLE OF 1 ENOCH

1. INTRODUCTION

The present chapter examines the references to medicine and healing found in 1 Enoch, focusing on the Book of Watchers and the Epistle. In the Book of Watchers, the author rejects the cutting of roots (1 En 7:1; 8:3a) and the knowledge of herbs (1 En 7:1) as the forbidden teaching of the fallen angels. The angelic teaching of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs refer, as I will show, to the instruction of herbal medicine and botany. The association of both—especially of the craft of root-cutting—with spell-casting indicates that the author has in mind magical healing practices. Furthermore, witchcraft and root-cutting are associated with astrological divination (1 En 8:3). The connection of magic, herbal medicine and astrology suggests that an inner bond linked the three domains. Moreover, a language of healing is encountered in the Epistle (1 En 95:4; 96:3). In particular, in a series of woes against the sinners, the author confirms that there will be no healing for those who pronounce curses (1 En 95:4) but the righteous will receive healing and a shining light will shine upon them (1 En 96:3).¹⁷³

The aims of this chapter are fourfold. I will first examine the manuscript evidence for 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3, giving particular emphasis to the testimony about root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs. Second, I will demonstrate how root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs are linked to herbal medicine and botany and then explain their association with magical practices (i.e. spell-casting), as well as the inner reasons for their rejection as the reprehensible teaching of the Watchers. Third, I will explore whether the particular rejection of sign lore in 1 Enoch 8:3 is connected to the medical realm and whether the transmission and circulation of astrological wisdom during the third century BCE can give some insight into medical practices of the time. Finally, I will investigate the relationship of the

¹⁷³ A language of healing is also employed in the Parables, particularly in 1 Enoch 67:8 and 67:13. The book, however, dates from the first century BCE to the first century CE and it thus stands outside of the chronological framework set by this dissertation.

healing language attested in 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3 with the antediluvian teaching of the fallen angels and examine whether such a connection can throw some light on the contemporary medical situation.

1.1. The Book of 1 Enoch

Much has been written in the past and present about 1 Enoch. It is not my intention here to make a full presentation of the Enochic literature. Nevertheless, a brief introduction to the Enochic corpus would be helpful for the examination of the verses in question.

1.1.1. Date and authorship of the Enochic corpus

*1 Enoch*¹⁷⁴ or *Ethiopic Enoch*¹⁷⁵ is an anthology of early Jewish writings that was circulated under the name of the antediluvian patriarch Enoch.¹⁷⁶ The Enochic corpus comprises seven¹⁷⁷ parts, namely:

- 1) the *Book of Watchers*¹⁷⁸ (chs. 1–36);
- 2) the *Parables* or *Similitudes* (chs. 37–71);
- 3) the *Astronomical Book* or the *Book of the Luminaries* (chs. 72–82);
- 4) the *Book of Dreams* or *Dream Visions* (chs. 83–90)—which contains the *Animal Apocalypse* (chs. 85–90);
- 5) the *Epistle of Enoch* or *Admonitions* (chs. 91–105)—which includes the *Exhortation* (ch. 91:1–10, 18–19) and the *Apocalypse of Weeks* (chs. 93:1–10; 91:11–17);
- 6) the *Birth of Noah* (chs. 106–107) and 7) the *Eschatological Admonition* (ch. 108).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ This title is used in terms of distinction from 2 *Enoch* or Slavonic Enoch.

¹⁷⁵ This title is used because the book survives in full only in Ethiopic.

¹⁷⁶ Enoch is known from Genesis 5:18–24.

¹⁷⁷ Most scholars refer to 1 Enoch as a five-fold collection with two short appendices; see Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), xlvi–lii; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 7; Daniel C. Olson, in consultation with Archbishop Melkesedek Workeneh, *Enoch: A New Translation. The Ethiopic Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch, Translated with Annotations and Cross-References* (Texas: Bibal, 2004), 8. Milik specifically spoke of a ‘Pentateuch of Enoch’; see Józef T. Milik (ed.), with the collaboration of Matthew Black, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 4, 54–58. Milik’s argument, however, has been disputed among scholarly circles; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 15. More recently, Stuckenbruck treated chapters 91–108 as ‘five independent literary units’, as these—to use his own words—‘do not always share the same theological emphasis, they are not all anchored in the same tradition-historical setting, and thus, for the most part, they do not share the same authorship’; *ibid.*, 1; cf. 49; 156; 606.

¹⁷⁸ The *Book of Watchers* will henceforth be cited as BW.

The latter two are considered appendices that were later attached to the very end of the Epistle.

The dating of the Enochic corpus is a difficult task as the latter was not composed all at once but some parts were written at different times and were circulated independently.¹⁸⁰ Nevertheless, scholarship has given the following dates for the Enochic compositions: the BW dates to the third century BCE,¹⁸¹ the Parables date from the first century BCE to the first century CE,¹⁸² the Astronomical Book dates to the third century BCE,¹⁸³ the Dream Visions date sometime between 165–160 BCE¹⁸⁴ and the Epistle dates to the second century BCE.¹⁸⁵ Olson regards the above-given dates as ‘reasonably secure’¹⁸⁶ and he discerns three phases in the Enochic tradition: first, the BW and the Astronomical Book—which contain the earliest Enochic traditions¹⁸⁷—‘certainly pre-date the Maccabean crisis’,¹⁸⁸ second, the Dream Visions and the Epistle ‘are second century BCE productions and reflect the situation just before the Maccabean uprising’¹⁸⁹ and, third, the Parables manifest ‘the Enochic tradition a century or two later, but probably still before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.’¹⁹⁰ Finally, chapters 106–107 and 108 are considered independent sections.¹⁹¹

¹⁷⁹ For this sevenfold division of the Enochic corpus see also Loren T. Stuckenbruck, ‘The Early Traditions Related to 1 Enoch From the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Overview and Assessment’, in Gabriele Boccaccini and John J. Collins (eds.), *The Early Enochic Literature*, JSJSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 41.

¹⁸⁰ They were, however, combined all together in order to fit well with the narrative context; see Annette Y. Reed, ‘The Textual Identity, Literary History, and Social Setting of 1 Enoch. Reflections on George Nickelsburg’s Commentary on 1 Enoch 1–36; 81–108’, *ARG* 5, no. 1 (2003), 280; 286–287.

¹⁸¹ Nickelsburg points out that ‘the earliest traditions in the book may predate the Hellenistic period, and the book as a whole was completed by the middle of the third century B.C.E.’; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 7. Olson notes that the BW may be dated even earlier than the third century BCE; see Olson, *Enoch*, 8.

¹⁸² Olson, *Enoch*, 8. Nickelsburg dates the book towards the end of the first century BCE; see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 7.

¹⁸³ Olson leaves open the possibility that the book dates even earlier than the third century BCE; see Olson, *Enoch*, 8.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸⁵ Olson, *Enoch*, 8. Stuckenbruck opts for a pre-Maccabean date for the Epistle on the basis of the Jubilees’ reference to the ‘testimony’ (Eth. *samā’t*) of Enoch (Jub 4:18–19) which occurs only in 1 Enoch 96:5, 97:4 and 99:3 as a substantive and in 1 Enoch 91:3, 104:11, 105:1 and 100:11 in verbal form; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 215.

¹⁸⁶ Olson, *Enoch*, 8.

¹⁸⁷ See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 7–8 and Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 8; 1.

¹⁸⁸ Olson, *Enoch*, 8–9.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁹¹ Olson notes that it is hard to date them, ‘but the Dead Sea Scrolls show that the first of them was attached to the “Admonitions” by the end of the first century BCE at the latest’: *ibid.*, 8. For the inclusion of chapters 106–107 into the Enochic corpus Stuckenbruck argues that the *terminus ante quem* is the last

The different dates of the Enochic compositions suggest the diversity of authorship. Charles argues that the Hasidim—or their successors, the Pharisees—were the authors of the Enochic compositions.¹⁹² Oesterley holds that the pre-Maccabean parts of the Enochic corpus are to be ascribed to the Hasidim, but as for the later portions it is more probable to say that they were written by authors who were neither Pharisees nor Sadducees.¹⁹³ VanderKam believes that ‘there is no need to identify the righteous with the Pharisees or the sinners with Sadducees’ about the author of the Epistle.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, Nickelsburg argues that although the content of the Epistle provides enough information to draw a profile for the author, it does not permit declaring to which religious group he belonged.¹⁹⁵ What is more, Collins holds that ‘neither the Book of the Watchers nor the Astronomical Book, which appear to be the oldest Enochic writings, attests a particular group identity in its terminology.’¹⁹⁶ The same scholar argues further that the Enochic literature was produced ‘by scribes who were distressed by the encroachments of Hellenism and the consequent erosion of traditional customs and aggravation of class divisions.’¹⁹⁷ Similarly, Olson points out that apart from the fact that the Enochic corpus reflects a scribal and priestly milieu, ‘no details emerge which would allow us to identify Enochians with any known group of the 1st c. BCE–1st c. CE era.’¹⁹⁸

third of the first century BCE—when 4QEn^c is to be dated—and the *terminus a quo*, due to the dependence of the *Birth of Noah* with 1 Enoch 91:5–9, is ca. the middle of the second century BCE; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 616. As for chapter 108, Stuckenbruck considers it probable that it was attached to the very end of the latter collection at the late first century CE; *ibid.*, 1; 693–694.

¹⁹² Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), xi.

¹⁹³ Robert H. Charles (trans.), *The Book of Enoch*, with an introduction by W. O. E. Oesterley (London: SPCK, 1917), xvii.

¹⁹⁴ James C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition*, CBQMS 16 (Washington DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984), 171.

¹⁹⁵ Nickelsburg further argues that the use of the term ‘pious’ throughout the Epistle does not necessarily mean that the author belonged to the Hasidim; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 428.

¹⁹⁶ John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, BRS (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2nd ed. 1998), 72. Collins further argues that ‘the internal evidence for an apocalyptic movement in *1 Enoch* ... is less than complete. If we may assume that all these works come from an ongoing tradition (which is plausible though not certain), then we have a movement that had its roots in the third century. In the earliest writings, the group identity is not prominent. The authors were presumably scribes, like Enoch, who had a mission to their fellow Jews and to humanity at large. While its calendar may have differed from that of the Jerusalem Temple, it was not involved in explicit polemics against mainline Judaism. The Apocalypse of Weeks and the Animal Apocalypse show a heightened group identity, apparently reflecting the recent emergence of a stronger group formation. They are also more militant and more directly critical of the Temple and of Jewish leadership’: *ibid.*, 73–74 (italics in the original).

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁹⁸ Olson, *Enoch*, 9. See his discussion *ibid.*, 9–10.

With respect to the place of composition, Charles argues that it was written in Palestine. In particular, he maintains that ‘the various authors are at home in Palestine and accurately acquainted with the various localities close to Jerusalem ... Greek elements have no doubt found an entrance in certain fragments of the book, but as a rule there is a deliberate and sustained opposition rendered to all Hellenistic ideas and influences. The whole tone and exegesis of the book are Palestinian in character.’¹⁹⁹

1.1.2 Textual evidence

1 Enoch survives in full only in classical Ethiopic (Ge‘ez), while portions of it are also found in Greek, Aramaic, Latin, Coptic and Syriac but in a quite fragmentary form.

1.1.2.1. The Ethiopic version

The Enochic corpus was translated into Ethiopic sometime between the fourth and sixth centuries CE.²⁰⁰ The Ethiopian Orthodox Church considers 1 Enoch—as well as the Book of Jubilees—Holy Scripture and includes it in its Old Testament Canon until today.

In terms of the version(s) that underlie the Ethiopic translation of 1 Enoch, there are two tendencies in contemporary scholarship. On the one hand, there are those who consider it probable that the Ethiopic translation relied not only on a Greek text but also on an Aramaic text. Knibb defends this view, arguing that it is probable that the Ethiopic translators had access to both a Greek and an Aramaic *Vorlage* of Enoch.²⁰¹ On the other hand, there are scholars—in fact the majority—who

¹⁹⁹ Robert H. Charles (ed.), *The Book of Enoch: Translated from Professor Dillmann’s Ethiopic Text; Emended and Revised in Accordance with hitherto Uncollated Ethiopic MSS. and with the Gizeh and Other Greek and Latin Fragments which are here Published in Full* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), 22.

²⁰⁰ Michael A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A New Translation in the Light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 2:22; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 15.

²⁰¹ He points out, however, that there is no certainty concerning the extent that the Ethiopian translators made use of an Aramaic text of Enoch; see Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:46.

maintain that the Ethiopic translation of 1 Enoch was based on a Greek *Vorlage* which, in turn, is a translation of the Aramaic original.²⁰²

Today at least fifty²⁰³ Ethiopic manuscripts of 1 Enoch exist which are classified into two groups, namely Ethiopic I and II (according to Flemming²⁰⁴) or α and β (according to Charles²⁰⁵). The first group contains the earliest Ethiopic manuscripts which preserve ‘an older form of the text’²⁰⁶, while the second preserves a text which was subject to the corrections of the Ethiopian copyists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first group includes ten²⁰⁷—or perhaps eleven²⁰⁸—manuscripts which date from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries CE.²⁰⁹ In broad terms, the text of this first category of Ethiopic manuscripts ‘corresponds to the Greek text known from the Akhmim manuscript, the Vatican fragment, and the Chester Beatty-Michigan papyrus.’²¹⁰ The second category, which reflects the effort of the Ethiopian scribes to correct the Ethiopic text in order to produce a version that could be officially used in the church,²¹¹ numbers at least forty manuscripts that date from the sixteenth to the twentieth century CE.²¹² The readings of the Ethiopic II are considered to alter the original text frequently²¹³ yet

²⁰² Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1893), 21–22; George H. Schodde, ‘The New Greek Enoch Fragments’, *BW* 1, no. 4 (1893), 359; Campbell Bonner (ed.), *The Last Chapters of Enoch in Greek*, SD 7 (London: Christophers, 1937), 3; Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 4. Furthermore, in his commentary, Nickelsburg employs the following chain of transmission: ‘Aramaic → Greek → Ethiopic’, due to, as he points out, ‘the close correspondence in word order between the Greek and Ethiopic and also because of readings in the Ethiopic that must have derived from a corrupt Greek text’; see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 15–16. Milik also opts for a Greek version that underlies the Ethiopic translation; Milik, *The Books*, 88.

²⁰³ Michael A. Knibb, ‘The Book of Enoch or Books of Enoch? The Textual Evidence for 1 Enoch’, in Gabriele Boccaccini and John J. Collins (eds.), *The Early Enochic Literature*, JSJSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 37. Olson numbers the Ethiopic manuscripts of 1 Enoch to more than sixty; Olson, *Enoch*, 22.

²⁰⁴ Johannes Flemming, *Das Buch Henoch: Äthiopischer Text*, TUGALNF 7.1/22.1 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1902), ix.

²⁰⁵ Robert H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch. Edited from Twenty-three MSS together with Fragmentary Greek and Latin Versions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906); cf. *idem*, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), xxiv.

²⁰⁶ Olson, *Enoch*, 22.

²⁰⁷ Olson mentions Tana 9, EMM 1768, 2080, 6281, 7584, G, M, Q, T, U; *ibid.*, 22.

²⁰⁸ To these Stuckenbruck adds BM 485a (= G^a [Flemming]; ,g [Charles]; LO₄(2) [Uhlig]; g’ [Nickelsburg]); Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 20.

²⁰⁹ See Stuckenbruck’s table which lists all Ethiopic I MSS together with their date, location and content, as well as the sigla given by Flemming, Charles, Uhlig and Nickelsburg; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 20–21.

²¹⁰ Knibb, ‘The Book of Enoch’, 37.

²¹¹ Olson, *Enoch*, 22; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 25.

²¹² See the table of the Ethiopic II MSS in Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 23–25.

²¹³ Most notably, Charles argued that the work of the Ethiopian scribes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was ‘on the whole disastrous’, as they ‘had neither the knowledge of the subject matter nor yet critical materials to guide them as to the form of the text. Hence in nearly every instance where they have

they sometimes preserve readings that are superior to those of the first category.²¹⁴ Arguing that the Ethiopic I manuscripts are full of mistakes and omissions and can hardly be used as a base-text, Knibb opted for the Ethiopic II readings—using as his base-text Rylands Ethiopic MS. 23 (eighteenth century)—in an attempt to demonstrate the text-critical value of Ethiopic II.²¹⁵ Scholars, however, tend to prefer the readings of Ethiopic I,²¹⁶ as they are the earliest witnesses extant of Ethiopic Enoch.

1.1.2.2. Greek witnesses

1 Enoch survives in Greek only in a fragmentary form. The Greek text of 1 Enoch is preserved in five—possibly six²¹⁷—witnesses. First, *Codex Panopolitanus* (fifth–sixth century CE²¹⁸), named after the place in which it was found (i.e. Akhmim-Panopolis in Egypt), preserves 1 Enoch 1:1–32:6a.²¹⁹ Milik argues that the Aramaic fragments of 4QEnoch demonstrated the value of the Akhmim Enochic fragments.²²⁰ Second, in his *Chronography*, George Syncellus (early ninth century CE), drawing from the chronographies of the Alexandrian monks Panodorus and Annianus,²²¹ quotes small portions from the BW (1 En 6:1–11:4; 8:4–10:14; 15:8–16:1²²²). Syncellus’ testimony is quite different from the Akhmim Enochic fragments and it is suggested that the Byzantine chronographer used a different *Vorlage* from the scribes of *Codex Panopolitanus*.²²³ Furthermore, it is argued that the Syncellus Enochic material has ‘undergone corruption in the process of

departed from the original unrevised text they have done so to the detriment of the book’: Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), xxiv.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xxv.

²¹⁵ Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2:36. Nevertheless, Knibb acknowledged that Ethiopic II does not by any means preserve a uniform text; see *ibid.*, 2:28.

²¹⁶ Milik, *The Books*, 83; Olson, *Enoch*, 22; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 27.

²¹⁷ Stuckenbruck mentions the Qumran fragments of Cave seven as the sixth possible—‘though not inconclusive’—place of 1 Enoch in Greek; see Stuckenbruck, ‘The Early Traditions’, 43.

²¹⁸ Cavallo and Maehle date the manuscript to the end of the sixth century CE; G. Cavallo and H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period: A.D. 300–800*, Bulletin Supplement 47 (London: University of London, Institute of Classical Studies, 1987), 90.

²¹⁹ Milik notes that the Greek BW of *Codex Panopolitanus* was actually copied by two different scribes; see Milik, *The Books*, 71.

²²⁰ More precisely, Milik writes the following: ‘in spite of their omissions, glosses, etc., they are unquestionably superior to the corresponding part of the Ethiopic Enoch’; *ibid.*, 71–72.

²²¹ Panodorus and Annianus draw in turn from the *Chronographies* of Julius Sextus Africanus; see Martin Wallraff, Umberto Roberto, and Karl Pinggéra (eds.), *Iulius Africanus Chronographiae. The Extant Fragments*, trans. William Adler, GCS 15 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), xlii; xliv.

²²² Stuckenbruck, ‘The Early Traditions’, 42.

²²³ Black particularly notes that Syncellus’ version might have been ‘closer to its Semitic original’; Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 4.

transmission.²²⁴ In addition, Syncellus used the material from the BW not to produce a word-for-word translation but in a way to fit the needs of his work and, thus, it should be used with caution.²²⁵ Third, small portions of 1 Enoch are preserved in two fragments of *Oxyrhynchus Papyrus* 2069 (fourth century CE). The first fragment preserves a text related to 1 Enoch 77:7–78:1 and 78:8, while the second preserves 1 Enoch 85:10–86:2 and 87:1–3. Fourth, *Codex Vaticanus* Gr. 1809 (eleventh century CE) preserves 1 Enoch 89:42–49 from the Animal Apocalypse of the Book of Dreams. Fifth, the fourth-century CE *Chester Beatty-Michigan Papyrus* preserves 1 Enoch 97:6–107:3. Finally, Greek portions of the Epistle are possibly preserved in Greek fragments from Qumran Cave seven, namely, 7Q4 1–103:3–4, 7Q2–98:11 or 105:1, which are to be dated about the turn of the Common Era.²²⁶

1.1.2.3. The Qumran fragments

The discovery of the Aramaic Enoch fragments has thrown new light on the research of the Enochic literature. In 1976, Milik was the first to publish the eleven Aramaic Enoch manuscripts of Cave 4. Of these, seven manuscripts contain portions of the BW, the Book of Dreams and the Epistle to which Milik has given the sigla 4QEn^{a–g}, while the remaining four preserve portions of the Astronomical Book for which Milik has appointed the sigla 4QEnastr^{a–d}.²²⁷ The dates of 4QEn range from the first half of the second century BCE to the last third of the first century BCE.²²⁸ The dates of 4QEnastr date from the late third or early second century BCE to the turn of the Common Era.²²⁹ On the whole, Milik calculates that the Aramaic fragments cover fifty per cent of the BW, thirty per cent of the

²²⁴ Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1893), 5. Milik agrees with Charles and he further points out that Syncellus' witness of specifically 1 Enoch 7–8 is 'less faithful to the original'; Milik, *The Books*, 73.

²²⁵ Nevertheless, as Olson points out, the Aramaic Dead Sea fragments of 1 Enoch 'have verified the superiority of Syncellus's readings in more than one place'; see Olson, *Enoch*, 22.

²²⁶ Stuckenbruck also adds 7Q8 (1 En 103:7–8), 7Q11 (1 En 100:12), 7Q12 (1 En 103:4) and 7Q13 (1 En 103:15) without omitting mentioning their contentious content; see more in Stuckenbruck, 'The Early Traditions', 43; see *idem*, *1 Enoch*, 7.

²²⁷ Milik, *The Books*, 4. Milik was also able to identify among the Aramaic Qumran fragments portions from the so-called *Book of Giants* but he edited in full only 4QEnGiants^a; *ibid.*, 4. The Aramaic fragments of the *Book of Giants* were later published by Stuckenbruck; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran*, TSAJ 63 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

²²⁸ See more on the dating of each of the seven 4QEn in Milik, *The Books*, 5.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

Astronomical Book, twenty-six per cent of the Book of Dreams and eighteen per cent of the Epistle.²³⁰

The Aramaic fragments of Enoch from Qumran are, without doubt, essential as they help ‘to reconstruct the literary shape of the early stages of the Enochic tradition’²³¹ and they undoubtedly form an important source for text-critical analysis.²³² It is the Aramaic evidence that demonstrates, as Knibb points out, that the Greek and Ethiopic evidence for 1 Enoch are ‘a not too unreliable guide to the Book of Enoch as it was known at Qumrân.’²³³

Beyond this, the discovery of the Aramaic Dead Sea fragments indicates with certainty that the original language of 1 Enoch was Aramaic. Before their discovery, it was very difficult to have a firm belief with respect to the original language of 1 Enoch. Most scholars believed that 1 Enoch was of Semitic origin. For instance, Charles argued that chapters 6–36 and 83–90 were originally written in Aramaic, while the rest of the book was written in Hebrew.²³⁴ The fact that the language of the Qumran fragments of 1 Enoch is Aramaic leaves no room for further speculation about the original language of composition. In brief, the Aramaic fragments are the earliest evidence for 1 Enoch and are the closest manuscript evidence extant today for the original text.

On the whole, the Aramaic text, the Greek translations, as well as the Ethiopic manuscripts of Enoch ‘represent different stages in the development of a text that underwent an extended process of evolution.’²³⁵ The different readings of the Greek and Ethiopic evidence are proof of further elaboration of the Enochic text that are not to be merely attributed to corruptions and omissions in textual transmission. This is not to say that Greek and Ethiopic witnesses preserve a completely different

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

²³¹ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 11.

²³² *Ibid.*, 11.

²³³ Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 2:13. Knibb argues that the Qumran fragments generally agree with both the Greek and the Ethiopic, yet there are ‘cases where the Aramaic text agrees with the Greek against the Ethiopic, and the cases where the Aramaic agrees with the Ethiopic against the Greek’; *ibid.*, 2:43.

²³⁴ Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), xi.

²³⁵ Knibb, ‘The Book of Enoch’, 40.

text from the Aramaic evidence but rather that they belong to a different historical context from the one in which the original Aramaic Enoch was composed.²³⁶

1.1.2.4. Latin, Coptic and Syriac evidence

There is no extant Latin version of 1 Enoch,²³⁷ but Latin quotations and allusions to the BW—especially from chapter six onwards—and the Epistle are found in the writings of the Christian author Tertullian (ca. 160–ca. 220 CE).²³⁸ Milik argues that the fact that Tertullian’s writings contain quotations and allusions from the BW and the Epistle demonstrates that the ecclesiastical writer worked with a manuscript that contained both of these Enochic compositions.²³⁹ Moreover, there is a Latin fragment (Royal MS. 5 E XIII) of 1 Enoch 106:1–18.²⁴⁰

In 1937, a Coptic manuscript (sixth–seventh century CE) was found in the cemetery of Antinoë which contained a very small portion from the Apocalypse of Weeks (93:3–8).²⁴¹ Having compared this with 4QEn^g I iii 23–5, Milik noted that the Coptic text of 1 Enoch 93:3–8 is a ‘faithful version’ of the Aramaic.²⁴²

Finally, Syriac portions from the BW survive in the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian (Patriarch of Antioch, twelfth century CE). In particular, the Syrian Patriarch quotes quite faithfully 1 Enoch 6:1–6a and preserves an abridged text of 1 Enoch 6:7a and 6:8. The Chronicle drew from the same sources as Syncellus, namely the Alexandrian monks Annianus and Panodorus.²⁴³

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

²³⁷ Milik, *The Books*, 81.

²³⁸ The Enochic passages to which Tertullian refers are found in *On Idolatry* IX and *On Female Dress* I. II; II. X which allude to 1 Enoch 8:1–3.

²³⁹ Milik, *The Books*, 80.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 80–81; cf. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:21. For the Latin fragment of 1 Enoch 106:1–18 see Montague R. James (ed.), ‘A Fragment of the Book of Enoch in Latin’, in his *Apocrypha Anecdota: A Collection of Thirteen Apocryphal Books and Fragments*, Texts and Studies 2, no. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), 146–150.

²⁴¹ Milik, *The Books*, 81.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 81.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 82.

2. THE MEDICAL CONTENT OF 1 ENOCH 7:1 AND 8:3

In 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3, the fallen angels are said to have taught humanity the craft of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs which are strongly linked, as I will show, to herbal medicine and botany.

2.1. The BW (1 Enoch 1–36)

The title of the BW was first given by Milik on the basis of Syncellus' reading ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου βιβλίου Ἐνώχ περὶ τῶν ἐγγρηγόρων.²⁴⁴ The BW comes from a scribal and priestly milieu. The scribal element is evident in Enoch's characterisation as a 'scribe of righteousness' (12:4; 15:1), whilst the priestly element can be seen in the repeated references about the 'defilement' of the fallen angels (7:1; 9:8; 10:11; 12:4; 15:3–4).²⁴⁵

The BW begins with a series of introductory oracles (chs. 1–5) about the Day of Judgment (1:4–9), the order of the creation (2:1–5:3), the destiny of the godless (5:4–6) and of the righteous (5:6–8) which are followed by the story of the Watchers' fall (chs. 6–11). According to the latter, the heavenly Watchers desired the daughters of men and thus decided—under oath (6:4–5)—to choose for themselves wives from them and beget offspring (6:2). They indeed took wives for themselves with whom they had sexual intercourse (7:1) and began teaching them various arts and skills (7:1; 8:1–3). Their wives bore gigantic offspring (7:2; 9:9)²⁴⁶ who started devouring men (7:3–4) and all creation (7:5).²⁴⁷ The angels of heaven, who saw the wickedness and corruption that prevailed on earth and heard the cries of men that went up to heaven (9:1–2; cf. 8:4), asked God to tell to them what they should do about this situation. God instructed Sariel to inform Noah about the Flood (10:1–3) and he further instructed Raphael, Gabriel and Michael to punish the Watchers (10:4–13). God assured Michael (cf. 10:11) that in the time of Judgment

²⁴⁴ Milik, *The Books*, 22.

²⁴⁵ Olson, *Enoch*, 9.

²⁴⁶ The gigantic offspring of the angelic-human marriages in the Watchers' myth are viewed as metaphors of the successors of Great Alexander, the rulers of the Hellenistic kingdoms, because they considered themselves to be breeds of divine-mortal unions; see VanderKam, *Enoch*, 128.

²⁴⁷ With the story of the Watchers' heavenly revolt and fornication with the daughters of men, the author aims to demonstrate the origin of evil in the world.

the Watchers and their offspring will perish (10:14–16) and the righteous will be rewarded (10:17–19).

Chapters 12–16 describe the vision of Enoch and the latter's mediation between God and the Watchers. The sage is instructed to pronounce to the Watchers their punishment (12:4–6). Enoch did as he was told (13:1–2) but the Watchers asked him to write a petition on their behalf to God so that they may receive forgiveness (13:4–5). So he did (13:6). But a voice in his sleep instructed him to reprimand the heavenly Watchers (13:8) and he did as he was instructed (13:10). In his vision, Enoch saw that the Watchers' petition would not be accepted (14:4). In what follows, Enoch describes his vision (14:8–16:3).

The final chapters of the BW describe Enoch's otherworldly journeys (17–36). What is actually described are two trips; in the first trip (17–19), Enoch sees different phenomena of the universe (17:1–18:16) and learns about the upcoming judgment of the Watchers' descendants (19:1), while in the second trip (20–36)—which repeats some of the places he visited in the first journey (e.g. the place of punishment of the seven stars and the abyss (21:1–10; cf. 18:11–16) and the seven mountains (24:1–2); cf. 18:6–10)—Enoch travels around the earth. Notable stops on his travels are the places of the souls of the dead (22:1–13), the places where beautiful, fragrant trees and spices grow (24:3–5; 26:1; 28:1–32:4), as well as the places where Enoch observes the stars of heaven and weather phenomena (33:3–36:3).

2.2. A note on the Shemihazah and Asael material

Before examining the medical implications of 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3, it would be helpful to make a note on the Shemihazah and Asael accounts within which the passages under examination are preserved.

It is generally agreed that 1 Enoch 6–11 is a blending of distinguishable traditions about the descent of the rebellious angels. More precisely, two narratives are discerned which build on two distinct angelic personae, namely Shemihazah and Asael, respectively. According to the first narrative, a group of angels, having Shemihazah as their leader (6:3, 7), lusted for the daughters of men (6:2),

descended to earth (6:6), chose for themselves wives and bore gigantic offspring (7:2) which in turn began to commit misdeeds upon the earth (7:3–5). The second story recounts the Watchers' forbidden instruction to mankind (8:1–3). There, Asael is the first to instruct forbidden arts to mankind (8:1)—a fact that makes him the archdemon²⁴⁸—and Shemihazah appears as the second instructor (8:3). Whereas the Shemihazah narrative refers to the heavenly conspiracy (6:3–5), the angelic-human union and the consequent procreation of gigantic offspring (7:1–2), the Asael myth conceals any information about the divine-human intercourse and the cannibalistic activity of the giants (cf. 7:3, 5) and begins with the instruction of forbidden knowledge to mankind (8:1). Such differences reveal the different departure points of the Shemihazah and Asael narratives in their attempt to explain the origin of evil in the world. The Shemihazah account draws on the 'rebellion-in-heaven' pattern²⁴⁹ to account for the source of evil on earth, while the Asael story traces the origin of evil in the disclosure of heavenly secrets to mankind.

The Shemihazah story is an exposition of Genesis 6:1–4²⁵⁰—supplemented by the heavenly rebellion theme, as mentioned above—and it is considered to be older than the Asael material.²⁵¹ It is suggested that the battles of the giants of the Shemihazah stratum are possibly influenced by Greek mythology and, in particular, it has parallels with the *Titanomachia* and the *Gigantomachia* and the *Catalogues of Women and Eoiae*.²⁵² Furthermore, Nickelsburg goes on to argue that the fallen

²⁴⁸ In the Shemihazah stratum, Asael holds the tenth place in the list of the angelic names (6:7).

²⁴⁹ The term belongs to Hanson who argued that this very pattern is found in Near Eastern mythology (Hurrian myths and Ugaritic literature) and also occurs in biblical writings; Paul D. Hanson, 'Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11', *JBL* 9 (1977), 197; 202–212; 217.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

²⁵¹ George W. E. Nickelsburg, 'Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11', *JBL* 96 (1977), 386. Nickelsburg argues that the Shemihazah narrative is older than the one of Asael on the basis that the position of the Asael material 'before the references to Shemihazah in chaps. 8, 9, and 10 indicates a developing tendency to identify Asael as the chief villain in the story': *idem*, *1 Enoch 1*, 191. Nickelsburg suggests late fourth century BCE as a possible date for the composition of the Shemihazah story as he holds that the giants' misdeeds and the battles among them probably reflect the wars of the *Diadochoi* (323–302 BCE), a period of continuous bloodshed; *idem*, 'Apocalyptic', 391. Hanson dates the Shemihazah material sometime to the third century BCE; Hanson, 'Rebellion', 197.

²⁵² In particular, Nickelsburg argues that the giants' battles have parallels with Hesiod's *Titanomachia* and *Gigantomachia*; Nickelsburg, 'Apocalyptic', 395. However, there are differences too (i.e. neither the Titans nor the Giants of the Greek sources are offspring of angelic and human intercourse but are breeds of gods and mortal women; in Hesiod, the mingling of gods with women is by no means a rebellion against the head of the Olympian gods, Zeus, and the gods are not punished as rebels for their act). Nickelsburg ascribes the foregoing differences to the author's worldview. More precisely, the author, living in a time when the mighty nations of the earth oppress his people and fight one another, employs Greek myths—

angels of the Shemihazah story might be a reflex of the *Diadochoi* on the basis of the latter's alleged divine parentage.²⁵³ According to Nickelsburg's hypothesis, if one accepts the claim of the *Diadochoi* that they were half-divine breeds, then they could well be associated with the sons of the Watchers, the giants.²⁵⁴ However, the paucity of sources, as Nickelsburg himself admits, makes such a hypothesis difficult to demonstrate.²⁵⁵

Turning now to the Asael story, the latter is considered to be 'an interpretative elaboration' that grew out of the Shemihazah story.²⁵⁶ It is argued that Asael can be compared to Azazel of Leviticus 16. More precisely, Hanson holds that since the Shemihazah story deals mainly with the aetiology of evil in the world and its eradication, then 'the appropriateness must have seemed compelling for creating an expository connection with the community's primary rite dealing with purgation.'²⁵⁷ Hanson further argues that this second stratum is dependent on 'a mythic tradition which was widespread in ancient near eastern culture, and which later spread to the Greek and Hellenistic worlds as well, the tradition of antediluvian culture-heroes who introduced the implements and techniques of civilization.'²⁵⁸ Contrary to Hanson's arguments, Nickelsburg holds that the Asael account is dependent on the Greek myth of Prometheus.²⁵⁹ Most notably, he argues that the Asael stratum has close affinities with the Promethean myth as the latter appears in Hesiod's works (*Theogony* 507–616; *Works and Days* 42–105) and in Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound*.²⁶⁰ In the latter, Prometheus is said to be

adapting them to the traditions of Genesis 6 which form the initial source of his story—to explain the existence of evil in his own time; *ibid.*, 396.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 396.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 396–397.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 397; 396.

²⁵⁶ Hanson, 'Rebellion', 220; 224.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 221.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 226. The culture-heroes tradition is found in ancient near eastern literature of the third millennium BCE where there is reference to the *apkallus*, namely seven antediluvian sages who revealed cultural secrets to humanity; *ibid.*, 227. Reference to the *apkallus* exists in a bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian text where they are presented as fish (*purādu*)-like figures; cf. Erica Reiner, 'The Etiological Myth of the "Seven Sages"', *Or* 30 (1961), 1–11. Some of the brick boxes found in Ur of Babylon contained clay figures in groups of seven dressed with a fish-cloak; see C. Leonard Woolley, 'Babylonian Prophylactic Figures', *JRAS* 4 (1926), 692; 693. In his recent article on the origins of the Watchers, Annus argues that the myth of the Watchers derived from Mesopotamian mythology on the *apkallus*; see Amar Annus, 'On the Origin of Watchers: A Comparative Study of the Antediluvian Wisdom in Mesopotamian and Jewish Traditions', *JSP* 19, no. 4 (2010), 277–320.

²⁵⁹ Nickelsburg, 'Apocalyptic', 403.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 500.

the founder of mining,²⁶¹ that is, the secret craft which forms the nucleus of Asael's instruction in 1 Enoch 8:1. Furthermore, Prometheus is also said to have taught mankind, among other things, astrology²⁶² and medicines²⁶³—which was also the greatest of the skills that he taught mankind—instructions which closely resemble the teaching of Shemihazah and his associates in 1 Enoch 8:3.²⁶⁴ Nickelsburg's argument about the dependence of the Asael material on Greek myths appears to be more possible and receives credit within scholarly circles.²⁶⁵ This does not mean that Hanson's theory about the culture-heroes tradition is incorrect, but it is preferable to say that the author and/or redactor of 1 Enoch 6–11 had access to this tradition from Greek sources that had already elaborated this ancient near-eastern tradition of culture-bringers. For instance, the Babylonian tradition of culture-bringers is found in the Greek writings of the Babylonian priest Berossus (ca. 330–250 BCE).²⁶⁶ Thus, it is more appropriate to say that the Asael story draws from the Babylonian culture-hero tradition that was revived in third century BCE Greek writings of Berossus, and to which the author/redactor of 1 Enoch 6–11 possibly had access.

The content of the angelic instruction—which is of particular interest here—in both stories is not quite the same. In 1 Enoch 7:1, the Watchers' teaching is restricted to sorcery and root-cutting, whereas in 8:1–3 their instruction expands on the crafts of metallurgy, mining, dyeing, the making of jewellery and cosmetics (8:1), as well as the arts of astrology and divination (8:3). Hanson holds that the teaching of Asael in 1 Enoch 8:1 is a further elaboration of the Asael stratum and that the attribution of instructional material to Shemihazah and his associates in 1 Enoch 8:3 is a further

²⁶¹ 'But as for the things hidden beneath the earth that benefit humanity—copper, iron, silver and gold—who can claim to have discovered them before I did?': Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, ed. and trans. Alan H. Sommerstein, LCL 145, vol. 1 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), (vv.) 500–503.

²⁶² 'Nor had they any reliable indicator of winter, or of flowery spring, or of fruitful summer; they did everything without planning, until I showed them the hard-to-discern risings and settings of the stars': *ibid.*, (vv.) 454–458.

²⁶³ 'If anyone fell sick, there was no means of aiding him, neither by food nor ointment nor potion: they withered and decayed for want of remedies, until I showed them how to mix gentle curative drugs, with which they can now defend themselves against all kinds of diseases': *ibid.*, (vv.) 478–483.

²⁶⁴ Nickelsburg, 'Apocalyptic', 399–400.

²⁶⁵ VanderKam, *Enoch*, 128.

²⁶⁶ Berossus describes the half-human, half-fish figure of Oannes—a probable reference to the *apkallu*—who is said to have brought civilisation to mankind; Felix Jacoby (ed.), *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (Leiden: Brill, 1958), no. 680, fragment 1b–3b.

elaboration of 1 Enoch 8:1.²⁶⁷ Nickelsburg also sees 1 Enoch 8:3 as secondary to the Asael account.²⁶⁸ Furthermore, the teaching of the Watchers in 1 Enoch 7:1 is, as Hanson points out, ‘an obvious gloss from the euhemeristic elaboration.’²⁶⁹ However, on the basis that 1 Enoch 7:1 and 9:8 do not contain the teaching of interpreting the heavenly omens, Nickelsburg argues that 1 Enoch 8:3 was probably added to chapters 6–11 after 1 Enoch 7:1 and 9:8 as an ‘elaboration’ and ‘extension’ of the content of angelic instruction preserved in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 9:8.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, both scholars agree that 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:1–3 are later interpolations to 1 Enoch 6–11.²⁷¹ This means that the Watchers’ teaching was not initially included in the original core of chapters 6–11, and it probably reflects a further attempt to meld the two originally distinct themes of angelic-mortal mingling (Shemihazah stratum) with the teaching of heavenly secrets (Asael stratum).²⁷² The date for this infusion is not known, but the author’s/redactor’s negative tendency towards the particular teaching of the Watchers in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:1–3 reflects a particular medical situation—which I examine below—that has probably taken place sometime in the first quarter of the third century BCE—or perhaps a bit later—and thus not too long after the Shemihazah narrative was composed.

In what follows, I shall examine the Ethiopic, Greek and Aramaic evidence for 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3. Due to the unfortunate lack of a critical edition of the Ethiopic manuscript evidence for 1 Enoch, I will cite the Ethiopic (Eth) text in the English translation from Olson’s edition,²⁷³ as his translation is a product of consultation of a good number of significant previous editions and translations of 1 Enoch, quotations of 1 Enoch found in Ethiopic literature, as well as thirteen EML manuscripts of 1 Enoch, namely the EML 1768, 2080, 6281 and 7584²⁷⁴ from Ethiopic I and EML 36, 1950, 2063, 2436, 2440, 4437, 4750, 6686 and 6974

²⁶⁷ Hanson, ‘Rebellion’, 230.

²⁶⁸ Nickelsburg, ‘Apocalyptic’, 397.

²⁶⁹ Hanson, ‘Rebellion’, 230.

²⁷⁰ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 191.

²⁷¹ Hanson, ‘Rebellion’, 197; Nickelsburg, ‘Apocalyptic’, 385–386.

²⁷² Hanson, ‘Rebellion’, 230.

²⁷³ Olson, *Enoch*, 35. Olson aims, as he himself points out, to ‘render the original Enoch into more natural-sounding English than previous attempts, yet without sacrificing accuracy’; *ibid.*, 20.

²⁷⁴ EML 7584, together with Tana 9, is the oldest Ethiopic manuscript, to be dated in the fifteenth century. EML 2080 is dated to 15–16th century, EML 1768 goes back to the 16th century and EML 6281 dates to the 17th century; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 21.

from Ethiopic II.²⁷⁵ In addition, I had the chance to examine three of the earliest Ethiopic manuscripts of 1 Enoch, namely Tana 9²⁷⁶ (fifteenth century),²⁷⁷ Gunda Gunde 151²⁷⁸ (fifteenth century)²⁷⁹ and EMMML 2080 (fifteenth–sixteenth centuries) to whose readings I will refer in the footnotes.²⁸⁰ I shall also cite the Greek witnesses of Codex Panopolitanus (Gr^{Pan}) from Black’s edition²⁸¹ and of Syncellus’ *Ecloga Chronographica*²⁸² (Gr^{Syn}) from Mosshammer’s edition²⁸³ followed by my own translation, as well as the Aramaic text of 4QEn^a (= 4Q201; first half of second century BCE) and 4QEn^b (= 4Q202; middle of second century BCE) from Milik’s edition²⁸⁴ accompanied by his translation, in an effort to make a comparative analysis of the textual evidence. I shall then try to explain the medical implications of the instructions of root-cutting and of the knowledge of herbs and their connection to the magical realm, and to demonstrate the inner reasons that led to their Enochic denouncement as the disgraceful teaching of the Watchers. Finally, I will attempt to investigate whether there is any medical allusion to the astrological teaching of the Watchers.

2.3. 1 Enoch 7:1

Eth: These then, and the others, all took wives for themselves from whomever they chose; and they began to go in to them, and they defiled themselves with them. They began teaching them sorcery and spell casting, and they showed them the cutting of roots and herbs.

Gr^{Pan}: Καὶ ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας· ἕκαστος αὐτῶν ἐξελέξαντο ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας, καὶ ἤρξαντο εἰσπορεύεσθαι πρὸς αὐτὰς καὶ μαινεσθαι ἐν αὐταῖς· καὶ ἐδίδαξαν αὐτὰς φαρμακείας καὶ ἐπαιοιδὰς καὶ ῥιζοτομίας, καὶ τὰς βοτάνας δῆλωσαν αὐταῖς.

²⁷⁵ Olson, *Enoch*, 23.

²⁷⁶ Tana 9 will henceforth be cited as T9.

²⁷⁷ The readings of T9 is often significantly different from the rest of the Ethiopic I manuscripts and for this reason Knibb describes it as a ‘sub-group’ within the first group of Ethiopic MSS; Knibb, ‘The Book of Enoch’, 37.

²⁷⁸ Gunda Gunde 151 will henceforth be cited as GG 151.

²⁷⁹ For the dating of GG 151 see Antonio Mordini, ‘Un Antica Pittura Etiopica’, *RSE* 11 (1951), 29.

²⁸⁰ I am grateful to my supervisor Loren Stuckenbruck and my colleague Ted M. Erho for giving me access to these manuscripts.

²⁸¹ Matthew Black (ed.), *Apocalypsis Henochi graece. Fragmenta pseudepigraphorum quae supersunt graeca una cum historicorum et auctorum judaeorum hellinistarum fragmentis collegit et ordinavit Albert-Marie Denis*, PVTG 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 21–22.

²⁸² This work will be hereafter cited as *EC*.

²⁸³ Alden A. Mosshammer (ed.), *Georgii Syncelli Ecloga Chronographica*, BSGRT (Leipzig: Teubner, 1984), 12.

²⁸⁴ Milik, *The Books*, 150–151; 157–158; 166–167; 170–171.

And they took for themselves women; each one of them chose women for themselves, and they began to go in to them and defile themselves with them; and they taught them enchantments and spells and the cutting of roots, and they revealed to them herbs.

²⁸⁵Gr^{Syn}: (7:1) Οὗτοι καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ πάντες ἐν τῷ ,αρο' ἔτει τοῦ κόσμου ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας καὶ ἤρξαντο μιαινεσθαι ἐν αὐταῖς ἕως τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ. καὶ ἔτεκον αὐτοῖς γένη τρία· α' γίγαντας μεγάλους. (7:2) οἱ δὲ γίγαντες ἐτέκνωσαν Ναφηλεῖμ, καὶ τοῖς Ναφηλεῖμ ἐγεννήθησαν Ἐλιούδ. καὶ ἦσαν αὐξανόμενοι κατὰ τὴν μεγαλειότητα αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐδίδαξαν ἑαυτοὺς καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἑαυτῶν φαρμακείας καὶ ἐπαοιδίας.

(7:1) These and all the rest, in the one thousand, one hundred and seventieth year of the world, took for themselves wives, and began to defile themselves with them until the flood. And they bore for them three types of offspring. First, great giants. (7:2) The giants bore Napheleim, and to the Napheleim were born Elioud. And they increased according to their greatness, and they taught²⁸⁶ themselves and their wives enchantments and spells.

4QEn^a 1 iii (Ll. 13–15): אנ[ון ור]בניה[ן] כלהן נסבו להן] נשין מן כל די בחרו ו[שריו למנעל עליהן ולאסתאבה בהן] ולא לפה אנן חרשה ו[כשפה ומקטע שרשין ולאחוויה להן עסבין]

Those (two hundred) and their leaders [all took for themselves] wives from all that they chose; and [they began to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them] and (they began) to teach them sorcery and [spell-binding, and the cutting the roots; and they showed them herbs].

4QEn^b 1 ii (Ll. 18–20): אנון ורבניהן כולהן נסבו להון] נשין מן כו[ל די בחרו] ושריו] למעל עליהן ולאסתאבה בהן ולא לפה אנן לחר[שתא ולכש]פתא ולמקטע שרשיא] ולאחוויה להן עשביא]

[Those (two hundred) and their leaders all took for themselves] wives from all [that they chose]; and they began [to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them and (they began) to teach them] sorcery and spell-binding [and the cutting of roots; and to show them plants].

²⁸⁵ Cf. EC 21, Ll. 4–9.

²⁸⁶ The subject of the verb ἐδίδαξαν is unclear here. One would expect that οἱ γίγαντες are the subject, since they are also the subject of ἐτέκνωσαν and ἦσαν. The context of the sentence, however, requires the Watchers to be here the subject of ἐδίδαξαν; see William Adler, and Paul Tuffin (trans.), *The Chronography of George Synkellos: A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation* (Oxford NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 17, note 1.

2.3.1. Textual notes

The focus of this section is the Watchers' teaching of the cutting of roots and the knowledge of herbs. Hence, I shall focus on the textual evidence for this particular instruction.

The Eth text is close to that of Gr^{Pan}. Both versions agree that the Watchers taught enchantments (ሥራዖተ²⁸⁷//φαρμακείας²⁸⁸) and spells (ሰብዓተተ [GG 151]²⁸⁹//ἐπαιδιάς), the cutting of root(s) (መቲረ ሥርወ²⁹⁰//ρίζοτομίας) and herbs (ዕፀወ//βοτάνας). The Greek text of Syncellus is considerably different from Gr^{Pan} and Eth. The Byzantine chronographer even adds information that does not exist in the other versions.²⁹¹ The correspondence with the other two versions can be traced in two places: first, the Watchers defiled themselves with the daughters of men (μιαίνεσθαι ἐν αὐταῖς), and second, they revealed to them enchantments and spells (φαρμακείας καὶ ἐπαιδιάς). The differences, however, are more notable. First, Syncellus omits the reference to the instruction in cutting root(s) and the acquaintance with herbs. Except for the reference to Shemihazah's instruction—to which I shall refer shortly—he actually omits any reference related to root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs, reporting only that the Watchers instructed the daughters of mortals in magic, sorcery and astronomical phenomena—following Africanus here—²⁹² or, elsewhere, that they have revealed to them sins and the

²⁸⁷ ሥራዖ can mean incantation, magic, charm, witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, spell, poison, healing, medicine, cure, bandage; see Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic). Ge'ez-English, English-Ge'ez, with an Index of the Semitic Roots* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1987), 536.

²⁸⁸ In the LXX, φαρμακεία has the meaning of 'sorcery', 'magic'; see J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie (with the collaboration of G. Chamberlain), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992), 2:499. In the New Testament context, φαρμακεία means 'employment of drugs for any purpose; sorcery, magic, enchantment'; see Wesley J. Perschbacher (ed.), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 426. Adler and Tuffin translate φαρμακείας here as 'the uses of potions'; Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography*, 17.

²⁸⁹ T9 has ሰብዓተተተተ, while EML 2080 reads ሰብዓተተ.

²⁹⁰ T9, GG 151 and EML 2080 preserve the noun in the singular. T9 and EML 2080 read ሥርወ, whereas GG 151 spells ሰርወ.

²⁹¹ Syncellus adds ἐν τῷ ἄρῳ ἔτει τοῦ κόσμου; ἕως τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ; as well as οἱ δὲ γίγαντες ἐτέκνωσαν Ναφηλεῖμ ἐγεννήθησαν Ἐλιούδ. καὶ ἦσαν αὐξανόμενοι κατὰ τὴν μεγαλειότητα αὐτῶν. The information about the offspring of the giants has no equivalent in 1 Enoch but occurs in Jubilees 7:21–22.

²⁹² εἰ δὲ ἀγγέλων νοοῖτο ἔχειν τούτους, τῶν περὶ μαγείας καὶ γοητείας, ἔτι δὲ ἀριθμῶν τῶν μετεώρων ταῖς γυναιξὶ τὴν γνώσιν παραδεδωκέναι: EC 35, Ll. 1–3.

making of charms for the production of hatred.²⁹³ In other words, Syncellus lays emphasis on the instructions related purely to magic and astrology. Second, both Gr^{Pan} and Eth identify the women as the object of ἐδίδαξαν. Syncellus, however, adds also ἐαυτούς as the first object of ἐδίδαξαν. In this way, Syncellus emphasises that not only did the Watchers teach the daughters of men sorcery and spells, they also initiated themselves in such practices.

Turning now to the Aramaic evidence for 1 Enoch 7:1, 4QEn^a and 4QEn^b are much fragmented. It is unfortunate that the fragments do not preserve the reference to root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs which is of special interest here. What they do preserve is the Watchers' instruction of sorcery (חרשה 4QEn^a/חרשתא 4QEn^b)²⁹⁴ and spell-binding (כשפה 4QEn^a/כשפתא 4QEn^b).²⁹⁵ Despite the lack of reference to root-cutting, 4QEn^a and 4QEn^b appear to be close in agreement with the structure of Gr^{Pan} and Eth.²⁹⁶ This similarity in structure qualifies Gr^{Pan} and Eth to have preserved the closest to the original reading for 1 Enoch 7:1. In light of this observation, the following analysis on the craft of root-cutting and botany is based on the testimony of Gr^{Pan} and Eth concerning the cutting of roots and the knowledge of herbs.

²⁹³ ἐδηλώσαν αὐταῖς πάσας τὰς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ ἐδίδαξαν αὐταῖς μίσσητρα ποιεῖν: EC 44, Ll. 2–3.

²⁹⁴ חרש can mean 'magic art' or perhaps 'magic drug'; see Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs (eds.), *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic: Based on the Lexicon of William Gesenius*, trans. Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979 [reprint]), 361. This work will henceforth be cited as BDB. Nickelsburg points out that 'in the Targumim it is widely used to translate Heb. כשף, a word whose precise connotations and root meaning are debated. The Greek Bible's consistent translation of כשף by φαρμακ- and the use of φαρμακεία here to translate חרשה may indicate the meaning of "potions"': Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 197.

²⁹⁵ Nickelsburg suggests אשפתא as a possible reconstruction and opts for the translation 'incantations'; cf. *ibid.*, 197–198.

²⁹⁶ Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:77.

2.4. 1 Enoch 8:3

Eth: Shemihazah²⁹⁷ taught spell casting²⁹⁸ and the cutting²⁹⁹ of roots³⁰⁰. Hermoni taught the release from spells, magic, sorcery, and craftiness. Baraqel taught how to read the signs of the lightning. Kokabel taught how to read the signs of the stars. Ziqiel taught how to read the signs of the comets. Arataqoph taught how to read the signs of the earth. Shamshiel taught how to read the signs of the sun. Sahriel taught how to read the signs of the moon. And they all began revealing secrets to their wives.

Gr^{Pan}: Σεμιαζᾶς ἐδίδαξεν ἐπα[ο]ιδᾶς καὶ ῥιζοτομίας· Ἀρμαρῶς ἐπαοιδῶν λυτήριον· Βαρακιήλ ἀστρολογίας· Χωχιήλ τὰ σημειωτικά· Σαθιήλ ἀστεροσκοπίαν· Σεριήλ σεληναγωγίας.

Semiazas taught spells and the cutting of roots; Armaros taught the loosing of spells; Barakiel taught astrology; Chochiel [taught] sign lore; Sathiel [taught] the observation of the stars; Seriel [taught] the courses of the moon.

³⁰¹Gr^{Syn}: ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὁ πρῶταρχος αὐτῶν Σεμιαζᾶς ἐδίδαξεν εἶναι ὀργὰς κατὰ τοῦ νοός, καὶ ῥίζας βοτανῶν τῆς γῆς. ὁ δὲ ια΄ Φαρμαρὸς³⁰² ἐδίδαξε φαρμακείας, ἐπαοιδίας, σοφίας, καὶ ἐπαοιδῶν λυτήρια. ὁ θ΄ ἐδίδαξεν ἀστροσκοπίαν. ὁ δὲ δ΄ ἐδίδαξεν ἀστρολογίαν. ὁ δὲ η΄ ἐδίδαξεν ἀεροσκοπίαν. ὁ δὲ γ΄ ἐδίδαξεν τὰ σημεία τῆς γῆς. ὁ δὲ ζ΄ ἐδίδαξε τὰ σημεία τοῦ ἡλίου. ὁ δὲ κ΄ ἐδίδαξε τὰ σημεία τῆς σελήνης. πάντες οὗτοι ἤρξαντο ἀνακαλύπτειν τὰ μυστήρια ταῖς γυναίξιν αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῶν³⁰³.

²⁹⁷ T9, GG 151 and EMLL 2080 preserve different spellings for the spell- and root-instructor angel. T9 has **አግስራስ**, GG 151 has **አግረራስ**, whereas EMLL 2080 preserves the odd reading **አግረረስ**. The dearth of a **ሥ** (§) as the initial letter of the Watcher's name is probably a corruption within the Ethiopic MSS. For the reading **አግረራስ** found in Ethiopic II MSS see Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:82.

²⁹⁸ T9, GG 151 and EMLL 2080 read 'magicians' (T9; GG 151: **መስብዳነ**//EMML 2080: **መስብዳነ**). It is important to note here that **መስብዳነ** is associated with **ስብዕ**, 'seven', 'reflecting the use of the number "seven" in witchcraft formulas': see Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, 483.

²⁹⁹ T9, GG 151 and EMLL 2080 read 'cutters' (T9; GG 151: **መታርያነ**//EMML 2080: **መተርያነ**).

³⁰⁰ GG 151 and EMLL 2080 read **ሥርዋት** ('roots'), whereas T9 preserves **ሥራያት** ('incantations'). Hence, GG 151 and EMLL 2080 read 'the cutters of roots', while T9 reads 'cutters of incantations'. The latter reading is most likely a scribal error. The magical content of the verse and the similarity in letters of the two words probably led to the misspelling of **ሥርዋት**. What is interesting here is to note that three of the earliest Ethiopic MSS mention that the angels taught not the crafts themselves (i.e. spell casting and root-cutting) but the practitioners of these crafts (i.e. magicians and root-cutters). Although this testimony differs from the one given in the Greek and the Aramaic textual evidence, all versions agree in that Shemihazah's instruction was related to transmitting magical knowledge and the craft of root-cutting.

³⁰¹ See EC 21, L. 20 – 22, Ll. 21–26.

³⁰² Syncellus' reading **Φαρμαρὸς** is probably a conscious corruption in order to connect the Watcher's name with the content of his instruction (i.e. **φαρμακείας**); see Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography*, 17, note 4.

³⁰³ Only Syncellus refers to the Watchers' offspring as the second receivers of the angelic teaching, adding καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῶν.

And their leader, Semiazas, taught [them] to be objects of wrath against reason³⁰⁴ and roots of herbs of the earth. The eleventh, Pharmaros, taught enchantments, spells, lore, and the loosing(s) of spells. The ninth taught the observation of the stars. The fourth taught astrology. The eighth taught divination by observing the heavens. The third taught the signs of the earth. The seventh taught the signs of the sun. The twentieth taught the signs of the moon. All of them began to reveal the mysteries to their wives and their offspring.

4QEn^a 1 iv. (Ll. 1–5): [שמי חוה אלף חבר] ומקטע שרשין חרמני אלף חרש למשרא [כ]שפו וחרטמו ותוש[ין] ברקאל אלף נחשי ברקין כוכבאל אלף [נ]חשי כוכבין זיקא[ל] אלף נחשי זיקין ארעתקף אלף נחשי ארע [שמ]שיאל אלף נחשי שמ[ש] שהריאל אלף נחשי[שה] [ר]וכלהן שריו[ן] [לגלי]ה רזין לנשיהן

Šemi-ḥazah taught spell-binding [and cutting of roots. Ḥermonî taught the loosing of spells,] magic, sorcery and skill. [Baraq'el taught the signs of thunders. Kôkab'el taught] the signs of the stars. Zêq'el [taught the signs of lightning-flashes. Ar'taqoph taught the signs of the earth]. Šamšî'el taught the signs of the sun. [Šahrî'el taught the signs of the] moon. [And they all began to reveal] secrets to their wives.

4QEn^b 1 iii (Ll. 1–5): [שמיחז]ה אל[ף] חברו[ן] ומקטא שרשין חרמני א[ל]ף חרש למ[שרא] כשפו וחרטמו ותושין ברקאל[ל] אלפ[] נחשי [ברקין כוכבאל א]לף נחשי כוכב[ין] זיקיאל אלף נחשי זיקין...אל אלף [] נחשי.... ארע[תקף אלף נחש[ין] ארע[] שמיאל אלף נחשי שמש שהריאל [] אלף נחשי שהר[] וכולהון שריו לגליה [רזין לנשיהון]

Šemi-ḥazah taught [spell-binding and cutting of roots. Ḥermonî] taught the loosing of spells, [magic, sorcery and skills. Baraq'el] taught [the signs of thunders. Kôkab'el] taught the signs of the stars. [Zêqî'el taught the signs of lightning-flashes. –'el taught the signs of Ar't^aqoph taught the signs of the earth. [Šamšî'el taught the signs of the sun. Šahrî'el taught the signs of the moon]. And they all began to reveal [secrets to their wives.

³⁰⁴ For the ambiguous phrase εἶναι ὀργὰς κατὰ τοῦ νοός I follow here the translation given by Adler and Tuffin as their rendering is most appropriate; see Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography*, 17. Its meaning is very unclear and does not fit the content of the Watchers' instruction. It is possibly a textual corruption.

2.4.1. Textual notes

Again, what is of special interest in 1 Enoch 8:3 is the literary evidence about the craft of cutting roots and thus the textual comments following will focus on this.³⁰⁵

Despite the Aramaic evidence for 1 Enoch 8:3 not being fully preserved, one can easily discern that the Ethiopic closely follows the Aramaic here as the names of the angels, their order and their instructions are in agreement. Gr^{Pan} is very much abridged. It agrees though with the Ethiopic regarding the content of the first instruction, that is, Shemihazah taught spells (ἐπα[σ]ιδάς) and root-cutting (ρίζοτομίας). Syncellus' testimony is again different in many respects. First, it is longer compared to the other versions. Syncellus preserves more information; for instance, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὁ πρῶταρχος αὐτῶν.³⁰⁶ Second, Syncellus' text is rather different in the description of the first part of Shemihazah's instruction. More precisely, the Byzantine chronographer preserves that the angel taught ὀργάς κατὰ τοῦ νοός ('objects of wrath against reason'). The phrase itself is quite problematic, as it has no parallel in the other versions. Milik believes that Syncellus' text is corrupt here, and the wording εἶναι ὀργάς could be a misrendering of the term ἐπαισιδάς ('spells') attested in Eth and Gr^{Pan}, as well as in Aramaic (חברו).³⁰⁷ The meaning of Syncellus' wording is rather unclear and it does not fit the content of the Watchers' instruction. Additionally, the evidence of 4QEn^a 1 iv, L. 1 on spell-binding (חברו) indicates that the Eth and Gr^{Pan} preserve the original reading. For these reasons, Syncellus' variant might be a textual corruption. Moreover, Syncellus clearly refers to the transmission of the angelic knowledge concerning the roots; however, he omits again the reference to 'cutting'. Knibb suggests that the additional wordings κατὰ τοῦ νοός and ρίζας βοτανῶν τῆς γῆς aimed to substitute the noun ρίζοτομίας.³⁰⁸ Black argues that the wording βοτανῶν τῆς γῆς is biblical (Job 5:25; Ps 71:16), and that if

³⁰⁵ The rest of angelic instructions given in this verse will be of help in the following analysis where I will investigate if there is any medical implication in the astrological teaching of the Watchers.

³⁰⁶ Knibb notes that one cannot be sure whether this phrase is actually Syncellus' addition due to the fragmentary state of the Aramaic fragments. The same scholar adds that 'it would appear likely that these variants should be attributed to the editorial activity of Syncellus': Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2: 82.

³⁰⁷ Milik, *The Books*, 160; cf. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:82.

³⁰⁸ Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book*, 2:82.

Syncellus' phrase *ρίζας βοτανῶν τῆς γῆς* is the original reading, then Eth and Gr^{Pan} reflect a more idiomatic Greek translation with *ρίζοτόμος/ρίζοτομία*.³⁰⁹ Unfortunately, the fragmentary state of the Aramaic cannot shed much light on this, as the reference to the cutting of roots is lost. For the problematic wording of Syncellus, regarding Shemihazah's instruction and his repeated omission of the 'cutting' of roots—both for 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3—one could make the following assumptions. First, the information might have been absent from Syncellus' intermediate sources, namely the chronographies of the Alexandrian monks Panodorus and Annianus who had in turn drawn their material from Julius Africanus.³¹⁰ Second, even if such information was originally attested in Syncellus' sources, it could have been lost in the early Greek transmission of the text. Third, it could have been a conscious omission by Syncellus himself, as the Byzantine chronographer had the tendency to make textual emendations of his sources.³¹¹ Syncellus does not comment on this particular section as he normally does in other parts of his work; therefore, there is no hint that could justify such an omission. Embracing Panodorus' apologia for the apocrypha, he questions the credibility of the apocryphal books, arguing that they contained material which had been corrupted by Jews and heretics.³¹² In light of this observation, the third assumption is more plausible. Although Syncellus refers to Shemihazah's instruction about the 'roots of herbs of the earth', his testimony lacks the reference to root-cutting. I am led to believe that such an omission was conscious and can be taken as further proof of Syncellus' editorial intervention. This particular wording was reminiscent of magical practices, and therefore Syncellus might have decided to be reserved in his approach to such statements. For these reasons, Syncellus' testimony on Shemihazah's instruction is not credible. Instead, the testimonies of Eth and Gr^{Pan} with regard to spell-casting and the cutting of roots merit attention, as they are in line with the Aramaic. Hence, the following analysis is based on the latter's testimonies.

³⁰⁹ Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 128.

³¹⁰ This argument is based on the influential theory of Gelzer; cf. William Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus*, DOS 26 (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 157–158.

³¹¹ Syncellus' elaboration of Africanus' material is described as an 'editorial intervention, ranging from excerpts to epitomes, paraphrases and testimonies': Wallraff, Roberto, and Pinggéra, *Iulius Africanus Chronographiae*, xlii.

³¹² διὰ τὸ νενοθεῦσθαι αὐτὰ ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων καὶ αἵρετικῶν: EC 48, L. 2; cf. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, 154; 179.

2.5. The meaning of the transmission of knowledge on roots and herbs

In the BW, the rebel angels are said to have taught various arts previously unknown to men, such as metallurgy, mining, dyeing and cosmetics (8:1), magical crafts and sign lore (8:3). The author regards such instructions as illegitimate because they have not been revealed to men after God's command but their teaching was in fact a rebellious deed against God.

The present section is particularly interested in examining the angelic transmission of knowledge related to root-cutting and herbs. This teaching which, in 1 Enoch 7:1, concerns all Watchers is the responsibility of one, namely of Shemihazah in 1 Enoch 8:3a. But what is the inner meaning of this instruction? The use—or, to be more precise, the uses—of vegetation in antiquity is a good starting point for understanding its meaning.

2.5.1. Plants in medicine

‘Such things [i.e. the sympathies and antipathies of nature]³¹³ alone had Nature decreed should be our remedies, provided everywhere, easy to discover and costing nothing—the things in fact that support our life’ are the words of Pliny the Elder (ca. 23–79 CE) when discussing the origin of medicine.³¹⁴ With nature being a storehouse of free remedies, plants and all kinds of vegetation have been used for the treatment of diseases since early antiquity. In the ancient world, the medicinal properties of plants were explained by reference to their divine origin. In particular, the ancients believed that ‘the substances of plants were parts and parcels of the substances of which the persons of the gods were composed, and that the juices of plants were exudations or effluxes from them likewise.’³¹⁵ This view is in close connection with the belief that gods were the first herbalists and physicians who first taught men the curative properties of plants.³¹⁶ The above beliefs explain well why floral substances possess a central role in ancient medicine. In Mesopotamian medicine, which is attested as early as the second millennium BCE, plants and plant-products (roots, seeds, leaves, blossoms, thorns) were the basic ingredients for

³¹³ NH XXIV. I.1–3.

³¹⁴ NH XXIV. I.4. Quotations from NH are taken from Pliny, *Natural History: With an English Translation in Ten Volumes*, trans. W. H. S. Jones, LCL, vols. 1–10 (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1938–1963).

³¹⁵ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 1.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, v.

the preparation of medicines.³¹⁷ The Babylonian medical texts catalogue prescriptions mostly comprised of vegetal substances prepared in various ways and often mixed with other ingredients.³¹⁸ The same holds for the Assyrian medical literature where plants and their products are often encountered for the treatment of diseases and are frequently mixed with minerals and animal parts, forming a drug compound.³¹⁹ Plants also possess a prominent place among the Egyptian medical papyri. The *Edwin Smith Papyrus* (ca. 1600 BCE) and *Ebers Papyrus* (ca. 1550 BCE) catalogue a plethora of remedies of vegetal origin.³²⁰ The earliest literary evidence for the medicinal use of plants in ancient Greece is found in the Homeric epics.³²¹ The Bible refers to 21 plants that were used for medicinal purposes in both Mesopotamia and Egypt.³²² Two notable biblical examples of pharmaceutical plants are the Balm of Gilead (Gen 37:25; Jer 8:22, 46:11) and the fig poultice with which Isaiah cured King Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:7).³²³ The prophet Ezekiel was acquainted with the medicinal powers of the flora. He says about tree-leaves: ‘The fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.’ (Ez 47:12, NRSV). In the Wisdom of Solomon, Solomon boasts that among the true knowledge (γνῶσιν ἀψευδῆ) of the formation of the world he was given by God he was also told about the varieties of the plants and the powers of the roots.³²⁴ Similarly, Flavius Josephus (37–ca. 100 CE) says that Solomon possessed knowledge of the nature and the properties of every kind of tree and all living creatures.³²⁵ The power of roots and the properties of trees may well refer to the pharmacological properties of the flora. Elsewhere,

³¹⁷ Biggs, ‘Medicine’, 1.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

³¹⁹ See examples of such compounds for the treatment of head diseases in the Assyrian cuneiform tablets of Koujunjic (henceforth *AM.*): No. 1, *AM.* 1.2 (= K. 6684), Ll. 8, 13, 17; No. 3, *AM.* 1.4 (= K. 2615), L. 3; No. 4, *AM.* 2.1 (= K. 2491 & 8356), L. 22; *AM.* 4.1 (= K. 2416), L. 3; No. 15, *AM.* 5.1 (= K. 2532), L. 2 in Campbell R. Thomson, ‘Assyrian Medical Texts’, *PRSM* 17 [Section of the History of Medicine] (1924), Part 1.

³²⁰ Five-sixths of the ingredients used in medicines by the Egyptians were of vegetal origin; see Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 27.

³²¹ *Iliad* 11.844–8, 5.900–4; *Odyssey* 4.220ff., 10.286ff.; see Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 157–158.

³²² Jacob, ‘Medicinal Plants’, 32.

³²³ Genesis 30:14–16 also refers to mandrakes, but the biblical text does not anywhere state that they were used for medicinal purposes; Samuel Kottek, ‘Medicinal Drugs in the Works of Flavius Josephus’, in Irene and Walter Jacob (eds.), *The Healing Past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*, SAM 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 103.

³²⁴ Wis 7:20.

³²⁵ *JA* VIII. 44.

the Jewish historian notes that the Essenes investigated the medicinal properties of roots, apotropaic materials and stones for the treatment of diseases.³²⁶

The virtues of plants prompted men of medicine and science in general to collect information on plants and all flora and write them down. Indeed, a plethora of botanical treatises on the curative powers of plants were written in antiquity by a large number of authors: Theophrastus; the Hippocratic authors; Diocles of Carystus; Praxagoras of Cos; Chrysippus of Cnidus; Herophilus of Chalcedon; Erasistratus of Ceos; Andreas of Carystus; Dioscorides; Celsus; Rufus; Soranus; and Galen, being only some of them. This abundance of botanical treatises indicates that all kinds of flora (roots, herbs, plants, root-, plant-, fruit-juices, trees, leaves, shrubs, bushes) were extensively used in antiquity as medicines or as the basic ingredients for the making of healing remedies. Pliny also devotes much space to describe the different kinds of vegetation that were used for medical purposes. Most of his *Natural History* is devoted to the description of plants: what they looked like (shape, colour, etc.); the places they grow; the way they should be collected; the carriers they should be taken with; the type of disease they cure, etc. The Roman naturalist admits that ‘nothing else will be found that aroused greater wonder among the ancients than botany.’³²⁷ The first to have discovered the properties of herbs, according to Homer to whom Pliny refers, were the Egyptians.³²⁸ Pliny goes on to say that Pythagoras was the first to write a botanical treatise on the curative properties of plants, which he assigned to Apollo, to Aesculapius (Asclepius) and the other immortal gods.³²⁹

Among the therapeutic qualities of plants listed in the botanical works was also their function as natural antidotes against poisonous herbs, venomous creatures, deadly medicinal drinks and poisons. In his five-volume herbal *Περὶ ὕλης ἱατρικῆς/De Materia Medica*, Pedanius Dioscorides of Anazarba (ca. 40–90 CE) mentions different kinds of vegetation to be used as antidotes.³³⁰ Vegetal antidotes

³²⁶ *JW* II. 136.

³²⁷ *NH* XXV. V.9–10.

³²⁸ *NH* XXV. V.11–12.

³²⁹ *NH* XXV. V.13.

³³⁰ ‘kinamomon’, *MM* I.13; ‘irinon’, *ibid.*, I.66; ‘pissa ugra’, *ibid.*, I.94; ‘ramnos trissus’, *ibid.*, I.119; ‘lukion’, *ibid.*, I.132; ‘kastana’, *ibid.*, I.145; ‘acras’, *ibid.*, I.168; ‘karua basilica’, *ibid.*, I.178; ‘morea’, *ibid.*,

to harmful herbs are also attested in the HB. In 2 Kings 4:38–41, it is said that the servant of prophet Elisha gathered from a wild vine gourds which he cut them up to make a stew for the prophet and his company. He did not know though that the gourds were poisonous. Elisha told him to add some flour and the stew became harmless. The passage shows first that not everyone knew the properties of herbs and, second, the antidote for the poisonous herbs was of vegetal origin too.

The medicinal qualities of herbal products indicate that the knowledge of the earthly herbs (1 En 7:1^{Eth GrPan}; 8:3a^{GrSyn}) and the craft of root-cutting (1 En 7:1^{Eth GrPan}; 8:3a^{Eth GrPan}) may well reflect the arts of herbal medicine and botany.

2.5.2. Plants and magic

But why are herbal medicine and botany viewed as ‘rejected secrets’ (1 En 16:3) revealed to men by the fallen angels? What is actually wrong with the medicinal use of plants for the treatment of diseases? The answer to this can be found in the beliefs about plants and the alternative ways vegetation was used in antiquity.

2.5.2.1. ‘Magical’ plants

To begin with, plants were considered to have magical qualities *per se*. Pliny characterises some plants as ‘magical’.³³¹ These are plants that can be poisonous—especially when used without certain caution like ‘minyas’ or ‘corinthia’³³²—or plants that have magnificent qualities, such as ‘aglaophotis’ which is used to call up gods,³³³ ‘achaemenis’³³⁴ and ‘ophiusa’³³⁵ which cause hallucinations, ‘theombroton or semnion’ which cures bodily disorders and offers stability of intellect and sense

I.180; ‘konia sukes’, *ibid.*, I.186; ‘congulis’, *ibid.*, II.134; ‘bounias’, *ibid.*, II.136; ‘crambe emeros’, *ibid.*, II.146; ‘kardamon’, *ibid.*, II.185; ‘erusimon’, *ibid.*, II.188; ‘piper’, *ibid.*, II.189; ‘skilla’, *ibid.*, II.202; ‘agaricon’, *ibid.*, III.1; ‘chamaileon leukos’, *ibid.*, III.10; ‘erungion’, *ibid.*, III.24; ‘apsinthion’, *ibid.*, III.26; ‘abrotonon’, *ibid.*, III.29; ‘origanos erakleotike’, *ibid.*, III.32; ‘tragoriganos’, *ibid.*, III.35; ‘kalaminthe’, *ibid.*, III.43; ‘peganon to kepaion’, *ibid.*, III.52; ‘karos’, *ibid.*, III.66; ‘selinon agrion, selinon kepaion’, *ibid.*, III.74; ‘krinon basilikon’, *ibid.*, III.116; ‘alisma’, *ibid.*, III.169; ‘chamaipitus’, *ibid.*, III.175; ‘kestron’, *ibid.*, IV.1; ‘tripolion’, *ibid.*, IV.135; ‘smilax tracheia’, *ibid.*, IV.144.

³³¹ Pliny writes that these plants were first made known by Pythagoras and Democritus; see *NH* XXIV. XCIX.156. Nutton considers it highly likely that a good portion of the magico-medical lore in *NH* ‘goes back at least to Greek circles in Alexandria in the first half of the third century BC ... It includes Egyptian and Persian lore, with an appeal to a long tradition of the magi, and it would be wrong to exclude a Greek component in this amalgam’: Vivian Nutton, *Ancient Medicine* (London: Routledge, 2004), 150.

³³² *NH* XXIV. C.157.

³³³ *NH* XXIV. CII.160.

³³⁴ *NH* XXIV. CII.161.

³³⁵ *NH* XXIV. CII.163.

of justice,³³⁶ ‘therionarca’ which ‘makes all wild beasts become torpid’,³³⁷ ‘thalassaegle’ which causes raving and odd visions,³³⁸ ‘theangelis’ which ‘the Magi take it in drink to gain power to divine’,³³⁹ ‘gelotophyllis’ which—when taken in myrrh and wine—causes visions and unceasing laughter,³⁴⁰ and so forth.

Long before Pliny, in his botanical treatise *Enquiry into Plants*, Theophrastus (370–ca. 285 BCE), the successor of Aristotle in the head of the *Lykeion*, discussed similar qualities that plants possess. In particular, describing the properties of ‘thryoron’ or ‘peritton’, he notes that, if this plant is administered in large doses, then it can cause delusions, insanity and even death:

‘The kind which produces madness (which some call *thryoron* and some *peritton*) has a white hollow root about a cubit long. Of this three twentieths of an ounce in weight is given, if the patient is to become merely sportive and to think himself a fine fellow; twice this dose if he is to go mad outright and have delusions; thrice the dose, if he is to be permanently insane; ... four times the dose is given if the man is to be killed.’³⁴¹

Only a few chapters later in the same book, Theophrastus refers to two other plants that possess qualities that can affect mental powers:

‘As to those which affect the mind, *strykhnos*³⁴² ... is said to upset the mental powers and make one mad; while the root of *onotheras* (oleander) administered in wine makes the temper gentler and more cheerful.’³⁴³

2.5.2.2. Amulets and charms

Due to the magnificent virtues of plants, the latter were used as amulets and charms. Theophrastus mentions that plants were used as such to protect the body and the house. He writes:

³³⁶ *NH* XXIV. CII.162.

³³⁷ *NH* XXIV. CII.163.

³³⁸ *NH* XXIV. CII.164.

³³⁹ *NH* XXIV. CII.164.

³⁴⁰ *NH* XXIV. CII.164.

³⁴¹ *EP* IX. XI.6. Quotations are taken from Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants and Minor Works on Odours and Weather Signs*, trans. Sir Arthur Hort, LCL, vol. 2 (London: Heinemann, 1916).

³⁴² On the mental effects of *strykhnos* see also *EP* IX. XI.5.

³⁴³ *EP* IX. XIX.1.

‘Thus they say that *tripolion* according to Hesiod and Musaeus is useful for every good purpose, wherefore they dig it up by night, camping on the spot. So too what is said of good or fair fame as affected by plants is quite as foolish or more so: for they say that the plant called snapdragon produces fair fame ... The man who anoints himself with this they say wins fair fame. And they say that the same result follows, if he crowns himself with the flower of gold-flower, sprinkling it with unguent from a vessel of unfired gold ...’³⁴⁴

Similarly, Dioscorides mentions that ‘peristereon uptios’ or ‘ierovotane’³⁴⁵ and ‘ippoglosson’³⁴⁶ are used as amulets. Pliny also reports amulets of vegetable origin.³⁴⁷ Moreover, the use of plants as amulets and charms is encountered in the *Greek Magical Papyri* (henceforth *PGM*).³⁴⁸ *PGM* IV. 930–1114 describes a plant-phylactery for the protection of the body whose preparation is accompanied by the writing of magical words—including the invocation of gods’ names—and magical acts, such as its seven-time tying, to ensure its efficacy. It reads:

‘Phylactery for the rite³⁴⁹, which you must wear for the protection of your whole body: On [a strip] from a linen cloth taken from a marble statue of Harpokrates in any temple [whatever] / write with myrrh these things: “I am HOROS ALKIB HARSAMŌSIS IAŌ AI DAGENNOUTH RARACHARAI ABRAIATH, son of ISIS ATHTHA BATHTHA and of OSIRIS OSOR[ON]NŌPHRIS; keep me healthy, unharmed, not plagued by ghosts and without terror during my / lifetime.” Place inside the strip of cloth an everliving plant; roll it up and tie it 7 times with threads of Anubis. Wear it around your neck whenever you perform the rite./’ (Ll. 1071–1082).³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ *EP* IX. XIX.2–3. Theophrastus often preserves in his work folk beliefs on plants; he does not omit them, although he is critical of them, as in this passage where he characterises them as foolish and incredible (εὐηθέστερα καὶ ἀπιθανώτερα).

³⁴⁵ ‘Now they call it *Sacra herba* because it is of fit use in be expiations to serve for Amulets’: *MM* IV.61. English quotations from *Materia Medica* are taken from Robert T. Gunther, *The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides: Illustrated by a Byzantine, A.D. 512, Englished by John Goodyer, A.D. 1655, Edited and First Printed A.D. 1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934).

³⁴⁶ ‘... be hair seems to be an Amulet profitable for be headaches’: *MM* IV.132.

³⁴⁷ For instance, the shrub ‘erythrodamun’ and the plant ‘alysson’ are to be worn as amulets; *NH* XXIV. LVI.94; XXIV. LVII.95. The herb ‘cynocephalia’ protects from all sorceries; *NH* XXX. VI.18.

³⁴⁸ The *PGM* date from the second century BCE to the fifth century CE; Hans D. Betz (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), xli. It is possible, though, that the magical lore they contain reflects earlier times.

³⁴⁹ The preparation of this phylactery is part of a larger charm for direct vision.

³⁵⁰ Quotations from *PGM* are taken from Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*.

Moreover, plants were used in charms to cause illness. *PGM* CXXIV. 1–43 is a charm which intends to inflict illness; the magician should, among other things, make a waxen doll (‘manikin’) and crush ‘rhododendron’ plants.

2.5.2.3. Love-potions and poisons

Plants were often the basic ingredients for the making of magical potions. Theophrastus says that the leaf of ‘mandrake’³⁵¹ and the root of ‘cyclamen’³⁵² are good for love potions. Dioscorides mentions that ‘doruknion’,³⁵³ ‘mandagoras’,³⁵⁴ ‘kotuledon’,³⁵⁵ ‘phuteuma’,³⁵⁶ ‘leontopodion’³⁵⁷ and ‘katananke’³⁵⁸ were used to make love potions. Even later in antiquity, plants were still used in magical love-recipes. For example, *PDM*³⁵⁹ xiv. 930–932 reads:

‘A prescription to cause a woman to love a man: Fruit of acacia; grind with honey; anoint his phallus with it; and lie with the woman!’³⁶⁰

In addition, plants were used for the making of poisons. In his *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon writes:

‘The boys of that time used also to learn the properties of the products of the earth, so as to avail themselves of the useful ones and keep away from those that were harmful. But now [in Cyrus’s days] it looks as if they learned them only in order to do as much harm as possible; at any rate, there is no place where more people die or lose their lives from poisons (ὕπὸ φαρμάκων) than there.’³⁶¹

³⁵¹ *EP* IX. IX.1.

³⁵² *EP* IX. IX.3.

³⁵³ *MM* IV.75.

³⁵⁴ *MM* IV.76.

³⁵⁵ *MM* IV.92.

³⁵⁶ *MM* IV.130.

³⁵⁷ *MM* IV.131.

³⁵⁸ *MM* IV.134.

³⁵⁹ *PDM* stands for *Demotic Magical Papyri*. They date palaeographically from the third century CE, or a bit later, but their lore goes back to earlier times; cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, lvii. On *PDM* see Janet H. Johnson’s introduction in *ibid.*, lv–lviii.

³⁶⁰ All Quotations from *PDM* are taken from Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*.

³⁶¹ *Cyropaedia* VIII. VIII.14. Quotation is taken from Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, trans. Walter Miller, LCL, vol. 2 (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1914).

2.5.2.4. Exorcisms

Close to the belief in the magical properties of plants was the view that certain plants had exorcistic powers. More precisely, Josephus³⁶² mentions a root called ‘baaras’³⁶³ which was thought to drive demons away.³⁶⁴ He also reports the exorcistic use of a ring which contained a magical herb by a certain Eleazar. The passage reads:

‘... I have seen a certain Eleazar, a countryman of mine, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and a number of other soldiers, free men possessed by demons, and this was the manner of the cure: he put to the nose of the possessed man a ring which had under its seal one of the roots prescribed by Solomon³⁶⁵, and then, as the man smelled it, drew out the demon through the nostrils ...’³⁶⁶

Moreover, Dioscorides mentions certain plants that possess exorcistic powers: the shrub ‘ramnos trissus’ is good against devils;³⁶⁷ the herb ‘artemisias’, if it is worn on feet, drives venomous beasts and devils away;³⁶⁸ ‘buphthalmum’ is used ‘against fears & devils & enchantments & poisons’;³⁶⁹ the herb ‘peony’ ‘is good against poisons & bewitchings & fears & devils & their assaults ... And it is said that sometimes growing on a hill where there were devils, it drove them away.’³⁷⁰

In summary, plants could heal and protect against harm but they could also be hurtful (i.e. poison, cause bodily and mental disorders). The plethora of properties plants possessed is shown from the different purposes they were used for in antiquity. Roots, plants, herbs and all kinds of vegetation were used as medicines (i.e. ointments, salves, decoctions) and natural antidotes but also in association with magical practices, such as the making of plant-phylacteries and charms for

³⁶² JW VII.185.

³⁶³ JW VII.180.

³⁶⁴ The exorcistic nature of herbal remedies is also found in Jubilees 10:10, 12–13, where the angels teach Noah herbal medicines for the diseases caused by the evil spirits. Jubilees’ testimony will be discussed in detail in a separate chapter.

³⁶⁵ In the same context but only few lines above Josephus reports that Solomon was acquainted with the properties of trees and living creatures, that he composed incantations and that he bequeathed the way to drive demons away.

³⁶⁶ JA VIII. 46–47. All quotations are taken from Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, trans. H. ST. J. Thackeray, Ralph Marcus and Louis H. Feldman, LCL, 18 vols. (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926–1965).

³⁶⁷ MM I.119.

³⁶⁸ MM III.127.

³⁶⁹ MM III.156.

³⁷⁰ MM III.157.

protection, for exorcisms, for the making of love-potions to change one's feelings and poisons to cause harm. The first two uses of plants (i.e. phylacteries and exorcisms) are intended to protect people from harm; such kind of magic is usually called 'apotropaic.' The last two, however, are intended to cause harm and thus this magic is called 'aggressive.' In all probability, the author(s) of the BW do(es) not refer to 'apotropaic' magic but to the 'aggressive' one which was used for unholy purposes, that is, to inflict troubles, pain, harm or even cause death. In this context, Pliny's testimony is characteristic as he states that he does not make a lengthy mention of harmful plants and renounces their use in unholy magic, whereas he prefers to refer to the ones that are good for health. In other words, Pliny does not renounce plants *per se* but only certain plants that are harmful to health and are used in magical practices. He writes:

'I myself am amazed that the Greeks have described even harmful plants, and not the poisonous ones only ... But what excuse was there to point out the means of deranging the mind, of causing abortion, and of many similar crimes? I personally do not mention abortives, nor even love-philtres, nor yet any other unholy magic, remembering as I do that the famous general Lucullus was killed by a love-philtre, unless it be by way of warning or denunciation, especially as I have utterly condemned all faith in such practices. Enough pains, and more than enough, will have been taken if I point out plants healthful to life and discovered in order to preserve it.'³⁷¹

It may well be that the author(s) of the BW has/have a view similar to Pliny's when renouncing root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs as the rejected teaching of the Watchers. Likewise, the author rejects herbal medicine and botany³⁷² because of its connection to the realm of magic but he does not denounce vegetation *per se*. If he had done so, he would not have included detailed descriptions of lands full of aromatic trees and spices (1 En 10:19; 24:3–5; 26:1; 28:2; 29:2; 30:2–3; 31:1–32:1, 3–5).³⁷³ Hence, the author(s) of the BW severely discredit(s) the knowledge of herbs because of their use in magical practices.

³⁷¹ NH XXV. VII.24–25.

³⁷² As suggested above (cf. p. 62), the Watchers' instruction of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs may refer to herbal medicine and botany.

³⁷³ The content of his account prompted Milik to suggest that the author(s) of the BW was/were not only a writer but also a traveller and a trader; Milik, *The Books*, 26–28. Palestine was a land rich in herbal products and whose products were imported by other countries. More precisely, the Egyptians imported

I now proceed to discuss in greater detail the craft of root-cutting and to examine the particular implications involved for its denouncement in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3a.

2.6. Dangers of root-cutting and plant-collection

The craft of root-cutting was thought not to be an easy affair. In fact, a plethora of superstitions sprang up concerning the dangers involved in uprooting and plant-collection. Theophrastus, discussing the methods of cutting roots, preserves the remarks of druggists (φαρμακοπῶλαι) and root-cutters (ρίζοτόμοι)³⁷⁴ about such dangers.³⁷⁵ He writes:

‘Thus they enjoin that in cutting some roots one should stand windward,—for instance, in cutting *thapsia* among others, and that one should first anoint oneself with oil, for that one’s body will swell up if one stands the other way. Also that the fruit of the wild rose must be gathered standing to windward, since otherwise there is danger to the eyes.’³⁷⁶

‘... they say that peony, which some call *glykyside*, should be dug up at night, for, if a man does it in the day-time and is observed by a wood-pecker while he is gathering the fruit, he risks the loss of his eyesight; and, if he is cutting the root at the time, he gets *prolapsus ani*.’³⁷⁷

juniper berries for the treatment of diseases; Germer, ‘Ancient’, 72. Hence the author(s) of the BW could also have been a contemporary scholar, describing in 1 Enoch 26–32 his own land’s abundance of plant goods.

³⁷⁴ The term ρίζοτόμοι was employed in the fifth century BCE to describe those who were engaged in the collection of plants for curative purposes; see Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 166. The profession of the root-cutter was distinct from that of the drug-seller, but sometimes the two professions overlapped; they could be both engaged in the selection of plants and the administration of the latter at the market; Lloyd, *Science*, 120. The root-cutters and drug-sellers were only two of the different groups in existence practising medicine in Classical Greece, the others being the midwives, the religious healers at the shrines of Asclepius, the soothsayers and seers and the ‘established’ physicians, namely the Asclepiads, a clan of physicians who were exclusively practising medicine and from which Hippocrates’ family descended.

³⁷⁵ Theophrastus points out that the comments of druggists and root-cutters may be correct to a certain extent but may also contain exaggerations; *EP IX. VIII.5*. He himself admits that some statements about root-cutting are unreasonable, absurd and irrelevant. These refer to precautions which need to be made because of superstitions about cutting certain roots, such as in cutting ‘peony’, ‘feverwort’, ‘mandrake’, ‘black hellebore’; see *EP IX. VIII.6–8*. However absurd these precautions might sound, Theophrastus used to write down everything that he heard during his travels from people who appeared to have some knowledge about the selection of plants. Perhaps he wished to leave some room to his readers to decide for themselves what was true and what was mere superstition. For this reason Theophrastus’ detailed study of plants is inseparably connected to folkloric elements. On this see Anthony Preus, ‘Drugs and Psychic States in Theophrastus’ *Historia Plantarum* 9.8–20’, in William W. Fortenbaugh, and Robert W. Sharples (eds.), *Theophrastean Studies on Natural Science, Physics and Metaphysics, Ethics, Religion and Rhetoric*, RUSCH 3 (New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Books, 1998), 78–79; 85–86.

³⁷⁶ *EP IX. VIII.5*.

³⁷⁷ *EP IX. VIII.6*. Pliny also preserves similar information on uprooting ‘peony’: ‘They recommend us to uproot it at night-time, because the woodpecker of Mars, should he see the act, will attack the eyes in its defense’: *NH XXV. X.29*.

‘It is also said that, while cutting feverwort one must beware of the buzzard-hawk, if one wishes to come off unhurt ...’³⁷⁸

Pliny says that Apion the grammarian told him of the herb ‘cynocephalia’ that ‘if it were uprooted altogether the digger would die at once.’³⁷⁹ Josephus also mentions the dangers involved when uprooting ‘baaras’. He writes:

‘Flame-coloured and towards evening emitting a brilliant light, it eludes the grasp of persons who approach with the mention of plucking it, as it shrinks up and can only be made to stand still by pouring upon it certain secretions of the human body³⁸⁰. Yet even then to touch it is fatal, unless one succeeds in carrying off the root itself, suspended from the hand. Another innocuous mode of capturing it is as follows. They dig all around it, leaving but a minute portion of the root covered; they then tie a dog to it, and the animal rushing to follow the person who tied him easily pulls it up, but instantly dies—a vicarious victim, as it were, for him who intended to remove the plant, since after this none need fear to handle it.’³⁸¹

Such superstitions triggered the association of root-cutting and plant-collection with magic. The dangers involved in root-cutting were confronted with precautions which resembled or, in fact, were magical rites. Theophrastus preserves ample evidence on this. For the cutting of the kind of ‘all-heal’ or ‘panacea’ (οἶον ὅταν τὸ πάνακες), of ‘gladwyn’, of ‘mandrake’ and ‘black hellebore’, he writes:

‘... as to cutting the kind of all-heal which is called that of Asklepios; for then it is said that one should put in the ground in its place an offering made of all kinds of fruits and a cake; and that, when cutting gladwyn, one should put in its place to pay for it cakes of meal from spring-sown wheat, and that one should cut it with a two-edged sword, first making a circle round it three times, and that piece first cut must be held up in the air while the rest is being cut.’³⁸²

‘Thus it is said that one should draw three circles round mandrake with a sword, and cut it with one’s face towards the west; and at the cutting of the second piece should dance round the plant and say as many things as possible about the mysteries of

³⁷⁸ *EP IX. VIII.7.*

³⁷⁹ *NH XXX. VI.18.*

³⁸⁰ The text here reads οὖρον γυναικὸς ἢ τὸ ἐμμητιον αἷμα (‘the urine of a woman or menstrual blood’) for which Thackeray does not give the literal translation here.

³⁸¹ *JW VII. 181–184.* Quotations are from Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. H. ST. J. Thackeray, 9 vols. (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926–1965).

³⁸² *EP IX. VIII.7.*

love.³⁸³ [This seems to be like the direction given about cummin, that one should utter curses at the time of sowing.]³⁸⁴ One should also, it is said, draw a circle round the black hellebore and cut it standing towards the east and saying prayers, and one should look out for an eagle both on the right and on the left; for that there is danger to those that cut, if your eagle should come near, that they may die within the year.³⁸⁵

2.6.1. The profession of root-cutters and drug-sellers

It may well be that the drug-sellers and root-cutters created themselves these superstitions on the basis of the belief in the magnificent powers of plants in order to present themselves as the only experts in root-cutting and thus to have the monopoly. The illiterate folk, who strongly believed in such superstitions, were eager to pay a good fee to acquire a rare root or plant whose cutting might have been lethal for a non-skilled person. In Classical Greece, root-cutters and drug-vendors were found at local markets, possessing a stall. They were competing for potential patients/clients alleging themselves to be proficient in plants and attempting to increase their reputation by consuming hurtful roots such as hellebore.³⁸⁶ They were selling their plant products as medicines but also as poisons under the ambiguous appellation of *φάρμακα*.³⁸⁷ Thus, the distinction between medicine and poison was very vague.

What is interesting in the case of root-cutters and drug-vendors is that they were not learned physicians. This problem concerns all types of folk-healers in ancient Greek medicine. Most of them did not have any medical education and were in fact charlatans. For the root-cutters and the drug-sellers, the medical profession was simply a way of earning a living. The problem was clear: the lack of basic medical education could cause the death of a patient as these groups of healers were not aware of how to treat a sickness effectively; a faulty prescription of a herbal drug or

³⁸³ Pliny preserves similar information on picking up ‘mandrake’: ‘The diggers avoid facing the wind, first trace round the plant three circles with a sword, and then do their digging while facing the west.’: *NH* XXV. XCIV.152–154.

³⁸⁴ For this reference see *EP* VII. III.3.

³⁸⁵ *EP* IX. VIII.8; cf. *NH* XXV. XXI.50.

³⁸⁶ See the stories about drug-sellers consuming hellebore in *EP* IX. XVII.1–3.

³⁸⁷ Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 130. Indeed, in Theophrastus’ book IX of *EP* the word *φάρμακον* is used both to denote ‘medicine’ and ‘poison’. In each case, one has to place the word in its context to determine its meaning.

an erroneous dose from a harmful plant could cause the condition of the patient to deteriorate or even lead to death.

The activity of root-cutters and drug-sellers did not cease in the Classical period, and it is attested throughout Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman times. They wandered the markets of Greece and Judaea selling their herbal remedies. Pliny reports that although some herbs remain still unknown and their knowledge confined to the illiterate country-folk, ‘nobody cares to look for them when crowds of medical men are to be met everywhere.’³⁸⁸ Pliny may well refer here to root-cutters and vendors of herbal drugs. Bohak notes that roots like ‘baaras’ and other potent substances were widely available at market places in Palestine and were used by Jews and non-Jews alike. Even a well-educated priest like Josephus accepted the potency of such roots.³⁸⁹

Some names of root-cutters are preserved till today through the writings of later authors. Crateuas (111–64 BCE) was an eminent root-cutter who served Mithridates VI Eupator, King of Pontus (120–63 BCE).³⁹⁰ The second-century CE physician, Galen, makes mention of the herbal remedies of the Persian root-cutter Pharnaces and his colleague Antonius.³⁹¹ The Roman physician also refers to different travelling drug-vendors (i.e. the *marsti*³⁹², Simmias and Chariton) who knew antidotes against venomous bites.³⁹³ He reports further that, not only did drug-sellers prepare healing remedies, but also poisons for a good deal of money.³⁹⁴ Elsewhere, Galen reprimands the drug-sellers in Rome for their insufficient knowledge of local plants.³⁹⁵ Moreover, the term ‘root-cutter’ appears in the *Dialogues of Gods* of the second-century CE satirist Lucian of Samosata in which Heracles reproaches Asclepius as a root-cutter who was selling dubious remedies.³⁹⁶

³⁸⁸ *NH* XXV. IV.16.

³⁸⁹ Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 92.

³⁹⁰ Vivian Nutton, ‘The Drug Trade in Antiquity’, *JRSM* 78 (1985), 140. On Crateuas cf. *NH* XXV. IV.8; XXV. XXVI.62.

³⁹¹ Rebecca Flemming, *Medicine and the Making of Roman Women: Gender, Nature and Authority from Celsus to Galen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 43.

³⁹² For the *Marsi* cf. *NH* XXV. C.11.

³⁹³ Nutton, ‘Drug Trade’, 138–139.

³⁹⁴ See, for instance, the story of Lucius Clodius of Ancona in *ibid.*, 139.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 144.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 139.

In brief, the profession of root-cutters and drug-sellers combined the commerce of herbal products with folk-healing. In the majority, they were individual,³⁹⁷ unlearned botanists who built their profession on the superstitions of the illiterate folk. They were primarily suppliers of herbal products who also prepared herbal remedies and poisons.

2.6.2. Sorcerers and sorceresses

To these healing figures one should add the sorcerers who used a great deal of plant products in their witchcraft (i.e. in amulets, love-potions, poisons, etc.). No doubt the root-cutters and drug-vendors were their suppliers. Like the two professionals above, the sorcerers travelled from city to city touting their therapeutic skills without being medically trained. In the Hippocratic treatises *Decorum* and *Precepts* (both date ca. 250 BCE), an educated physician is distinguished from a travelling quack who is dressed in shabby clothes and wanders from city to city selling his ‘pharmaceutical’ remedies.³⁹⁸ Their activity, however, was not confined to the administration of remedies but also to the making of poisons. One can only imagine what the qualities of the ‘magical’ plants described by Pliny could do in the hands of sorcerers in exchange of a small fee!

Philo of Alexandria (ca. 13 BCE–45 CE) refers to those who compound poisonous drugs and mix them with food in order to cause death to others.³⁹⁹ The Jewish exegete further urges that the people who, although they do not compound drugs, administer them so as to cause diseases that are often incurable, need to be condemned to death like the sorcerers and the poisoners.⁴⁰⁰ Josephus complements Philo’s testimony on poisons. He writes:

‘Let no one of the Israelites keep any poison that may cause death, or any other harm; but if he be caught with it, let him be put to death, and suffer the very same mischief that he would have brought upon them for whom the poison was prepared.’⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁷ The textual evidence shows that the root-cutters did not belong to any particular group but they worked as individuals.

³⁹⁸ Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, 155.

³⁹⁹ *SL* 3.17.95.

⁴⁰⁰ *SL* 3.17.98.

⁴⁰¹ *JA* IV .279.

Elsewhere, the Jewish historian mentions that Piso gave a poison (φάρμακον) to Tiberius' nephew Germanicus and killed him.⁴⁰² Hardly is there any doubt that in both cases the poisons (φάρμακα) were herbal compounds or heterogeneous mixtures of plant, animal and mineral substances.

Sorcery was not just a masculine affair but also a feminine one. Philo makes mention of sorcery practised by women. He reports that the vilest of women, together with slaves and quacks, claiming to know all kinds of incantations and purifications and professing to be able to divert ones' feelings by means of charms and incantations.⁴⁰³ This is the 'wicked' magic as opposed to the 'true' magic of the Magi.⁴⁰⁴ Josephus again complements Philo's account on the inclination of women towards witchcraft and the existence of female practitioners of sorcery. Josephus says about Cleopatra that she poisoned (προανελοῦσα φαρμάκοις) her brother⁴⁰⁵ and that Antony was submissive to her not only because of her charm but also because she had bound him with φάρμακα.⁴⁰⁶ Furthermore, it appears that the women in Herod's court were very much familiar with the use of φάρμακα. Mariamne, the second wife of Herod, was accused of making a potion (φίλτρον/φάρμακον)⁴⁰⁷ for her husband with the help of her eunuch and she was punished by death.⁴⁰⁸ Herod is also said to have accused his sister-in-law that she turned his brother Pheroras against him by means of φάρμακα (ἐνδησαμένη φαρμάκοις).⁴⁰⁹ Elsewhere, Josephus reports that the death of Pheroras was due to an administration of poison prepared by an Arabian woman. The passage reads:

'... her mother and sister had brought from Arabia a woman who was an expert in drugs (φαρμάκων ἔμπειρον), to make up a love-potion (φίλτρον) for Pheroras; but,

⁴⁰² JA XVIII. 53; cf. Tacitus' vivid description on the poisoning of Germanicus and the magical rites it involved in *Ann.* 2.69.

⁴⁰³ SL 3.18.101.

⁴⁰⁴ SL 3.18.100.

⁴⁰⁵ JA XV. 89.

⁴⁰⁶ JA XV. 93.

⁴⁰⁷ The words φίλτρον and φάρμακον are interchanged to refer to Mariamne's compound.

⁴⁰⁸ JA XV. 223–231.

⁴⁰⁹ JW I. 571.

instead of this, she had given him a deadly poison, at the instigation of Syllaesus, who knew her.⁴¹⁰

Moreover, Pliny reports that the ‘science’ of enchantments and magical herbs ‘is the one outstanding province of women.’⁴¹¹ He further mentions sorceresses such as Medea of Colchis and Circe of Italy,⁴¹² and that Homer appoints Egypt for ‘the prize of herbs’ as ‘Egyptian herbs in great number were given by the wife of the king to the Helen of his tale ... to be administered especially by Helen to all mortals.’⁴¹³ Moreover, the Roman historian Tacitus (56–117 CE) partly connects the death of Germanicus mentioned by Josephus above with an infamous poisoner called Martina, a close friend of Plancina, wife of Piso. He reports that Martina was sent to Rome where the Senate carried out an investigation into the death of Germanicus⁴¹⁴ but she died on the way from a knot of poison on her hair.⁴¹⁵

Ancient Israel was not ignorant of female practitioners of sorcery. In Exodus 22:17, it is said that a female sorcerer (מכשפה) should not be allowed to live. Furthermore, in 2 Kings 9:22, Queen Jezebel, the wife of the King Ahab, is said to have used sorceries (כשפיה; φάρμακα) against Jehu. The literary evidence for female practitioners of witchcraft from biblical times until late antiquity (and even further) may well explain why in 1 Enoch 7:1 the author appoints the women as the receivers of the Watchers’ teaching of spell-casting, root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs.

Magic was an indispensable part of everyday life in Hellenistic times. The existence of travelling therapists and wandering sorcerers indicate that the Hellenistic folk were in need of gaining control in a changing and powerful world to which magic seemed to provide an answer. People felt insecure as they were experiencing a world that kept changing and believed that they were subject to the powers of the universe. The massive practice of magic during the Hellenistic period shows exactly

⁴¹⁰ JW I. 583.

⁴¹¹ NH XXV. V.10.

⁴¹² NH XXV. V.10–11.

⁴¹³ NH XXV. V.11–12.

⁴¹⁴ Ann. 2.74.

⁴¹⁵ Ann. 3.7.

the desperate attempt of the folk to control the universal forces and have control over their own life. The magician was for them a ‘crisis manager.’⁴¹⁶ In Betz’s words, ‘he was a problem solver who had remedies for a thousand petty troubles plaguing mankind: everything from migraine to runny nose to bedbugs to horse races, and, of course, all the troubles of love and money.’⁴¹⁷ Hence, it is no surprise that the medico-magical art of root-cutters, drug-vendors and sorcerers flourished for centuries in the ancient world.

As a final remark, the association of herbal medicine and botany with the magical realm indicates that the author(s) of the BW discredit(s) healing practices that heavily relied on superstitions and made vast use of magic in the healing process practised by unlearned healers as the root-cutters, drug-sellers and wandering sorcerers, as well as by the illiterate people. Like other authors in antiquity who did not distinguish between medicine and magic but treated them as one domain, the author(s) of the BW inextricably mixe(s) magic (i.e. spell-casting) and herbal medicine (i.e. root-cutting) together. In his case though, he does not praise them but rejects them as defiled.

2.7. Incantations in herbal medicine and root-cutting

I now proceed to examine a last aspect which further relates herbal medicine and botany with magic, that is, the reciting of incantations and the invocation of divine names, a phenomenon that can further explain the reasons for their Enochic rejection.

2.7.1. Recitations of incantations in the administration of herbal medicines

The recitation of incantations often accompanied the preparation and administration of herbal drugs in the ancient world. In ancient Egypt, the pronunciation of spells when administering a medicine had its place among the sacerdotal practices.⁴¹⁸ The anointing with oil for healing or bodily nourishment was often accompanied by incantations and spells and sometimes by a motion of the priest’s rod to increase

⁴¹⁶ Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, xlvii.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, xlvii.

⁴¹⁸ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 39.

‘the effect of the oil on the body.’⁴¹⁹ The same procedure is encountered in Babylonian and Assyrian magico-medical texts where the physician prepares and administers his medicaments⁴²⁰ while the magical-expert recited the most suitable incantations for each occasion.⁴²¹ In the case of a chronic illness, the patient was carried in the temple and placed in a chamber called *kummu*. There, a series of magical acts was employed for his protection against demonic presence—which were thought to have inflicted the illness—such as the recitation of incantations, the writing of names on the chamber’s walls and the making of prophylactic figures.⁴²² The latter were often fish-like figures,⁴²³ carrying a piece of bay-tree wood on their right hand.⁴²⁴ They represented the *apkallus*,⁴²⁵ namely the seven sages from before the Flood who were viewed as the first teachers of incantations against illness.⁴²⁶ Their names were written on their hips⁴²⁷ and incantations were recited before them.⁴²⁸ Moreover, in the Assyrian Koujunjic tablets the preparation of drug compounds is often followed by the recitation of charms. No. 2, *AM.* 1.3 (= K. 8346), L. 7 reads: ‘... thou shalt recite the charm E.NU.ŠUB *kinib kinib kinib šuḥ kinib ...*’⁴²⁹ Another example is No. 3, *AM.* 1.4 (= K. 2615), L. 21: ‘[Charm against] the Hand of a Ghost.’⁴³⁰ No doubt the recitation of charms was employed to secure the efficiency of the vegetal or compounded medicament. Thus, in Mesopotamian medicine the reciting of incantations and the invocation of names—both oral and written in the case of the *apkallu* figures—occurred during the preparation and administering of drugs and was central in the healing process: medicine and magic coexisting in total harmony.

⁴¹⁹ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 30.

⁴²⁰ Mesopotamian medicine, as seen above, was primarily based on herbal medicines and, thus, there is hardly any doubt that the medicines of the physician were of vegetal origin or even a heterogeneous compound of plant, animal and mineral substances.

⁴²¹ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 52.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 52. Such and other figures were found in Ur of Babylon. They were made of clay and were buried in brick boxes beneath a house for its protection against demons; see Wooley, ‘Babylonian’, 689; 692. For the various types of these figures see *ibid.*, 693–695.

⁴²³ K.A.R. No. 298, Ll. 15, 19. For the text of K.A.R. No 298 see *ibid.*, 695–701.

⁴²⁴ K.A.R. No. 298, L. 3.

⁴²⁵ K.A.R. No. 298, L. 2.

⁴²⁶ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 53.

⁴²⁷ K.A.R. No. 298, L. 4.

⁴²⁸ K.A.R. No. 298, Ll. 11, 16, 25, 28, etc.

⁴²⁹ All quotations from *AM.* are taken from Thomson, ‘Assyrian Medical Texts’, Part 1 & 2.

⁴³⁰ What strikes the reader of *AM.*, and in general of Mesopotamian medical literature, is that medicine is not distinguished from magic; on the contrary the two realms are inextricably mixed together.

Also, the recitation of incantations appears to have been essential in midwifery in classical Greece. In Plato's *Theaetetus*, Socrates is presented as saying that the midwives administer drugs (φαρμάκια) and incantations (ἐπάδουσαι) to arouse the pains in labour and, if they wish, to make them milder (149 c–d). Hence, it appears that incantations were inextricably connected to medicine in the ancient world.

2.7.2. Recitation of incantations in root-cutting: The reading of the Name and/or divine names

The recitation of incantations is also encountered in the craft of root-cutting. The magical rites that had to be followed for the 'safe' practice of root-cutting and plant-collection included the recitation of prayers and incantations. Theophrastus reports that while cutting 'feverwort' one should pray and that this is not unreasonable.⁴³¹ He also says that while cutting 'black hellebore' one should pray.⁴³² Theophrastus does not preserve the verbal content of such prayers. The reason for such a lack is probably due to the oral nature of such prayers. In addition, only the root-cutters must have known what to say so as to appease a root before cutting it. It may be, however, that such prayers contained an invocation of gods to keep the root-cutters unharmed while plant-picking and to secure the potency of the root too. What is more, the sowing of a plant sometimes required the recitation of curses in order to make it more effective. For 'cummin' Theophrastus says: 'And there is another peculiarity told of this plant: they say that one must curse (καταρᾶσθαι) and abuse it (βλασφημεῖν), while sowing, if the crop is to be fair and abundant.'⁴³³ Also, the use of a plant was often accompanied by incantations. For instance, an incantation was recited while 'black hellebore' (or 'hellebore of Melampus' [Μελαμπόδιον]) was used in purifying horses and sheep.⁴³⁴ Again, the content of such curses and incantations is not known. However, one could reasonably surmise that the invocation of divine names had a prominent place in them.

⁴³¹ τὸ δ' ἐπευχόμενον τέμνειν οὐθὲν ἴσως ἄτοπον: *EP IX. VIII.7.*

⁴³² *EP IX. VIII.8.*

⁴³³ *EP VII. III.3.*

⁴³⁴ *EP IX. X.4; cf. NH XXV. XXI.49–50.*

The little evidence for Second-Temple-period Jewish magic indicates that the Name of God was invoked in curses and incantations and such a use may have further led to the prohibition of pronouncing the Name issued in the third century BCE.

The personal name of God, יהוה—usually referred to as the *Tetragrammaton* and with which God identified himself to Moses on Mount Horeb (Ex 3:6)—was normally pronounced up to at least until the destruction of the First Temple (586 BCE) as shown by the Lachish Letters.⁴³⁵ Most notably, the High-Priest uttered the Name at *Yom Kippur* (‘Day of Atonement’) and in the confession of sins, and the ordinary priests also uttered the Name when pronouncing the priestly blessing (cf. Num 6:22–27⁴³⁶).⁴³⁷ The Name was to be uttered only inside the Temple.⁴³⁸ Philo reports that the Name is to be heard and pronounced only in the Sanctuary (ἀκούειν καὶ λέγειν ἐν ἁγίοις).⁴³⁹ But at least from the third century BCE there is a tendency to avoid any pronunciation of the Name. This is strengthened from the third-century BCE Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (LXX) where יהוה is substituted by κύριος (‘Lord’).⁴⁴⁰ For instance, in Leviticus 24:16 the שם־יהוה (‘name of God’) is translated by the LXX as τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου. The use of κύριος as the translation of יהוה can be explained by the introduction of the oral reading אדני for the written יהוה which is already attested to in 1QIsa^a and other Qumran texts.⁴⁴¹ Hence, κύριος was not literally the translation of יהוה but the translation of אדני (and מרא in Aramaic), which was the way to pronounce יהוה.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁵ Moshe Idel, ‘God, Names of’, *EncJud* 7 (2nd ed. 2007), 675.

⁴³⁶ In Numbers 6:27, it is said: ‘So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them’ (NRSV).

⁴³⁷ Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135): A New English Version Revised and Edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:306, note 54.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 306 and 453, notes 54 and 137, respectively.

⁴³⁹ *De Vita Moses* II. 114.

⁴⁴⁰ Idel, ‘God’, 675.

⁴⁴¹ Christiane Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters: Studien zu ausgewählten neutestamentlichen Gottesbezeichnungen vor ihrem frühjüdischen und paganen Sprachhorizont*, AJEC 69 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 175.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 175.

The avoidance of pronouncing the personal name of God⁴⁴³ might have been due to a feeling of reverence which was in turn triggered by a misapprehension of the Third Commandment (Ex 20:7; cf. Deut 5:11) for the misuse of God's Name.⁴⁴⁴ An incident of misuse of the Name occurs in the book of Leviticus. There, the son of an Israelite woman and of an Egyptian man used the Name in a curse (Lev 24:10). The Lord ordered for the man to be stoned to death by the whole community (Lev 24:14) and he further issued a general rule for Israel: the one who curses God will bear the sin of his deed (Lev 24:15) and the one who blasphemes the Name he should be put to death by stoning (Lev 24:16).

The belief in the power of the divine name is evident in 2 Kings. There, Elisha is said to have cursed in the Name of the Lord some young boys who mocked him (2 Kings 2:23–24). It appears that there was a view that the Name of God had a power of its own, not only because it was often uttered in curses, but mainly because its use made the curse effective. After Elisha's cursing, for instance, two she-bears came out of the woods and injured the boys (2 Kings 2:24), an incident indicating that the curse was crowned with success.

The substitution of the personal name of God with אֱלֹהִים and κύριος was actually due to a growing mystification ('Mystifizierung') around the name יהוה and thus aimed to protect it from misuse.⁴⁴⁵ The belief in the inherent power of God's Name is more evident in Artapanus' story about Moses' whispering the Ineffable Name. The second-century BCE Jewish writer says that the Egyptian king, scoffing at Moses, asked the latter for the name of the god who had sent him (cf. Ex 5:2) and when Moses whispered the Name in his ears, the king fell speechless and revived only when Moses picked him up.⁴⁴⁶ The sound of God's Name is described here as possessing a unique power according to which life is almost 'magically' diverted

⁴⁴³ Among the precepts of the Community Rule (ca. 100 BCE) is the complete avoidance of pronouncing the divine name: 'Whoever enunciates the Name (which is honoured above all) [...] whether blaspheming, or overwhelmed by misfortune or for any other reason, {...} or reading a book, or blessing, will be excluded' (1QS VI. 27–VII 2). All quotations from the DSS are taken from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 1994). Furthermore, Josephus reports that he is no longer allowed to pronounce the name of God. Unfortunately he does not explain such a prohibition (JA II. 276).

⁴⁴⁴ On this misapprehension see Idel, 'God', 675.

⁴⁴⁵ Zimmermann, *Die Namen*, 175.

⁴⁴⁶ *Praeparatio Evangelica* IX. XXVII.24–25.

into death. The Name of God itself is so powerful and there is no need for Moses to say or do anything more (e.g. verbal formulas, gestures) to strengthen its power. In this connection, Bohak points out that ‘the aggressive use of the power inherent in God’s Name is of extreme importance, because it probably is the oldest and longest-continuing practice in the history of Jewish magic.’⁴⁴⁷

The belief in the power of invoking God is also encountered in two marble inscriptions from the island of Rheneia (next to Delos) which date to the late second century BCE and were composed by a Jewish or Samaritan hand.⁴⁴⁸ The text of the first reads:

‘I invoke and beseech the Most High God, Lord (τὸν κύριον) of the spirits and all flesh, against those who treacherously murdered or killed with *pharmaka* (φαρμακεύσαντας) the wretched Heraclea, untimely dead, spilling her innocent blood in unjust fashion, so that the same would happen to those who murdered or killed her with *pharmaka* (φαρμακεύσασιν) and also to their children. Lord (κύριε) who oversees all things and angels of God, before whom every soul humbles itself in supplication on this present day, may you avenge this innocent blood and seek [justice?] speedily.’⁴⁴⁹

The inscription is an appeal to the Jewish God against those who committed murder by means of *pharmaka*. Although there is no reference to ‘magical technologies’—to use Bohak’s term—indicative for the classification of the tablets as magical, it appears that the power of the curse lies in the invocation of God as this is obvious from the plethora of divine appellations.⁴⁵⁰ The engravers apparently believed that an invocation of their and their clients’ God would be powerful enough to avenge the poisoners. As the writing of the *apkallu* names in the hips of the clay *apkallu*

⁴⁴⁷ Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 127.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 125–126.

⁴⁴⁹ Quotation is taken Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 125 (italics in the original). For the Greek text, see Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2003), 414. The text of the second tablet is almost identical with the exception of small differences (i.e. instead of Heraclea it reads Mar[th]ine). For its text see *ibid.*, 414–415.

⁴⁵⁰ These appellations have analogies in the LXX. For instance, the appellation τὸν κύριον τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός is a variant of Numbers 27:16 (cf. 16:22): κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός. See more on this in *ibid.*, 416–417.

figures for protection against illness, likewise the invocation of God and the engraving of divine appellations form an indispensable part of this curse-formula for vengeance upon murderers. Of course, the Delos curse-tablets are a written appeal to God without reference to the Ineffable Name.⁴⁵¹ The name *κύριος*, however, which occurs twice in the tablet, is the Greek written equivalent of יהוה.⁴⁵² Thus, it is reasonable that Greek-speaking Jews in the second century BCE would use the name *κύριος* instead of יהוה. In addition, the invocation of God with the writing down of a bouquet of divine appellations reflects the belief in the inherent power of God's Name. The writing down of different names for God aimed to compel the latter to fulfil the supplicant's desire—in the case of the Delos tablets to inflict harm on the murderers. Hence, the use of the Name and/or the use of equivalent names or titles for the name of God were used within the sphere of 'aggressive' magic.

The recitation of incantations is also encountered in exorcisms. According to Josephus, Eleazar, after drawing the demon out of the man by means of a root-bearing ring, recited the incantations that Solomon had composed for the alleviation of distempers.⁴⁵³ It is possible that these incantations contained a reference to the Ineffable Name⁴⁵⁴ or an appeal to God on the basis that only God had the power to alleviate illness and offer healing (cf. Ex 15:26). In this case and in contrast with the Delos tablets, the invocation of God's Name would have been used to achieve beneficial results. Also, in ancient Egypt the pronunciation of the god's name, as a form of the sacerdotal methods of the Egyptian clergy, was thought to be enough to drive a demon away.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ For the writing of the Name on objects and body as an amulet in the First Temple period see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 117–119.

⁴⁵² The name *ὁ κύριος*—often used without the article—was used by the LXX as a proper name and such a use had the same function as the unpronounced יהוה; Zimmermann, *Die Namen*, 174–175.

⁴⁵³ *JA* VIII. 45–46.

⁴⁵⁴ Elsewhere—after describing the incidents of the burning bush on Mount Sinai and of the rod of Moses—Josephus reports that Moses asked from God his name so that he would invoke him by his name during sacrifice-offerings; *JA* II. 275 (cf. Ex 3:13–18).

⁴⁵⁵ Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 36.

The silence of sources with regard to magical practices, let alone the craft of root-cutting, is probably due to a lack of interest of literate Jews of the Second Temple period in these matters (i.e. ‘outsider’ evidence), as well as to ‘the *oral* nature of much Second Temple period Jewish magic’ (i.e. ‘insider’ evidence).⁴⁵⁶ The little evidence, however, indicates that there was a general belief in the inherent power of the Name of God and its use formed one of the main features of Second Temple period Jewish magic.⁴⁵⁷ The Name might have been used to make spells and exorcisms efficacious, and secure safety in cutting roots and their potency in herbal remedies. Thus, the denouncement of root-cutting in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3a may be further related to the recitation of the Ineffable Name while cutting a root or collecting a plant. Such an implication Stuckenbruck must have had in mind when pointing out that ‘the rejection of medicinal cures [in the BW] is reinforced by their association with practices involving incantations which may have involved the risk of misusing the holy name of God.’⁴⁵⁸ The testimony of the *PGM* is rather enlightening on this. In *PGM* IV. 286–295 occurs an invocation of a deity upon plant-picking. It reads:

‘Spell for picking a plant: Use it before sunrise. *The spell to be spoken*: ‘I am picking you, such and such a plant, with my five-fingered hand, I, NN,⁴⁵⁹ and I am bringing home so that you may work for me for a certain purpose. I adjure you by the undefiled / name of the god: if you pay no heed to me, the earth which produced you will no longer be watered as far as you are concerned—ever in life again, if I fail in this operation, MOUTHABAR NACH BARNACHŌCHA BRAEŌ MENDA LAUBRAASSE PHASPHA BENDEŌ; fulfill for me / the perfect charm.’

The spell shows first that plant-collection was connected to spell-casting and, second, the spell itself involved adjuration to a divine name.

A similar example occurs in *PGM* IV. 2967–3006. It reads:

⁴⁵⁶ Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 137 (italics in the original). On the ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’ evidence see *ibid.*, 70.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁴⁵⁸ Stuckenbruck, ‘The Book of Tobit’, 261. Kollmann similarly points out that magico-medicinal practices were viewed with caution, because they included the danger of syncretism or the abuse of the name of God; Kollmann, ‘Göttliche’, 290.

⁴⁵⁹ The abbreviation ‘NN’ stands for a name or names against whom or in favour of the magical act is directed and are to be inserted in the text by the reader; Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, xxxiii.

‘Among the Egyptians herbs are always obtained like this: the herbalist first purifies his own body, then sprinkles with natron and / fumigates the herb with resin from a pine tree after carrying it around the place 3 times. Then, after burning kyphi and pouring the libation of milk as he prays, he pulls up the plant while invoking by name the daimon⁴⁶⁰ to whom the herb / is being dedicated and calling upon him to be more effective for the use for which it is being acquired (Ll. 2967–2976).’⁴⁶¹

The text shows, among others things, that the invocation of a divine name was an indispensable part of the magical praxis during plant-collection. It was actually such an invocation that would make the plant effective. Adjurations to gods are very often found in *PGM*. Of special interest are the names Iabas, Iabo, Iabai, Iapos and IAŌ—the Greek transliteration of יהוה⁴⁶² which are encountered throughout *PGM*. The invocation of divine names was not restricted to the practice of root-cutting but was expanded to all types of magical acts employed for different purposes. For example, in *PGM* IV. 296–466 (Ll. 305) the name of IAŌ is invoked together with other names—some of them of unknown meaning—as part of a spell for the binding of a lover.⁴⁶³

In light of these observations, the recitation of incantations formed an indispensable part not only in the preparation and administration of herbal drugs in antiquity but also in root- and plant-collection. The invocation of divine names (either written or oral) must have been an essential part of incantation-formulas. The belief in God’s powerful Name, which is well reflected in Artapanus’ story of Moses and the Egyptian king, probably triggered its association with magical practices. The avoidance of pronouncing the Name of God (at least) from the third century BCE may well have had to do with its use outside the Temple and particularly with its misuse in occult practices. The practice of root-cutting would have been only one of them. One can imagine root-cutters and herbalists—who may well have been of

⁴⁶⁰ ‘daimon’ is used here in the sense of ‘deity’, not ‘demon’ as used in the New Testament.

⁴⁶¹ In the lines to follow (2977–3001) the text gives the exact invocation which contains reference to various gods, such as Kronos, Hera, Ammon, Isis, Zeus, Helios, Hermes, Selene, Osiris, etc.

⁴⁶² On these names see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, 335. Also, the Hebrew name SABAŌTH (‘Lord of Hosts’) is very often encountered among *PGM*. The name ’IAŌ for יהוה is also encountered in 4QLev^bLXX; Zimmermann, *Die Namen*, 173.

⁴⁶³ A similar invocation of holy names, among which IAŌ has a prominent position, for the effectiveness of a love-spell occurs in *PGM* CI. 1–53. The last sentence is characteristic: ‘You, these holy names and these powers, confirm and carry out this perfect enchantment; immediately, immediately; quickly, quickly.’ (Ll. 52–53).

Jewish origin even though Jewish literature of the Second Temple period does not make any mention of professional Jewish magicians,⁴⁶⁴ let alone root-cutters—invoking the Name when cutting a root, aiming first for their protection and second to secure the potency of the root to be later used as medicine. The same can well stand for the wandering sorcerers who were selling their herbal remedies accompanied by an incantation of the Ineffable suitable for their Jewish clientele! Hence, the adjuration of the Name may well have been the deeper cause for discarding the craft of root-cutting in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3a.

In summary, the denouncement of popular herbal medicine and botany in the BW resulted from their association with magic. On the one hand, it was the marvellous properties of roots, plants and herbs that prompted such a connection. Thus, vegetal products were used as amulets, for the preparation of love-philtres and poisons and for exorcistic purposes. Also, the dangers involved upon root- and plant-collection were confronted with magical rites and verbal formulas invoking God by his Name or other equivalent appellations. The invocation of God would have made the roots potent. In other words, the pronounciation of God's name aimed at divine intervention in the healing process. On the other hand, the preparation and administration of herbal remedies was accompanied by incantations and spells to secure their effectiveness. From the marriage of medicine and magic sprung the so-called 'magical' healing, first introduced in Mesopotamian and Egyptian medicine and surviving through the course of time in the craft of the root-cutters, drug-sellers, wandering healers and charlatans. These were the representatives of folk-medicine contemporary to the author's time to whose craft he refers when equally discarding spell-casting, root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs as secrets which were illegitimately (i.e. without God's command) revealed by the rebel angels.

2.8. The medical implication of the astrological teaching of the Watchers

The teaching of the Watchers in 1 Enoch 8:3 is not restricted to the transmission of knowledge about magic and herbal medicine (i.e. root-cutting) but expands on the interpretation of celestial and meteorological phenomena. The Watchers' names⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁴ Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 135.

⁴⁶⁵ I use here the transcription of the angelic names from the Aramaic used by Milik. The Watchers' names are not the same throughout the textual evidence. For a comparison among Aramaic, Greek and Ethiopic

are linked to the theme of their instruction: Baraq'el, 'lightning of God', taught the signs of the lightning; Kôkab'el, 'star of God', taught the signs of the stars; Zêq'el, 'lightning-flash of God', taught the signs of lightning-flashes; Ar'taqoph, 'the earth is power', taught the signs of the earth; Šamšî'el, 'sun of God', taught the signs of the sun; Šahrî'el, 'moon of God', taught the signs of the moon.⁴⁶⁶ This angelic teaching of sign lore points to the instruction of the art of astrology.

It should be noted here that the Watchers' astrological teaching is of interest to the present thesis as far as it can cast some light on the medical situation in the author's time. My aim is thus to explore if and how astrology was connected to medicine in the ancient world and if the instruction of sign lore conceals any specific medical connotation.

2.8.1. Astral medicine

2.8.1.1. Astrology and herbal medicine

Astrology was associated with herbal medicine since early antiquity as its role was central to the preparation and administration of herbal remedies.⁴⁶⁷ Most notably, in Mesopotamian medical literature the instruction to expose the herbal (or compounded) drugs under astral irradiation is very frequent. The cuneiform medical tablets of Kouyunjik give ample evidence on this. For example, for the treatment of head diseases it is said:

'in *kurunnu*-beer thou shall wash, set it under the stars; in the morning ..., he shall eat and recover: flat thou shalt reduce, bray, in oil and beer anoint, the under part (?) of thorns ...'⁴⁶⁸

Similar instructions are given in a recipe to turn grey hair black. The passage reads:

'If a man's head in his youth is full of grey hairs, to darken the grey hair ... into oil thou shalt put until they die, bray, in oil of the cypress of a cemetery thou shalt mix, anoint ... one hundred days thou shalt anoint ..., the charm seven times you shalt

evidence see Milik, *The Books*, 159. The names of the Watchers-astrologers are also listed in 1 Enoch 6:7 among the names of the twenty *decadarchs*. See the list and more on the names in Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 118–124.

⁴⁶⁶ The etymology of the Watchers' names is taken from Milik, *The Books*, 152–154.

⁴⁶⁷ Reiner, 'The Uses', 593.

⁴⁶⁸ No. 2, *AM*. 1.3 (= K. 8346), L. 9.

recite ..., thou shalt pound, therein refined oil ... [under] the stars thou shalt set it,
(on) his head press it, bind on for seven days and he shall recover.⁴⁶⁹

Elsewhere, for eye diseases it is said:

'If a man's eyes are sick and full of blood, unguents (only) irritating (?) the blood,
blood (and) tears coming forth from the eyes, a film closing over the pupils of his
eyes, turning to film, to look oppressing him: thou shalt beat leaves of tamarisk,
steep them in strong vinegar, leave them out under the stars'⁴⁷⁰

The instruction to set the medical compound under the stars has its roots in the belief that celestial bodies had the ability to heal and thus the medicines were exposed to astral irradiation to enhance their healing power.⁴⁷¹

2.8.1.2. Catarchic astrology

Astrology further provided the Babylonian physician—who was both a herbalist and a druggist—with the astrologically auspicious times for the collection of a herb and, in turn, for the preparation and administration of his herbal medicines.⁴⁷² This kind of astrology, which was based on the belief that celestial bodies can influence terrestrial activities—the physician's work in this case—was known in the Hellenistic period as *catarchic* astrology.⁴⁷³

2.8.1.3. Stars: Astral personifications of healing deities

The belief in the healing power of the heavenly bodies led to their invocation as gods.⁴⁷⁴ For the Mesopotamian man, stars were nothing else but night-gods⁴⁷⁵ and masters of herbs who were invoked as such in prayers for alleviation of illness:

⁴⁶⁹ *AM.* 4.1. (= K. 2416), L. 7. The recipe further demonstrates the association of herbal remedies with magical acts (seven-time recitation of charm) and astrology (setting under the stars).

⁴⁷⁰ No. 26, *AM.* 8.1; *AM.* 12.8; *AM.* 20.2 (= K. 2570, etc.), Pl. 9. 1, Col. ii, L. 31. See similar instructions for astral irradiation of herbal remedies in No. 36, *AM.* 16.3 (= K. 3320) + 12.3 (= K. 2575) + 13.1 (= K. 8110) + 18.2 (= K. 2545) + 19.6 (= K. 2533), L. 6; No. 45, *AM.* 14.1 (= K. 8349), L. 7; No. 67, *AM.* 23.2 (= K. 6025), L. 11; No. 68, *AM.* 23.4 (= K. 8273), L. 5; No. 73, *AM.* 29.5 (= K. 3461), L. 4; No. 79, *AM.* 31.4 (= K. 2417), L. 7.

⁴⁷¹ Reiner points out that 'most efficacious are plants growing in the mountains; there on the mountains' heights they are better exposed to the influence of the stars, not only because they are closer to them but also because the atmosphere is thinner': Reiner, *Astral Medicine*, 39.

⁴⁷² Reiner, 'The Uses', 593–594.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 593.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 590.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 591.

‘O star, who illuminates the darkness, who surveys the world from the mist of the heavens! In this night, I kneel before you; decide my case; give me a verdict. Let these herbs wipe out the evil that afflicts me’.⁴⁷⁶

Stars, however, were not unnamed but were identified with specific deities. The most-often-invoked constellation was the Goat (the constellation Lyra) which was identified with the healing goddess Gula.⁴⁷⁷ Besides the Goat constellation, other constellations were also invoked such as the Wagon (or Ursa Major)—most frequently invoked after the Goat⁴⁷⁸—, the star Sirius, the Yoke, Scorpius, Orion and Centaurus.⁴⁷⁹

The invocation of star-gods meant that the Babylonian diviner aimed to beseech the divine so as to succeed divine intervention in healing.

2.8.1.4. Melothesia

Astral-medicine was given further sophistication by the development of the zodiac. Like the stars and planets, the zodiac signs were considered to have power over terrestrial life. Most notably, they were thought to affect illness. For instance, *LBAT*⁴⁸⁰ 1598 reads:

‘When the moon is in Virgo, and the illness belonging to Scorpio moves into Pisces, ... When the moon is in Libra and the illness belonging to Sagittarius moves into Aries, ... When the moon is in Scorpio and the illness belonging to Capricorn moves into Taurus ... When the moon is in Sagittarius and the illness belonging to Aquarius moves into Gemini ... When the moon is in Capricorn and the illness belong to Pisces moves into Cancer ... When the moon is in Aquarius and the illness belonging to Aries moves into Leo ... (LI. 1–6).⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁶ Quotation is taken from Reiner, ‘The Uses’, 595.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 594.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 594.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 595.

⁴⁸⁰ *LBAT* stands for ‘Late Babylonian Astronomical Texts.’

⁴⁸¹ Quotation is taken from M. J. Geller, *Look to the Stars: Babylonian Medicine, Magic, Astrology and Melothesia* (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte 2010 [Preprint 401]), 61.

Similarly, in *LBAT* 1597 it is said that when the moon is in certain zodiacal regions, it can cause diseases.⁴⁸² Such a phenomenon is related to *melothesia*. The concept of *melothesia* originated in Hellenistic times and it is connected to the belief that the zodiac signs dominate certain regions of the human body.⁴⁸³

2.8.1.5. The art of divination: Astro-medical diagnosis and prognosis

A last astro-medical connection can be found in the use of divination in the healing process. In the Mesopotamian world, the healing process was often a combination of medicine, magic and divination. The association of the three domains is evident in the magico-medical texts from Babylonia and Assyria where three distinct figures of medicine men appear, namely the *asû* or the physician, the *āšhipu* or the magical expert, and the *bāru* or the diviner. When a man was ill in his house, the three professionals set off to the latter's house. On the way, the *bāru* observed every omen upon people, animals and things. He informed the *āšhipu* about the omens so that the latter could recite the most suitable incantations to send the illness away from the sick man. When they reached the house, the *bāru* continued to deduce omens from everyone and everything that was in the house and informed the *āšhipu* about the portents. The *āšhipu* began reciting the appropriate incantations to drive off the sickness. Apart from the reciting of incantations the magical expert was also responsible for diagnosing a disease, making prognostications about its course and outcome, and often attempting to determine its cause.⁴⁸⁴ The physician's work involved the preparation and administration of medicines. The most essential procedure required for the preparation of the medicines was their exposure to astral irradiation to make them more effective.⁴⁸⁵ When the *asû* prepared the medicines and began administering them to the patient, the *āšhipu* continued to recite incantations.⁴⁸⁶ No doubt, the incantations were also intended to make the medication more efficacious. In effect, the reciting of the most suitable incantations by the magical expert was determined from the correct interpretations of celestial and terrestrial signs by the diviner.⁴⁸⁷ But also the right interpretation of omens

⁴⁸² For the text of *LBAT* 1597 see *ibid.*, 69–71.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁴⁸⁴ Reiner, *Astral Magic*, 47.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 47–48.

⁴⁸⁶ For a vivid description of the duties of the three medically related figures see Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 51–52.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

meant a proper diagnosis and prognosis of an illness and, in turn, a successful medical treatment. In other words, the interpretation of celestial phenomena was a prerequisite in the healing process. Hence, the art of divination was inseparably connected to the healing process. The physician had the least important role since he was totally dependent on the work of his two colleagues.

From the above, it becomes clear that astrology went hand in hand with medicine in antiquity, forming a type of medicine known as astral medicine. The joint reference of herbal medicine and astrological lore in 1 Enoch 8:3 in connection with the vast use of astrology in Mesopotamian medicine, leaves room to suggest that the denunciation of the astrological teaching of the Watchers may well be a cryptically encoded attack against astral medicine. The latter involved astral irradiation of herbal or compounded remedies, that is, healing through celestial bodies since the latter were considered astral personifications of Mesopotamian deities, *catarchic* astrology and the concept of *melothesia*, recitation of incantations and medical diagnosis and prognosis by means of interpretation of signs and omens. Now, the question is how this medical system became known to the Jews and was thus rejected as reprehensible by the author(s) of the BW.

2.8.2. The spread of astral medicine in the Orient

In Hellenistic times there was a renewed interest in astral science⁴⁸⁸ which appears to have had an impact in the field of medicine. Greek medicine appears to have been influenced by the Hellenistic progress of astronomy/astrology⁴⁸⁹. Most notably, early Greek medicine shares many features in common with late Babylonian astral-medicine. It was in the late classical and Hellenistic times that the transmission and circulation of medical knowledge between Babylonians and Greeks began to take place.⁴⁹⁰ The Greek physician Diocles of Carystus (fourth

⁴⁸⁸ This is well attested in the astronomical poem *Eudoxus' Phaenomena* where the Greek poet Aratus of Soli (late fourth–first half of the third century BCE) vividly describes the constellations and celestial signs.

⁴⁸⁹ The distinction between astronomy and astrology was often not clear in antiquity. In the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman world astrology was often considered 'the practical application of astronomy'; Pieter W. van der Horst, 'Jewish Self-Definition by Way of Contrast in *Oracula Sibyllina* III 218–247', in his *Hellenism-Judaism-Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction*, CBET 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 97.

⁴⁹⁰ R. Thomas, 'Greek Medicine and Babylonian Wisdom: Circulation of Knowledge and Channels of Transmission in the Archaic and Classical Periods', in H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, and M. Stol (eds.) (in

century BCE) speaks of the ‘ancients’ who ‘made their prognoses of diseases on the basis of the phase and the orbit of the moon.’⁴⁹¹ Although it is not very clear who the ‘ancients’ are here, Diocles may well refer to Babylonian diviners. This is strengthened by the fact that some of the earliest treatises of the Hippocratic Corpus very much resemble in form and concepts late Babylonian medical texts.⁴⁹² A clear interest in the application of astronomy/astrology in medicine is encountered in the early Hippocratic work of *Airs, Waters, Places*. The author writes:

‘Being familiar with the progress of the seasons and the dates of rising and setting of the stars, he [i.e. the physician] could foretell the progress of the year. Thus he would know what changes to expect in the weather and not only would he enjoy good health himself for the most part but he would be very successful in the practice of medicine. If he should be thought that this is more the business of meteorologist, then learn that astronomy plays a very important part in medicine since the changes of the seasons produce changes in diseases.’⁴⁹³

Elsewhere in the same treatise, the author reports that the rising of certain constellations can affect diseases. He writes:

‘Care must also be taken at the rising of certain stars, particularly the Dog Star and Arcturus. Similarly, discretion must be exercised at the setting of the Pleiads. It is at such times that the crisis is reached in the course of diseases; some prove fatal and some are cured, but all show some kind of change and enter a new phase.’

Arcturus stands for the Babylonian constellation of the Yoke⁴⁹⁴ which, as mentioned earlier, was frequently invoked in Babylonian medicine.

The decisive encounter of Greek medicine with Babylonian astrology, however, took place in the early third century BCE. Through the foundation of a school of astrology on the island of Cos, the Babylonian priest Berossus introduced ‘into

collaboration with C. R. van Tilburg), *Magic and Rationality in Ancient Near Eastern and Graeco-Roman Medicine*, SAM 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 175.

⁴⁹¹ Philip J. van der Eijk, *Diocles of Carystus: A Collection of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*, SAM 22 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1:131.

⁴⁹² Geller, ‘West Meets East’, 11.

⁴⁹³ All quotations from *Airs, Waters, Places* are taken from G. E. R. Lloyd (ed.), *Hippocratic Writings*, trans. J. Chadwick, and W. N. Mann (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 3rd ed. 1983).

⁴⁹⁴ John H. Rogers, ‘Origins of the Ancient Constellations: I. The Mesopotamian Traditions’, *JBAA* 108, no. 1 (1998), 16.

Greek thought and medicine stellar determinism and the consultation of the stars and planets in the treatment of illnesses'.⁴⁹⁵ Berossus was also the author of the *Babyloniaca* (280 BCE), a three-volume chronicle of Babylonian history and civilisation written in Greek⁴⁹⁶ and dedicated to Antiochus I Soter of the Seleucid Empire. He appears thus to be the agent responsible for reviving the interest in the astral healing system and making the latter more widely known in the Orient.

Beyond this, the initial acquaintance of the Jews with Berossus' astro-medical teaching may have been made in Babylon itself. Jewish families of the *Diaspora* were still living there⁴⁹⁷ and it is very much likely that they were familiar with Berossus' work. Even if they could not read the *Babyloniaca*, it can be assumed with certainty that they were familiar with Babylonian astral medicine after having lived there for so long. In this context, it is also possible that the Jews of Babylon, visiting the land of their fathers or contacting their relatives there, somehow contributed to the spread of Babylonian astro-medical wisdom. Besides, it appears that the *Babyloniaca* had some impact on Jews, at least the literate ones. Josephus, for instance, preserves excerpts from the *Babyloniaca*,⁴⁹⁸ a fact which indicates, first, that he may have had a copy of Berossus' work in his hands, and second, that the Jewish historian held his work in high esteem. All the above show that the Jews were aware of the *Babyloniaca* and that his work somehow appealed to them.

The connection of astronomy/astrology with medicine also appears in later Hellenistic sources, namely in the *Tetrabiblos* of Claudius Ptolemy (second century CE), who particularly connects the development of astronomical medicine with Egypt. He writes:

⁴⁹⁵ Hogan, *Healing*, 66.

⁴⁹⁶ Berossus' work is lost but was quoted by Abydenos, Apollodoros of Athens, Alexander Polyhistor and Josephus (*JA* 1.3.6 [93]; 1.7.2 [158]). Apart from Josephus, the testimony of the other authors is lost but excerpts of it survive in Eusebius (e.g. *PE* IX. XL–XLI; X. IX) and Syncellus (*EC* 25; 50–56; 62–73; 81–87).

⁴⁹⁷ For textual evidence on the presence of Jews in Mesopotamia see F. Joannès, and A. Lemaire, 'Trois Tablettes Cunéiformes à Onomastique Ouest-Sémitique', *Transeuphratène* 17 (1999), 17–34. For more recent evidence on this cf. Laurie E. Pearce, 'New Evidence for Judeans in Babylonia', in Oded Lipschitz and Manfred Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 399–411, where Pearce offers evidence from the textual corpus TAYN ('Texts from āl-Yāhūdu and Našar').

⁴⁹⁸ See, for instance, *JA* I. 93. Also, in *JA* I. 158, Josephus reports the following: 'Berossus mentions our father Abraham, without naming him, in these terms: "In the tenth generation after the flood there was among the Chaldeans a just man and great and versed in celestial lore."' This consequently means that Berossus acknowledged Jewish wisdom.

‘... those who have most advanced this faculty of the art [i.e. prognostication], the Egyptians,⁴⁹⁹ have entirely united medicine with astronomical prediction. For they would never have devised certain means of averting or warding off or remedying the universal and particular conditions that come or are present by reason of the ambient, if they had had any idea that the future cannot be moved or changed. But as it is, they place the faculty of resisting by orderly natural means in second rank to the decrees of fate, and have yoked to the possibility of prognostication its useful and beneficial faculty, through what they call their iatromathematical systems (medical astrology), in order that by means of astronomy they may succeed in learning the qualities of the underlying temperatures, the events that will occur in the future because of the ambient, and their special causes, on the ground that without this knowledge any measures of aid ought for the most part to fail, because the same ones are not fitted for all bodies or diseases; and, on the other hand, by means of medicine, through their knowledge of what is properly sympathetic or antipathetic in each case, they proceed, as far as possible, to take precautionary measures against impending illness and to prescribe infallible treatment for existing disease’.⁵⁰⁰

The concept of *melothesia* is also attested in Ptolemy. He reports:

‘For the parts of the individual signs of the zodiac which surround the afflicted portion of the horizon will indicate the part of the body which the portent will concern, and whether the part indicated can suffer an injury or a disease or both, and the natures of the planets produce the kinds and causes of the events are to occur. For, of the most important parts of the human body, Saturn is lord of the right ear, the spleen, the bladder, the phlegm, and the bones; Jupiter is lord of touch, the lungs arteries, and semen; Mars of the left ear, kidneys, veins, and genitals; the sun of the sight, the brain, heart, sinews and all the right-hand parts; Venus of smell, the liver, and the flesh; Mercury of speech and thought, the tongue, the bile, and the buttocks; the moon of taste and drinking; the stomach, belly, womb, and all the left-hand parts’.⁵⁰¹

The re-emergence of astrology and the vivid interest in astral medicine spread in the Hellenistic Orient by means of Berossus’ astrological teaching hardly left the Jews

⁴⁹⁹ Ptolemy favours the Egyptians here. This is quite sensible though since he himself was Egyptian. In Graeco-Roman times there was a dispute among Babylonian and Egyptian literati about the origin of astronomy/astrology; see Peter W. van der Horst, ‘Antediluvian Knowledge’, in his *Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Studies on Jewish Hellenism in Antiquity* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 140–146.

⁵⁰⁰ *Tetrabiblos* I. 3.16. Quotations are taken from Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, F. E. Robbins (ed. and trans.), LCL (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1940).

⁵⁰¹ *Tetrabiblos* III. 12.148.

unconcerned.⁵⁰² This is evident from the description of the astronomical/astrological lore as the disgraceful teaching of the Watchers. But what were the particular implications that led to such a negative attitude towards astral medicine?

2.8.3. Rejection of astral healing in the BW

For learned Jews like the author(s) of the BW, the problem with astral medicine was that the latter was of non-Jewish origin; in fact, it originated with and was practised by nations such as Babylon and Egypt. For Mesopotamians, the celestial bodies were nothing other than astral personifications of their deities.⁵⁰³ They believed that the astral deities operated healing by making medicines efficacious through astral irradiation (e.g. Gula, the Babylonian goddess of healing). The belief in the healing power of the stars (i.e. astral deities) was based on the notion that these can afflict an illness.⁵⁰⁴ The problem was deeply theological: if the author(s) of the BW had accepted astral healing, this would have been equivalent to acknowledging foreign gods as healers. Traditionally, ancient Israel believed that God was the only healer (Ex 15:26). The BW appears to share the same belief. In particular, in 1 Enoch 10:7, God is said to send Raphael to heal the earth from the corruptions that the Watchers' teaching brought upon it. In other words, God is depicted as the source of healing. Hence, the author acknowledges divine intervention in the healing process but only the intervention of the one God of Israel, not of the Mesopotamian astral deities. Furthermore, if the author was to accept that stars and planets (i.e. celestial manifestations of pagan deities) have a power over terrestrial life and can influence impending events, this would have been like accepting that his God was not the only god in the universe. If he did so, this would have been equivalent of acknowledging the existence of gentile gods. The author thus discards here astral medicine on the basis that it posed a threat to the Jewish monotheistic faith that the Jewish scribal circles wished to consolidate. He does not, however, condemn the heavenly bodies and the meteorological phenomena *per se* but only the interpretation of their signs. This becomes further evident from the *Astronomical*

⁵⁰² Hogan, *Healing*, 67.

⁵⁰³ Ancient Israel was forbidden to follow gentile practices among which was the worship of the heavenly bodies (Ex 20:3–5; Deut 4:19; 17:2–4). Nevertheless, ancient Israel appears to have breached such a commandment (2 Kings 17:16; 23:5, 11 Jer 8:2; 19:13; Ez 8:16–17; Zeph 1:4–6).

⁵⁰⁴ Reiner, *Astral Magic*, 8; 59.

Book which contains old traditions that are also to be dated in the third century BCE. In 1 Enoch 78:1, Uriel, the leader of the heavenly bodies, reveals to Enoch everything regarding the courses of the heavenly luminaries. In contrast to the Watchers' astrological teaching, Uriel's instruction is legitimate because it was revealed with God's consent. Similarly, in the *Parables* the angelic guide of Enoch reveals to him hidden secrets about celestial phenomena, such as the chambers of the winds, the intensity of moonlight, the divisions of the stars, their names and their subdivisions, thunder peals and lightings (1 En 60:11–12). In both cases, the astronomical lore revealed is judaicised. Hence, one may safely assume that the problem of the author with astral medicine was not the heavenly bodies themselves but their use in gentile healing practices.⁵⁰⁵

In brief, the denunciation of astrological lore in 1 Enoch 8:3 may well be an indirect reference to astral medicine. The revived interest in the art of astrology which led in turn to the re-emergence of astral medicine through the teaching of Berossus posed a threat to the monotheistic ideal that the Jewish scribes wished to establish. For this reason, sign lore is classified as one of the reprehensible crafts taught by the Watchers.

⁵⁰⁵ Hogan, *Healing*, 76.

3. HEALING LANGUAGE IN THE EPISTLE

The final section of this chapter deals with the language of healing found in the Epistle and particularly in 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3 where the author describes the punishments of the wicked and the rewards of the righteous, respectively. These verses are of interest here as their content and language provide an intertextual link with the story of the Watchers and are reminiscent of the oath of the Watchers in 1 Enoch 6:4–5, as well as the angelic instruction of magico-medicinal practices in 1 Enoch 8:3 (cf. 7:1).

3.1. The Epistle (91–105)

The title ‘Epistle’ derives from the colophon at the end of the Chester Beatty-Michigan Papyrus (ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΕΝΩΧ).⁵⁰⁶ The title is also suggested by the designation of the piece of Enoch’s writing as ‘epistle’ in 100:6 (τότε ὁψονται οἱ φρόνιμοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ κατανοήσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς γῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τούτους τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ταύτης).⁵⁰⁷ Most Ethiopic manuscripts, however, preserve the reading ‘that which was written by Enoch’, which appears to be consistent with the reading of 4QEn^g 1 ii 22.⁵⁰⁸

The Epistle⁵⁰⁹ contains three main discourses that address both the righteous and the wicked.⁵¹⁰ On the one hand, the righteous are encouraged to be vigilant (94:3–4; 101:1; 104:6), not to be afraid (95:3; 96:3; 102:4; 104:6) but to be hopeful (96:1; 104:4) and courageous (102:4; 104:2) as the Day of Judgment will come when the sinners will be punished (96:1, 8; 97:1–2; 98:10, 14; 99:1, 9, 16; 100:7; 103:8; 104:5) and the righteous will rejoice (103:3–4; 104:4, 13). On the other hand, in a series of woe-oracles (94:6–95:2; 95:4–7; 96:4–8; 97:7–10; 98:9–99:2; 99:11–16; 100:7–9; 103:5–8), the wicked are reprimanded for their iniquity and they will be punished at the Day of Judgment (95:2; 98:10; 99:15–16; 104:5).

⁵⁰⁶ H. F. D. Sparks (ed.), *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1984), 177; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 186; 188.

⁵⁰⁷ VanderKam, *Enoch*, 171; Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 188. The quotation is taken from Black, *Apocalypsis Henochi graece*, 40.

⁵⁰⁸ Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 188; 217–219.

⁵⁰⁹ I follow here Stuckenbruck’s suggestion on the ‘frame’ (92:1–5; 93:11–94:5; 104:9–105:2) and ‘body’ (94:6–100:6; 100:6–102:3; 102:4–104:8) of the Epistle; *ibid.*, 188.

⁵¹⁰ For a detailed outline of the Epistle see *ibid.*, 189–190.

3.2. 1 Enoch 95:4

1 Enoch 95:4 belongs to the second woe-oracle against the wicked (95:4–7). The verse reads:

(Eth) ‘Woe to you who pronounce curses so that they will not be loosed: healing will be far from you because of your sins.’⁵¹¹

The pronouncement of curses here is reminiscent of the Watchers’ oath in 1 Enoch 6:4–5 which they swore binding themselves with imprecations so as not to withdraw from descending on earth, taking wives for themselves and begetting children (1 En 6:2).⁵¹² Furthermore, the reference to curses may allude to the magical arts that Hermoni is said to have taught (1 En 8:3). Curses were an inextricable part of witchcraft employed to inflict harm on others.⁵¹³ Magicians often made use of them to render their spells unbreakable.⁵¹⁴ The reference to the irreversibility of curses in 1 Enoch 95:4 (i.e. ‘will not be loosed’) may well point to some kind of magical formula which contained a curse to make the spell irreversible. Moreover, the pronouncement of curses may well refer to Shemihazah’s instruction of spell-casting and cutting roots (1 En 8:3a; cf. 7:1).⁵¹⁵ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the craft of root-cutting involved the pronouncement of curses and the recitation of incantations for the appeasement of a dangerous root and its rendering as efficacious for healing. It is most probable that such curses and incantations involved invocations of gods and the pronunciation of the Name of God. This suggests that the wicked of the Epistle, like the root-cutters of the BW, were portrayed as using such curses for healing purposes. If so, the reference to ‘healing’ in the second part of the lemma is ironic: the wicked make use of cursing to bring healing but this very same practice deprives healing from them.⁵¹⁶ In other words, it is cursing that prevents the blasphemers from receiving

⁵¹¹ Quotation is taken from *ibid.*, 273.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, 276.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁵¹⁴ See Olson, *Enoch*, 230; 260, note 5.

⁵¹⁵ Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 277–278.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 276; cf. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), 237 and Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 464. The reference to ‘healing’ can have a further symbolic use here: deprivation of healing as destruction of the impious. Such use of healing is encountered in Malachi 4:1–2 where it is said that in the Great Day of the Lord the evildoers will be burnt but the righteous will receive healing. This suggests that the impious are entitled to no healing; instead, they will be destroyed by the righteous: ‘And you shall tread down the wicked, for they

healing and further determines their destruction at the Day of Judgment. The reference thus to curses may well indicate that the author of the Epistle had in mind magical formulas used in healing. This can be taken as proof that magical healing was also prominent in the time of the Epistle. The particular mention of cursing might be due to a certain increase in the use of curses at the author's time. The phrase 'so that they will not be loosed' seems to indicate that the author considers such curses as truly effective.⁵¹⁷

The reference to 'sins' at the end of the lemma refers to the pronouncement of curses. Cursing is considered sinful because of its association with the magical realm. In particular, cursing reflects the human attempt to subjugate the supernatural powers so as to serve the blasphemer's aims (i.e. inflict harm or achieve healing). The pronouncement of curses most probably involves a misuse of the Name of God, a fact that would make cursing look reprehensible in the author's eyes. Moreover, curses are regarded as sins because their instruction does not originate from God.⁵¹⁸ The teaching of cursing goes back to the forbidden instructions of the Watchers. Their teaching is reprehensible because it was illegitimately revealed (i.e. without God's consent) to human kind. In 1 Enoch 10:8, Asael is said to have been the Watcher to whom all sin is ascribed. Thus, like the Watchers who were punished for the sinful union with mortal women, the revelation of forbidden secrets and the propagation of children (cf. 1 En 10:4–8, 11–14), the wicked of the Epistle will be punished too (i.e. they will find no healing), because they make use of the sinful instruction of the Watchers (i.e. curses). In brief, in 1 Enoch 95:4 the wicked are viewed as those who continue the sinful teaching of the Watchers, that is, magical and/or magico-medicinal crafts, and should thus be punished.

will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts' (Mal 4:3, NRSV). Furthermore, only the righteous are entitled to healing in Jubilees 23:30. There, it is said that the Lord will heal his servants whereas the unrighteous will suffer the punishments—among which disease and stomach pain, fever and death (cf. Jub 23:13)—that the righteous suffered before the Great Day of Judgment. I will comment more on this passage in the penultimate chapter.

⁵¹⁷ Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 279.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 279.

3.3. 1 Enoch 96:3

The theme of the woe in 1 Enoch 95:4 ‘is picked up and reversed’, in Stuckenbruck’s words, in the consolation to the righteous in 1 Enoch 96:3.⁵¹⁹ The verse reads:

(Eth) ‘You, however, who have suffered: do not fear; for you will have healing, and a bright light will shine upon you, and you will hear a sound of rest from heaven.’⁵²⁰

In contrast to the fortune of the wicked, the righteous ones will receive healing in the Day of Judgment. The latter will come suddenly (1 En 96:6) and sudden will be the punishment of the sinners (1 En 95:6; 96:1).

The author addresses not the righteous dead but the ones who are still alive,⁵²¹ his contemporaries who currently suffer from the wicked. Their suffering can be taken to refer to the injuries or illnesses that the wicked inflicted on them by means of irreversible curses. The suffering of the righteous is the devastating aftermath of the practice of the antediluvian illegitimate teaching of the Watchers. But the author exhorts the righteous not to fear as they will receive healing. The source of healing is not stated here. However, the rest of the verse with the reference to light and the hearing of a heavenly sound of rest suggest that healing will come from heavens.⁵²² In this way, the author settles God as the ultimate and true healer, and this is in contrast to the false healers of 1 Enoch 95:4 who, by means of curses, attempt to inflict harm or achieve healing.

The connection between healing and light worked in 1 Enoch 96:3 is reminiscent of Malachi 4:2:

‘But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings’ (NRSV).

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 275.

⁵²⁰ Quotation is taken from *ibid.*, 283.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 292.

⁵²² Nickelsburg argues that ‘with healing comes the presence of God, here denoted by the theophoric light ... and the voice of God’: Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 466. Reference to light in connection with the salvation of the righteous is also present in 1 Enoch 5:6; on this see *ibid.*, 161–162.

Stuckenbruck notes that ‘the reception of healing and light is a metaphor for the encouragement to be experienced by God’s people; the combination occurs also in 4Q374 2 ii 8 in the context of paraphrasing the deliverance of Israel from Egypt: “and when he let his face shine unto them for healing, they strengthened [their] heart again ...”’⁵²³

The last clause of the verse is reminiscent of 1 Enoch 8:4 where it is said that the cry of those who suffered on earth from the wickedness and iniquity that the Watchers’ teaching inflicted on humans went up to heaven. Here, the author of the Epistle assures the righteous that they ‘will hear a sound of rest from heaven.’

In summary, the author of the Epistle uses language of healing to describe the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous in 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3, respectively. Such language alludes to the story of the Watchers. More precisely, when the author describes the wicked as those who pronounce irrevocable curses (1 En 95:4), he might have had in mind the forbidden teaching of the fallen angels about magically oriented crafts in 1 Enoch 8:3 (cf. 7:1), as curses were usually uttered in witchcraft either to cause harm or injury or to achieve beneficial results (e.g. healing). The emphasis on the pronouncement of curses indicates that the latter must have been a rather famous or perhaps the most famous magical act in his time. The reference to their irreversibility indicates that the author was aware of these curses and believed in their potency. The reference to curses with all their magico-medical implications suggests that the author probably had to deal with a similar situation to the one reflected in the BW, that is, the wide use of magical healing practices. These must have been prominent in the time of the Epistle demonstrating that the Jews of the second century BCE were not only aware but also made use of such practices, provoking the reaction of literate Jews to describe such practitioners with woes and to pronounce their destruction in the Day of Judgment. The popularity of such practices must have been great because the Jews defied the warning of the author(s) of the BW about their illegitimacy, continued to practise them and provoked the author of the Epistle to make mention of them again. In brief, the testimony of the BW and the Epistle indicates that magical healing

⁵²³ Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch*, 293; for further comments cf. *ibid.*, 293.

practices have had a prominent place in Jewish life of the third and second centuries BCE.

4. CONCLUSION

The author(s) of the BW describe(s) witchcraft, root-cutting, the knowledge of herbs and astrological lore as the forbidden teaching of the Watchers (1 En 7:1; 8:3). The instructions of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs represent the crafts of herbal medicine and botany. Their association with the magical realm indicates that the author(s) refer(s) to magico-medical practices. In antiquity, plants and plant products were considered to have not only medicinal powers but also magical properties of their own, and their connection to magical practices was primarily based on such a consideration. The craft of root-cutting was also impregnated with magical rites and formulas among which the recitation of the Name of God must have had a prominent place. The author(s) thus reject(s) root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs because they were used in magical healing practices.

Furthermore, the instruction of sign lore might be an implicit reference to astral medicine. The latter received a particular boost in the early third century BCE due to a renewed interest in astronomy/astrology and was spread in the Orient by means of the astrological teaching of the Babylonian priest Berossus. The common features that early Greek medicine shares with late Babylonian astral medicine suggest that there should have been a certain influence of the latter upon the former. This is strengthened by the fact that certain Hippocratic treatises are astrologically oriented. A vivid interest in signs is also encountered in the third-century BCE Greek poet Aratus whose *Phaenomena* contains (in its first half) the lost work of the Greek astronomer Eudoxus of Cnidus (late fifth to ca. mid of fourth century BCE), a detailed description of constellations and heavenly signs.⁵²⁴ There is nothing negative in Aratus' description of the signs unlike the author(s) of the BW who devote(s) few lines to describe the signs of celestial bodies as part of the instructions of the fallen angels. It was not the heavenly bodies themselves that troubled the author but the knowledge of their signs as used in astral medicine. In particular, astrological divination was used for the diagnosis and prognosis of a disease in Babylonian medicine. Moreover, for the Mesopotamian man the

⁵²⁴ For the Greek text and the English translation of *Phaenomena* see Douglas A. Kidd (ed.), *Aratus: Phaenomena*, CCTC 34 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

heavenly bodies were astral deities which could either cause or heal an illness and make a herbal remedy efficacious by their astral irradiation. If the author was to accept astral medicine, this would be equal to accepting gentile deities as healers. In effect, this would have been a breach in the monotheistic Yahwistic religion in which God was the only and ultimate healer for Israel (Ex 15:26). Thus, the author rejects sign lore because of its implications in idolatrous astro-medical practices.

The magico-medical content of the Watchers' teaching suggests that the author(s) was/were addressing fellow Jews who were acquainted with magico-oriented healing practices. These were probably average Israelites, common people, who had a general predisposition towards occult practices (cf. Ex 22:28; Deut 18:10–11). As at the beginning of the Hellenistic period, when changes in language, worldview and culture had an increasing impact on people's lives, the people of that time needed more than ever to feel that they had control of their lives and that their fortune lay in their hands. On the one hand, by means of incantations, amulets, magical herbs, love-philtres and poisonous potions they claimed to exorcise demons, to cure an illness, to avert one's feelings or to cause harm and/or death. On the other hand, by means of sign-interpretation they claimed to subjugate the heavenly powers, to prognosticate the future, to diagnose and prognosticate the course of a disease and find the most appropriate healing treatment. All these offered a feeling of hope and security in the unstable environment of Hellenistic times. There is no reason to believe that the Jews did not share the same feelings with the rest of the nations living in the new world that Hellenism brought with it and that did not use the same means to accommodate their lives. Hence, it appears that two trends were in existence among Jews at the time of the author(s) of the BW; the one, represented by the average Israelite, embraced magico-medical and astro-medical practices, whereas the other, represented by the intellectual elite (e.g. the circles to which the author(s) of the BW belonged) considered such practices as a threat to Judaism and struggled to preserve the latter intact from any gentile elements. The author(s) thus warn(s) his fellow Jews against such practices by depicting them as the illegitimate teaching of the fallen angels; that is, they were revealed to men without God's consent, but also as impure since they were an outcome of the sexual union of the Watchers with the daughters of men.

Finally, the author of the Epistle sets the aspect of healing in a punishment-reward frame that will take place at the Day of Judgment. Most notably, he draws from the BW to describe the reversed fortunes of the wicked and the righteous in 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3, respectively. In particular, he says that those who pronounce curses will find no healing but the righteous ones who have suffered from the wicked will receive healing. The language of healing used in these verses alludes to the illegitimate teaching of the fallen angels and specifically to 1 Enoch 8:3 (cf. 7:1) where the Watchers teach magico-medicinal crafts which involve the utterance of curses. The latter were used either to inflict harm, injury and illness, or to bring healing. The reference to cursing solely demonstrates that the latter was largely used at the time of the author of the Epistle. Despite the warning of the author(s) of the BW about the illegitimacy of occult practices, the Jews appear to have continued to practise magical healing even a century later. The view of the literate Jews, however, did not change; like the author(s) of the BW, the author of the Epistle sees magico-medicinal practices as illegitimate because they do not originate from God. Thus, it appears that the attitudes towards medicine in the BW and the Epistle revolved around a discussion of the legitimacy of contemporary medical practices.

CHAPTER 3

MEDICINE AND HEALING IN TOBIT

1. INTRODUCTION

The present chapter examines the medical and healing material found in the Book of Tobit. More precisely, special focus is given to the unsuccessful medical treatment Tobit is said to have received from physicians (2:10) and to the God-given remedies, namely the fumigation of the fish's heart and liver and the fish-gall ointment (6:5; 8–9), revealed by Raphael to Tobias for the cure of Tobit's blindness and for the expulsion of the demon Asmodeus who nastily troubled Sarah.

The Book of Tobit is perhaps the only place in Jewish writings from the early Hellenistic period where the two types of Hellenistic medicine, namely rational (or scientific) medicine and magical healing practices, are set off against each other in clear opposition. My aim here is to investigate the particular reasons involved in the author's denouncement of the physicians' medical treatment and his acknowledgement of magico-medical cures. In an effort to do so, I will examine the multiple textual witnesses for Tobit 2:10 and 6:5; 8–9 and compare them in order to detect the earliest readings on which my analysis will be founded.

1.1. The Book of Tobit

1.1.1. Nature and content of the book

The Book of Tobit is a Jewish didactic narrative from the Second Temple period which harmoniously combines the element of fairy tale with biblical motifs.⁵²⁵ It bears the name of a pious Jew of the Dispersion who is the central character of the story he himself narrates. The story describes the misfortunes of two related families of the Jewish Diaspora, the family of Tobit in Nineveh and the one of Raguel in Ecbatana. The misfortunes concern two characters of the story: Tobit and Sarah, the daughter of Raguel. On the one hand, Tobit is said to have acquired white spots in his eyes due to sparrow droppings (2:9–10). The incident with the sparrows comes only after Tobit has buried the body of a dead compatriot (2:7–8) and it appears that, although he piously buries his compatriot, he suffers physical

⁵²⁵ Otto Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha: An Introduction* (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 30. Kaiser describes the book as 'a wisdom moral tale with novelistic features': *ibid.*, 31.

damage. On the other hand, Sarah is a widow of seven husbands as each was killed by the demon Asmodeus, each one in his wedding night (3:7–8). The solution to their problems comes from God who sends his archangel Raphael—disguised as Azariah (5:4, 13)—to instruct Tobias, the son of Tobit, with healing remedies to cure his father’s ailment and to save Sarah from the demonic affliction (3:17). Indeed, Raphael’s fish remedies succeed in curing Tobit’s blindness and drive Asmodeus away (8:3; 11:12–13).

1.1.2. Date of composition

The events narrated take place in Nineveh of Assyria and in Ecbatana and Rages of Media during the Neo-Assyrian period (eighth–seventh centuries BCE).⁵²⁶ Tobit himself states that he lived under the reigns of the Assyrian kings Shalmaneser V (727–722 BCE), Sennacherib (705–681 BCE) and Esarhaddon (681–669 BCE).⁵²⁷ This information, however, does not mean that the book was composed near this time. Besides, Tobit erroneously says that Sennacherib was the son of Shalmaneser, whereas he was the son of Sargon II (722–705 BCE). This indicates that the author of Tobit was not a contemporary of the Assyrian kings mentioned above, otherwise he would not have mistaken the order of their reigns, that is, Shalmaneser, Sargon II, Sennacherib and Esarhaddon.⁵²⁸ Hence, a post-exilic date for the Book of Tobit is more likely.

The prominent view among scholars is that the Book of Tobit was composed somewhere between 225 and 175 BCE.⁵²⁹ The *terminus ante quem* for this dating is based on the reference to the fulfilment of the sayings of the prophets of Israel (Tob 14:4) which presupposes recognition of the writings of the OT prophets as Scripture, as well as to the phraseology (i.e. ‘the Book of Moses’ in Tobit 6:13; 7:11–13 and ‘the Law of Moses’ in Tobit 7:13) which presupposes acknowledgement of the authority of the Pentateuch that took place sometime after the fourth century BCE.⁵³⁰ Furthermore, the lack of evidence that would point to the activities of Antiochus IV Epiphanes to hellenise the Jews of Judaea or to the

⁵²⁶ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 50.

⁵²⁷ Tobit 1:12–14, 16–18, 22; 2:1.

⁵²⁸ On this see Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 15; 22.

⁵²⁹ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 51.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

agitated environment that led to the Maccabean revolt,⁵³¹ as well as the lack of any connection to the sectarian beliefs of the Qumran community, suggests a *terminus post quem* sometime in 175 BCE.⁵³²

1.1.3. Place of composition

There has been a long debate about the place of composition of the Book of Tobit and as yet there is no consensus among scholars. As already mentioned, the events of Tobit's story take place in Assyria and Media, that is, in the eastern Diaspora of Mesopotamia. The places that have been considered as possible places for the book's provenance are Assyria (that is, the geographical setting of the book), Egypt and Palestine.

Zimmermann argues that due to the unhistorical order the author of Tobit gives for the reigns of the Assyrian kings, as well as his unfamiliarity with the geographical setting, Assyria cannot have been the place of composition.⁵³³ He also considers it unlikely that the book was written in Egypt as it gives certain information that could hardly be true in pre-Christian Egypt. For instance, the author makes mention of camels and sheep as if they were in general usage, but this picture is simply not true for Ptolemaic Egypt.⁵³⁴ On this, Haupt notes that if the book was composed in Egypt, the author would not have mentioned that the demon Asmodeus fled to the upper part of Egypt when he smelled the burnt fish entrails (Tob 8:3).⁵³⁵ To this, it should be added that if Egypt was the place of composition, then the author might have not been so negatively disposed towards the scientific methods of the physicians' treatment (Tob 2:10), prominent in Alexandria, the city that fostered the scientific research of well-known physicians and biologists of the Hellenistic world. If the author of Tobit came from Egypt, then it would be difficult to accept that he rejected contemporary achievements of medical research that took place in his land.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 52. To this dating one has to add the view that chapters 13 and 14 are considered to be later additions to the text. Zimmermann dates both sometime after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE; Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 24–27.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵³⁵ Paul Haupt, 'Tobit's Blindness and Sara's Hysteria', *PAPS* 60, no. 2 (1921), 75.

With regard to Palestine, Zimmermann argues that the book cannot have been composed there as ‘there is scarcely any other extracanonical book that conveys so unmistakable an impression of being written in the Dispersion ... The author strongly conveys the immediate feelings of one crying out in the Dispersion.’⁵³⁶ Fitzmyer, however, notes that ancient Palestine may still be considered as a possible place of composition ‘because of the picture of the faithful Jew Tobit and his dedication to the Temple, tithing, and Jewish customs, all of which are logically at home there.’⁵³⁷

Founding his argument on the burial-theme, Zimmermann argues that the book was composed in Antioch of Syria. More precisely, he suggested that the burial of Tobit’s dead compatriots indirectly points to the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes who prohibited the burial of the Jewish slain (2 Macc 9:15).⁵³⁸ Zimmermann concludes that Antioch was the place of composition of the Book of Tobit as there ‘lived the largest percentage of Jews outside Palestine.’⁵³⁹ Fitzmyer, however, suggests that the ‘eastern Diaspora would be a more logical setting for the composition, because it is the scene of most of the events in the book. The Aramaic language was used there, and Jews lived in that area as a result of both the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.’⁵⁴⁰ It may well be that the eastern Diaspora (i.e. Assyria and Babylonia) was the book’s provenance as the author has profound knowledge of exorcistic rituals and magical therapeutic treatments prominent in the Mesopotamian medical system, as I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter. Such an explanation, however, does not account for the historical and geographical discrepancies found in the book that one would not expect from an author whose place of origin was there.⁵⁴¹ This leaves again open the possibility that the book was composed in ancient Palestine, which might also be suggested by the vivid interest of Tobit in his fatherland (Tob 1:4, 6–7; 13:8–9, 11, 16–17) and in the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple (Tob 13:10, 16; 14:5).⁵⁴²

⁵³⁶ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 18–19.

⁵³⁷ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 53; 54.

⁵³⁸ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 19.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁵⁴⁰ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 54. Moore also considered it probable—although with some reservations—that the book was composed in the eastern Diaspora; Moore, *Tobit*, 43.

⁵⁴¹ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 54.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 54.

1.1.4. Textual evidence

The Book of Tobit has been transmitted in several languages, *inter alia* in Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopic. Prior to the discovery of the DSS, the most important witnesses for Tobit were the Greek and Latin translations.⁵⁴³ In what follows, I will briefly introduce the most prominent textual witnesses for Tobit known today.

1.1.4.1. The Greek recensions

The Greek witnesses of Tobit are the second oldest versions of the story.⁵⁴⁴ There are three Greek recensions known today: the *Short* Recension (G1) of Codices Vaticanus (B) (fourth century), Alexandrinus (A) (fifth century) and Venetus (V) (eighth century), the *Long* Recension (G2) of Codex Sinaiticus (S) (fourth/fifth century), and the *Intermediate* Recension (G3) found in the late minuscule manuscripts 44 of Codex Cittaviensis and 106–107 of Codex Ferrariensis.⁵⁴⁵ G1 is a curtailed form of G2 and is regarded as ‘a redacted form of the earlier Greek Long Recension, produced in an effort to improve the Greek phraseology and literary character of the Tobit story.’⁵⁴⁶ G2 is considered the nearest witness to the original text due to its affinity to the Tobit fragments found in Qumran.⁵⁴⁷ Finally, G3 preserves a distinct text for Tobit 6:9–12:22 for which it has borrowed from both S and B. As for the rest of the text, G3 reproduces the text of B.⁵⁴⁸

1.1.4.2. The Latin witnesses

The Latin evidence for Tobit comes from the Old Latin witnesses (*Vetus Latina*) and the Vulgate.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁴⁴ The oldest versions of Tobit are found in the Qumran fragments to which I shall refer at the end of this section.

⁵⁴⁵ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 32; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 4–5.

⁵⁴⁶ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 5.

⁵⁴⁷ Stuart Weeks, Simon Gathercole, and Loren Stuckenbruck (eds.), *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions: With Synopsis, Concordances, and Annotated Texts in Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syriac*, FoSub 3 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 3.

⁵⁴⁸ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 5.

1.1.4.2.1. The Old Latin texts (VL)

The VL texts are the oldest translations of the Book of Tobit in Latin. There is not one form of the VL of Tobit but a plethora of versions as the text is preserved in a number of MSS.⁵⁴⁹ To this, one should add the absence of a critical text for the VL of Tobit, an absence that makes the examination of the VL evidence for Tobit a difficult task.

Furthermore, the VL texts have close affinities to the *Long* Greek of S,⁵⁵⁰ a fact which suggests that a similar version to G2 was the basis for the VL.⁵⁵¹ Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the VL texts and it may be that they did not originate from a single *Vorlage*.⁵⁵²

1.1.4.2.2. The Vulgate (Vg)

The Book of Tobit was further translated into Latin by St. Jerome ca. 391–405 CE.⁵⁵³ The books of Tobit and Judith are the only *deuterocanonical* works Jerome translated.⁵⁵⁴ Although Jerome did not have a completely negative view of these books, he certainly did not consider them equivalent to the books of the Hebrew canon.⁵⁵⁵ The reason he translated Tobit was because he was requested to do so by Bishops Chromatius of Aquileia and Heliodorus of Altinum, as the latter ‘were responsible for keeping him afloat financially.’⁵⁵⁶

Jerome claimed that he translated the book in a single day from an Aramaic text. His knowledge of Aramaic, however, was poor and it is therefore likely that he had an assistant skilled in Aramaic and Hebrew who translated for him into Hebrew and he in turn translated into Latin.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁴⁹ For a list of the MSS of the VL of Tobit see *ibid.*, 8, note 32.

⁵⁵⁰ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 34; 129; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 6.

⁵⁵¹ Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 3.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁵³ Vincent T. M. Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with Other Ancient Witnesses*, SBLDS 180 (Atlanta GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 16.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

Furthermore, Jerome's translation of Tobit has affinities to the VL texts, yet its reading is very different as it often paraphrases and curtails the VL texts and/or even adds detail that do not exist in the other ancient versions.⁵⁵⁸ Skemp concludes that the Vg of Tobit 'often relies heavily on VL. In such instances, Vg is more a revision of VL than a fresh translation.'⁵⁵⁹

Finally, Jerome's mention that he translated Tobit into Latin from an Aramaic *Vorlage*, prompted scholars to think that Jerome had in his possession a version of the book that was earlier than the Greek.⁵⁶⁰ But the Qumran fragments of Tobit refuted this theory as Jerome's text has little in common with them.⁵⁶¹ On this, Skemp writes the following: 'all ancient versions of Tobit, in particular Codex Sinaiticus and the Aramaic and Hebrew fragments of Tobit from Qumran, lack these [i.e. Jerome's] additions, which make it clear that the Vg special material was not original to the Book of Tobit.'⁵⁶²

1.1.4.3. The Syriac version

The book of Tobit was also translated in Syriac⁵⁶³ and survives today in two forms: first, Tobit 1:1–7:11a is preserved in the Syro-Hexaplaric MS 8f1 of the seventh-eighth century, which is a copy of a translation produced by Paul of Tella from Origen's Hexapla in 616 CE. Second, Tobit 7:11b–14:15 exists in all Syriac MSS (including MS 8f1).⁵⁶⁴ The first form heavily relies on the Greek text of Vaticanus,⁵⁶⁵ whereas the second form resembles G3.⁵⁶⁶ It appears thus to be, as Zimmermann puts it, 'a confirmatory secondary version.'⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁵⁸ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 6.

⁵⁵⁹ Skemp, 'The Vulgate', 469.

⁵⁶⁰ Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 3.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁶² Skemp, 'The Vulgate', 470.

⁵⁶³ For a critical edition of Tobit in Syriac see J. C. H. Lebram (ed.), 'Tobit', in *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version*, Part IV, fascicle 6: *Canticles or Odes – Prayer of Manasseh – Apocryphal Psalms – Psalms of Solomon – Tobit – 1(3) Esdras* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), i–xiv + 1–55.

⁵⁶⁴ See more in Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 15–16.

⁵⁶⁵ Zimmermann argues that it is 'an obvious translation of the Greek B': Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 34.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

1.1.4.4. The medieval Aramaic and Hebrew recensions

The book of Tobit is extant in Aramaic and Hebrew translations which date quite late. In 1878, Neubauer published the medieval Aramaic version of Tobit found in a MS of the Bodleian Library. This is written in the third person singular—except for the prayer in Tobit 3:1–6 which is in the first person⁵⁶⁸—an element which is also found in the Vg of Tobit.⁵⁶⁹ The medieval Aramaic Tobit was most probably translated into Aramaic from Greek, and not from a Semitic *Vorlage* as initially suggested by its publisher.⁵⁷⁰ Finally, it is written in Late Aramaic, not in Middle Aramaic in which the Qumran Aramaic fragments of Tobit are written.⁵⁷¹

Furthermore, there are four Hebrew medieval witnesses of Tobit. First, the Sebastian Münster text (HM) initially published in Constantinople in 1516 and is considered to be close to the Aramaic Neubauer.⁵⁷² Second, Paul Fagius' text (HF) which was first published in Constantinople in 1517 (or 1519) and is viewed as 'a paraphrastic translation or a free recasting of a Greek text like G1, made by a medieval Jew of Western Europe who introduced much OT phraseology.'⁵⁷³ Third, the London Hebrew Tobit (HL) was found in a thirteenth-century MS in the British Museum, edited and published by Moses Gaster, and is closely related to the Vg of Tobit.⁵⁷⁴ Finally, the Hebrew Tobit of Gaster (HG) which is a 'translation derived from a fifteenth-century Midrash on the Pentateuch that condenses and greatly abbreviates in Hebrew the narrative found in the medieval Aramaic text.'⁵⁷⁵

The medieval Aramaic and Hebrew recensions of Tobit can be of little help in a study that attempts to cast light on the original content of the book of Tobit⁵⁷⁶ mainly because their text is not related to the one of the Qumran fragments of Tobit. Weeks, Gathercole and Stuckenbruck write on this: 'Given the rarity of correspondences between the Qumran readings and any of these later texts, it is

⁵⁶⁸ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 11.

⁵⁶⁹ F. Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 34; 133–135; cf. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 11.

⁵⁷⁰ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 12–13.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁷² Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 35; 136; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 13.

⁵⁷³ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 14; cf. Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 137.

⁵⁷⁴ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 136; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 14.

⁵⁷⁵ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 14.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

unlikely that they will ever resume their place in attempts to disentangle the earlier strands of the tradition.⁵⁷⁷

1.4.4.5. The Aramaic and Hebrew Tobit fragments from Qumran

I left the Qumran evidence for Tobit at the end not because it is of lesser importance but because it was discovered relatively late, that is, in 1952. For Tobit, five fragments have been discovered in total in Qumran Cave 4, namely four Aramaic fragments (4Q196–199), written in Middle Aramaic,⁵⁷⁸ and one Hebrew (4Q200), which date from ca. 100 BCE to the first century CE.⁵⁷⁹ The existence of both Aramaic and Hebrew fragments of Tobit indicates that the book was read both in Aramaic and Hebrew in pre-Christian Palestine, correcting at the same time the erroneous view of Origen that there was not a Hebrew form of Tobit⁵⁸⁰ and ‘reveal that the Greek form of the story, with which he [i.e. Origen] was acquainted, was a version of it produced perhaps in Alexandria, along with the rest of the Greek OT.’⁵⁸¹

In brief, the discovery of the Qumran Tobit fragments is of a great significance as the scholars now have access to the oldest textual evidence for the book of Tobit that can help them reconstruct the earlier strands of the Tobit tradition. The Qumran fragments of Tobit can further reveal the credibility of the translations of Tobit known prior to their discovery. Indeed, they suggest that the Greek *Long Recension* of S and the Old Latin texts are credible witnesses as they are closer to the text of the Qumran MSS⁵⁸² and hence reflect the earlier stages of Tobit’s textual transmission history.

1.1.5. Language

There has been a long debate about the original language of the book of Tobit and there is no consensus among scholars to date. With the discovery of the Qumran Tobit fragments, one would expect that the question of the original language would

⁵⁷⁷ Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 32.

⁵⁷⁸ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 26.

⁵⁷⁹ Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 29. For a table with the verses that each Tobit fragment from Qumran contains, see Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 10.

⁵⁸⁰ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 19; 21.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 9–10; Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 3.

have been cleared up but, as the Qumran evidence for Tobit is both in Aramaic and Hebrew, the original language of Tobit still remains an open question.⁵⁸³ Nevertheless, the fact that the Aramaic scrolls for Tobit exceed in number the Hebrew—only one Hebrew scroll was found (i.e. 4Q200)—strengthens significantly the possibility that Aramaic was the original language of composition. Zimmermann argues that the original language should have been Aramaic as the latter was the *lingua franca* in Western Asia and a popular tale like the Tobit story would have been composed in the language used in daily communication (i.e. Aramaic).⁵⁸⁴ Finally, Fitzmyer holds that ‘the multiple copies of the Qumran Aramaic text of Tobit might suggest that it was read more often in that language than in Hebrew’⁵⁸⁵ and opts for Aramaic as the original language of the book of Tobit.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸³ For a discussion on past and present scholarly views about the question of the original language of Tobit, see Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 18–25.

⁵⁸⁴ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 145–146.

⁵⁸⁵ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 22.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 25. See particularly his arguments against Beyer’s and Wise’s theory of a Hebrew original for Tobit in *ibid.*, 22–25.

2. THE REJECTION OF SCIENTIFIC MEDICINE AND THE LEGITIMISATION OF MAGICO-MEDICAL CURES IN TOBIT

In this section, I will explore the material on medicine and healing found in the Book of Tobit. More precisely, in the first part of this section, I will examine the reading of Tobit 2:10, where Tobit is said to have gone to physicians to be treated for the white spots in his eyes. I will first cite the ancient textual evidence for Tobit 2:10 followed by a comparison of the readings. I will then attempt to reconstruct the medical situation contemporary to the author of Tobit to account for the negative view towards the physicians' medical treatment. In the second part of this section, I will investigate Tobit 6:5, 8–9, where Raphael reveals the therapeutic properties of the fish entrails and their particular usage, in an attempt to examine the two types of medicine reflected in the book and to account for the distinct attitude the author adopts towards them.

2.1. The narrative framework of Tobit 2:10⁵⁸⁷

The author begins with a statement about the content of the book, that is, the story of Tobit, a deported Jew of long lineage (1:1) who lived in the days of Shalmaneser, King of Assyria (1:2). From verse three onwards, Tobit himself narrates his story. The first thing he declares is that he has been a pious Jew all his life who devoted himself to charity, helping his relatives and compatriots while in exile in Nineveh (1:3). The story continues with a reference to his youth when he was still in the land of Israel, to the city of Jerusalem and the Temple (1:4). Tobit refers to the gentile customs practised by his compatriots (1:5), stressing that he was the only one who used to go to Jerusalem for the prescribed festivals with his offerings (1:6–7). He mentions again his charitable activity towards the orphans, widows and converts in Jerusalem (1:8). He further mentions his marriage with a woman of his own family (i.e. Anna) and the son he begot with her, Tobias (1:9). In the following verses, Tobit describes the events after he went as a captive to Nineveh. There, everyone embraced the food of the gentiles, except for him (1:10–11). Because of his righteousness, he says, God helped him to be in the service of Shalmaneser, buying for him everything he needed (1:12–14). He used to travel to Media where he once

⁵⁸⁷ I make use of the Long Greek version (G2) for my narration throughout the present chapter.

entrusted bags of silver worth ten talents to Gabael (1:15). In the following verses, Tobit again refers to his charitable work, adding the (secret) burying of the dead bodies of his compatriots (1:16–18). But when King Sennacherib was informed about the burying, he ordered that Tobit be put to death (1:19). Tobit was afraid and ran away, but all his property was confiscated (1:20). After Sennacherib's murder and his succession by Esarhaddon, Tobit's kinsman Ahikar, the King's head accountant, interceded for Tobit and the latter returned to Nineveh (1:21–22; cf. 2:1). A generous dinner had been prepared for Tobit at his house, but before they began to eat Tobit sent his son to bring any poor fellow Jew to eat with them (2:2). When Tobias came back, he informed his father that he saw the dead body of a compatriot lying in the market-place (2:3). Then Tobit left the house, removed the body from the market-place and carried it into one of the rooms until sunset so he might bury it (2:4).⁵⁸⁸ When the sun went down, he dug a grave and buried the body (2:7) while their neighbours scoffed at him as Tobit was again doing exactly the same thing that had led him to run away from Nineveh in the first place (2:8; cf. 1:19). After burying the dead body, he returned home, washed himself and slept by the wall in the courtyard, having his face uncovered because of the heat (2:9). The next verse, of special interest here, describes how Tobit became unwell due to sparrow droppings and further refers to the unsuccessful medical treatment he received from physicians (2:10).

2.2. Tobit 2:10

A text-critical examination of Tobit is a complex procedure as the book was translated into various languages, as shown above. Tobit 2:10 is a lengthy verse and the textual evidence for it is ample; it is extant in Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew and Syriac. In what follows, I will examine the Greek (G1, G2), Latin (VL and Vg) and Syriac (S1) evidence, as they are the most ancient versions for Tobit 2:10, attempting to demonstrate the differences among the readings. The Aramaic and Hebrew evidence for it comes from the medieval Semitic witnesses, as the verse is

⁵⁸⁸ Scholarship connected the theme of the burial of Tobit's compatriot with the popular story of the 'Grateful Dead', according to which a hero buries somebody's corpse who had not received a proper burial due to debts and he (the hero) is eventually rewarded by the deceased; on this see Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1946), 51–52; Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 5–6; Moore, *Tobit*, 11. Although there are echoes of the 'Grateful Dead' in Tobit's story, the latter departs from it as Tobit is not rewarded after burying his compatriot but falls ill with an eye-defect.

not attested in the Aramaic and Hebrew fragments from Qumran.⁵⁸⁹ The medieval evidence for Tobit can hardly cast any light on the earlier strands of Tobit tradition,⁵⁹⁰ as mentioned earlier in this chapter, and hence they will not be examined here. Finally, for reasons of space, I will not reproduce the verse in its entirety but cite only the medically related material from each version.

2.2.1. The text⁵⁹¹

G1: καὶ οὐκ ᾔδειν ὅτι στρουθία ἐν τῷ τοίχῳ ἐστί(ν) καὶ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν μου ἀνεωγόντων ἀφώδευσαν τὰ στρουθία θερμόν εἰς τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου καὶ ἐγενήθη λευκώματα εἰς τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς μου καὶ ἐπορεύθην πρὸς ἰατροὺς καὶ οὐκ ὠφέλησάν με.

And I did not know that there were sparrows in the wall and when my eyes opened the sparrows dropped warm [excrement] into my eyes and white spots were formed in my eyes and I went to physicians and they did not benefit me.

G2: καὶ οὐκ ᾔδειν ὅτι στρουθία ἐν τῷ τοίχῳ ἐπάνω μου εἰσιν καὶ ἐκάθισε(ν) τὸ ἀφόδευμα αὐτῶ(ν) εἰς τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου καὶ ἐπήγαγεν λευκώματα καὶ ἐπορευόμην πρὸς τοὺς ἰατροὺς θεραπευθῆναι καὶ ὅσῳ ἐνεχρείοσάν με τὰ φάρμακα τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον ἐξετυφλοῦντο οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τοῖς λευκώμασιν μέχρι τοῦ ἀποτυφλωθῆναι.

And I did not know that there were sparrows in the wall above me, and their excrement sat in my eyes and produced white spots; and I was going to the physicians to be treated, and as much as they anointed me with the medicines, the more my eyes were becoming blind with the white spots until they were completely blind.

L1: et ignorabam quoniam passeress in pariete super me residebant, quorum stercora oculis meis calida et induxerunt albugines. et ibam caecus ad medicos ut curarer, et quanto mihi medicamenta imponebant, tanto magis excaecabantur oculi mei maculis, donec perexcaecatus sum.

And I was not aware that sparrows settled in the wall above me, whose warm excrement appeared in my eyes and caused white spots. And I, blind, went to the⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁹ 4Q196 preserves only the reading מל.

⁵⁹⁰ Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 32.

⁵⁹¹ All citations for Tobit are taken from Weeks, Gathercole and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*. I have also given the sigla used in this edition: G1 and G2 stand for the *Short* and the *Long* Greek Recensions, respectively; L1–L3 are the VL witnesses (L1 stands for Codex Regius 3564, L2 for Alcalà Bible and L3 for Codex Reginensis [7 Old Latin section]); L4 is the Vg text of Codex Amiatinus; finally, S1 stands for the Syro-Hexaplaric MS 8f1. The translations are my own. I would like to thank my friend and colleague Lorenzo Cuppi for his valuable comments with regard to the translation of the Latin evidence for Tobit. Also, I wish to thank my supervisor Lutz Doering for his assistance in translating the Syriac Tob 2:10.

L2: ignorans quoniam passeressedebant in pariete super me. quorum decidencia calida stercora insiderunt oculis meis et superducta pupillis oculorum meorum densa nube excecaberunt me. et cum irem ad omnes medicos quanto instantius medicamina inponebant mici tanto magis excecabantur oculi mei donec crescentibus ypocimatis⁵⁹³ perexcecatus sum.

L3: et nesciebam, quoniam passeris super me, quorum stercora resederunt calida in oculi meis; et contigit, ut induerent albuginem oculi mei. cotidie autem Abamad medicus aderat, ut curarer; et quando inunguebar cum medicamentis, tanto magis excaecabantur oculi mei, et albicabant, quoadusque excaecauerunt me.

L4: ex nido hirundinum dormienti illi calida stercore insederent super oculos eius fieretq(ue) caecus.

[illegible]

⁵⁹² The lack of articles in Latin makes the translation of *medicos* problematic. Should it be translated with the definite article? The proximity of L1 with G2 suggests that the translation ‘the physicians’ (G2 τοὺς ἰατροὺς) is appropriate.

⁵⁹³ *ypocimatis* comes from the Greek medical term ὑπόχυμα which means ‘cataract in the eye’; Henry G. Liddell, and Robert Scott, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry S. Jones with the assistance of Roderick McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 9th ed. 1940), 2:1902.

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2.2.2. Textual notes

Apart from the reference to the formation of white spots (λευκάματα) in Tobit's eyes due to sparrow droppings, the Greek readings of Tobit 2:10 show several important differences. G1 is quite abridged as it does not preserve as much information as G2. Both readings preserve the detail that Tobit went to see physicians. However, G1 reads only 'to physicians' (πρὸς ἰατρούς), whereas G2 reads 'to the physicians' (πρὸς τοὺς ἰατρούς). The verb used by both witnesses is πορεύομαι; however, it is used in different tenses. G1 has the Aorist Passive (ἐπορεύθην), whereas G2 use the Imperfect (ἐπορευόμην). The use of the Aorist in G1 indicates that Tobit went only once to physicians, while the use of the Imperfect suggests that Tobit's visit to the physicians was a repeated action. In other words, G2 wants to say that Tobit went more than once to the physicians and that his treatment was not a one-day affair but a continuous process. Furthermore, G1 does not make any mention of the use of medicines (φάρμακα)⁵⁹⁵ or of Tobit's blindness. It merely says that Tobit went to physicians but they did not do any good to him. G2 expands more on this: the physicians anointed Tobit with medicines but the latter made his sight worse (ἐξετυφλοῦντο) until he became completely blind (ἀποτυφλωθῆναι). From the testimony of G2 the reader gains two things: first, G2 makes more precise the cause of Tobit's blindness, that is, the medicines of the physicians, and second the results of his treatment were gradual: it was his sight that first deteriorated and then he became blind.

The reading of L1 denotes that Tobit went progressively blind: first, it was the sparrow droppings that caused Tobit to become blind (*caecus*); second, the

⁵⁹⁵ It is likely that the absence of φάρμακα from the testimony of G1 is due to the magical implications of the word itself. The word φάρμακον is often used in the LXX to denote 'poison' (Wis 1:14) or 'magical potion' (Mic 5:11); Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 2:500. The author of G1 might have been afraid that his readers might associate the word with magical acts and thus he avoided any mention of it; see Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 267. Similarly, G1 omits the word φάρμακον in Tobit 6:5; 11:8, 11. In brief, the author of G1 rejects what the word might express (i.e. a magical potion or poison). This explanation is in line with the tendency of G1 to correct the language and/or even the ideas expressed in G2 in an effort to rationalise them. In G2, however, the term φάρμακα has the meaning of 'medicines, medicaments', as it was physicians, not magicians, that administered them to Tobit. I shall dwell longer on this below.

physicians' medicines aggravated his condition, making him even more blind (*excaecabantur*); third, he ended up losing his sight completely (*perexcaecatus*). *excaecabantur* and *perexcaecatus* are equivalent to ἐξετυφλοῦντο and ἀποτυφλωθῆναι of G2, respectively. With the wording *caecus*, L1 probably refers to the initial stage of blindness the white spots effected in Tobit's eyes. It is in this case that L1 is different from G2; for in L1 Tobit was already blind when he went to the physicians (*ibam caecus ad medicos*). This would consequently mean that for L1 the physicians and their medicines are not to be totally blamed for Tobit's blindness.

L2 is close to G2 and L1, yet very different from them in many respects. First, it adds the phrase 'after bringing a thick cloud on the pupils of my eyes' (*superducta pupillis oculorum meorum densa nube*). The 'thick cloud' (*densa nube*) substitutes the reference to the white spots of G1, G2 (λευκώματα) and L1 (*albugines*). For L2, it is the sparrow droppings, which in turn caused a thick cloud, that initially blinded Tobit (*exceperunt me*) and one discerns here the tendency not to blame solely the physicians for Tobit's blindness. In that, L2 agrees with L1 that Tobit was already blind when he went to the physicians. Second, L2 reads 'all the physicians' (*omnes medicos*). In this way, the scribe of L2 stresses that Tobit consulted all the physicians in existence at his time that were considered able to treat an eye ailment. Third, L2 gives evidence about the way the physicians applied their medicines, that is, 'urgently' (*instantius*). It is possible that the scribe of L2 wanted to stress that Tobit's eye condition was at a critical stage and there was a pressing need for treatment; hence, the physicians acted swiftly with the immediate administration of medicines. Finally, L2 reads 'while the cataracts were growing' (*crescentibus ypodimatis*) and in this way attempts to identify Tobit's eye disease with a cataract (ὕψωμα). Overall, L2 agrees with G2 and L1 in that the medicines of the physicians aggravated Tobit's vision until he completely lost his sight.

L3 is close to G2 in that it preserves the information about the warm sparrow droppings (*passeris ... stercora ... calida*) which caused a white spot (*albuginem*) in Tobit's eyes, as well as making mention of the medicines (*medicamentis*) which

made him completely blind at the end. L3 also agrees with G2 in the nature of the medicines (i.e. ointments, salves) as it uses the verb *inungo*, ‘to anoint’, equivalent of ἐγγρίω of G2. However, when it comes to the reference to the physicians L3 is significantly different. It speaks of only one physician (*medicus*), named Abamad, information which is lacking from the rest of the evidence—apart from L4 that omits any reference to the medical treatment—as all have a plural form of ‘physician’ (G1, G2 ἰατρούς; L1, L2 *medicos*; S1 𐤀𐤊𐤁𐤁𐤁). L2 even adds ‘all the physicians’ (*omnes medicos*), as noted above. It may be that such a deviation was consciously made by the scribe of L3 in order to attribute Tobit’s blindness to the medical treatment of one physician, and not to all physicians. In other words, it appears here that the scribe of L3 did not agree with the rejection of the medical profession as a whole and he probably tried to say that Tobit’s blindness was an isolated case which was erroneously treated by a certain physician. Moreover, L3 reports that the physician Abamad visited Tobit, not *vice versa* as it is the case in the other versions.⁵⁹⁶ Finally, L3 adds that with the medicines Tobit’s eyes were white (*albicabant*), probably wanting to say that the white spot (*albugo*) increased with the application of medicines.

In short, the VL evidence for Tobit 2:10 is not too critical of the medical profession. L1 and L2 say that Tobit’s sight was already in a critical condition before he went for medical treatment, information that makes the physicians look less responsible for Tobit’s blindness. L3 gives responsibility only to one physician, attempting here to restore the reputation of the medical profession as a whole.

Turning now to the evidence of L4, the latter stands on its own as it is very much abridged and significantly different from the rest of the evidence. First, the narration is in the third person singular, not in the first person singular. Second, in L4 the birds are in a nest (*ex nido*) and not in the wall as it is the case in G1, G2 (ἐν τῷ τοίχῳ), L1 and L2 (*in pariete*) and S1 (𐤀𐤊𐤁𐤁𐤁). Third, L4 reads swallows (*hirundium*) instead of sparrows (G1, G2 στρουθία; L1, L2 *passeres*; L3 *passeris*;

⁵⁹⁶ G1, G2, L1, L2 and S1 all report that Tobit himself went to the physicians.

the textual differentiations of VL, priority will be given here to the elements which are common in L1, L2 and L3 and which agree with G2, as well as to the elements that are preserved in the majority of the above versions. These are the following: (1) sparrow droppings fell on Tobit's eyes (G2, L1, L2, L3) and (2) caused him white spots (G2, L1, L3); (3) Tobit went to the physicians (G2, L1, L2) who (4) treated him with medicines (G2, L1, L2, L3); (5) the physicians' treatment was unsuccessful as Tobit went totally blind (G2, L1, L2)⁵⁹⁹. Hence, the following analysis is based on this evidence.

2.3. Comments

2.3.1. The cause of Tobit's blindness

The episode of the sparrow droppings which caused white films on Tobit's eyes comes almost immediately after Tobit has buried the dead body of his compatriot (2:7). The author uses the same 'deed-outcome' pattern as in Tobit 1:18, 20 where Tobit says that he used to bury his compatriots' bodies secretly and had his property confiscated because of this. In the HB, disease is viewed as the outcome of divine punishment for disobedience of the divine ordinances (Lev 26:16; Num 12:10–11; Deut 28:22, 27, 35; cf. Lev 26:14–16). The irony is that Tobit did not commit any misdeed; on the contrary, the burial of his compatriot in Tobit 2:7 was a deed of almsgiving, yet Tobit was repaid with an eye-affliction.

Having in mind Exodus 15:26 and Deuteronomy 32:39 where God is presented as both an inflictor of disease and a healer, one would sensibly surmise that God is the one who has inflicted Tobit's eye-illness by means of sparrows.⁶⁰⁰ Different scholars, however, have expressed varied opinions on this. Moore argued that the sparrows, not God, were the cause of Tobit's blindness.⁶⁰¹ For Fitzmyer, it was Tobit's carelessness about the place he chose to sleep that led to this misfortune.⁶⁰² Moreover, Collins argued that the sparrows are not to be blamed for Tobit's misfortune and that 'his fate cannot be justified as a punishment, any more than the

⁵⁹⁹ L3 reads *excaecauerunt me* ('they blinded me'), not *perexcaecatus* (L1)/*perexcecatus* (L2) *sum* ('I was completely blind').

⁶⁰⁰ Zimmermann characterises the sparrows as an 'agent of God's will'; Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 28.

⁶⁰¹ Moore, *Tobit*, 130–131.

⁶⁰² Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 137.

fate of Job.’⁶⁰³ In brief, the above scholars do not acknowledge God’s involvement in Tobit’s misfortune and consider the latter either as Tobit’s fault or as a fortuitous happening. In Tobit 11:15, however, Tobit himself admits that God afflicted him (G2 ὅτι αὐτός ἐμαστέγωνσέν με). What is more, in Tobit 12:14, Raphael says to Tobit that he was sent by God to test him (G2 πειράσαι; G3 πειρασμός; L1 *tentare*; L2 *tentari*). The testing here refers to Tobit’s eye-illness. Raphael’s statement implies that he is God’s agent of illness. This is also in agreement with the belief that God is the one who afflicts and the one who heals, too. In light of this observation, it is sensible to argue that God sent the disease to Tobit.

2.3.2. The sparrows

The plot of the story is promoted with the reference to the sparrows which resided on the wall under which Tobit slept. A reference to sparrow and swallow is found in Psalm 84:3:

‘Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars. O LORD of hosts, my King and my God’ (NRSV).

Commenting on this, Moore notes that the price to be paid for the existence of birds in God’s Temple was bird droppings.⁶⁰⁴ The same scholar further connects the reference to sparrows with Jubilees 11:11–24, where the demon Mastema sent ravens and other birds to eat the seed and fruits from the fields.⁶⁰⁵

Moore’s connection of the sparrows to the demonic realm is interesting and one might think that such a suggestion is in line with the attribution of Sarah’s suffering to the demon Asmodeus (Tob 3:8). But there is nothing in the text to suggest such a connection. There is not even an adjective to attribute to the sparrows a negative connotation. On this, Collins holds that the sparrows are not demonic and ‘Tobit’s

⁶⁰³ John J. Collins, ‘The Judaism of the Book of Tobit’, in Géza G. Xeravits, and József Zsengellér (eds.), *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology. Papers for the First International Conference on Deuterocanonical Books, Pépa, Hungary, 20–21 May, 2004*, JSJSup 98 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 28. Collins concludes that ‘the problems ... that generate the core story of Tobit, are neither exile nor guilt, but the arbitrary suffering of innocent people, a phenomenon seldom acknowledged in the Hebrew Bible, with the notable exception of Job’: *ibid.*, 29.

⁶⁰⁴ Moore, *Tobit*, 131.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 131. Moore points out that the idea of Satan’s control over birds is also found in Jesus’ ‘Parable of the Sower/Seeds’ (Mark 4:4, 15); *ibid.*, 131.

misfortune is due to natural causes.⁶⁰⁶ Collins' argument receives credit because the white spots, as I shall discuss below, refer to an actual, not fictitious, eye disease. The whole verse of Tobit 2:10 does not suggest any relation to the magical realm,⁶⁰⁷ a connection which would justify the demonic nature of the sparrows; on the contrary, the reference to an actual eye disease is one of the indications for the rationality of the passage. In short, the sparrows should not be understood as incarnation of evil but as the natural cause of Tobit's eye disease.

2.3.3. The white spots

The term λευκώμα means 'a white spot in the eye, caused by a thickening of the cornea'⁶⁰⁸ and occurs in the medical treatises to describe an eye defect. In his *De remediis parabilibus*, (Pseudo-)Galen says that λευκώματα are the cloud-like opacity in the eye (νεφέλια).⁶⁰⁹ The Byzantine chronicler Michael Glycas writes that the sparrow droppings caused a 'leucoma of cornea' in Tobit eyes.⁶¹⁰ Fitzmyer comments that λευκώματα are not related to the eye disease known today as 'cataract'.⁶¹¹

2.3.4. The physicians

In Tobit 2:10, Tobit is said to have visited physicians to receive treatment for the white spots he acquired from the sparrow droppings. It is clear from the textual witnesses for Tobit 2:10 cited above that the physicians' help is viewed negatively as it was the medicines with which the physicians anointed Tobit that led the latter

⁶⁰⁶ Collins, 'The Judaism', 37.

⁶⁰⁷ Even the word φάρμακον, as already mentioned, is not related to magic here as it means 'medicine, medicament', not 'magical potion' or 'poison'.

⁶⁰⁸ Liddell, and Scott, 2:1042.

⁶⁰⁹ See C. G. Kühn (ed.), *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia* (Leipzig: Knobloch, 1827), 14:411.

⁶¹⁰ Papayannopoulos, Laskaratos, and Marketos, 'Remarks', 182. The Greek ophthalmologist Ananias Gabrielides opts for leucoma, pointing out that 'bird droppings are known to contain acids and lime which could cause leucoma': *ibid.*, 183. This suggests that Kollmann's argument about the sparrows being the author's fiction and that they suggest his dearth of medical knowledge is erroneous; Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 294.

⁶¹¹ Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 137. The scribe of L2, as seen above, omits any reference to the white spots but adds the medical term ὑπόχυμα, that is, 'cataract in the eye', to refer to the outcome of sparrow droppings. In other words, for L2 the sparrow droppings caused cataracts in Tobit's eyes.

to complete blindness.⁶¹² A similar hostility towards the medical profession is also viewed in 2 Chronicles 16:12–13. There, the Chronicler infers that King Asa died because he did not pray to God but consulted the physicians.

2.3.4.1. The national identity of the physicians

A question that arises when reading Tobit 2:10 is that of the identity of the physicians. As I have suggested elsewhere,⁶¹³ the author might refer to physicians that were Jews. The HB makes no mention of Israelite physicians; even when there is reference to medical practitioners, it is inferred that these were gentiles (cf. Gen 50:2).⁶¹⁴ Nevertheless, the HB is by no means a medical treatise and therefore one cannot not expect a full account of medical practice. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine that there were no native physicians in ancient Israel. As already mentioned in the introduction, the medical role of the Israelite priests was mainly restricted to hygiene issues (cf. Lev 11–15); the prophets also appear to have had some medical knowledge (cf. 2 Kings 4:18; 20:7) but this does not suffice to say that there were no Jewish physicians. Preuss argues that it is possible that some of the physicians working in Ptolemaic Alexandria to have been Jews.⁶¹⁵ Additionally, it would be odd if ancient Israel had exclusively consulted gentile physicians, when there are repeated prohibitions in the HB to avoid gentiles and their practices (e.g. Deut 18:9–14). Finally, if the author had in mind gentile physicians, then it would be hard to explain why an observant Jew like Tobit, who kept himself so vigorously distant from gentile practices all his life (cf. Tob 1:10–12), went to be treated by gentiles. I suggest therefore that it is possible that the author refers here to physicians of Jewish origin.

2.3.4.2. The spread of Hippocratic medicine in the Near East

If this is the case then, why does Tobit reject the medical treatment of his fellow Jews? What seems to be a probable explanation is that Tobit saw Jewish physicians as apostates who embraced gentile customs (Tob 1:4–5). In particular, I suggest that

⁶¹² As shown above, L1 and L2 are not so categorical on this as they testify that Tobit went to the physicians, already blind, in an effort to reduce responsibility on the latter's part. Nevertheless, they attest that the medical treatment Tobit received from them made him completely blind.

⁶¹³ See my discussion in Maria Chrysovergi, 'Contrasting Views on Physician in Tobit and Sirach', *JSP* 21, no. 1 (2011), 39–42.

⁶¹⁴ Rosner, *Medicine in the Bible*, 7; cf. Wiseman, 'Medicine', 15.

⁶¹⁵ Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, 6; cf. Kagan, *Jewish Medicine*, 27.

they may have been influenced by Hippocratic medicine which became widely known in the Near East with the coming of Hellenism. I will explain my syllogism.

Hippocratic medicine, called after the Greek physician Hippocrates of Cos (ca. 460–ca. 370 BCE), emancipated medicine from any superstition and application of magic to medical treatment, introducing rational thinking into the aetiology of diseases, medical diagnosis and prognosis, and methods of treatment.⁶¹⁶ Hippocratic medicine did not cease to exist with Hippocrates' death nor stay within the narrow limits of the Coan school, but its influence is attested in learned physicians and scientists of the Hellenistic period. These rationally-oriented men of medicine found fertile ground to carry out their research goals in Alexandria of Egypt, the city which, in the third century BCE, developed as the centre of Hellenistic culture. The development of Alexandria as a cultural centre that attracted prominent scientists of the time was due to the keen interest of the Ptolemies to promote arts and sciences.⁶¹⁷ More precisely, ambitious anatomists and biologists found in the Ptolemies the financial support they needed to conduct their research and, in return, the Ptolemies acquired fame for being noble patrons of arts and sciences.

Turning to the text itself, Tobit 2:10 voices a spirit of rationalism: there is nothing in the text to suggest that the sparrows are demonic agents of illness. This consequently means that the sparrow dung which caused leucoma in Tobit's eyes is a natural cause, not a supernatural one. The attribution of a natural cause to a disease⁶¹⁸ indicates the rationalism of Hippocratic medicine which was kept alive in the scientific spirit of the Alexandrian physicians.⁶¹⁹

Bearing the above in mind, the rejection of the physicians' medicine in Tobit 2:10 is a veiled form of propaganda against the cultural invasion of Hellenism. Such a view is in line with the author's polemic against gentile customs and his criticism of fellow Jews for embracing the latter. The Jewish physicians in Tobit 2:10 should

⁶¹⁶ Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 28; Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 181.

⁶¹⁷ Lloyd, *Greek Science*, 1; Lloyd, and Nathan Sivin, *The Way*, 97. For more details on Ptolemaic patronage and the forms of 'indirect' royal patronage in early Alexandria cf. Heinrich von Staden (ed. and trans.), *Herophilus: The Art of Medicine in Early Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 26–30.

⁶¹⁸ This is evident, for instance, in [Hippocrates], *Airs, Waters, Places* 22.

⁶¹⁹ See Lührmann, 'Aber auch dem Arzt', 69.

therefore be understood as adherents of Hellenistic culture, or, to be more precise, of Greek rational medicine.⁶²⁰

2.3.4.3. The existence of medical sects and different methods of treatment

In a further attempt to understand the medical landscape of the time and account for Tobit's rejection of the physicians' medical treatment, one should also refer to the polymorphism of concepts and methods of treatment in contemporary medicine. Most notably, two medical sects developed in third-century BCE Alexandria, namely the Dogmatists and the Empiricists.⁶²¹ On the one hand, the Dogmatists believed that medicine should search for the 'hidden' causes of an illness which would, in turn, suggest the most appropriate treatment. This theory encouraged anatomical dissection with which the 'hidden' causes of an illness might be unveiled. Representatives of this sect were the well-known anatomists Herophilus of Chalcedon (ca. 335–280 BCE) and Erasistratus of Ceos (ca. 325–250 BCE).⁶²² On the other hand, the Empiricists rejected the theory of the Dogmatists and instead suggested that the physician should examine the symptoms of a patient to diagnose a disease and to provide appropriate treatment according to his diagnosis.⁶²³ These two medical philosophies were actually in rivalry with each other.⁶²⁴ As Lloyd and Sivin point out, 'their primary function was not to hand on and preserve a tradition, nor yet to supply what could pass as an official orthodoxy. They served the ambitions of their own members more than of rulers.'⁶²⁵

Bearing in mind the above, the pluralism of medical philosophies and the different approaches towards therapeutics might have been an additional reason for the negative view of the physicians' treatment in Tobit 2:10. How could the author of

⁶²⁰ This argument is still more plausible when one considers that the author of Tobit attempts to legitimise a magical healing ritual such as the fumigation of fish entrails. This consequently points to the rejection of the rationality of Hellenistic medicine.

⁶²¹ A third sect, the Methodists, was developed in the second century BCE Rome by Greek physicians.

⁶²² Owsei Temkin (trans.), *Soranus' Gynecology* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1956), xxv–xxvi.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, xxvi.

⁶²⁴ Such a phenomenon was not new within the circles of scientific medicine. The so-called Hippocratic Corpus, a collection of medical treatises dating between 430 and 330 BCE, was far from being unanimous in its methods of treatment as it contained the works of various medical authors who belonged to rival medical schools of the time, such as the school of Cos and the school of Cnidus; Lloyd, *Hippocratic Writings*, 10.

⁶²⁵ Lloyd and Sivin, *The Way*, 116–117.

Tobit accept therapeutic treatments that were hotly debated within the very same circles (i.e. scientific medicine) from which they arose?

2.3.5. The medicines

The verbs *ἐνεχρέισαν* and *inunguebar* found in G2 and L3, respectively, suggest that the medicines of the physicians might have been medicinal ointments.⁶²⁶

The word *φάρμακον* is polysemous; it can mean ‘poison’ (Wis 1:14) or ‘magical potion’ (Mic 5:11).⁶²⁷ The verb *φαρμακεύω* can either denote ‘to practise sorcery’ (2 Chr 33:6) or ‘to poison oneself’ (2 Macc 10:13; Ps 57:6).⁶²⁸ Also, the words *φαρμακεία* (Ex 7:11, 22, 8:3, 14; Isa 47:9) and *φαρμακός* (Ex 7:11, 9:11, 22:17; Deut 18:10; Mal 3:5) are associated with magical practices.⁶²⁹ However, the context of Tobit 2:10 suggests that *φάρμακον* has the sense of ‘medicament’,⁶³⁰ as physicians—not sorcerers or poisoners—treated with medicines Tobit’s eye disease. Therefore, attention should be directed to the use of medicines by physicians.⁶³¹

It was not until the third century BCE that pharmacology met a rapid progress.⁶³² This was due to the abundance of herbal products. Nutton points out that ‘Alexander’s conquests and the growth of Alexandria to be the major entrepôt for the import and export of rare substances from Africa and India saw a massive increase in the range of herbs and spices becoming available.’⁶³³ The Alexandrian scientists Herophilus and Erasistratus were conducting experimental activities, and it has particularly been argued that they practised vivisection on prisoners.⁶³⁴ The Roman encyclopaedist Cornelius Celsus (ca. 25 BCE–ca. 50 CE) reports on this:

⁶²⁶ For further comments see Chrysovergi, ‘Contrasting Views’, 39.

⁶²⁷ Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 2:500.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:500.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:500–501.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:501.

⁶³¹ See Chrysovergi, ‘Contrasting Views’, 42.

⁶³² Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, 141.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁶³⁴ Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, *Methods and Problems in Greek Science: Selected Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 358.

‘Moreover, as pains, and also various kinds of diseases, arise in the more internal parts, they [i.e. the Dogmatists] hold that no one can apply remedies for these who is ignorant about the parts themselves; hence it becomes necessary to lay open the bodies of the dead and to scrutinize their viscera and intestines. They hold that Herophilus and Erasistratus did this in the best way by far, when they laid open men whilst still alive—criminals received out of prison from the kings—and while these were still breathing, observed parts which beforehand nature had concealed ...’⁶³⁵

Tertullian also writes on Herophilus:

‘There is that Herophilus, the well-known surgeon, or (as I may almost call him) butcher, who cut up no end of persons, in order to investigate the secrets of nature, who ruthlessly handled human creatures to discover (their form and make) ...’⁶³⁶

Herophilus and Erasistratus would have been unable to carry out their experiments without the help of the Ptolemies, who supplied them with criminals from prisons, as Celsus points out, to conduct dissection and vivisection.⁶³⁷

Furthermore, Herophilus is thought to be the authentic author of the medical treatise *On eyes*⁶³⁸ and was ‘the first to distinguish carefully between four coats of the eye and to introduce an influential nomenclature for them.’⁶³⁹ Beyond this, Herophilus, Erasistratus and their followers, as well as the Empiricists, held in high esteem the healing properties of drugs.⁶⁴⁰ Herophilus considered drugs ‘the hands of the gods’, acknowledging at the same time the necessity of human science in their

⁶³⁵ *DM Prooemium* 23–24. Quotations from *De Medicina* are taken from Aulus Cornelius Celsus, *De Medicina*, trans. W. G. Spencer, LCL, 3 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1935–1938). Von Staden says on Celsus’ report: ‘What renders this report particularly plausible is not only the absence of factional polemics on the part of Celsus in this passage ... but in particular the vivid details Celsus provides about the unique circumstances, motivations, and justifications which made vivisection possible’: von Staden, *Herophilus*, 144.

⁶³⁶ *De Anima* X. Quotation is taken from Peter Holmes (trans.), *The Writings of Quintus Sept. Flor. Tertullianus*, ANCL 15, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1870).

⁶³⁷ Von Staden summarises the specific circumstances that permitted dissection and vivisection in early Alexandria: ‘That the dissection and vivisection of humans finally became possible—though only briefly—at Alexandria in the early third century B.C. clearly was due to the exceptional situation which prevailed there. The unusual combination of ambitious Macedonian patrons of science (i.e. the Ptolemies), eager scientists like Herophilus, a new city in which traditional values at first were not considered intrinsically superior, and a cosmopolitan intelligentsia committed not only to literary and political, but also to scientific frontiersmanship, apparently made it possible to overcome traditional inhibitions ...’: von Staden, *Herophilus*, 141.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁴⁰ *DM* V.1.

preparation.⁶⁴¹ With regard to the constituent ingredients of medicines, Herophilus was keen on using vegetal substances as they were easier to obtain than animal and mineral ones.⁶⁴² Indeed, the Alexandrian anatomist made frequent use of ‘hellebore’. Pliny the Elder (ca. 23–79 CE) reports on this:

‘Herophilus compared it [hellebore] to a truly courageous general; having aroused all within, it itself marches out in the van.’⁶⁴³

‘Hellebore’, known in black and white varieties, was used as a purgative and was administered for various curative purposes.⁶⁴⁴

To Herophilus is attributed a drug for the improvement of vision which was a heterogeneous compound of plant, animal and mineral substances.⁶⁴⁵ It may well be that Herophilus also used ‘black hellebore’ for eye illnesses, because ‘black hellebore’, as Pliny mentions, when ‘used as a fomentation it disperses films over the eyes. Therefore, some have also pounded it and made an eye salve.’⁶⁴⁶ However, although hellebore can be very beneficial, care must be taken in its administration as it can be extremely harmful if taken in erroneous doses and without certain precautions.⁶⁴⁷ Herophilus was in fact reproached for administering excessive doses of herbal medicines to his patients and for mixing diverse medical compounds.⁶⁴⁸ Pliny further reports that ‘hellebore is never prescribed for old people or children, or for those who are soft and effeminate in body or mind, or for the thin or delicate.’⁶⁴⁹

With all this in mind, one could make the following suggestion for the case of Tobit 2:10: the author might have had in mind medicines that contained a potent herbal substance (e.g. ‘black hellebore’) which, instead of treating eye defects, worsened them. Also, the author may refer to a situation where contemporary physicians were

⁶⁴¹ Von Staden, *Herophilus*, 19. Herophilus’ motto on drugs is found in Marcellus, *Letter of Cornelius Celsus On Remedies*.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁴³ *NH* XXV. XXIII.58.

⁶⁴⁴ See on this *NH* XXV. XXII.54–XXII.57.

⁶⁴⁵ Georgia L. Irby-Massie, and Paul T. Keyser, *Greek Science of the Hellenistic Era: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2002), 298.

⁶⁴⁶ *NH* XXV. XXII.55.

⁶⁴⁷ On this see *NH* XXV. XXIV.59.

⁶⁴⁸ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 57.

⁶⁴⁹ *NH* XXV. XXV.61.

not yet fully aware of the possible side effects that the medicines they administered could cause, as pharmacology was still at an experimental stage in the third century BCE, a situation that continued into the second century BCE.⁶⁵⁰ If Herophilus and Erasistratus practised vivisection on criminals and slaves, what would possibly stop them and their followers from experimenting with the effectiveness of new medicines on them? Pliny also refers to physicians' experimental disposition. He writes:

‘Physicians acquire their knowledge from our dangers, making experiments at the cost of our lives. Only a physician can commit homicide with complete impunity.’⁶⁵¹

The case of Tobit 2:10 fits well with the medical situation described above. A likely setting for the narrative would be Jewish physicians—who might have received their medical education somewhere in Alexandria—administered to Tobit medicines that were still at an experimental stage, leading to the loss of his vision. The author might have had in mind cases of patients treated, as it were, guinea pigs by physicians who wished to test the efficacy of new medicines.

The ineffectiveness of medical treatment is also attested in *Epidemics* I and III, where 60 per cent of the cases have resulted in the death of the patient.⁶⁵² Similarly, Josephus infers in several instances the ineffectiveness of the therapeutic treatment of physicians (*JW* I. 665; *JA* IX. 121; *Life* 421). He also reports the inhumane approach of a certain physician who is said to have killed his patient (Phasael) by means of poisonous drugs (*JW* I. 272).⁶⁵³

In summary, the author of Tobit may well refer to Jewish physicians who adopted Hippocratic rationalism into medical treatment. It was not the rationalism itself but what it represented, namely the Hellenistic culture, that made the author of Tobit

⁶⁵⁰ The pharmacological activities of the second-century BCE Kings Attalus III of Pergamum and Mithridates V of Pontus are famous. The former tested the power of poisons on his slaves, whereas the latter tested the power of drugs and the poisons produced by reptiles and insects on criminals in order to develop antidotes for his own use; see Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, 142; Lloyd, *Methods*, 359. I will refer to the pharmacological experiments of these kings in more detail in subsequent chapter.

⁶⁵¹ *NH* XXIX. VIII.18.

⁶⁵² Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1990), 486–487.

⁶⁵³ See more in Chrysovergi, ‘Contrasting Views’, 44.

view the physicians' treatment as a fraud. This view may have been strengthened by the fact that there was no unanimous treatment for many diseases but every medical sect had a different approach. Finally, a third factor that may have contributed to the denunciation of rational medicine was the experimental activity of the Hellenistic scientists, as well as the experimental stage of contemporary pharmacology. As I have argued elsewhere, 'Tobit's rejection of the medical arts may also be an indirect attack on the dearth of humane practices among contemporary physicians and scientists.'⁶⁵⁴

2.4. The God-given remedies

Having examined the author's negative disposition towards the medical profession and the reasons for it, I now proceed to discuss the healing remedies the angel Raphael revealed to Tobias. More precisely, I will examine the textual evidence for Tobit 6:5, that is, the first mention that the fish entrails are identified as medicine(s), as well as the evidence for Tobit 6:8–9, where Raphael explains to Tobias the specific utility of the fish entrails.

2.4.1. The narrative framework of Tobit 6:5, 8–9

In chapter three of the book of Tobit the author introduces Sarah's misery: the demon Asmodeus⁶⁵⁵ killed her seven husbands before they consummate the marriage (3:8)⁶⁵⁶.⁶⁵⁷ When she was reproached by one of her father's maids about this situation (3:8), Sarah aimed to hang herself but she decided not to, as she was going to cause sorrow to her father (3:10). Instead, she prayed to God to help her

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁶⁵⁵ The name 'Asmodeus' is the Persian equivalent of *Aeshma-daeva*. According to Haupt, 'Aeshma is the Avestan demon of rage, and *daeva* means *demon*, evil': Paul Haupt, 'Asmodeus', *JBL* 40, no. 3/4 (1921), 175 (italics in the original).

⁶⁵⁶ The demon Asmodeus also appears in the OT pseudepigraphon *Testament of Solomon* reporting to Solomon that among his activities is the harassment of the newlyweds (νεονύμφων ἐπιβουλός εἰμι; *Test. of Sol.* 5:7). Quotations from this work are taken from Chester C. McCown (ed.), *The Testament of Solomon: Edited from Manuscripts at Mount Athos, Bologna, Holkham Hall, Jerusalem, London, Milan, Paris and Vienna, with Introduction*, UNT 9 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1922).

⁶⁵⁷ It is argued that Sarah's harassment by Asmodeus corresponds to the part of the 'Grateful Dead' folktale which refers to the 'Monster in the Bridal Chamber.' According to the latter, a princess is harassed by a dragon who killed all the bridegrooms at the wedding night and she is also enchanted, having snakes in her body. After the grateful man's advice, the hero marries the princess and when the dragon enters the bridal chamber, the hero's helper slays him and saves the princess of the enchantments of the snakes; Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 6–7. Zimmermann notes on this that 'it is fair to say that in the loom of the Tobit tale, the woof comes from the folklore of mankind, and the wrap and the pattern, the vitality and the color come from the religious experience of the Jewish people': *ibid.*, 12.

(3:11–15). And God listened to the prayers of both (cf. 3:1–6 for Tobit’s prayer) and sent Raphael to heal them: heal Tobit from the white spots and redeem Sarah from Asmodeus, giving her also Tobias as her husband (3:16–17). In what follows, Tobit decides to send Tobias to Rages in Media to request from Gabael the money that Tobit entrusted him (4:1; cf. 1:14). Because Tobias did not know the roads to Media (5:2), he had to find someone who was familiar with the way (5:4). The person he found as a guide was the angel Raphael in the form of a young man (5:4–6). Tobit requested to see his son’s escort (5:10). Raphael encouraged Tobit that the time was close for God to heal him (5:10) and introduced himself as Azariah (5:13). Raphael and Tobias began their way to Media (6:1). In the first night, they camped in the river Tigris (6:2). Tobias went to wash his feet when a big fish came out of the river and tried to swallow his feet. Tobias cried out but Raphael told him to catch the fish and pull it out to the land (6:4). Then Raphael said to him to cut the fish and take out its gall, heart and liver and keep them because they are useful as medicine(s) (6:5). When Tobias asked Raphael about the utility of the fish entrails the angel said that the fish’s heart and liver was good to send demons away (6:8; cf. 6:17–18), whereas the fish gall can heal the white spots in the eyes (6:9; cf. 11:8). Indeed, the fumigation of the heart and the liver of the fish drove Asmodeus away (8:2–3) and the fish gall healed Tobit’s white spots and his sight was restored (11:11, 13).

2.4.2. Tobit 6:5

For reasons already stated with regard to the early character of the textual witnesses, I will cite here the textual evidence of G2, L1, L2, L3. The Qumran Aramaic evidence for Tobit 6:5, 8–9 (A1, A2), the earliest witness for these verses, is very much fragmented; however, I will refer to it in the textual notes, wherever it can throw light on the text.

G2: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος ἀνάσχισον τὸν ἰχθὺν κ(αι) ἐξέλε τὴν χολὴν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπόθες αὐτὰ μετὰ σου καὶ τὰ ἔγκατα ἐκβαλε ἔστιν γὰρ εἰς φάρμακον χρήσιμον ἡ χολὴ καὶ ἡ καρδία καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ αὐτοῦ

And the angel said to him, ‘Rip up the fish and take out its gall and heart and liver and keep them with you and throw away the intestines; for its gall and heart and liver are useful for medicine.’

L1: et dixit angelus puero: exintera hunc piscem, et tolle fel, et cor, et iecor illius, et repone et habe tecum. sunt enim necessaria haec ad medicamenta utilia: et caetera interanea proiice.

And the angel said to the boy, ‘Gut this fish, and remove its gall, and heart and liver, and store away and keep them with you. For these are necessary for useful medicines: and throw away the rest of the intestines.’

L2: et dixit illi angelus: exintera nunc piscem ipsum et tolle cor et iecur et fel illius. Et reponens diligenter habe tecum. sunt enim necessaria ad utilitatem medicamentorum. nam cetera interanea eius proice.

And the angel said to him, ‘Gut now this very fish and remove its heart and liver and gall. And storing [them] away keep them with you. For they are useful for the effectiveness of the medicaments. And throw away the rest of its intestines.’

L3: et dixit angelus ad puerum. finde eum medium, et tolle cor, et fel, et iecur eius, et repone: sunt enim utilia in medicamentis:

And the angel said to the boy, ‘Split it in the middle, and remove its heart, and gall, and liver, and store [them] away; for they are useful in medicines.’

2.4.2.1. Textual notes

G2 is the longest version for Tobit 6:5. Its length is probably owed to the fact that it repeats the order of the fish parts twice. Such a repetition, however, is in line with the fragmented text of A2 which, in the end, reads (וכבדה) ‘and its liver’.⁶⁵⁸ This consequently suggests the superiority of G2 over the VL texts as the latter do not mention the fish entrails a second time.⁶⁵⁹

G2 is closer to L1; both agree in the order of the fish parts (G2 τὴν χολήν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ; L1 *fel, et cor, et iecor*), whereas L2 and L3 preserve a different order both from G2-L1 and from each other (L2 *cor et iecur et fel*;⁶⁶⁰ L3 *cor, et fel, et iecur*⁶⁶¹). The word וכבדה (‘and its liver’) at the end of A2 confirms the order of G2, L1 and L3 which place liver at the end. Furthermore, L1 and L3 read ‘to the boy’ (L1 *puero*; L3 *puerum*), while G2 and L2 read ‘to him’ (G2 αὐτῷ; L2 *illi*). L3

⁶⁵⁸ In Tobit 6:7, the reading of G2 ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ καὶ τῷ ἥπατι τοῦ ἰχθύος καὶ ἐν τῇ χολῇ is confirmed by A2 which reads [...] בלבב נוגס ובכ (‘in the heart of the fish and li[...]').

⁶⁵⁹ L1 replaces the phrase ἡ χολή καὶ ἡ καρδία καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ αὐτοῦ with *haec*.

⁶⁶⁰ L2 agrees in that with G1: τὴν καρδίαν καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ καὶ τὴν χολήν.

⁶⁶¹ The same order is preserved in the Vg.

reads *finde* (findō = ‘to split, to divide’) instead of *exintera* (exenterō = ‘to gut, to disembowel’), and also adds *medium* (‘in the middle’), a phrase that does not exist in the other versions. Also, L3 omits any reference to discarding of the fish intestines extant in G2, L1, L2 (G2 καὶ τὰ ἔγκατα ἔκβαλε; L1 *et caetera interanea proiice*; L2 *nam cetera interanea eius proice*)—though in a different place.⁶⁶² A2 reads ידך ומעוה (‘your hand and its intestines’), a reading that agrees with the order of G2, that is, Raphael first said to Tobias to keep the fish entrails (gall, heart and liver) with him and then to throw away the intestines (καὶ ἀπόθες αὐτὰ μετὰ σαντοῦ καὶ τὰ ἔγκατα ἔκβαλε). This again confirms the early character of G2’s testimony.

Finally, the most striking difference between the G2 and the VT texts is that the latter read ‘medicines’ (L1 *medicamenta*; L2; *medicamentorum*; L3 *medicamentis*), whereas G2 preserves ‘medicine’ (φάρμακον).⁶⁶³ In all likelihood, G2 preserves the original as in Tobit 6:7 the word ‘medicine’ is preserved in the singular by G2, VL and A2 (G2 φάρμακον; L1, L3 *remedium* [= ‘remedy’]; L2 *medicamentum*; A2 םס).⁶⁶⁴ In any case, G2 and VL agree in the medicinal properties of the fish entrails.

⁶⁶² G2 places it in the middle of the verse, whereas L1 and L2 at the end.

⁶⁶³ G1 omits again the word φάρμακον. A2 cannot be of help here as nearly the whole last sentence is lost.

⁶⁶⁴ Stuckenbruck writes on this: ‘The evidence for the text from Qumran Cave 4 supports the likelihood that the version which identifies all three fish organs as φάρμακον is to be preferred as the more original’: Stuckenbruck, ‘The Book of Tobit’, 267.

2.4.3. Tobit 6:8–9

⁶⁶⁵G2: (6:8) καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ἡ καρδία καὶ τὸ ἥπαρ αὐτοῦ ἰχθύος κάπνισον ἐνώπιον ἀνθρώπου ἢ γυναικὸς ᾧ ἀπάντημα δαιμονίου ἢ πν(ευματος) πονηροῦ καὶ φεύζεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πᾶν ἀπάντημα κ(αι) οὐ μὴ μείνωσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (6:9) καὶ ἡ χολή ἐνχρεῖσαι ἀνθρώπου ὀφθαλμούς οὓς λευκώματα ἀνέβησα(ν) ἐπ' αὐτῶν ἐμφυσῆσαι ἐπ' αὐτούς ἐπὶ τῶν λευκωμάτων καὶ ὑγιαίνουσιν

(6:8) And he said to him, 'As for the heart and the liver of this fish, smoke [them] in the presence of a man or a woman afflicted by a demon or evil spirit and every presence⁶⁶⁶ will depart from him and they will not remain with him forever. (6:9) And as for the gall, anoint a man's eyes where the white spots appeared on them [i.e. on the eyes], blow upon them, on the white spots and they shall be well.'

L1: (6:8) et angelus dixit: cor et iecor fumigatur coram uiro, et muliere, qui incursum daemonis aut spiritum immundum habet; et fugiet ab illo omnis incursum, et non apparebit in aeternum. (6:9) et fel facit ad unguendos oculos homini, cui fuerint albugines, uel ad flandum in ipsis oculorum maculis, ut ad sanitatem perueniat.

(6:8) And the angel said, 'The heart and the liver is smoked in the presence of a man and a woman, who is attacked by a demon or an unclean spirit; and every affliction will flee from him, and never appear again. (6:9) And the gall works well for anointing the eyes of man, who has got white spots, or for blowing on the spots of his eyes, so that he may attain health.'

L2: (6:8) et dixit angelus ad eum: de corde aut iecore fumigatur uir aut mulier qui incursum demonum sustinet aut spiritus nequissimos habent et effugient ab eis omnis incursum demoniorum nec apparebunt umquam spiritus immundi in eis. (6:9) sed et fel illius facit ad unguendos oculos hominum quorum pupille induxerunt albuginem. insufflatur enim de puluere fellis ipsius in oculis eorum et auferuntur obiecte uisibus caliginum macule et cito perueniunt ad sanitatem.

(6:8) And the angel said to him, 'From the heart or the liver is smoked. A man or woman who has endured the afflictions of demons or of the most wicked spirits and every demonic affliction will flee from them and the impure spirits will not appear ever in them. (6:9) But its gall works well for anointing the eyes of men whose pupils have brought forth white spot. For it is blown from the powder of its gall in

⁶⁶⁵ Tobit 6:8–9 is also extant in G3. However, it is difficult to determine its original reading and hence it is not examined here.

⁶⁶⁶ ἀπάντημα literally means 'encounter, meeting'. Zimmermann points out that ἀπάντημα is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew נִפְגַּשׁ ('encounter'). The latter is 'employed specifically for attacks of evil spirits, and very strikingly with Shamdon (= Ashmedai) in rabbinic literature': Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 81. On נִפְגַּשׁ see BDB, 803.

their eyes and the spots of darkness put against the sight will be removed and soon they shall attain health.’

L3: (6:8) et dixit ei: cor eius, atque iecor ad incendendum in conspectu hominis. si fuerit in eum occursio daemonis, uel spiritus malignus, fugabit ab eo. (6:9) de fel ad unguendos oculos, in quibuscunque fuerit albugo, sanabuntur.

(6:8) And he said to him, ‘its heart, and liver [is] for the kindling in the presence of a man. If there was in him the presence [lit. meeting] of a demon, or an evil spirit, it will make [it] flee from him. (6:9) Of the gall for anointing the eyes, whatever be the white spot, they shall be healed.’

2.4.4. Textual notes⁶⁶⁷

2.4.4.1. Tobit 6:8

G2, L1 and L2 agree on the smoking of the fish heart and liver (G2 *ἀάπτουσιν*; L1, L2 *fumigatur*).⁶⁶⁸ Their reading is confirmed by A2 which reads אַתְּנָה. G2 and A2 read ‘in the presence of a man or a woman’ (G2 *ἐνώπιον ἀνθρώπου ἢ γυναικός*; A2 אַתְּנָה אוֹ אִשָּׁה), whereas L1, L2 and L3 preserve slightly different readings (L1 *coram uiro, et muliere*; L2 *uir or mulier*; L3 *in conspectu hominis*). G2 and L3 read ‘meeting’ (*ἀπάντημα*; *occursio*), whereas L1 and L2 read *incursus* and *incursum* (plural), respectively (‘infliction’). A2 preserves [...] סְחָרְתָּהוּ (‘merchandise’) which is close to the meaning of *ἀπάντημα* and *occursio*. Furthermore, all witnesses attest to the word ‘demon’ (G2 *δαίμονι*; L1, L3 *daemonis*; L2 *demonum* [plural]). A2 reads ‘demon’ (דֵּם), a reading which confirms the singular forms of G2, L1 and L3. Moreover, all versions read ‘spirit’, accompanied though by different adjectives (G2 *πνεύματος* πονηροῦ; L1 *spiritum immundum*; L2 *spiritus nequissimos*; L3 *spiritus malignus*). From A2 is preserved only the word ‘spirit’ (רוּחַ). Finally, G2, L1 and L2 preserve the reading that the demonic affliction will never return again—

⁶⁶⁷ Due to the lengthiness and the multiple textual evidence of Tobit 6:8–9, I will restrict myself to the similarities and the differences that can cast some light on the earliest readings.

⁶⁶⁸ L3 reads *ad incendendum* (‘for kindling’).

which is confirmed by A2 (אל)יסחרון סחרתהו)—whereas L3 omits such a reference.

2.4.4.2. Tobit 6:9

All witnesses agree that the gall is for anointing the eyes (G2 ἐνχρεῖσαι; L1, L2, L3 *ad unguendos*). A2 confirms their readings ([...] עי' למבחל ומררתא). All versions mention the white spot(s) (G2 λευκώματα; L1 *albugines*; L2 *albuginem* [singular]; L3 *albugo* [singular]). G2, L1 and L2 preserve the information on blowing (G2 ἐμφυσῆσαι; L1 *flandum*; L2 *insufflatur*). Finally, the last clause of G2 and L3 are equivalent (G2 ὑγιαίνουσιν; L3 *sanabuntur*) and agree with A2 (ויחי' = 'they shall get well'). The essential element here is that all witnesses agree that the person to use the fish gall will be healed.

2.4.5. Comments on Tobit 6:5, 8–9

In Tobit 6:5, Raphael says to Tobias to cut open the fish⁶⁶⁹ and remove its gall, heart and liver for they are useful for medicine (singular), whereas in Tobit 6:8–9 Raphael explains for which purpose are the fish heart, liver and gall to be used, namely the heart and the liver are to be smoked in the presence of a man or woman who has been afflicted by a demon or unclean spirit, whereas the gall is to be anointed in a person's eyes upon which white spots have appeared. It is not hard for the reader to make a connection between the two cures and the two problematic situations of Sarah and Tobit,⁶⁷⁰ respectively: the smoking of the heart and liver of the fish will drive the demon Asmodeus away, and the gall will treat Tobit's eye defect.

⁶⁶⁹ Much has been argued about the kind of the fish that attacked Tobias. For a discussion on this see Haupt, 'Tobit's Blindness', 92–93.

⁶⁷⁰ Interestingly enough, however, Tobias does not connect the fish gall remedy with his father's loss of sight; see Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 210.

2.4.5.1. Raphael

As an answer to Tobit's and Sarah's prayers, God sends the angel Raphael, in the form of the human Azariah, to save them from their misfortunes (3:16–17).⁶⁷¹ In other words, Raphael is God's agent of healing.⁶⁷² His healing function is also indicated by the etymology of his name, that is, 'the one who heals' (from רפא, 'to heal').

Dion points out the close relation that the name 'Raphael' has with Mesopotamia. Most notably, he mentions that the infinitive λῦσαι of G2 in Tobit 3:17—used to describe the second part of Raphael's mission (i.e. the sending away of Asmodeus)—is an equivalent of the Aramaic verb פטר ('to separate, remove, set free'),⁶⁷³ an essential technical term in Jewish divorce language.⁶⁷⁴ The same verb is also attested in seventh-century CE Aramaic incantations of Jewish origin inscribed on bowls, according to which the exorcist pronounced the separation ('divorce') between his client and the demon.⁶⁷⁵

In Tobit 6:5, 8–9, Raphael is presented as an expert exorcist whose formula will ward Asmodeus off and consequently bring healing to Sarah (cf. 8:3). The presentation of Raphael as an exorcist has its parallel in Ugaritic epic poetry where the gods create superhuman beings, which resemble the OT angels, and send them to exorcise demons and bring healing.⁶⁷⁶

Dion argues that the elements concerning Raphael's exorcistic appearance in Tobit are related to Babylonian magic.⁶⁷⁷ The profession of exorcist or magician (*āšipu*) was prominent in Mesopotamia. His activity was closely connected to medical practice as he was one of the two main healing practitioners found in Mesopotamian

⁶⁷¹ In *Test. of Sol.* 5:9, Raphael is indicated as the angel who thwarted Asmodeus.

⁶⁷² Zimmermann points out that Raphael's agency reflects God's transcendence; Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 28.

⁶⁷³ BDB, 809.

⁶⁷⁴ Paul-Eugène Dion, 'Raphaël l' Exorciste', *Bib* 57 (1976), 405.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 406.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 412.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 413; cf. 409–412.

literature, the other one being the physician (*asû*).⁶⁷⁸ The exorcist is an expert in dealing with demons⁶⁷⁹ and considers himself as a messenger of gods.⁶⁸⁰ With respect to the exorcist's use of magic, Abusch gives the following description:

‘The *āšipu* is the legitimate practitioner of magic. He operates constructively and destructively on behalf of his clients. He attempts to free his client from malevolent forces that grip him, and occasionally he provides protective devices against future attacks. He is regarded as well intentioned, certainly not malicious. On a cosmic level, the main enemies of the exorcist are demons. On a human level, he contends with the witch or sorcerer.’⁶⁸¹

The above evidence illustrates the affinity of Mesopotamian exorcists with the exorcistic function of Raphael in the book of Tobit and further suggests the author's familiarity with exorcistic rites. The exorcistic rite of smoking of the heart and the liver of the fish is also indicative of its magical character as exorcisms fall within the scope of magic. To this character I shall refer in more detail below.

2.4.5.2. The anti-demonic fumigation of the fish heart and liver

Raphael reveals to Tobias that the fish heart and liver, if smoked, drive a demon or unclean spirit away (6:8)⁶⁸².⁶⁸³ As Zimmermann characteristically writes ‘the smoke would stupefy the demon.’⁶⁸⁴ It is clear that Raphael reveals to Tobias how to perform an exorcistic rite. So he does; in the next chapter, Tobias puts into practice Raphael's instructions on the smoking of the heart and the liver of the fish. He puts the fish organs on the embers of incense (8:2)⁶⁸⁵ and their odour drives the demon away (8:3). The burning of the fish entrails takes place shortly after Tobias and Sarah went to the bridal chamber (8:1). The act of fumigation here, together with

⁶⁷⁸ Tzvi Abusch, *Mesopotamian Witchcraft: Toward a History and Understanding of Babylonian Witchcraft Beliefs and Literature*, AMD V (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 5.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁸² Although the name of the demon is not stated here, the reader knows in advance that the heart and the liver of the fish will be used for the smoking out of Asmodeus, as already in Tobit 3:8 the author introduced Sarah's problem and Asmodeus' involvement in it.

⁶⁸³ In the *Test. of Sol.* 5:9, it is the liver and the gall, not the heart and the liver, of the fish that are smoked:

διώκει [Solomon] δέ με καὶ ἥπαρ μετὰ χολῆς ἰχθύος ἐπὶ κροκίνων ἀνθρώπων καπνιζόμενον.

⁶⁸⁴ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 81.

⁶⁸⁵ The order of the fish organs are not the same in all witnesses; G2 reads liver and heart, while G1, L1 and L2 read heart and liver.

the young couple being in their bridal chamber, is reminiscent of Herodotus' mention of the burnt offering when a Babylonian man had intercourse with his wife.⁶⁸⁶

Although there is 'no exact parallel' in ancient literature for the smoking of fish heart and liver,⁶⁸⁷ the closest equivalent is found in the collection of magico-medical texts *Cyranides*. There it is said that the burning of the bones of the fish γλάνεος ('sheatfish') sends the demons away^{688, 689}. Elsewhere in the same source, it is said that the mouth of the fish ραφίς ('garfish'), when smoked, wards off demons.⁶⁹⁰ Another interesting reference which presents some similarities with the burning of fish entrails in the book of Tobit occurs in *PDM* xiv. 875–85 which contains the recipe of an eye-ointment to acquire purity. The basic ingredient of the recipe is a *buri* river-fish burned when it is still alive.⁶⁹¹ The above examples illustrate that burned fish-organs were thought to have anti-demonic powers, as well as therapeutic value for the eyes.

Furthermore, ancient sources preserve information on the antidemonic power of odours. The most characteristic example on this is found in Josephus who reports

⁶⁸⁶ 'Whenever a Babylonian has had intercourse with his wife, they both sit before a burnt offering of incense [θυμίαμα], and at dawn they wash themselves; they will touch no vessel before this is done': *Histories* I. 198. The passage is taken from Alfred D. Godley (trans.), *Herodotus*, LCL (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1920). On this see Dion, 'Raphaël', 408. Moore, however, argues that 'any similarity between that postcoital custom and the contact of Tobiah and Sarah here seems coincidental': Moore, *Tobit*, 236.

⁶⁸⁷ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 292; Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 263.

⁶⁸⁸ Γλάνεος ιχθύς ἐστι ποτάμιος καὶ λιμναῖος. τούτου τὰ ὀστέα καίόμενα δαίμονας ἀποδιώκουσιν: *Cyr.* IV. 13,1–2. Quotations from *Cyranides* are taken from Dimitris Kaimakis (ed.), *Die Kyraniden*, BKP 76 (Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1976).

⁶⁸⁹ The interesting element here is that in the *Test. of Sol.* 5:10 the fish called γλάνις—probably a different rendering of γλάνεος—is said to have been the one whose liver and gall were smoked for the expulsion of the demon Asmodeus (cf. *Test. of Sol.* 5:9).

⁶⁹⁰ Ραφίς ιχθύς ἐστι θαλάττιος ἢ καλουμένη βελόνις, καὶ ζαργάνην οἱ πολλοὶ ὀνομάζουσιν, ἔχουσα στόμα μακρὸν παρεοικῶς σφυραίνῃ. ταύτης τὸ στόμα φορούμενον ἢ θυμιάμενον δαίμονες διώκει: *Cyr.* IV. 55.1–4.

⁶⁹¹ '[The ointment] which you put in the youth's eyes when he goes to any vessel inquiry of the sun: you bring two *buri* fish of the river, both being alive; you burn one of them with vinewood before the sun; you add the blood of the other to it; you make it smooth with it and myrrh; and you make them into balls which measure one finger [in length]. You should spread (?) [it] in his eyes.'

that the exorcist Eleazar, attempting to ward off a demon, puts a ring with a root to the nostrils of the possessed.⁶⁹²

Despite the fact that the heart and the liver of the fish are mentioned many times in Tobit 6:5–9, the author does not explain why these vital fish organs were connected to exorcisms.⁶⁹³ The audience perhaps was already familiar with the anti-demonic use of fish (and generally animal) parts and thus there was no reason for the author to state again what his audience already knew. As Moore points out, ‘the use of vile-smelling smoke to exorcise an evil spirit was a widespread technique throughout the ancient world’,⁶⁹⁴ a fact already indicated from the examples given above.

In an attempt to explain in rational terms Sarah’s condition (i.e. her harassment by Asmodeus) and consequently the burning of the fish entrails, Haupt argues that Sarah was ‘hystero-epileptic’, as the people who suffered with this illness were viewed as demoniacally possessed (cf. Mk 9:17–26).⁶⁹⁵ In this case, her seven husbands would have escaped from a woman who was ill.⁶⁹⁶ Haupt points out the following:

‘the chief remedies for hysterics are asafetida and valerian ... Hysterical patients often enjoy the most disagreeable odors: they may object to a fragrant flower, but like e.g. the odor of burned feathers. The oil of valerian smells like stale cheese. It is found not only in the root of valerian, but also in the secretion of sweating feet and in the liver of the dolphin.’⁶⁹⁷

Haupt concludes that the author of Tobit ‘may have heard of a wise man who had cured an attack of hystero-epilepsy by the fumes of the liver of a dolphin, placed on the embers of incense containing asafetida.’⁶⁹⁸ He thus believes that the fumigation of the fish entrails was meant for treating Sarah’s hysteria. The text, however, does

⁶⁹² JA VIII. 47. For further examples on the expulsion of demons by means of odours see Kollmann, ‘Göttliche’, 293.

⁶⁹³ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 80.

⁶⁹⁴ Moore, *Tobit*, 201.

⁶⁹⁵ Haupt, ‘Tobit’s Blindness’, 71; 84; *idem*, ‘Asmodeus’, 176–177.

⁶⁹⁶ *Idem*, ‘Asmodeus’, 177; *idem*, ‘Tobit’s Blindness’, 86.

⁶⁹⁷ *Idem*, ‘Asmodeus’, 177.

⁶⁹⁸ *Idem*, ‘Tobit’s Blindness’, 93.

not suggest that Sarah had any symptoms of hysteria or epilepsy and the husbands did not flee away by themselves but they were killed by Asmodeus (Tob 3:8). Moreover, if the author of Tobit knew, as Haupt suggests, that the treatment included the burning of a root (e.g. asafoetida), he would probably have added it to the text. Even if Sarah's illness was actually hystero-epilepsy, Tobit 6:8 suggests a non-rational context as it speaks of demonic harassment.

The expulsion of demonic beings was connected to the magical realm in the ancient world. The practice of exorcisms is founded on the belief in the existence of supernatural powers that can affect a man's life by causing pains, troubles, diseases, etc. Such a belief is fundamental in magic, as the latter aims to subjugate the supernatural forces by means of incantations, adjurations, spells, curses, charms, amulets, knotted knots, etc.⁶⁹⁹ In other words, exorcism is a magical practice for the subdual of supernatural forces—in the case of Sarah the demon Asmodeus. Scholarship agrees on the magical character of the smoking of the fish entrails.⁷⁰⁰ Zimmermann points out that side by side with the belief in the transcendence of God and the angelic intervention 'was the fear of demons and the trust in magic.'⁷⁰¹ The particular mentions of heart and liver further strengthen the magical character of Raphael's anti-demonic rite, as they were the vital organs most often used in Near Eastern divination techniques.⁷⁰²

2.4.5.3. The legitimisation of the magical burning of the fish entrails

Raphael's instruction of a magical rite for the casting out of a demon (6:8; cf. 6:17–18) seems at first glance inconsistent with ancient Israel's negative attitude towards magical practices (cf. Ex 22:17; Deut 18:10–11; 47:9; Mic 5:12; Mal 3:5). By the attribution of a divine origin to the apotropaic fumigation of the fish entrails, the author succeeds in legitimising an exorcistic procedure that was probably common in his time. Who could possibly question a God-given ritual? Kollmann argues that due to the vast use of such magico-medical practices by contemporary Jews,

⁶⁹⁹ Cf. Harari, Dan, and Saenz-Badillos, 'Magic', 342.

⁷⁰⁰ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 28; Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 292–293; Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 263.

⁷⁰¹ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 28.

⁷⁰² Moore, *Tobit*, 207. More precisely, extispicy was the most well-known and frequent divinatory technique in Mesopotamia, according to which the diviner inspected animal entrails in an attempt to predict future events.

especially Jews coming from Mesopotamia and Egypt, there arose the need for their legitimisation, describing them as being according to God's will.⁷⁰³ The ultimate aim of this legitimisation was not to violate the faith in God being the ultimate healer for Israel (Ex 15:26).⁷⁰⁴

2.4.5.4. Tobias' and Sarah's prayer to God for deliverance

The author, however, does not stop at the legitimisation of a magical rite but creates a Jewish-oriented frame within which the magical burning of the fish entrails coexists with prayer and praise of God in perfect harmony. In Tobit 6:18, Raphael instructs Tobias to pray to God after the expulsion of the demon and just before he consummates the marriage with Sarah (cf. 8:4–8).⁷⁰⁵ And so it happens; after Asmodeus' flight to the upper parts of Egypt (8:3),⁷⁰⁶ Tobias and Sarah pray to God to grant them mercy and keep them safe from the presence of the demon (8:4–5). The insertion of the prayer to God serves the aim of 'judaicising' the magical burning of the fish heart and liver. The fumigation of the fish entrails had only a temporal result, that is, to send away the demon, but the prayer to God⁷⁰⁷ is the act that ensures that Asmodeus will not harass them again. In other words, their definite deliverance will come from God. In this way, he succeeds in showing that God remains the one and only healer for Israel.

2.4.5.5. The fish gall as an eye remedy

I shall now proceed to comment on the second remedy revealed by Raphael, namely the application of fish gall in a person's eyes for the treatment of white spots.

⁷⁰³ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 290.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 290.

⁷⁰⁵ Fitzmyer points out that 'the apotropaic means are to be used with prayer to the Creator God who has given them to humanity': Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 217.

⁷⁰⁶ Raphael's sayings are confirmed (cf. 6:18): the demon smelled the odour coming from the burnt fish entrails and fled (8:3).

⁷⁰⁷ Skemp comments on the significant role of prayer in Asmodeus' expulsion, commenting that prayer is also an essential aspect in Jesus' function as an exorcist. He refers to Mark 9:28–29 where Jesus' disciples asked their master why they have been unsuccessful in casting a demon out and Jesus then answered that 'this kind can come out only through prayer' (τοῦτο τὸ γένος ἐν οὐδενὶ δύναται ἐξελεθεῖν εἰ μὴ ἐν προσευχῇ); Vincent Skemp, 'Avenues of Intertextuality between Tobit and the New Testament', in Jeremy Corley, and Vincent Skemp (eds.): *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit*, CBQMS 38 (Washington DC: The Catholic Association of America, 2005), 58.

In antiquity, the fish gall was used for the treatment of eye disorders. Von Soden pointed out that five Akkadian documents mention the use of the gall of a big fish named *kuppû* (probably an eel) for the treatment of eye afflictions.⁷⁰⁸ The Assyrian cuneiform medical tablets of Koujunjic (henceforth *AM.*) contain a range of medicinal remedies for the eyes.⁷⁰⁹ Amongst the different eye-remedies, the gall of a yellow frog mixed in curd⁷¹⁰ and the gall of a male sheep⁷¹¹ are said to be applied in the eyes as medicine. Similarly, in Egypt the gall of the eel and of a 'bdw fish was used in eye treatment.⁷¹²

Dioscorides mentions that the gall of sea-scorpion is good for cataracts, white spots and dim-sightedness.⁷¹³ Elsewhere, he reports again the therapeutic value for eye ailments of the gall of sea-scorpion together with the gall of the fish *callionymus*, sea-turtle, hyena, partridge, eagle, white hen and wild she-goat.⁷¹⁴ Pliny also preserves ample evidence on the use of fish gall in eye-treatment. He reports:

'Tortoise gall gives clearness of vision.'⁷¹⁵

'... cataract is also cured by the gall of sea tortoise with the blood of river tortoise and milk.'⁷¹⁶

'The gall of star-gazer heals scars, and removes superfluous flesh about the eyes. No other fish has a great abundance of gall ... The gall of the coracinus too improves vision, and that of red sea-scorpion with old oil and Attic honey disperses incipient cataract; it should be applied as ointment three times, once every other day. The same treatment removes albugo from the eyes.'⁷¹⁷

Pliny also preserves information on the therapeutic value of the gall of animals for the treatment of eye diseases. More precisely, he says that the gall of lion,⁷¹⁸

⁷⁰⁸ Wolfram von Soden, 'Fischgalle als Heilmittel für Augen', *AfO* 21 (1966), 81–82.

⁷⁰⁹ For these, see Thomson, 'Assyrian Medical Texts', 1:22–34 and 2:30–55.

⁷¹⁰ No. 26, *AM.* 8.1; 12.8; 20.2 (= K. 2570; K. 2573; etc.), L. 13.

⁷¹¹ No. 35, *AM.* 10.4 (= K. 11695), L. 2.

⁷¹² Moore, *Tobit*, 202.

⁷¹³ τοῦ δὲ θαλασσίου σκορπίου ἡ χολὴ ἀρμόζει πρὸς τὰς ὑποχύσεις καὶ λευκώματα καὶ ἀμβλυωπίας: *MM* II.12. Greek quotations from *MM* are from Max Wellmann (ed.), *Pedanii Dioscuridis Anazarbei De Materia Medica Libri Quinque*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Apud Weidmannos, 1906–1914).

⁷¹⁴ *MM* II.78.2.

⁷¹⁵ *NH* XXXII. XIV.37.

⁷¹⁶ *NH* XXXII. XIV.38.

⁷¹⁷ *NH* XXXII. XXIV.69–70.

⁷¹⁸ 'The gall [of a lion], used with the addition of water as a salve, improves vision': *NH* XXVIII. XXV.90.

hyena,⁷¹⁹ crocodiles,⁷²⁰ chameleon,⁷²¹ snakes,⁷²² eagle,⁷²³ vulture and white cock,⁷²⁴ hen⁷²⁵ and partridge⁷²⁶ is good for eye treatment.⁷²⁷⁷²⁸ Similarly, in *Remediis parabilibus*, Pseudo-Galen writes that the gall of a sea-dog or the gall of cock or the gall of a lion together with honey is good for the treatment of white spots.⁷²⁹ Finally, in *Cyranides* it is said that the gall of the fish γλάνεος when taken together with the juice of the balsam-tree as a collyrium or when anointed, cleanses the white spots.⁷³⁰

The above evidence suggests that fish gall, as well as animal gall, was a well-known medicine for eye ailments in antiquity. The nineteenth-century Greek ophthalmologist and historian G. Costomires points out that the fish gall remedy of Raphael is credible ‘because even in his days quacks and practitioners of folk medicine used the gall of fish and birds for the treatment of pannus of the cornea and other diseases of the cornea.’⁷³¹ Furthermore, another Greek ophthalmologist A. Gabrielides argues that the fish-gall ointment found in the book of Tobit ‘is a perfectly valid means of exfoliating the epithelium of the cornea and may certainly remove leucomas.’⁷³² In short, the author of Tobit appears to be familiar with contemporary and long-enduring techniques for the treatment of leucoma and his

⁷¹⁹ ‘the gall [of an hyena] if applied to the forehead cures ophthalmia, preventing it altogether if an anointment is made of gall boiled down with three cyathi of Attic honey and one ounce of saffron, and that the same prescription disperses film and cataract’: *NH* XXVIII. XXVII.95.

⁷²⁰ ‘We are assured that there is no more useful remedy for cataract than to anoint the eyes with crocodile’s gall and honey’: *NH* XXVIII. XXVIII.110.

⁷²¹ ‘It is particularly a current belief that anointing the eyes for three days with the gall is a cure for opaqueness of the eye and cataract’: *NH* XXVIII. XXIX.117.

⁷²² ‘The gall of the boa also is recommended for white ulcers, cataract, and dimness, and its fat similarly for clear vision’: *NH* XXIX. XXXVIII. 123.

⁷²³ ‘The gall of the eagle ... makes, when mixed with Attic honey, an ointment for film on the eyes, dimness of vision, and cataract’: *NH* XXIX. XXXVIII.123.

⁷²⁴ ‘There is the same property also in vulture’s gall with leek juice and a little honey, likewise in the gall of a cock, especially of a white cock, diluted with water and used for white specks, white ulcers, and cataract’: *NH* XXIX. XXXVIII.123.

⁷²⁵ ‘The gall of a hen ... is recommended for pustules on the pupils’: *NH* XXIX. XXXVIII.124.

⁷²⁶ ‘partridge gall can be used ... for clear vision’: *NH* XXIX. XXXVIII.125.

⁷²⁷ Pliny’s information on the animal gall as medicine for the eyes overlap with Dioscorides’ testimony with the only difference being that Pliny preserves more details.

⁷²⁸ For further details on the use of animal-gall for eye-diseases from antiquity to the modern period, see Papayanopoulos, Laskaratos, and Marketos, ‘Remarks’, 184–185.

⁷²⁹ Kühn, *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, 14:412.

⁷³⁰ ἡ δὲ χολή συν ὀποβαλσάμῳ ἐνσταζομένη ἢ ἐπιχριομένη λευκώματα καθαίρει: *Cyr.* IV. 13.2–3.

⁷³¹ Papayanopoulos, Laskaratos, and Marketos, ‘Remarks’, 185.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, 183.

testimony indicates that, in his time, ancient Judaism began to develop a relatively highly developed ophthalmological system.⁷³³

2.4.5.6. ἐνχρεῖσαι ('to anoint') and ἐμφυσῆσαι ('to blow')

In Tobit 6:9, Raphael explains to Tobias the medicinal power of the fish gall. The latter is to be anointed on a person's eyes where white spots have appeared; one should then blow on the white spots and they will get well. The reader can easily understand that this treatment refers to the cure of Tobit's blindness.

The two infinitives found in this verse, namely to anoint (G2 ἐνχρεῖσαι) and to blow (G2 ἐμφυσῆσαι)⁷³⁴, describe the exact procedure that needs to be followed for the treatment of the white spots. In ancient literature, both in magico-medical and true medical treatises, the verb 'to anoint' always occurs in remedies for the eyes; it is actually what follows the preparation of an eye salve. The act of anointing (rubbing and smearing, too) is attested in the *PGM* and the *PDM* in a number of spells for the improvement of vision.⁷³⁵

The act of blowing which follows the anointing appears to function as a last act to assure the effectiveness of the eye remedy. The verb ἐμφυσάω 'to blow in, to breathe in(to)/upon' is encountered in *LXX* and is connected to the giving and restoration of life. The act of blowing is reminiscent of Genesis 2:7 where it is said that God breathed into (ἐνεφύσησεν) man's face the breath of life and he (i.e. the man) became a living being. Similarly, in 1 Kings 17:21, Elijah blows (ἐνεφύσησεν) three times into the face of the dead son of the widow of Zarephath with whom Elijah was staying, and God gave him his life back (v. 22). Blowing is thus a means of transmission of life. Similarly, in Tobit 11:10, 13, Tobias, the chosen receiver of

⁷³³ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 297.

⁷³⁴ G1 refers to the anointing (ἐνχρεῖσαι) but omits the reference to the blowing. As with the omission of φάρμακον, the same implications should also apply here, as the act of blowing is associated with magical practices.

⁷³⁵ See, for example, *PGM* IV. 1070, 1100; *PGM* V. 65; *PGM* Va. 1–3; *PGM* VII. 335–336; *PDM* xiv. 1102.

God-given remedies, blows upon Tobit's eyes (v. 10) and restores his father to good health (v. 13).⁷³⁶

Zimmermann notes that 'anciently, breathing or blowing on a patient was an attempted cure.'⁷³⁷ In *AM.*, the verb 'to blow' often occurs in eye remedies. In No. 26, *AM.* 8.1; 12.8; 20.2 (= K. 2570; K. 2573; etc.), Pl. 9.1, Col. ii., Ll. 38–40, it is said:

'38. If ditto, myrrh, storax, "Akkadian Salt" through a bronze tube into his eyes thou shalt blow. 39. If a man ditto, "gum of copper" (and) storax thou shalt bray, 40. If a man ditto, mint and storax thou shalt bray, through a bronze tube into his eyes thou shalt blow.'⁷³⁸

Thomson notes that the phrase 'thou shalt blow' 'refers to an operation of blowing drugs into the eyes.'⁷³⁹ The instruction of blowing is followed by the recitation of a charm, a fact that indicates the close connection of blowing with magic. The connection of blowing with the magical realm is strengthened with the latter's occurrence in exorcistic rites. More precisely, it is found in *PGM IV.* 3007–86, namely the 'Charm of Pibechis for those possessed by daimons', a Jewish (or judaicising) adjuration (ca. 300 CE). There the magician, having prepared a compound of vegetal substances (3007–10) and having followed a series of magical acts (incantations, preparation of phylactery, conjurations [3010–79]), is said to blow while conjuring: 'blow once, blowing air from the tips of the feet up to the face ...' (3081–2). Blowing here is the very last act of a series of magical acts for protection from a demon.

Although blowing is different from expectorating, the former may involve expectoration of saliva. In antiquity, saliva was considered to have medicinal value for the eyes. Pliny reports the application of saliva every morning as an eye

⁷³⁶ For Tobit, a restoration to good health would consequently mean his restoration to religious life as, according to Leviticus 21:16–20, a person with blemishes in the eyes (among other things), is not allowed to make offerings to God. For a pious Jew like Tobit this must have been a great deprivation, being equal to non-life.

⁷³⁷ Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 81, note 9.

⁷³⁸ Similarly, cf. No. 28, A. *AM.* 11.2 (= K. 2440; etc.), L. 43; No. 28, C. *AM.* 15.4 (=K. 13393), L. 2; No. 62, *AM.* 92.8 (=K. 2508), L. 1; see *ibid.*, 2:33–34, 54.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:4, note 3.

ointment;⁷⁴⁰ as well as that the saliva of a fasting woman ‘is judged to be powerful medicine for bloodshot eyes and fluxes.’⁷⁴¹ In Mark 8:23–25, Jesus puts saliva on the eyes of a blind man and lays his hands on him, restoring his sight. In John 9:6, Jesus heals a man blind from birth by spitting on the ground, making mud with his saliva and spreading the mud on the man’s eyes. The therapeutic value of the saliva is also evident in Mark 7:33 where Jesus spits on a deaf man to cure him.

Discussing medical treatment for the cure of white spots (λευκώματα), (Pseudo-) Galen uses the verb ‘to blow, to breathe’ to say that if in a young child’s eyes appears a small white spot (σ μικρῷ λεύκωμα), his mother, chewing *ammoniacon* (ἀμμωνιακόν)⁷⁴², should breathe (ἐμφυσάτω) in the child’s eye.⁷⁴³

The above evidence suggests that blowing (and/or breathing) was an integral part of a series of actions for the treatment of eye afflictions and it was equally used in magico-medical remedies, as well as in more rational ones.

2.4.5.7. The character of the fish-gall remedy

The problem with the character of the fish remedies does not concern the smoking of the liver and the heart of the fish but the gall ointment. The former, as already discussed, clearly falls into the category of magical healing. As for the latter, however, its character is difficult to define and scholarship has expressed different views on this. Kollmann draws a clear distinction between the smoking of the fish entrails and the fish-gall remedy, arguing that the former is magical,⁷⁴⁴ whereas the latter belongs to folk-medicine.⁷⁴⁵ He grounds his argument in that the causes of Tobit’s and Sarah’s illness are different—Tobit is not harassed by a demon—and they consequently need two distinct healing treatments.⁷⁴⁶ In other words, he draws a categorical distinction between the two cures. Stuckenbruck refutes Kollmann’s

⁷⁴⁰ NH XXVIII. VII.37.

⁷⁴¹ NH XXVIII. XXII.76.

⁷⁴² *Ammoniacon* (*ammoniacum*) is ‘a concrete gummy resinous juice, composed of little lumps, or tears, of a strong and somewhat ungrateful smell, and nauseous taste, followed by a bitterness’: Robert Hooper, *Lexicon Medicum or Medical Dictionary* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 4th ed. 1829), 1:59.

⁷⁴³ Kühn, *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, 14:412.

⁷⁴⁴ Kollmann, ‘Göttliche’, 292.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 293; 298.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 293.

argument about the non-magical character of the fish-gall ointment. More precisely, he points out that not only was the fumigation of the fish entrails magical but also the fish-gall ointment. He grounds his argument on the *Long Recension* (G2) of Tobit 6:5—whose testimony is completely overlooked by Kollmann—where the word *phármakon* is used to refer to all fish entrails, a fact which suggests that both God-given remedies were magical.⁷⁴⁷ Stuckenbruck further argues that for the author of the book of Tobit magic and medicine are not distinguished.⁷⁴⁸

The employment of the act of anointing and blowing (cf. Tob 6:8) in both magical and rationally-oriented remedies, as pointed out above, further strengthens the idea of the indistinguishable nature of magic and medicine in the author's mind. The folk⁷⁴⁹ character of the fish-gall ointment, as Kollmann observed, does not disqualify the possibility of the fish-gall remedy being magical. On the contrary, folk-remedies most often have a magical character. The eye remedies found in *AM* are accompanied by the recitation of incantations, the use of spells and charms to secure effectiveness in treatment.⁷⁵⁰ The provenance of the fish remedies in Tobit 6:8–9, namely Mesopotamia and Egypt,⁷⁵¹ further suggests their magical implications, since magico-medical cures were prominent there. In connection to this, the fish-like prophylactic figures found in Ur of Babylon and representing the seven sages from before the Flood who were considered the first teachers of incantations against illness,⁷⁵² strengthens the association of fish with magic and in turn suggests the magical character of Raphael's fish-gall prescription.

Furthermore, the association of fish with magical practices in antiquity furthers the magical character of the fish-gall remedy. In the *Fasti*, the Roman poet Ovid (43

⁷⁴⁷ Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 268; 265. Stuckenbruck takes here *phármakon* to mean 'magical potion, poison'.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 268.

⁷⁴⁹ The fish-gall ointment is described in a 'recipe-based' format characteristic of folk remedies. This 'recipe-based' format includes the notion of special preparation of the ingredients needed for compounding a remedy. In Tobit 6:5, Raphael says to Tobias to cut open the fish, keep its gall, heart and liver and throw the intestines. And in the following verse (6:6), Tobias keeps the fish organs salted.

⁷⁵⁰ See, for example, No. 26, *AM*. 8.1; 12.8; 20.2 (= K. 2570; K. 2573; etc.), Pl. 9.1, Col. ii., Ll. 17, 20–30, 41, (Pl. 10.1) 48–50; *ibid.*, Pl. 10.1, Col. 1, iii., Ll. 6–8, 14–17, 23–24, 30–31; *ibid.*, Pl. 11.1, Ll. 1, 3–7, 10–11; 32–33, 36–37, 39, 40–41; *ibid.*, Pl. 12.1, Ll. 1, 50–51 in Thomson, 'Assyrian Medical Texts', 1:27–34.

⁷⁵¹ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 298.

⁷⁵² Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 53.

BCE–17/18 CE) describes a magical rite prepared by an old woman for the prevention of gossiping in which fish has a central role. The passage reads:

‘With three fingers she puts three lumps of incense under the threshold, ... Then she binds enchanted threads together with dark lead, and mumbles seven black beans in her mouth; and she roasts in the fire the head of a small fish which she has sewed up, made fast with pitch, and pierce through and through with a bronze needle. She also drops wine on it ... Then as she goes off she says, “We have bound fast hostile tongues and unfriendly mouths.”’⁷⁵³

Pliny also reports in several instances the use of fish amulets. He writes:

‘They say that noxious charms cannot enter, or at least cannot harm, homes where a star-fish, smeared with the blood of a fox, has been fastened to the upper lintel or to the door with a bronze nail.’⁷⁵⁴

‘An amulet of crab’s eyes also, worn on the neck, is said to cure ophthalmia.’⁷⁵⁵

‘As an amulet a dolphin’s tooth removes a child’s sudden terrors.’⁷⁵⁶

The magical properties of fish are also evident in the *Apologia* of Apuleius (ca. 125–ca. 180 CE). More precisely, the latter is accused of having used certain species of fish to make charms, aiming to make Pudentilla fall in love with him (29–41). Despite Apuleius’ attempt to refute his accusers, the association of fish with the preparation of love-charms suggests that there was some basis in the accusations against him. Pliny says that the fish remora (‘sucking-fish’) ‘has an evil reputation for supplying a love-charm.’⁷⁵⁷ Also, *PDM* xiv. 335–55, a spell for making a woman love a man, involves a particular preparation of oil by means of a black Nile fish.

What is more, both the smoking of the fish entrails and the fish-gall ointment are attributed to an angel-exorcist, not to a physician, and this can be interpreted as a sign of the magical character of both remedies. To all this one can also add the

⁷⁵³ *Fasti* 2.573–582. Quotation is taken from Ovid, *Fasti*, James G. Frazer (trans.), LCL (London: Heinemann, 2nd ed. 1989).

⁷⁵⁴ *NH* XXXII. XVI.44.

⁷⁵⁵ *NH* XXXII. XXIV.74.

⁷⁵⁶ *NH* XXXII. XLVIII.137.

⁷⁵⁷ *NH* IX. XLI.79.

rejection of the scientific medicine of the physicians in Tobit 2:10. The author builds an argument between two types of healers, namely the physicians and the magical experts/exorcists who practised medicine by magical means, and consequently between two types of medical treatment prominent in his time, namely the scientific (i.e. rational) medicine and magical healing practices.

Bearing all the above in mind, it is safe to assume that the fish-gall remedy was of magical character. The author legitimises the type of medicine he and his readers were familiar with.⁷⁵⁸ In the presence of the new cultural threat of Hellenism which introduced, among others, rationalism and experimentation in medicine, the magico-medicinal cures of Mesopotamia and Egypt—to which the Jews had been exposed much earlier than to Alexandrian medicine—provide the necessary feeling of security the Jews needed in a world that kept changing.

2.5. God as the ultimate healer

The fish remedies of Raphael were successful. In Tobit 8:2–3, Tobias puts into practice the angel's instructions; he took the liver and the heart of the fish and put them on embers of incense (8:2). The repelling odour of the fish organs drove Asmodeus away who fled to the remotest parts of Egypt; there, he was bound hand and foot by Raphael (8:3). In Tobit 11:7, Raphael assures Tobias that his father's sight will be restored. The angel says to Tobias to spread the fish gall on Tobit's eyes. The fish ointment will dwindle the white films which will eventually be dissolved (11:8). Indeed, Tobias did as Raphael instructed him: after blowing into his father's eyes (cf. 6:9), Tobias applied the fish gall on Tobit's eyes (11:11), and then peeled off the white films from the corners of his (i.e. Tobit's) eyes (11:12–13).⁷⁵⁹ Having his sight restored, Tobit praises God (11:14–15), a fact that indicates that he had immediately acknowledged that it was God who healed him (cf. 11:17).⁷⁶⁰ Tobias and Sarah also pray to God after Asmodeus' flight (8:5–8), but

⁷⁵⁸ Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 268. As Kollmann points out, the need for such legitimisation arose from the fact that the Jews had begun to make use of magico-medical cures; Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 290.

⁷⁵⁹ The healing is actually enacted by Tobias here who also assumes an intermediate function; he is the one who puts into practice the God-given remedy.

⁷⁶⁰ This also demonstrates that Tobit did not perceive Tobias as his healer but God.

their prayer aims to beseech God to grant them mercy and keep them safe (8:4).⁷⁶¹ This suggests that they recognise that only God can grant them safety and deliverance from demonic affliction and hence acknowledge, in an indirect way, God as their healer.

The well-known biblical idea that God is the only source of healing for Israel (Ex 15:26; Gen 20:17; Deut 32:39; Job 5:18; Hos 6:1; Jer 17:14; etc.) lies behind Tobit's narrative. The emphasis on this idea is founded on the attempt of Jewish authors to avoid the danger of syncretism with the other cultures.⁷⁶² In this way, the physicians' pharmacological treatment could by no means have been efficacious, as it did not stem from God. Instead, the author presents the magical burning of the fish heart and liver (6:8, 17; 8:1–2) and the fish-gall ointment (6:9; 11:7–8) as successful remedies on the basis that they were revealed by God through Raphael. For the author of Tobit, God is the only true healer.

This same idea is also reflected in the healing language of Tobit. More precisely, the verb *θεραπεύω*, found in Tobit 2:10 (G2), is almost exclusively⁷⁶³ used in LXX—in medical contexts—to describe healing associated with human medicine, whereas the verb *ιάομαι*, found in Tobit 3:17 (G2 *ιάσασθαι*), 5:10 (G2 *ιάσασθαι*), 6:9 (G1 *ιαθήσεται*) and 12:14 (G1, G2, G3 *ιάσασθαι*), is used to describe the healing activity of God⁷⁶⁴ or his agents⁷⁶⁵ that is certainly effective. Wells argues that 'the use of *θεραπεύω* does not necessarily imply a successful outcome but a course of treatment, which may or may not be successful in its outcome.'⁷⁶⁶ In other words, *θεραπεύω* does not designate a restoration of health, but rather a treatment which could be successful or not.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶¹ Of course, they could not have possibly known that after the demon fled, Raphael bound him, a fact that indicates that they have already been freed from Asmodeus' presence and thus they were safe.

⁷⁶² Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 290.

⁷⁶³ An exception occurs in the Wisdom of Solomon 16:12 where *θεραπεύω* is used to describe the healing activity of the word (*λόγος*) of God; see Louise Wells, *The Greek Language of Healing from Homer to New Testament Times*, BZNW 83 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 104; 109.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁷⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁷⁶⁷ Cf. Chrysovergi, 'Contrasting Views', 45–46.

In brief, the rejection of the medical treatment of the physicians, on the one hand, and the acknowledgement of the effectiveness of God-given remedies, on the other, demonstrates that, for Tobit, God is the ultimate healer.

3. CONCLUSION

The Book of Tobit tells the story of an observant Jew living in Nineveh of Assyria who acquired an eye-defect due to sparrow droppings, and of Sarah from Ecbatana of Media who was harassed by the wicked demon Asmodeus. Tobit went to physicians to be cured but without success: the physicians' medicines made his sight worse until he was completely blind. Nevertheless, healing for Tobit and Sarah will come from God who sends his angel Raphael to reveal to Tobias the medicines to cure Sarah's misfortune and Tobit's blindness. The author leaves no room for doubt that the God-given remedies are effective as the demon Asmodeus is driven away with the fumigation of the fish liver and heart and Tobit's eyes recover from the white spots with the application of a fish-gall ointment. In this way, God appears as the only true healer.

Tobit's narrative builds a contrast between the medical treatment of the physicians (2:10) and the God-given fish remedies (6:8–9). The physicians are only referred to in Tobit 2:10 and the author, apart from the mention of the medicines with which the physicians anointed Tobit's eyes, does not provide further information, e.g. on the ingredients from which the eye ointments were compounded. This suggests that he considered the physicians' treatment unworthy to speak of.

Furthermore, the use of the word *φάρμακα* (G2) in Tobit 2:10 should be understood in a strictly medical context, namely as 'medicaments', not as 'magical potions' or 'poisons', because the text refers to physicians, not magicians or poisoners. Tobit's negative reaction to the physicians' medical treatment reflects a phobia that should have emerged due to the discovery of new medicines and the uncontrolled testing of their effects on men which began in third-century-BCE Alexandria. The physicians of Tobit 2:10, in all likelihood of Jewish origin, may have struggled to find the most appropriate cure for Tobit's case through experimentation of different medicines but their approach did not have the desirable results. The author might have been aware of such unsuccessful attempts of medical treatment and he thus confutes the incompetence of contemporary physicians, as well as their inhumane approach towards a patient, with the introduction of God-given remedies made of fish entrails. Beyond this, the author wanted to show that the rational medicine of

learned physicians was not united due to the existence of different medical sects, whereas popular magico-medical cures were unanimous, hence offering a feeling of security to the patient.

The anti-demonic smoking of the liver and the heart of fish clearly suggests its magical character, as demonic afflictions in the ancient world, especially in Mesopotamia and Egypt, were confronted by magical means (i.e. fumigation of animal parts and vegetal substances). The nature of the fish-gall ointment for Tobit's eye ailment is more problematic, as the gall of fish (and, in general, animal gall) was used both in magico-medical cures and in rational medicine. The use of the word *φάρμακον* in Tobit 6:5, however, to describe both the exorcistic fumigation of the fish entrails and the fish-gall ointment suggests the association of both with the magical realm and further indicates that the author does not distinguish between magic and medicine.⁷⁶⁸

The author's knowledge of such magico-medical cures suggests that not only were the Jews, especially those living in Babylon and Egypt, acquainted with them but they also made use of them.⁷⁶⁹ The ultimate aim for attributing a divine origin to them was not to violate the Jewish belief that God is the ultimate healer.⁷⁷⁰ In this way, he succeeds in demonstrating that God is the only true healer for Israel no matter what other medical methods and treatments began to appear. The integration of such practices into Jewish monotheism meant that there was no danger of magic any more.⁷⁷¹ This also indicates that the rejection of the magico-medical cures of God would be equivalent to opposing God himself.⁷⁷² Finally, Kollmann points out that one could venture to understand the author's legitimisation of magical healing practices, taking into consideration the existence of traditions that associated such practices with the fallen angels.⁷⁷³

⁷⁶⁸ Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 268; 265.

⁷⁶⁹ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 290; Stuckenbruck, 'The Book of Tobit', 268.

⁷⁷⁰ Kollmann, 'Göttliche', 290.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 298.

⁷⁷² *Ibid.*, 298.

⁷⁷³ Kollmann argues that the Book of Tobit implicitly deals with these traditions; *ibid.*, 299.

In summary, the author of Tobit speaks of two totally different bearers of medical knowledge who consequently introduce two distinct types of medicine. On the one hand is the scientific medicine of the physicians prominent in contemporary Alexandria. On the other hand are the God-given magico-medical cures that are also prominent in the author's time. The author of Tobit adapts into his theology healing practices of Mesopotamia and Egypt, dressing them 'with the spirit of Jewish legal piety.'⁷⁷⁴ In fact, he legitimises magical healing practices by identifying them with God's provision for illnesses such as blindness and demonic harassment. For the author of Tobit, only God is the bearer of genuine medical knowledge and reveals the fact to men through angelic mediation.

⁷⁷⁴ Moore, *Tobit*, 14.

CHAPTER 4

THE PHYSICIAN AND HIS MEDICINES IN BEN SIRA

1. INTRODUCTION

The Book of Ben Sira is a sapiential work from the Second Temple period. By means of advice and admonitions, the author instructs his readers to Jewish wisdom for dealing with problems of daily life. The present chapter focuses on Sir 38:1–15 where the author lavishly praises the role of the physician and his medicines. In particular, Ben Sira exhorts his readers to be positively disposed towards the physician and herbal remedies, because they are both part of God's creation. My aim here is to offer a comparative analysis of the textual evidence for Sir 38:1–15 that mirrors the original text as much as possible and provide some fresh comments on the passage, aiming to throw light on the historical background that prompted Ben Sira's positive attitude towards the medical profession.

1.1. The Book of Ben Sira

1.1.1. Canonicity, content and nature of the book

Ben Sira was excluded from the Hebrew canon probably due to its late origin.⁷⁷⁵ Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians include it in the OT, whereas Protestants list it among the *Apocrypha*.⁷⁷⁶

A work of fifty-one chapters, Ben Sira is in its larger part an unsystematic collection of mottos, advice and admonitions (1:1–42:14),⁷⁷⁷ aiming to help the reader confront daily problems and lead him to the pursuit of wisdom. For the author, wisdom is identified with the Law (24:23–24) and the keeping of the Law means, among other things, accurate completion of worship (35:1–12). The admonitions are followed by two other sections where the glory of God within nature (42:15–43:33) and history (44:1–50:29) is praised. The book ends with a thanksgiving hymn to God (51:1–12) and a poem for the pursuit of wisdom (51:13–30).

⁷⁷⁵ Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha*, 88.

⁷⁷⁶ James C. VanderKam, and Peter Flint, 'The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sira', in their, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus and Christianity* (London: T & T Clark, 2002), 185.

⁷⁷⁷ The section of admonitions is preceded by the Prologue of the grandson of Ben Sira.

The recording of wisdom sayings indicates the author's intention to present the wealth of Jewish wisdom and to provide his readers with ethics that stem from the practice of the Law. Ben Sira could thus be described as an ethical manual for daily life.

1.1.2. Title and author

The title of the book in Greek is *Σοφία Ἰησοῦ Υἱοῦ Σιραχ* (51:30).⁷⁷⁸ The title in Hebrew reads *חכמת שמעון בן ישוע בן אלעזר בן סירא* ('Wisdom of Simon son of Yeshua son of Elazar son of Sira'). The name of the author is given in Greek as *Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Σιραχ Ελεαζαρ ὁ Ἱεροσολυμίτης* (50:27). The meaning of the Greek appellation is not very clear. In Hebrew, the author's name is given as *שמעון בן ישוע בן אלעזר בן סירא* ('Simon son of Yeshua son of Elazar son of Sira'). Most likely the author's name was Yeshua or Jesus, his father was El(e)azar and his grandfather was Sira, as 'the use of the name of a grandfather or earlier male ancestor as a patronymic with *Ben* ("son of") prefixed was not unusual, particularly when the name of one's father was not sufficiently distinctive.'⁷⁷⁹

As Sir 50:27 indicates, Jesus ben Sira was an inhabitant of Jerusalem. His family was probably prominent and he received a good education. He travelled a lot (34:12) and was a wisdom scholar who instructed the youths of the Jerusalem aristocracy.⁷⁸⁰

1.1.3. Language and date

The Book of Ben Sira was originally written in Hebrew in the first quarter of the second century BCE. More precisely, it was written around 190 or 180 BCE in Jerusalem. Scholarship grounds the above date on the testimony of Sir 50:1–21,

⁷⁷⁸ The Latin title is *Liber Jesu filii Sirach*. In Latin tradition, the book is also known as *Ecclesiasticus*, a title that demonstrates its official use in the Western Church; see R. A. F. MacKenzie, *Sirach*, OTM 19 (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1983), 13.

⁷⁷⁹ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 4 (italics in the original).

⁷⁸⁰ MacKenzie, *Sirach*, 15; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 10.

where the author refers to the High Priest Simon II (219–196 BCE) as if he had recently died.⁷⁸¹

1.1.4. The grandson's translation

The grandson of Ben Sira translated the book into Greek sometime after his coming to Egypt⁷⁸² (Prologue, Ll. 27–30). His arrival should be dated to around 132 BCE,⁷⁸³ and his translation should have been completed some time before 100 BCE.⁷⁸⁴ As he notes in his Prologue, his translation may be imperfect in certain instances (Prologue, L. 20). He himself explains the reason for this:

‘For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language’ (Prologue, Ll. 21–22; NRSV).

Scholarship agrees that it is difficult, if not impossible, to recover the original Hebrew text from the Greek, and this is largely due to the grandson's translation technique.⁷⁸⁵

1.1.5. Versional evidence

1.1.5.1. The Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira

Although the Hebrew original is lost, the discovery of Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira sheds new light on the transmission history of the text. In 1896, S. Schechter identified portions of Ben Sira in Hebrew from an old manuscript, brought from Egypt to Cambridge by the famous ‘lady adventurers’ and manuscript collectors, A. Lewis and M. Gibson. In the years that followed, Schechter travelled to the Geniza of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Cairo where he identified many more fragments of Ben Sira in Hebrew.⁷⁸⁶ These fragments date from the eleventh and twelfth

⁷⁸¹ James H. Charlesworth, ‘Biblical Literature: Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha’, *EncRel* 2 (1987), 178; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 9; Douglas M. Nelson, *The Syriac Version of the Wisdom of Ben Sira Compared to the Greek and Hebrew Materials*, SBLDS 107 (Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1988), 1–2.

⁷⁸² He emigrated from Palestine to Egypt and probably settled in Alexandria; MacKenzie, *Sirach*, 20.

⁷⁸³ In his Prologue, he reports that he came to Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of King Euergetes (L. 27). The latter is Ptolemy VII Physkon Euergetes II (117–164 and 146–117 BCE); Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 8.

⁷⁸⁴ MacKenzie, *Sirach*, 20; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 8–9.

⁷⁸⁵ Douglas M. Nelson, review of *No Small Difference: Sirach's Relationship to its Hebrew Parent Text* (Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1989), by Benjamin G. Wright, in *JBL* 109, no. 4 (1990), 719.

⁷⁸⁶ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 51.

centuries CE.⁷⁸⁷ Scholarship generally agrees that the Geniza Hebrew MSS of Ben Sira ‘represent the original Hebrew version, though in a corrupted form.’⁷⁸⁸ Other Hebrew Ben Sira fragments, probably also from the Cairo Genizah, had found their way to Oxford’s Bodleian library. In 1956, two Hebrew fragments were discovered in Qumran Cave 2 (2Q18) and were later identified as parts of chapter 6 of Ben Sira (6:14–15 and 6:20–31, respectively); these date from the second half of the first century BCE. Nine years later parts of chapter 51 (51:13–20 and 51:30b) were found in Cave 11 (11Q Ps^a) which date from the first half of the first century CE.⁷⁸⁹ Furthermore, in 1964 a Hebrew manuscript of Sir 39:27–44:17 (early first century BCE) was discovered during the excavations of Y. Yadin in the fortress of Masada in the Judaeen desert.⁷⁹⁰ The Masada Scroll confirms ‘the general faithfulness of Greek I and the Cairo Geniza Hebrew manuscripts, while at the same time showing how some changes have come about through corruption and paraphrasing.’⁷⁹¹ Finally, it is suggested that the Masada Scroll and the Geniza fragments represent two forms of the Hebrew original.⁷⁹²

1.1.5.2. The Greek versions

The Greek version of Ben Sira (‘Sirach’) survives in two forms: Greek I (GI), which is Ben Sira’s grandson version (120 BCE), and Greek II (GII), which is a later, expanded version (65 BCE) based on a different Hebrew text, also having affinities to GI.⁷⁹³ This consequently means that the Greek versions of Ben Sira ‘derived from different Hebrew *Vorlagen*.’⁷⁹⁴ Nevertheless, GII is very close to GI as the scribe of GII did not make a translation afresh but largely used GI and only in cases where he thought it was necessary he translated from the Hebrew version (HTII) in his possession.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁸⁷ Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 2. For detailed information on the contents and publications of the five Ben Sira MSS (A–E) found in Cairo Geniza see *ibid.*, 2–3.

⁷⁸⁸ Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 4; cf. Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 54.

⁷⁸⁹ Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 4; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 53.

⁷⁹⁰ Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 4; 14.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, 131.

⁷⁹³ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 55–56; Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 5; cf. Nelson’s helpful diagram in *ibid.*, 131.

⁷⁹⁴ Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 6 (italics in the original).

⁷⁹⁵ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 55.

1.1.5.3. The Old Latin

GII was the base text for the second century CE Old Latin (VL) translation of Ben Sira. The latter was incorporated into the Vg as St. Jerome did not translate afresh the Book of Ben Sira.⁷⁹⁶ It preserved the right order of chapters after Sir 30:24, though it lacked the Prologue of the grandson, as well as chapters 44–50.⁷⁹⁷ In its process of transmission, the VL of Ben Sira has undergone many alterations and it thus contains ‘more doublets, variants, glosses, and interpolations than any other book of the Latin Bible.’⁷⁹⁸

1.1.5.4. The Syriac

The Syriac version of Ben Sira was not translated from Greek but from a later expanded form of a Hebrew original which was most probably different from the one used by GI. However, the Syriac version was influenced by GI and also shows awareness of the readings of GII.⁷⁹⁹ Nelson considers it probable that the first Syriac translation of Ben Sira was made ‘by Jewish scholars for Syriac-speaking Jews’, probably at Edessa in the third or fourth century CE,⁸⁰⁰ and, before the middle of the fifth century CE, it was subject to a Christian revision.⁸⁰¹

1.2. Ben Sira’s interaction with Hellenistic culture

Ben Sira wrote in a troublesome period just a few years before the Maccabean revolt in 167 BCE. Diverse opinions exist in scholarship as to whether Ben Sira was a polemical work against Hellenism. Maier suggested that not only was Ben Sira a polemical work, but also ‘an apologetic work directed against Hellenism.’⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 56–57.

⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 57; Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 6–7, 131–132; Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha*, 90.

⁸⁰⁰ Nelson grounds his argument about the Jewish origin of the first Syriac translation of Ben Sira on the existence of a Jewish community at Edessa already from 40 CE. He writes: ‘Perhaps this was done in the region of Edessa where there had been a Jewish community since A.D. 40. Syriac versions of the Bible were known in that area from the second century A.D. and the Peshitta Version was in use before the middle of the fifth century A.D. The Syriac Version of Ben Sira was produced during this period of time when writings sacred to the Jews were being put into the language of the people’: Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 132; cf. *ibid.*, 17–18.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁸⁰² George W. E. Nickelsburg, review of *Mensch und freier Wille: Nach den jüdischen Religionsparteien zwischen Ben Sira und Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1971), by Gerhard Maier, in *JBL* 92, no. 2 (1973), 294. Hengel also favours the idea of an anti-Hellenistic polemic in Ben Sira; Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the early Hellenistic Period*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 1:150. Moreover, Charlesworth argues that ‘Ben Sira is an apology for

Nickelsburg, however, questioned such a characterisation,⁸⁰³ and Collins argued that the author did not engage himself in a polemic against Hellenism, but rather ‘he welcomed many features of the Greek world.’⁸⁰⁴

Before examining Sir 38:1–15, it would be helpful to briefly address some ideas that suggest interaction with the Hellenistic culture, as these will assist the following analysis on Ben Sira’s attitude towards medicine.

To begin with, there are a number of instances in Ben Sira that suggest interaction with Hellenism. I hereby report briefly a few examples.

In Sir 11:28a, the author admonishes to call no one fortunate before his death (πρὸ τελευτῆς μὴ μακάριζε μηδένα). This is a well-known motto found in Greek literature (Herodotus 1.32:7; 86:3; Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 1528–30; Euripides, *Andr.* 100–102).⁸⁰⁵ Such a use indicates the author’s acquaintance with Greek gnomic sayings. Furthermore, the parallels between Ben Sira and the elegiac poetry of Theognis of Megara (ca. 540 BCE) suggest that the former did in fact read and use to some extent the work of the latter.⁸⁰⁶ Moreover, Hayward suggests that Ben Sira, having probably in mind the portrayal of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi as the navel of the world, draws an analogous description for the Temple in Jerusalem. More precisely, in Sir 24:11 Jerusalem is said to be Wisdom’s place of rest and residence. Hayward argues that the author pictures Wisdom as the *axis mundi*,⁸⁰⁷ assuming ‘a tradition that Jerusalem with its Temple constitutes the navel (*omphalos*) of the world, that central point of origins giving stability to the cosmos.’⁸⁰⁸ Hayward thus considers it probable that Ben Sira ‘had Delphi’s fame in mind as he pictured ... the Temple of

Judaism and is directed against the encroachments from Greek religion and culture’: James H. Charlesworth, ‘Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha’, *ER* 2 (1987), 178.

⁸⁰³ Nickelsburg, review of *Mensch und freier Wille*, 296.

⁸⁰⁴ James L. Crenshaw, review of *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1997), by John J. Collins, in *JAOS* 120, no. 1 (2000), 106.

⁸⁰⁵ Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha*, 97.

⁸⁰⁶ On this see Jack T. Sanders, *Ben Sira and Demotic Wisdom*, JBLMS 28 (Chico: Scholars, 1983), 30–38; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 48.

⁸⁰⁷ Robert C. T. Hayward, ‘Sirach and Wisdom’s Dwelling Place’, in Stephen C. Barton (ed.), *Where shall Wisdom be found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), 39.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 40 (italics in the original).

the Lord in Jerusalem at the navel of the world.⁸⁰⁹ Finally, it is argued that in the Stoic *Hymn to Zeus*, written by Cleanthes in ca. 232 BCE, one easily discerns the same worldview as in Ben Sira: God is the ruler of the cosmos and all nature obeys him; everything, good or evil, is divine in origin and has its place in God's plan (39:12–35).⁸¹⁰ Kaiser holds that Ben Sira depends on the Stoic doctrine of the providence of Zeus.⁸¹¹ Hengel also argues that Ben Sira's borrowing from Stoicism was quite easy, as 'the Stoa had grown up on Semitic ground, and had a great deal in common with the thought-world of the Old Testament.'⁸¹²

Examining the degree to which Hellenistic culture influenced Ben Sira, Sanders offers two distinctions. The first one is the use of certain expressions and phrases from Greek literature that had become 'common parlance' at that time and with which contemporary authors may well have been familiar. This, however, does not necessarily mean that these authors had actually read the literature where such expressions and phrases originally occurred.⁸¹³ The second distinction concerns the use of Greek figures of speech and concepts to express a Judaic idea.⁸¹⁴ Bearing the above in mind, Sanders speaks of the 'unconscious use of Hellenic material' in Ben Sira,⁸¹⁵ agreeing with Hengel that the Hellenistic expressions and concepts are only 'echoes' of Hellenic thought and thus one cannot speak of 'real influence.'⁸¹⁶ Sanders points out that 'a better understanding of Ben Sira's use of Hellenic material is that, when it suits his (Judaic) purpose, i.e., when he regards it as true, *he claims it for Judaism*. This is what the Jewish sages had always done.'⁸¹⁷ In effect, Ben Sira 'is entirely open to Hellenic thought as long as it can be Judaized.'⁸¹⁸ On this, Di Lella notes that Ben Sira's purpose was 'to show others how the best of Gentile thought is no danger to the faith but could even be incorporated into an

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁸¹⁰ Sharon L. Mattila, 'Ben Sira and the Stoics: A Reexamination of the Evidence', *JBL* 119, no. 3 (2000), 473–474.

⁸¹¹ Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha*, 97–98. There are, however, major differences between the Stoic cosmological view and that of the Jewish wisdom texts. The latter perceive the function of the world order as unchanging and eternal, whereas the Stoics consider that it is changing and 'undergoes identical cycles of generation and destruction': Mattila, 'Ben Sira', 474–475.

⁸¹² Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:148–149. Mattila, however, considers highly unlikely that Ben Sira was actually acquainted with Stoicism; Mattila, 'Ben Sira', 499–500.

⁸¹³ Sanders, *Ben Sira*, 27–28.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁸¹⁶ Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:149–150; Sanders, *Ben Sira*, 55.

⁸¹⁷ Sanders, *Ben Sira*, 57 (italics in the original).

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 58; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 49.

authentically Jewish work.’⁸¹⁹ In short, Ben Sira made use of Greek concepts and figures of speech, presenting them under the cloak of Jewish wisdom.

The above information on Ben Sira’s interaction with Hellenism is relevant to the present study as it can account for the author’s particular notion of the medical profession in Sir 38:1–15 which I now proceed to examine.

⁸¹⁹ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 50; cf. *ibid.*, 16.

2. LEGITIMISATION OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN SIR 38:1–15

2.1. The narrative framework of Sir 38:1–15

Sir 38:1–15 is probably the only place in the Bible and related Jewish texts that refers lengthily to the physician's work. It belongs to the lengthy section of the book that contains advice and admonitions for daily life. Chapter 37 contains admonitions on false and true friendship (37:1–6), bad and good counsellors (37:7–16), true and false wisdom (37:17–26) and temperance regarding eating and drinking (37:27–31). This last set of admonitions precedes the passage under examination. There, the author advises his readers not to be gluttonous towards any delicacy (37:29), and warns them that gluttony may result in sickness (37:30) or even death (37:31). The reference to sickness works as a fine link for the speech on the usefulness of the physician and his medicines (38:1–15).⁸²⁰

The basic ideas presented in Sir 38:1–15 can be summarised in the following:

- The origin of the medical profession;
- The origin and healing properties of earthly herbs;
- The work of the physician: to alleviate pain;
- The work of the pharmacist: to prepare the medicines;
- Repentance, prayer and offerings to God in sickness;
- The religiosity of the physician;
- Sin leads to sickness and, in turn, to the need of the physician.

Sir 38:1–15 is followed by a set of admonitions on death and grief (38:16–23). Ben Sira appears to place his thematic sections in a logical sequence: sickness (from gluttony; 37:30–31), need of medical profession (38:1–15), death and mourning (38:16–23).

⁸²⁰ Di Lella notes that 'it is interesting that Ben Sira places this section right after the one that deals with temperance and the evils attendant upon intemperance [37:27–31] as if to imply that even though one observes moderation at table, one still cannot avoid sickness': *ibid.*, 441.

2.2. Medical and healing language in Ben Sira

Before examining the textual evidence for Sir 38:1–15, it should be noted that medical/healing language is interspersed in the sections that precede the passage under examination. I hereby mention these passages.

In Sir 1:18, the author says that peace and good health (εἰρήνην καὶ ὑγίαιαν ἰάσεως)⁸²¹ flourish from the fear of the Lord (φόβος κυρίου). Sir 3:28 says that there is no healing for the proud/vile man in distress (ἐπαγωγῇ ὑπερηφάνου οὐκ ἔστιν ἰασις/לִּי מַכַּת לְרַפְאוֹת אֵל תְּרוֹץ^{MS A})⁸²². Furthermore, in Sir 10:10 occurs a brief mention of the physician: a long illness mocks the physician; the king of today will die tomorrow (μακρὸν ἀρρώστημα σκώπτει ἱατρόν· καὶ βασιλεὺς σήμερον, καὶ αὔριον τελευτήσει/יפול/ומחר היום מלך רופא יצהיב רופא מחלה/שמץ^{MS A}). The phrase belongs to a section that criticises pride and arrogance in men (10:1–19). Di Lella comments on Sir 10:10 with the following: ‘what one day is simply a report of the king’s illness about which the physician is not worried (v 10a) terminates the next day in the death of the patient (v 10b).’⁸²³ Ben Sira probably wants to say that there is no use in being arrogant, because everyone is ‘dust and ashes’ (10:9a), and he gives as an example the case of a physician who can be baffled as he is actually unable to predict the course of a long illness, and thus to know with certainty when the life of the patient will be terminated.

Moreover, Sir 18:19 is an exhortation to take care of health before illness (καὶ πρὸ ἀρρωστίας θεραπεύου). Ben Sira considers each man responsible for his health.⁸²⁴ In Sir 18:21, he further exhorts his readers to be humble before falling sick (πρὶν ἀρρωστῆσαι σε ταπεινώθητι).

⁸²¹ All quotations of the Greek Ben Sira are taken from Joseph Ziegler (ed.), *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach*, Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Societas Litterarum Gottingensis editum, vol. 12/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965).

⁸²² All quotations of the Hebrew Ben Sira are taken from Pancratius C. Beentjes (ed.), *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew. A Text Edition of all Extant Manuscripts & A Synopsis of all Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts*, SVT 68 (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

⁸²³ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 225.

⁸²⁴ Man’s responsibility for his health is also evident in Sir 37:29–31 where the author advises his readers to restrain themselves from gluttony, because the latter may cause sickness.

What is more, Sir 30:14–17 speaks of good health. In Sir 30:14, it is said that it is better to be poor, healthy (ὕγις/יח^{MS B}) and strong than wealthy, having been afflicted in body (30:14). In Sir 30:15a, health (ὕγεια/ייח^{MS B}) and well-being (εὐεξία/אֵוִיתִי שֶׁר^{MS B}) are described as better than any gold. In Sir 30:16a, it is said that the health of the body (ὕγειας σώματος/עצם שֶׁר^{MS B}) is better than any wealth, and Sir 30:17b says that eternal rest is better than long-lasting illness (ἀρρώστημα ἔμμονον/מְכַאֵב עוֹלָם^{MS B}). Finally, in Sir 34:20b the Lord is presented as the one who gives healing, life and blessing (ἰασιν διδοὺς ζωῆς καὶ εὐλογίαν). The concept of God as a healer is prominent here (cf. Sir 38:2a, 9b).

The foregoing evidence, which all precede chapter 38, indicates Ben Sira's vivid interest in good health. The terminology met above presupposes the language the author will use to describe the role of the physician and his medical art in Sir 38:1–15. The reader is already acquainted with the author's interest in health and the discourse on the medical profession comes naturally.

2.3. Textual evidence of Sir 38:1–15

Ben Sira is a book that has undergone a remarkable number of revisions and emendations in the course of its transmission.⁸²⁵ Sir 38:1–15 is not extant in the Masada Scroll, the oldest and closest to the original text of Ben Sira. The Hebrew evidence for it is found in the Cairo Geniza MS B (twelfth century CE).⁸²⁶ It is also found in the Greek, Latin and Syriac versions. In what follows, I will examine the Greek and Hebrew evidence, as they are the closest to the original evidence available for Sir 38:1–15,⁸²⁷ and proceed to textual notes in an effort to compare the

⁸²⁵ For a synopsis of the difficulties of a textual criticism of Ben Sira see Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 59–60.

⁸²⁶ Also, Cairo Geniza MS D (eleventh century) preserves only the very first bit of Sir 38:1.

⁸²⁷ The Cairo Geniza MSS were based on the second Hebrew form (HII) that was developed from the Hebrew original. Although the Syriac version is a textual witness of an older form of the Hebrew than the Geniza MSS, its text was subject to Christian reworking (i.e. alterations, deliberate omissions, etc.) to a point that the meaning of the Hebrew text is significantly altered; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 59; Nelson, *The Syriac Version*, 132. The VL version of Ben Sira has undergone multiple alterations and emendations, too. In the absence of Sir 38:1–15 from the Masada Scroll, I will examine GI and MS B evidence as the Masada evidence confirmed the genuineness of both.

two. The Greek text of GI (Sir^{GI}) is taken from Ziegler's Göttingen edition^{828 829}, and the Hebrew citation of MS B (Sir^{MS B}) is taken from Beentjes' text edition.⁸³⁰ I shall also refer to the marginal material of MS B (Sir^{MS B mg}) in the notes and the commentary section, because 'they are part of the textual evidence of the manuscripts ... [and] they often seem to represent variant readings available to the copyist in other Ben Sira manuscripts', as Beentjes notes.⁸³¹ The English translations are my own.⁸³²

2.3.1. Sir^{GI} 38:1–15

38:1 Τίμα ιατρὸν πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ, καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔκτισεν κύριος·
 38:2 παρὰ γὰρ ὑψίστου ἐστὶν ἴασις, καὶ παρὰ βασιλέως λήμψεται δόμα.
 38:3 ἐπιστήμη ἱατροῦ ἀνυψώσει κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔναντι μεγιστάνων
 θαυμασθήσεται.
 38:4 κύριος ἔκτισεν ἐκ γῆς φάρμακα, καὶ ἀνὴρ φρόνιμος οὐ προσοχθεῖ αὐτοῖς.
 38:5 οὐκ ἀπὸ ξύλου ἐγλυκάνθη ὕδωρ εἰς τὸ γνωσθῆναι τὴν ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ;
 38:6 καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν ἀνθρώποις ἐπιστήμην ἐνδοξάζεσθαι ἐν τοῖς θαυμασίοις αὐτοῦ·
 38:7 ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐθεράπευσεν καὶ ἤρεν τὸν πόνον αὐτοῦ,
 38:8 μυρεψὸς ἐν τούτοις ποιήσει μεῖγμα, καὶ οὐ μὴ συντελεσθῇ ἔργα αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ εἰρήνην παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἐπὶ προσώπου τῆς γῆς.
 38:9 Τέκνον, ἐν ἀρρωσθήματί σου μὴ παράβλεπε, ἀλλ' εὗξαι κυρίῳ,
 καὶ αὐτὸς ἰάσεται σε·
 38:10 ἀπόστησον πλημμέλειαν καὶ εὐθύνον χεῖρας καὶ ἀπὸ πάσης ἀμαρτίας
 καθάρισον καρδίαν·
 38:11 δὸς εὐωδίαν καὶ μνημόσυνον σεμιδάλεως καὶ λίπανον προσφορὰν ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων.

⁸²⁸ Ziegler, *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach*. Ziegler consulted all the available Greek MSS and took into consideration patristic and/or versional accounts, reconstructing an eclectic text; cf. Robert A. Kraft, review of *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach*, Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Societas Litterarum Göttingensis editum, vol. 12/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), by Joseph Ziegler, *JBL* 86, no. 2 (1967), 233–234.

⁸²⁹ For Sir 38:1–15, GII does not preserve any additional reading, only variants of words given in Ziegler's apparatus. When GII preserves additional material (e.g. full sentences that do not exist in GI), Ziegler prints it in smaller script in the text itself; see Ziegler, *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach*, 69.

⁸³⁰ Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew*.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, 8. Beentjes also refers to Yadin's observation (*The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* [Jerusalem, 1965]) that more than fifty percent of the marginal material of MS B agrees with the text of the Masada Scroll; *ibid.*, 8–9. Marböck also notes that the marginal material offers better variants which agree with the Greek and the Syriac and is to be preferred; Marböck, 'Der Arzt bei Ben Sira', 154.

⁸³² I am grateful to my supervisors Lutz Doering and Robert Hayward for their helpful comments and assistance in translating the Hebrew Sir 38:1–15.

38:12 καὶ ἰατρῷ δὸς τόπον, καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔκτισεν κύριος, καὶ μὴ ἀποστήτω σου,
καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ χρεία.

38:13 ἔστιν καιρὸς ὅτε καὶ ἐν χερσὶν αὐτῶν εὐοδία·

38:14 καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖ κυρίου δεηθήσονται, ἵνα εὐοδώσῃ αὐτοῖς ἀνάπαυσιν

καὶ ἴασιν χάριν ἐμβιώσεως.

38:15 ὁ ἁμαρτάνων ἔναντι τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτὸν ἐμπέσοι εἰς χεῖρας ἰατροῦ.

38:1 Honour the physician with regard to the needs of him⁸³³, for the Lord created him;

38:2 for healing comes from the Most High, and he shall receive a gift from the king.

38:3 The knowledge of the physician shall lift up his head, and before the great men shall be admired.

38:4 The Lord created medicines from the earth, and a sensible man shall not despise them.

38:5 Was not the water sweetened by wood so as its power might be known?

38:6 And he gave knowledge to men so that he might be glorified in his marvellous deeds;

38:7 By means of them he healed and took his pain away,

38:8 the pharmacist shall make of them a compound, and his works shall never be finished, and from him health⁸³⁴ is upon the face of the earth.

38:9 Child, in your sickness do not be negligent, but pray to the Lord, and he shall heal you;

38:10 abandon your deceit and direct your hands and cleanse your heart from all sin;

38:11 Give a sweet-smelling sacrifice and a memorial of fine flour and a fat offering, as much as there ever is.

38:12 And give a physician his place, for the Lord created him, and let him not leave you, for there is need of him.

38:13 There is time when success lies in their hands;

38:14 for they too shall pray to the Lord so that he would grant them rest and healing for the maintenance of life.

38:15 He who sins before his maker may fall into the hands of a physician.

⁸³³ An alternative translation of πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ would be ‘according to his needs’, taking αὐτοῦ as a possessive genitive. I take αὐτοῦ here as a genitive objective—the noun *χρεία* can be modified into the verb *χρήζω*; its subject would be σύ (the subject can be taken from τίμα) and its object αὐτοῦ (i.e. the physician). In this way, πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ can mean ‘because you are in need of him.’ This is also in agreement with the Sir^{MS B} (see below).

⁸³⁴ The content of Sir^{GI} 38:1–15 requires a translation of εἰρήνη as ‘health.’ The same meaning of εἰρήνη is also found in Judges^B 18:15: καὶ ἐξέκλιναν ἐκεῖ καὶ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ νεανίσκου τοῦ Λευίτου, οἶκον Μιχαῖα, καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν εἰς εἰρήνην (cf. Isa 53:5; 57:18–19; Jer 6:14); on this see Wells, *The Greek Language of Healing*, 106–107.

2.3.2. Sir^{MS B} 38:1–15

- 38:1 רעי רופא לפני צרכו גם אתו חלק אל :
- 38:2 מאת אל יחכם רופא ומאת מלך ישא משאות :
- 38:3 דעת רופא תרים ראשו ולפני נדיבים יתיצב :
- 38:4 אל מארץ מוציא תרופות וגבר מבין אל ימאס בם :
- 38:5 הלא בעץ המתיקו מים בעבור להודיע כל אנוש כחו :
- 38:6 ויתן לאנוש בינה להתפאר בגבורתו :
- 38:7 בהם רופא יניח מכאוב וכן רוקח עושה מרקחת :
- 38:8 ל[.]ען לא יש[.]ת מעשהו ותושיה מבני אדם :
- 38:9 בני בחולי אל תתעבר התפלל אל אל כי הוא ירפא :
- 38:10 [....]עול ומהכר פנים ומכל פשעים טהר לב :
- 38:11 [.....]אזכרה ודשן ערוך בכנפי הוניך :
- 38:12 וג[.]ל[.] [.....] מקום ולא ימוש [.....] צורך :
- 38:13 כי יש עת אשר בידו מצלחת כי גם הוא אל אל יעתיר :
- 38:14 אשר יצלח לו פשרה ורפאות למען מחיה :
- 38:15 אשר חוטא לפני עושהו יתגבר לפני רופא :

- 38:1 Make friends⁸³⁵ with the physician before⁸³⁶ (you) need him⁸³⁷, because⁸³⁸ God also created him.
- 38:2 From God the physician receives wisdom, and from the king he shall take gifts.
- 38:3 The knowledge of the physician shall lift his head up and before nobles⁸³⁹ he shall stand.
- 38:4 From the earth God brings forth⁸⁴⁰ medicines and an intelligent man shall not despise them.
- 38:5 Was not the water sweetened by wood⁸⁴¹ so that he may let every human being know his strength?

⁸³⁵ Sir^{MS B mg} reads רעה. Sir^{MS D}, which preserves only the first bit of Sir 38:1, reads רעה (רעה רועה רופא) (לפי).

⁸³⁶ Sir^{MS D} reads לפי ('according to').

⁸³⁷ Sir^{MS B mg} reads צרכך ('your need').

⁸³⁸ Sir^{MS B mg} preserves כי ('because') which agrees with γὰρ of Sir^{GI}.

⁸³⁹ Sir^{MS B mg} reads מלכים ('kings').

⁸⁴⁰ Sir^{MS B mg} preserves ברא שמים ('he created heavenly').

- 38:6 And he gave human beings knowledge so that he (God) be distinguished by means of his might⁸⁴².
- 38:7 By them the physician suppresses pain, and similarly the ointment-maker makes a drug.
- 38:8 [so that]⁸⁴³ his work may not c[ea]se⁸⁴⁴, nor effective wisdom from the sons of men.⁸⁴⁵
- 38:9 My son, in illness⁸⁴⁶ be not negligent, pray to God because it is he who heals.
- 38:10 [Depart from]⁸⁴⁷ sin and from partiality and from all transgressions cleanse the heart.
- 38:11 [Give a grain offering and]⁸⁴⁸ memorial-offering and set up fat (offerings) according to⁸⁴⁹ your wealth⁸⁵⁰.
- 38:12 And al[so]⁸⁵¹ to [the physician give]⁸⁵² room and let him not depart [from you, because he is also in]⁸⁵³ need.
- 38:13 Because there is a time that success (lies) in his hand; because he also supplicates to God
- 38:14 that he shall make⁸⁵⁴ for him a successful diagnosis and healing so that he may keep (patients) alive.
- 38:15 He who sins before his maker shows himself strong⁸⁵⁵ before the physician.

⁸⁴¹ Sir^{MS B mg} reads 'from wood' (מעץ).

⁸⁴² Sir^{MS B mg} reads בגבורתם ('by their power').

⁸⁴³ I follow Smend who restores the lacuna with מ, so למען ('so that'); Rudolph Smend, *Weisheit des Jesus Sirach: Hebräisch und Deutsch* (Berlin: Verlag von G. Reimer, 1906), 35.

⁸⁴⁴ Smend restores the lacunae with the letters בו, so ישובות ('cessation, rest'); *ibid.*, 35. This is also in agreement with οὐ μὴ συντελεσθῇ in the Greek.

⁸⁴⁵ Sir^{MS B mg} preserves מבני מפני ארצו ('from the sons of from the face of his earth').

⁸⁴⁶ Sir^{MS B mg} reads במחלה ('in illness').

⁸⁴⁷ I follow Smend who restores the lacunae with מ סור ('depart from'); Smend, *Weisheit*, 35.

⁸⁴⁸ I follow Smend's restoration of the lacunae: תן מנחה וגם; *ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁴⁹ Sir^{MS B} reads בכנפי ('on the wings'). Sauer suggests that בכנפי is incomprehensible and the word should probably be כפי ('according to'), which agrees with ὡς μὴ of the Greek; Georg Sauer, *Jesus Sirach/Ben Sira*, ATD, Apocryphen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 261, note 154. Skehan also translates with 'according to'; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 438.

⁸⁵⁰ Sir^{MS B mg} reads the word in singular הנך.

⁸⁵¹ I follow here Smend's restoration: וג[ם] ('and al[so]'); Smend, *Weisheit*, 35.

⁸⁵² I follow here Smend's restoration: ל[רופא] ('to [the physician give]'); *ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁵³ I follow Smend who restores as follows: ב[ו] [מאתך כי גם בו] ('[from you, because he is also in]'); *ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁵⁴ Sir^{MS B mg} preserves ימנה ('he shall appoint').

⁸⁵⁵ Sir^{MS B mg} reads יסתגר ('he imprisons himself').

2.3.3. Textual notes

In Sir 38:1, Sir^{GI} begins with the imperative τίμα ('honour'), whereas Sir^{MS B mg} and Sir^{MS D} read the imperative רעה ('make friends').⁸⁵⁶ Although the two verbs are different, their meaning is close; they both suggest a positive inclination towards the physician. Furthermore, Sir^{GI} reads πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ ('with regard to the needs of him'). As noted above, I take αὐτοῦ here as a genitive objective (i.e. because you are in need of the physician). Sir^{MS B} reads לפני צרכו ('before you need him'). Sir^{MS D} reads לפי ('according to') which is equivalent to the πρὸς of Sir^{GI}. Smend suggests that לפני (Sir^{MS B}) is a corruption of לפי (Sir^{MS D}) and translates it with a causative adjunct ('weil' ('because')).⁸⁵⁷ Skehan also translates with 'because'.⁸⁵⁸ If Smend is right, then the alternative translation would be 'because (you) need him', which is in agreement with the Greek. Sir^{MS B} reads צרכו ('his need'), which would agree with αὐτοῦ if the latter was a possessive genitive. Sir^{MS B mg} reads צרכך ('your need') which suggests the following rendering: 'before (or because) you need him'. Hence, both the Hebrew and Greek state that one is in need of a physician.

In the second bit of verse 1, Sir^{GI} says that the physician is a creature of God (καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐκτίσεν ὁ κύριος). Sir^{MS B} does not use the verb ברא, equivalent of ἀτίζω, but the verb חלק, 'to divide, to share, to assign'.⁸⁵⁹ Smend, however, points out that חלק can also mean 'to create'.⁸⁶⁰ In this way, both Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} use a 'language of creation' to express the divine origin of the physician. In brief, in Sir 38:1 the point of the Greek and the Hebrew is significantly the same: one should be

⁸⁵⁶ Sir^{MS B} reads רעי ('my friend') but the case of imperative is to be preferred here, as it is attested in both Sir^{MS B mg} and Sir^{MS D}, and also agrees with the reading of Sir^{GI}.

⁸⁵⁷ Smend, *Weisheit*, 65.

⁸⁵⁸ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 438.

⁸⁵⁹ BDB, 323–324.

⁸⁶⁰ Smend, *Weisheit*, 260, note 153; cf. Marböck, 'Der Arzt bei Ben Sira', 156. On the meaning of חלק as 'to create' see also the recent essay of M. O'Connor, 'The Language of Creation in Ben Sira: חלק = ἀτίζω', in Jeremy Corley and Vincent Skemp (eds.), *Studies in the Greek Bible: Essays in Honor of Francis T. Gignac, S.J.*, CBQMS 44 (Washington DC: The Catholic Biblical Society of America, 2008), 217–228.

positively disposed towards the physician (τίμα/רעה), because, first, one is in need of him, and second, God created him.

The first bit of Sir 38:2 is different in the Greek and Hebrew. Sir^{GI} reads ‘for healing comes from the Most High’ (παρὰ γὰρ ὑψίστου ἐστὶν ἰασις), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads ‘from God the physician receives wisdom’ (מֵאֵת אֵל יִחְכֵּם רֹפֵא). Sir^{MS B} connects medical knowledge with wisdom. By reference to the physician, Sir^{MS B} strengthens the mediatory role of the physician in the healing process. For Sir^{GI}, it is God who grants healing, whereas for Sir^{MS B} it is the physician, the receiver of divine wisdom, who shall mediate God’s healing. In both cases, God is the ultimate source of healing. The second bit of the verse overlaps significantly in both versions: the physician shall receive his gifts (δόμα/משאות)⁸⁶¹ from the king.

In Sir 38:3 both versions are very close, except for the very last verb of the verse; Sir^{GI} reads ‘he shall be admired’ (θαυμασθήσεται), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads ‘he shall stand’ (יתיצב). The Greek verb is stronger, laying emphasis on the admirable work of the physician. For both Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B}, it is the divine knowledge of the physician that makes the existence of his profession legitimate.

In Sir 38:4, Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} present two differences. The first difference is that Sir^{GI} uses the same ‘language of creation’ (ἐκτίσεν) as in Sir 38:1b to describe the physician as a creature of God. For Sir^{GI} both the physician and earthly medicines are thus divinely created. Sir^{MS B} reads ‘from the earth God brings forth’ (אֵל מֵאֶרֶץ (מוציא). Sir^{MS B mg}, however, preserves the reading ברא שמים (‘he created heavenly’) which agrees with Sir^{GI} and indicates that the medicines were divinely created. The second difference is that Sir^{GI} reads a different adjective from Sir^{MS B}, that is, φρόνιμος (‘sensible’) and מבין (‘intelligent’), respectively. The latter adjective is

⁸⁶¹ The only difference is that Sir^{GI} preserves the noun as singular, whereas Sir^{MS B} in plural.

much stronger from the former, indicating that Sir^{MS B} considers it not merely prudence but intelligence not to despise herbal medicaments.

Both Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} overlap significantly in verse 5. Sir^{MS B} adds כל אנוש ('every human being').

In verse 6, both Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} agree that God gave the knowledge (i.e. knowledge of healing herbs) to humanity, so that he will be glorified (ἐνδοξάζεσθαι/להתפאר). There are, however, two differences. The first difference is that Sir^{GI} has the verb in the Aorist (ἔδωκεν), whereas Sir^{MS B} has Qal imperfect (ויתן). The second difference is that Sir^{GI} reads 'in his marvellous deeds' (ἐν τοῖς θαυμαστοῖς αὐτοῦ), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads 'by means of his might' (בגבורתו). Only the third person masculine pronominal suffix of בגבורתו is in agreement with Sir^{GI} (αὐτοῦ). Sir^{MS B mg} preserves בגבורתם ('by their power'). Nevertheless, both versions agree that the knowledge comes from God. The second bit of the verse should be understood as follows: by means of the successful application of pharmaceutical knowledge God shall be glorified.

Moreover, some significant differences exist between Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} in Sir 38:7. First, Sir^{GI} preserves two verbs (ἐθεράπευσεν καὶ ἤρην), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads only one (יניח). Second, Sir^{GI} omits the subject, whereas Sir^{MS B} reads רופא. Third, Sir^{GI} reads τὸν πόνον αὐτοῦ ('his pain'), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads only מכאוב ('pain'). The wording ἐν αὐτοῖς/בהם refers to the earthly medicines of verse 4. Moreover, Sir 38:7b^{MS B} corresponds to Sir 38:8a^{GI} and the two are very similar. Sir^{MS B}, however, omits the phrase ἐν τούτοις of Sir^{GI}, probably because it presupposes בהם, the first word of Sir 38:7^{MS B}. The wording ἐν τούτοις (Sir 38:8a^{GI}) refers like ἐν αὐτοῖς (Sir 38:7^{GI}) to the earthly medicines (cf. 38:4).

Sir 38:8a^{MS B} is not fully preserved but it appears that it is close to Sir 38:8b^{GI}. The former reads '[so that] his work may not c[ea]se' (ל[מ]ען לא יש[בו]ת מעשהו), which agrees with the reading of Sir^{GI}, 'and his works shall never be finished' (καὶ οὐ μὴ συντελεσθῇ ἔργα αὐτοῦ). Sir 38:8b^{MS B} reads 'effective wisdom from the sons of men' (מעשהו ותושיה מבני אדם) and is different from Sir 38:8c^{GI} which reads 'and from him health is upon the face of the earth' (καὶ εἰρήνη παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἐπὶ προσώπου τῆς γῆς). Sir^{MS B mg} preserves מבני מפני ארצו ('from the sons of from the face of his earth'). The reference to 'the face of his earth' almost agrees fully with προσώπου τῆς γῆς—Sir^{GI} does not preserve any personal pronoun equivalent to the third singular masculine pronominal suffix of the Sir^{MS B mg} (י-). Sir^{MS B mg} appears here to attempt to combine the two textual traditions (Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B}).

In Sir 38:9, Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B} are very close. Sir^{GI} reads 'in your sickness' (ἐν ἀρρωστήματί σου), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads 'in illness' (במחלה/בחולי Sir^{MS B mg}), omitting the pronominal suffix. Sir^{MS B} reads תתעבר ('be not negligent') which agrees with μὴ παράβλεπε. Sir^{GI} reads 'he shall heal you' (αὐτὸς ἰάσεται σε), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads 'it is he who heals' (ירפא).

The first bit of Sir 38:10 Sir^{MS B}, though fragmented, is close to Sir^{GI}. Sir^{MS B} reads '[depart from] sin' (ל[סור] מ[עול]) which agrees with ἀπόστησον πλημμέλειαν. Sir^{GI} reads 'direct'⁸⁶² your hands' (εὐθύνον χεῖρας), whereas Sir^{MS B} reads 'from partiality'

⁸⁶² The literal meaning of εὐθύνον (from the verb εὐθύνω) is 'to guide straight, to direct, to chastise'; see Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 1:186. A more metaphorical translation of εὐθύνον fits also the context of 38:10a, that is, 'to purify'; see Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 438. Snaith also offers a non-literal translation of εὐθύνον χεῖρας, that is, 'amend your ways', which fits with the ethical expiation advised for the sick in verse 10, too; John G. Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus or The Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach*, CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 183.

(הכר פנים).⁸⁶³ Both versions agree in the second bit of the verse; they admonish the sick one to clean his heart from all sin⁸⁶⁴.

Verse 11 is not fully preserved in Sir^{MS B}; it appears, however, to be in agreement with Sir^{GI}. אזכרה is equivalent of *μνημόσυνον* and the second bit of the verse in Sir^{MS B} refers to the fat offerings (⁸⁶⁵ודשן ערוך) which corresponds to *λίπανον προσφοράν*. The very last bit of the verse makes clearer the obscure wording *ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων*. Sir^{MS B} reads ‘according to your wealth’ (בכנפי הוניך). The meaning of *ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων* can thus be: make an offering as much as possible (both in quantity and quality) like there is no other like this. Sir^{MS B} adds the second person singular suffix (ך) at the end of the word הן.

Sir 38:12^{MS B} is very much fragmented. The word ‘room/place’ (מקום) that is preserved in the first bit of the verse is equivalent of *τόπον*. In the second bit, ימוש agrees with *καὶ μὴ ἀποστήτω* and צורך agrees with *χρεία*. The preserved parts of Sir 38:12^{MS B} suggest that the testimony of Sir^{MS B} significantly agrees with that of Sir^{GI}.

What is more, the first bit of Sir^{MS B} 38:13 agrees with Sir^{GI}. The difference lies in that Sir^{MS B} reads ‘in his hand’ (בידו), whereas Sir^{GI} reads ‘in their hands’ (*ἐν χερσιν αὐτῶν*). Sir 38:13b^{MS B} agrees with Sir 38:14a^{GI866} in that the physician(s) will pray to God. Sir^{GI} again has the plural, whereas Sir^{MS B} has the singular (*αὐτοῖ* ... *δεηθήσονται/יצלח*). Sir 38:14^{MS B} reads ‘that he shall make for him a successful diagnosis and healing so that he may keep (patients) alive’ (אשר יצלח לו פשרה).

⁸⁶³ הכר פנים literally means ‘recognise the face’ (i.e. ‘be partial in judgment’). Sauer translates here ‘Parteilichkeit’; Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 261. Smend and Skehan attempt to harmonise the Hebrew with the Greek, reading ‘purify your hands’; Smend, *Weisheit*, 65; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 438.

⁸⁶⁴ Sir^{MS B} reads the word in plural: פשעים (‘transgressions’).

⁸⁶⁵ Sir^{MS B mg} preserves the same word, omitting the ו (ערוך).

⁸⁶⁶ Sir^{MS B} 38:13b corresponds to Sir^{Gr} 38:14a.

מחיה (ורפאות למען מחיה), which is an approximation of Sir 38:14b^{GI} ‘so that he would grant them rest and healing for the maintenance of life’ (ἵνα εὐοδώσῃ αὐτοῖς ἀνάπαυσιν καὶ ἰασιν χάριν ἐμβιώσεως). The essential aspect here is that both versions attest that the physician(s) shall pray to God so as he (i.e. God) will assist him/them in treating the sick.

Finally, the first bit of verse 15 is almost the same in both Sir^{GI} and Sir^{MS B}: ‘he who sins before his maker’ (ὁ ἀμαρτάνων ἐναντι τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτόν/ אשר חוטא לפני (עושהו)). The difference between the two is that the Greek does not preserve any equivalent of אשר.⁸⁶⁷ A more significant difference occurs in the second bit of the verse which is, by far, the most difficult sentence of the passage. Sir^{GI} reads ‘(he) may fall into the hands of a physician’ (ἐμπέσοι εἰς χεῖρας ἱατροῦ). The verb ἐμπίπτω bears a concealed tone of scepticism. Sir^{MS B} preserves a different verb, namely יתגבר, which is Hithpa‘el imperfect of גבר (‘to strengthen’), and can be translated as ‘(he) shows himself strong’, in the sense that he will avoid the physician’s assistance. יתגבר is found in Job 15:25 and Isaiah 42:13. In the former passage, יתגבר is used to refer to defiance against God. Skehan translates: ‘(he) will be defiant toward the doctor.’⁸⁶⁸ Similarly, Sauer translates ‘der sich vor einem Arzt groß tut’ (‘is the one who boasts his strength before the physician’).⁸⁶⁹ In other words, both Skehan and Sauer connect sinning against God with disobedience towards the physician. Similar to the Greek, Sir^{MS B mg} lays emphasis on the issue of sin; it reads יסתוגר (‘he imprisons himself’). The one who decides to sin before God is equivalent to imprisonment, namely dependence on the physician. Smend renders the second bit of the verse, combining the two marginal readings found in MS B. His rendering is as follows: יסתוגר על ידי רופא (‘he imprisons himself through the

⁸⁶⁷ J. T. Nelis, ‘Sir 38,15’, in W. C. Delsman, J. T. Nelis, (et al.) (eds.), *Von Kanaan bis Kerala: Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg O. P. zur Vollendung des siebzigsten Lebensjahres am 4. Juli 1979*, AOAT 211 (Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1982), 174. Nelis suggests an interesting possibility about the place of אשר at the beginning of the 38:15: ‘Le verset 14 peut être considéré comme une parenthèse, de sorte que le verset 15 développe la pensée du verset 13’: *ibid.*, 177; cf. 178.

⁸⁶⁸ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 439.

⁸⁶⁹ Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 26.

physician’).⁸⁷⁰ In his translation, Smend attempts to harmonise the text even more with the Greek: ‘fällt in die Hände des Arztes.’⁸⁷¹ The marginal readings (יסתוגר and על ידי, respectively) are found in different places in MS B,⁸⁷² a fact which suggests that might not have been added at the same time. It appears that in MS B for Sir 38:15b, two textual traditions coexist, namely the one of the primary text, whose meaning is very different from the Greek, and the one of the marginal material which attempts to bring the Hebrew in line with Greek. In short, the construction of Sir^{GI, MS B mg} assumes a strong link between sin and sickness, whereas Sir^{MS B} sees sinning against God as equal to defiance towards the physician.

In summary, the language of Sir^{GI} indicates a moderate positivity on the usefulness of the medical profession, laying more emphasis on the role of God as the ultimate healer (e.g. 38:2a), whereas Sir^{MS B} accepts the physician and his art unconditionally. Despite their differences, both versions recommend a positive disposition towards the physician and his medicines—Sir^{MS B} evidently more than Sir^{GI}, as it lays more emphasis on the role of the physician (e.g. 38:2a, 7).

2.4. Comments on Sir 38:1–15

2.4.1. Sir 38:1–3: The origin of the physician

In Sir 38:1, the author exhorts his readers to be positively disposed towards the physician. As seen above, Sir^{GI} reads τιμα, whereas Sir^{MS B mg, MS D} read רעה (Sir^{MS B} רע). In the second half of the first verse, the author explains the reason for the positive disposition towards the physician: for Ben Sira, the physician is a creature of God (Sir^{GI, MS B}). Ben Sira attempts to legitimise the existence of the physician (as a person) by means of a ‘creation theology.’⁸⁷³ In other words, the attribution of honour (Sir^{GI}) and/or the friendly relationship (Sir^{MS B, MS B mg, MS D}) with the physician lies on the fact that God is his maker.

⁸⁷⁰ Smend, *Weisheit*, 35.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁸⁷² Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew*, 66.

⁸⁷³ The term is taken from Kollmann, ‘Göttliche’, 291 and Stuckenbruck, ‘The Book of Tobit’, 261. Marböck use the terms ‘Ordnungskonzeption’ and ‘Schöpfungsordnung’; Marböck, ‘Der Arzt bei Ben Sira’, 156–157.

Sir 38:2a^{GI} reports that healing will eventually come from God and reflects the idea that God is the ultimate healer prominent in the HB (Ex 15:26; Deut 32:39; Job 5:18; Hos 6:1; Jer 17:14). Sir^{MS B} reports that the physician draws his wisdom (i.e. medical knowledge) from God. In both versions, God is the ultimate source of healing.⁸⁷⁴

In Sir 38:2b^{GI, MS B}, it is said that the physician will receive (a) gift(s) from the king. This reference portrays the situation according to which physicians belonged to royal courts and their royal patrons offered sustenance for their medical services.⁸⁷⁵ Temkin argues that ‘since there was no Jewish king at the time of Ben Sira, this is likely to refer to the Egyptian or Syrian courts and to members of the Jewish aristocracy.’⁸⁷⁶ Sir 38:3^{GI, MS B} says that the knowledge which God endowed will make the physician distinguished and admired by great men.⁸⁷⁷ During his travels (Sir 34:9–12), Ben Sira may well have met physicians whose services were highly appreciated by the kings and nobles of his time. Ben Sira’s point here is that these admirable services derive from the knowledge with which God granted the physician.

2.4.2. Sir 38:4–6: The earthly medicines

In verses 4–8, Ben Sira discusses the origin and utility of medicines. More precisely, in verse 4a^{GI, MS B} Ben Sira refers to the origin of earthly medicines, declaring that they come from God (cf. Gen 1:11–12). Like the physician (38:1a^{GI, MS B}, 12a^{GI}), medicines have a divine origin. They are both ‘part of God’s ordering of the world.’⁸⁷⁸ The author obviously has in mind here the therapeutic properties of floral substances, already discussed in the second chapter. Ben Sira regards

⁸⁷⁴ The idea that God is the one who heals is also evident in Sir 34:20: ‘He [the Lord] lifts up the soul and makes the eyes sparkle; he gives health and life and blessing’ (NRSV).

⁸⁷⁵ Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 185; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 441.

⁸⁷⁶ Owsei Temkin, *Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 89.

⁸⁷⁷ This verse is reminiscent of Sir 11:1: ‘The wisdom of the humble lifts their heads high and seats them among the great’ (NRSV). In both passages, it is the wisdom that shall cause men (the humble ones and the physician, respectively) to be distinguished; cf. Lührmann, ‘Aber auch dem Arzt’, 60.

⁸⁷⁸ Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 184.

medicines as God's gift to humanity for healing⁸⁷⁹ (cf. 38:6a^{GL, MS B}) and therefore a sensible/intelligent man should not despise them (38:4b^{GL, MS B}). Humanity's prudence lies in his ability to understand that God has allotted medicines and thus it is good to be used. In other words, the author says that the person, who does not acknowledge the utility of herbal medicaments, is foolish. The non-use of herbal medicaments can be further seen as an act of impiety; God created earthly medicines to be used for medicinal purposes and a refusal to use them is equivalent to a refusal of God's provision.

The reference to the sweetening of the water by means of wood in Sir 38:5^{GL, MS B} is reminiscent of Exodus 15:23–25 where God told Moses to throw a twig into the water of Marah to sweeten its bitterness. Exodus 15:25 reads:

‘He [Moses] cried out to the LORD; and the LORD showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet’ (NRSV).

MacKenzie notes that Ben Sira does not wish to stress the miraculous intervention of God, but rather the ‘purifying quality inherent in the wood.’⁸⁸⁰ Snaith is of the same opinion. He argues that if *τὴν ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ* (cf. *כחו*) is to be translated as ‘the power of God’, then it does not fit the context of the text.⁸⁸¹ The purpose of the author in verses 4 and 5 is to demonstrate the medicinal properties of the flora. The healing power of God is not in question here, but rather the beneficial properties inherent in floral substances; the latter were seen with mistrust due to their use in magical healing practices by travelling quacks and sorcerers, as already discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation. Snaith thus rightly points out that ‘Ben Sira re-interprets the sweetening of the waters as due to natural properties in the wood rather than to God's direct power. As God healed the water through the wood, so he heals humans through the doctor and his medicines.’⁸⁸²

⁸⁷⁹ A very similar view that God has given flora and their products for the benefit of humanity (and animals) exists in Psalm 104:14–15. The passage reads: ‘You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for the people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart’ (NRSV).

⁸⁸⁰ MacKenzie, *Sirach*, 143.

⁸⁸¹ Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 185. Di Lella, however, argues that the wording refers to God's power, not to the wood's; see Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 442.

⁸⁸² Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 185.

In Sir 38:6^{GI, MS B}, it is said that God has given the knowledge to men and he will gain praise by means of his mighty works. The knowledge here refers to the knowledge of healing herbs. Not only are herbs divine in origin (38:4a^{GI, MS B}), but also the knowledge of their therapeutic powers.⁸⁸³ Moreover, the reference to mighty works in the second half of verse 6 alludes to the healing treatment that will come through the use of herbal substances. All men will see what good these herbs do for the preservation of health and the treatment of sickness, and therefore God will be glorified for giving such knowledge to humanity.

2.4.2.1. The character of medicines

The question that arises now is what sort of medicines Ben Sira had in mind. Allan argues that by the use of the term *φάρμακα* (Sir^{MS B} תרופות) Ben Sira's grandson 'embraces the medicaments current in Alexandria along with Jewish folk remedies, including magic, which so fascinated the non-Jewish populace. It is difficult otherwise to explain the honour and respect accorded the Jewish physician by pagan patients (vv 2, 3), if he could offer only the standard medicine practised by his non-Jewish colleagues.'⁸⁸⁴ This mixture of rational and magico-folk medicaments Allan suggests is less probable. It is true that both sorts of medicaments co-existed in Alexandria of the grandson's time—the magico-folk remedies as part of Egypt's long tradition in magical healing, and the new, rational medicaments of the Alexandrian physicians as the outcome of the burgeoning growth of Alexandrian pharmacology. This co-existence, however, does not necessarily suggest that Ben Sira had in mind both sorts of medicines. In response to Allan's argument regarding the appreciation that the Jewish physician received from pagan patients as implied in Sir 38:2–3, one can argue that not only could magical healing practices have caused admiration among pagans, but also the newly released scientific remedies and approaches to illness introduced by the Alexandrian physicians and scientists. As a man of many travels (cf. Sir 34:12), Ben Sira may have witnessed the launching of new medicines that would have caused the admiration of both Jews

⁸⁸³ As already noted, a similar statement about the divine origin of the knowledge of the properties of floral substances occurs in the Wisdom of Solomon. In fact, Solomon characterises such knowledge as 'true' because it originates from God (Wis 7:20).

⁸⁸⁴ Allan, 'The Physician', 389–390.

and non-Jews.⁸⁸⁵ This admiration may well have been derived not just from the administration of a new, effective medicine but also from the fact that one did not have to spend so much time in the medical process. To be more precise, the administration of a rational medicament meant that there was no need of spending time on a long, often complicated, series of magical acts (e.g. spells and incantations, the finding and cutting of a particular plant or root, preparation of charms, knots and amulets, etc.) required for the preparation of a medicine and the overall process until the patient recovers. In other words, the new medical techniques and the already-prepared new medicines would require less time than the magico-medicinal practices. This would certainly cause surprise and admiration to the people of that time who were very much used to devoting a long time, waiting, for instance, for a drug-seller to supply them with the herbal ingredients required for the preparation of a medicine, or the most appropriate time for a plant to absorb the maximum of astral irradiation and, in turn, the most astrologically propitious time to be administered, so that they could recover their health. One can only imagine how a successful recovery from the swift and magic-free administration of a medicine would look in the eyes of people who were very much accustomed to magic. In support of the rational nature of medicines in Sir 38:4, 6^{GI, MS B}, one can also add that the acknowledgment of magico-medical cures would have been inconsistent with the author's rejection of occult practices such as divination and dream interpretation (Sir 34:5, 7)⁸⁸⁶. Moreover, the fact that in Sir 38:7^{GI, MS B} (see below) the author says that the physician, not a magician or a soothsayer, makes use of herbal remedies further strengthens their non-magical character. Finally, Ben Sira's overall justification of the medical profession and especially his reference to the veneration of the physician towards God (cf. Sir 38:14^{GI, MS B}) suggests that he was influenced, to a certain extent, by Hippocratic thought—I shall address this matter in greater detail below. Hippocratic medicine was free from any implication of magic in medical treatment. It would thus be a great inconsistency for the Hippocratically-oriented Ben Sira to suggest to his readers the use of magical herbal compounds. Bearing all the above in mind, it is far more possible that the medicines in Sir 38:4, 6^{GI, MS B} are magic-free, rational herbal medicaments.

⁸⁸⁵ See further comments in Chrysovergi, 'Contrasting Views', 50.

⁸⁸⁶ Sir 34:5, 7 reads: '(5) Divinations and omens and dreams are unreal, and like a woman in labour, the mind has fantasies ... (7) For dreams have deceived many, and those who put their hope in them have perished' (NRSV).

2.4.2.2. Influence of Alexandrian medicine on the significance of medicines

Now, the positive attitude towards herbal medicines suggests that Ben Sira was influenced by the great interest of Alexandrian medicine in the therapeutic properties of drugs. More precisely, the Alexandrian physicians Herophilus and Erasistratus were very keen on the use of drugs. Cornelius Celsus writes on drugs:

‘These were held on high value by ancient writers, both by Erasistratus and those who styled themselves Empirics, especially how by Herophilus and his school, insomuch that they treated no kind of disease without them. A great deal has also been recorded concerning the powers of medicaments, as in the works of Zeno or of Andreas or of Apollonius, surnamed Mys.’⁸⁸⁷

Also, Herophilus’ previously mentioned motto that ‘drugs are the hands of gods’ is indicative of his opinion about the significance of drugs in medical treatment. Marcellus reports:

‘Herophilus, who was once held to be among the greatest physicians, is held to have said that drugs are the hands of gods, and indeed, not without reason, in my opinion. For, in a word, what divine touch can effect, drugs tested by use and experience also accomplish.’⁸⁸⁸

The above information indicates that the Alexandrian scientists held the healing properties of medicines in high esteem and made vast use of them. Ben Sira may well have been acquainted with this tendency, and he himself may also have experienced the successful results of new medicaments.

2.4.3. Sir 38:7: The work of the physician

In Sir 38:7^{GI}, the subject of ἐθεράπευσεν and ἤρην is not very clear. In the previous verse (6), the subject of ἔδωκεν is God, so one has to assume that God is again the subject in verse 7. However, verse 8 begins with reference to the pharmacist (μυρεψός) and the context suggests that the author attempts to make a distinction between the work of the pharmacist and that of the physician. It thus makes better

⁸⁸⁷ *DM* V.1.

⁸⁸⁸ Marcellus, *Letter of Cornelius Celsus On Remedies*. Quotation is taken from Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 164.

sense that the subject of ἐθεράπευσεν and ἤρην is the physician, not God. Moreover, a preference for ‘the physician’ as the subject is suggested because of the use of θεραπεύω. As noted in the previous chapter, in the LXX θεραπεύω is used with reference to the medical activity of human beings, while ἰάομαι is used for the healing activity of God (cf. the noun ἰασις in Sir 38:2a).⁸⁸⁹ Hence, the particular use of θεραπεύω suggests that the physician should be the subject of verse 7. This is also strengthened by the Hebrew version. The latter reads רופא as the subject of ירר.⁸⁹⁰ The physician is thus the one who makes use of the medicines (ἐν αὐτοῖς/בהם) to cure and ease the pain.

2.4.4. Sir 38:8a^{GI}/38:7b^{MS B}: The work of the pharmacist

Right after the mention of the physician’s work follows the reference to the pharmacist (Sir 38:8a^{GI}/38:7b^{MS B}). The pharmacist uses the earthly herbs and from them makes the medical compound (μείγμα/מרקחת). Hence, he is the maker of medicines. It appears that Ben Sira attempts here to draw a distinction between the work of the physician and that of the pharmacist. The biblical references to the pharmacist distinguish the latter’s craft from the physician’s work. The pharmacist deals with the preparation of oil and perfumes for ritual use. For instance, in Exodus 30:25–27 God says to Moses that the perfumer will blend the anointing-oil with which he (Moses) will anoint the tent of meeting, the ark of the covenant, all utensils and the altar of incense (cf. Ex 30:35; 37:29). In 2 Chronicles 16:14, the dead body of King Asa is said to have been laid on a bier filled with various spices prepared by the apothecary. The distinction, however, between the work of the physician and that of the pharmacist is not clear in other ancient civilisations alongside which Israel lived for centuries. In Mesopotamian medicine, the physician was also a herbalist who prepared the medicines himself.⁸⁹¹ It is also highly probable that the physician prepared the medicines himself in ancient

⁸⁸⁹ Wells, *The Greek Language of Healing*, 104; 108.

⁸⁹⁰ The reference to the physician in the Hebrew text can also be seen as a further indication that the Hebrew text lays more emphasis on the part of the physician than the Greek one does.

⁸⁹¹ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, vii; 52; Reiner, *Astral Magic*, 47–48; Abusch, *Mesopotamian Witchcraft*, 5.

Egypt.⁸⁹² The Egyptian gods Osiris and Isis were also thought to have been herbalists.⁸⁹³ Moreover, Anubis was regarded both as a god of medicine and as the apothecary of the Egyptian gods, because he kept the medicines and was the maker of prescriptions.⁸⁹⁴ What is more, in Classical Greece there was strife between physicians and drug-sellers (φαρμακοπῶλαι). More precisely, the activity of the latter was not restricted to the collection and selling of plant products but was expanded to the administration of vegetal compounds as medicines that could also be poisons.⁸⁹⁵ In this way, the drug-vendors styled themselves as physicians, rendering the boundaries between pharmacy and medicine particularly vague.⁸⁹⁶ The need for Ben Sira to make a very clear distinction between the work of the physician (Sir 38:7^{GI}, 7a^{MS B}) and that of the pharmacist (Sir 38:8a^{GI}, 7b^{MS B}) suggests that there should have been a vague distinction between the two professions, or even cases when druggists encroached on the physician's domain, like the drug-sellers who were violating the physician's profession in Classical Greece. Ben Sira demonstrates that the profession of both is equally essential to medical treatment and they can both work harmoniously—each engaged in his own pursuit—in treating the sick, thus participating in God's providence for healing.⁸⁹⁷

2.4.5. Sir 38:9–11: The religious duties of the sick

In the following verses (Sir 38:9–11^{GI, MS B}), Ben Sira refers to the religious duties one has in sickness. In particular, one has to pray to God, because he is the one who heals (Sir 38:9^{GI, MS B}; cf. Sir 38:2a^{GI}). King Asa did not pray to God but only sought the physicians' help (2 Chr 16:12). The Chronicler implies that the king's death was due to his disregard for prayer (2 Chr 16:12). Ben Sira attempts here to counterbalance the need of prayer in sickness (v. 9) and the help of the physicians (cf. Sir 38:12^{GI, MS B}). For him, the first does not exclude the second. Ben Sira further admonishes that the man in sickness should renounce deceit, make his hands

⁸⁹² Ghalioungui, *Magic*, 146.

⁸⁹³ Budge, *The Divine Origin*, 12–13.

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁹⁵ Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 130.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁸⁹⁷ Cf. Chrysovergi, 'Contrasting Views', 51.

pure (Sir 38:10a^{GI}) and clean his heart from every sin (Sir 38:10b^{GI, MS B}).⁸⁹⁸ The exhortation for the purification of hands symbolises the discharge from sin (cf. Job 17:9; Isa 1:15–16).⁸⁹⁹ The reference of Sir^{MS B} to impartiality (הכר פנים) is reminiscent of Deuteronomy 1:17: ‘You must not be partial in judging: hear out the small and the great alike ...’ (NRSV). The cleansing of heart from sin is an allusion to Psalm 51:3–4, 12.⁹⁰⁰ The sweet-smelling oblation and the memorial of choice flour and oil offering of verse 11^{GI, MS B} is reminiscent of Leviticus 2:1–3.⁹⁰¹ In Sir 35:1–15, Ben Sira connects righteousness (i.e. obedience to the Law) with religious offerings.⁹⁰² The phrase ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων/בכנפי הוניד of Sir 38:11b is reminiscent Sir 35:10, 12 where the author exhorts his readers to be as generous as possible when making offerings to the Lord. Moreover, the fact that the reference to the purification and cleansing of heart from sin (v. 10) precedes the admonition to religious offerings suggests that the former is a prerequisite of the latter, that is, ‘sacrifice without innocence or freedom from sin is worthless’ (cf. Ps 51:18–19).⁹⁰³ In short, in Sir 38:9–11 the author lays an emphasis on the responsibility of human beings in sickness, a view which is also in line with Sir 18:19.⁹⁰⁴

2.4.6. Sir 38:12–13: The successful treatment of the physician

In Sir 38:12–15^{GI, MS B}, the author returns to his initial reference to the physician. In verse 12^{GI}, Ben Sira exhorts his readers to give the physician his place, because God created him (cf. Sir 38:1b^{GI}) and let him not go away as there shall be need of him. There is a progression in Ben Sira’s argumentation of the physician’s role; nor does he restrict himself to the argument that the physician is a creature of God or that his medical knowledge is of divine origin (cf. 38:2a^{MS B}, 6a^{GI, MS B}), but he stresses here the fact that human beings in sickness will actually be in need of him (καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ χρεία/צורך), thus making the physician’s presence among men a necessity. Hence,

⁸⁹⁸ Di Lella notes that Sir 38:10 alludes to ‘the Deuteronomic theory of retribution according to which illness is viewed as a punishment for infidelity to the Law (cf. Deut 28:21–29; Prov 3:7–8)’: Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 442.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 442.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 442.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 442; Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 185.

⁹⁰² Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 442.

⁹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 442.

⁹⁰⁴ There, Ben Sira emphasises the responsibility of human beings to avoid getting sick.

the duties of the sick in Sir 38:9–12 can be summarised as follows: prayer to God (v. 9); abstinence from sin^{GL, MS B} and partiality^{MS B}; and the heart's deliverance from transgression(s) (v. 10), offering to God (v. 11); and consultation of the physician (v. 12).

In Sir 38:13^{GL, MS B}, Ben Sira explains why men will be in need (cf. 38:12b^{GL, MS B}) of the physician: because there are times when success (i.e. effective treatment) lies in the physician's hands. It is the knowledge with which God endowed the physician that enables the latter to cure his patients successfully. The expression 'there is time'⁹⁰⁵ (ἔστιν καιρὸς ὅτε/תָּעַתִּי שִׁי) may be interpreted as the author's concealed acceptance that the physician's treatment may not always be successful;⁹⁰⁶ when it is though, it is due to the knowledge God has given him.

2.4.6.1. The medical advances of the Alexandrian scientists

A plethora of medical advances were recorded by the Alexandrian scientists. Apart from the progress in pharmacology and dissection (already discussed), new progress was recorded in human anatomy, physiology, pathology, gynaecology, obstetrics, surgery and medical technology. Herophilus is said to have discovered the nervous system,⁹⁰⁷ he was the first to describe in detail the human liver,⁹⁰⁸ he made progress in the anatomy of the eye⁹⁰⁹, he was the first to recognise the diagnostic and prognostic value of the pulse⁹¹⁰ and differentiated the pulse according to its size, speed, vehemence and rhythm (μεγέθει, τάχει, σφοδρότητι, ῥυθμῳ).⁹¹¹ He was also interested in gynaecology. He rejected past ideas that menstruation is beneficial for all women,⁹¹² pointing out that menstruation can be good for some women but can be harmful for others.⁹¹³ The practice of dissection on females enabled Herophilus

⁹⁰⁵ This phrase is reminiscent of Ecclesiastes 3:3: 'a time to kill, and a time to heal' (NRSV); Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom*, 442.

⁹⁰⁶ Lührmann offers a different explanation here; he says that this phrase insinuates that the physician should assess the right time to provide medical treatment to his patient; Lührmann, 'Aber auch dem Arzt', 70.

⁹⁰⁷ Rufus, *De corporis humanis appellationibus* 149–150.

⁹⁰⁸ Galen, *De anatomicis administrationibus* 6.8 (= II. 570K).

⁹⁰⁹ Rufus, *De corporis humanis appellationibus* 153.

⁹¹⁰ Lloyd, *Greek Science*, 79; Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 144.

⁹¹¹ Galen, *De dignoscentis pulsibus* 4.3 (= VIII. 959K).

⁹¹² Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 194.

⁹¹³ Soranus, *Gynaeciorum* I. 27.2 (CMG IV); I. 29.1 (CMG IV).

to identify that the womb is supported by membranes.⁹¹⁴ The Alexandrian anatomist further had an interest in obstetrics. He is in fact the author of the treatise *On Midwifery* (Μαιωτικόν).⁹¹⁵ His colleague, Erasistratus, is credited with the discovery of ‘the co-ordinated function of all four main valves of the heart’,⁹¹⁶ and to have invented ‘a catheter to drain the bladder.’⁹¹⁷ Furthermore, the knowledge of anatomy enabled Erasistratus to proceed to bold surgical operations. Caelius Aurelianus writes on this:

‘In cases of those suffering from ailments of the liver, Erasistratus cuts the skin and the membrane covering the liver and applies drugs extensively to the organ itself; then he draws aside the stomach and boldly lays bare the part that is affected.’⁹¹⁸

What is more, the student of Herophilus, Andreas, is said to have invented ‘an instrument for reducing dislocations of the larger joints.’⁹¹⁹

These new scientific advances, together with the newly discovered drugs, enhanced the medical knowledge of the physicians of the time. Ben Sira may well refer to these medical advances by the mention of the physician’s ‘success’ in Sir 38:13. It was the progress of Alexandrian medicine that prompted Ben Sira to acknowledge the value of the medical profession and, in turn, to reinstate the importance of the physician’s role in the eyes of pious Jews.⁹²⁰ Nevertheless, Ben Sira reported in advance that the medical knowledge comes from God (Sir 38:2a^{MS B}, 4a^{GI, MS B}, 6^{GI, MS B}). In this way, although he acknowledges contemporary medical and pharmacological progress, he attributes to it a divine origin, blending harmoniously the scientific spirit of his time with the traditional belief that God is the ultimate

⁹¹⁴ Galen, *De uteri dissectione* V. 2.1 (= II. 895–6K).

⁹¹⁵ Soranus, *Gynaeciorum* III Proemium 3.4 (CMG IV); IV. 1.4–5 (CMG IV). See more on Herophilus’ treatise in Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 201.

⁹¹⁶ Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 94.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 187; 189.

⁹¹⁸ Caelius Aurelianus, *On chronic diseases* III. 4. Quotation is taken from *ibid.*, 187.

⁹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 186; 189.

⁹²⁰ Marböck, ‘Der Arzt bei Ben Sira’, 156; 158.

healer.⁹²¹ This was Ben Sira's unique way to make his fellow Jews understand and appreciate the importance of the medical profession.⁹²²

2.4.7. Sir 38:14^{GI}/13b^{MS B}: The religiosity of the physician

In Sir 38:14a^{GI}/13b^{MS B}, Ben Sira attests that the physician also prays to God, asking him for help to do his work properly. Thus, the physician's success in treating the sick is connected not only to his possession of God-given medical knowledge but also to his supplication to God. The fact that Ben Sira describes the physician as a faithful Jew who prays to God for assistance in his medical work suggests that the author had in mind contemporary Jewish doctors of whom he himself might have been a client.⁹²³ Hogan considers it possible that these Jewish physicians would have been educated in Alexandria, 'a major center for Hippocratic medicine', as he calls it.⁹²⁴

2.4.7.1. Echoes of Hippocratic thought

The representation of the physician as a God-fearing professional (Sir 38:14a^{GI}/13b^{MS B}), as well as the admonition for purification from sin and prayer to God (Sir 38:9–11^{GI, MS B}), is found in the Hippocratic writings. Exceedingly criticising contemporary witch doctors, charlatans and quacks, who use purifications and magical means for the treatment of epilepsy, the author of *The Sacred Disease* (ca. 400 BCE) states the following:

'In using purifications and spells they perform what I consider a most irreligious and impious act, for, in treating sufferers from this disease by purification with blood and the like things, they behave as if the sufferers were ritually unclean, the victims of divine vengeance or of human magic or had done something sacrilegious. It would have been better if they have done the opposite and taken the sick into the temples, there, by sacrifice and prayer, to make supplication to the gods; instead they simply purify them and do none of these things. Charms are to be buried in the ground, thrown into the sea or carried off into the mountains where no one may touch them

⁹²¹ *Ibid.*, 159. This attitude is also evident in Philo who reports that it is God who bestows health by means of medical science and the physician's skill. He points out, however, that God can also heal with or without those means (*Legum allegoriarum* 3.178).

⁹²² Marböck, 'Der Arzt bei Ben Sira', 156; 158.

⁹²³ Temkin, *Hippocrates*, 90, note 24; Hogan, *Healing*, 48; cf. Chrysovergi, 'Contrasting Views', 48–49.

⁹²⁴ Hogan, *Healing*, 48.

or tread on them. If a god really be responsible, surely these things should be taken into the temples as offerings.’⁹²⁵

The Hippocratic author here draws a clear distinction between the purification rites of contemporary pseudo-healers and the rites performed in the sanctuaries. He considers sacrifice, prayer and supplication to gods a much better way to treat epilepsy than the magical treatment of charlatans. In other words, the author acknowledges the significance of traditional temple-worship. In the largest part of his small treatise, the author is very much disturbed by the irreligious practices of mock healers, showing in this way his particular sensitivity towards religious matters.⁹²⁶ The writer of *The Sacred Disease* acknowledges in his own way the existence of the divine. He says that every sickness is divine (epilepsy too) in the sense that the divine is hidden behind the natural cause of a disease or, to put it differently, the natural causes of a disease are divine.⁹²⁷ In other words, the natural cause of a disease is a manifestation of the divine.⁹²⁸ In brief, not only does the author of *The Sacred Disease* acknowledge the divine but also admonishes ‘the combination of “natural” therapeutic measures with prayers and sacrifices.’⁹²⁹

The reverence of the physician towards the divine is also evident in the Hippocratic *Oath* where the physician swears in the name of gods, who have been traditionally associated with healing in Greece, that he will perform his medical duties in the most appropriate way. The beginning paragraph of the Hippocratic *Oath* reads:

‘I swear by Apollo the healer, by Asclepius, by Health, by Panacea and by all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses that I will carry out to the best of my ability and judgment this oath and this covenant.’⁹³⁰

⁹²⁵ *The Sacred Disease* 4. All quotations of *The Sacred Disease* are taken from G. E. R. Lloyd (ed.), *Hippocratic Writings*.

⁹²⁶ For instance, he says on these practices: ‘And yet I believe that all these professions of piety are really more like impiety and a denial of the existence of the gods, and all their religion and talk of divine visitation is an impious fraud ...’: *The Sacred Disease* 3.

⁹²⁷ *The Sacred Disease* 21.

⁹²⁸ On this see more in William H. S. Jones, *Philosophy and Medicine in Ancient Greece: With an Edition of Περὶ Ἀρχαίας Ἱητρικῆς*, SBHM 8 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), 24–25; cf. Philip J. van der Eijk, ‘The “Theology” of the Hippocratic treatise *On the Sacred Disease*’, in his *Medicine and Philosophy in Classical Antiquity: Doctors and Philosophers on Nature, Soul, Health and Disease* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 45–46, 70–71.

⁹²⁹ Van der Eijk, ‘The “Theology”’, 71.

⁹³⁰ Quotation is taken from Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 101.

Similarly, the author of *Decorum* 6 acknowledges the significant role of the gods in medical treatment and reports that the physicians have given place to them (οἱ δὲ ἰητροὶ θεοῖσι παρακεχώρηκασιν).⁹³¹

Indeed, the Hippocratic physicians never turned themselves against the appeal to gods for healing nor did they discard temple medicine.⁹³² They called themselves *Asclepiads* (from Asclepius), showing in this way their belief in the god of medicine.⁹³³ Also, Hippocrates and his family had close relations with the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, a fact that indicates that ‘the practice of religion was not incompatible with the practice of rational medicine.’⁹³⁴ But also Hippocratic medicine was not opposed to religious medicine practised at the shrines of Asclepius. Van der Eijk points out that ‘the borderlines between secular medicine and temple medicine were vague and ... the relationship between these was seldom hostile and antagonistic.’⁹³⁵ It appears thus that the Hippocratic physicians were worshippers of healing deities and that the rationality of Hippocratic medicine co-existed well with religiosity and religious medicine. Even later in antiquity, the peaceful co-existence of Asclepius with the physician appears in the cult of Asclepius in the second-century-CE Pergamum, as described in the work of Aelius Aristides *Ἱερὰ Λόγοι* (Sacred Tales).⁹³⁶ This co-existence shows, according to Horstmanshoff, that ‘the religious medicine represented by the Asclepius cult in the second century AD has been deeply influenced by “rational”, that is Hippocratic medicine.’⁹³⁷

The religiosity of Hippocratic physicians may well have served as the basis for Ben Sira’s description of a God-fearing doctor. The fact that the Hippocratic writings found their way into the Library of Alexandria due to the Ptolemies’ vivid interest

⁹³¹ Jones suggests as the general meaning of *Decorum* 6 that the gods are the ones who actually bring healing, whereas the physicians are merely the mediators of this healing; William H. S. Jones (trans.), *Hippocrates*, LCL (London: Heinemann; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 2:288, note 4.

⁹³² Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, 195.

⁹³³ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁹³⁵ Van der Eijk, ‘The “Theology”’, 71.

⁹³⁶ Horstmanshoff, ‘Asclepius’, 329; 336.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 339.

in arts and sciences,⁹³⁸ strengthens the possibility that Ben Sira might have made himself familiar with Hippocratic ideas on the compatibility of medicine and religion, which in turn had an impact on his view of the God-physician relationship. The Hippocratic writings might have been one of the things Ben Sira had himself acquainted with in one of his travels (cf. 34:12).⁹³⁹ Alexandria as one of the important, or perhaps the most important, scientific centres of the time, may well have been among the places Ben Sira visited. There, he may have socialised with learned men and Alexandrian scientists, or even Jewish physicians, who may have introduced him to Hippocratic ideas. A more evident influence of Hippocratic thought occurs in the writings of Philo of Alexandria. In his time, 'Hippocratic tradition dominated the medical field'⁹⁴⁰ and the Hippocratic treatises 'were studied as the repository of past knowledge.'⁹⁴¹ The Jewish philosopher often refers to Hippocrates' sayings⁹⁴² and Sly maintains that he might have read Hippocratic writings, as 'on a couple of occasions he goes into more anatomical and physiological detail than would possibly come from folklore or hearsay.'⁹⁴³ This is to say that Hippocratic medicine did have an impact on educated Jews like Philo. Although Ben Sira antedates Philo by almost two centuries, it may be that the first steps of acquaintance with Hippocratic thought might have been achieved in Ben Sira's time.

Furthermore, it is beyond doubt that Ben Sira was an educated man.⁹⁴⁴ Hengel considered it possible that Ben Sira had also some knowledge of Greek.⁹⁴⁵ He argued that the upper classes in Jerusalem, to which Ben Sira apparently belonged, had some knowledge of Greek already from the third century BCE.⁹⁴⁶ This suggests that Ben Sira could even have been able to read the Hippocratic treatises himself.

⁹³⁸ Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, 61.

⁹³⁹ Hengel argues the travels of Ben Sira indicate that the Hellenistic world was not strange for him; Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:132.

⁹⁴⁰ Dorothy I. Sly, *Philo's Alexandria*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 155.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁹⁴² See, for instance, *De opificio mundi* 124; *De vita contemplative* 2.16; 9.122.

⁹⁴³ Sly, *Philo's Alexandria*, 156.

⁹⁴⁴ In his Prologue, the grandson of Ben Sira states the following: '... my grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors, and had acquired considerable proficiency in them' (NRSV). Also, Ben Sira himself acknowledges the importance of education. In Sir 34:9, he says: 'An educated person knows many things, and one with much experience knows what he is talking about' (NRSV).

⁹⁴⁵ Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:133.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:59–60; cf. *ibid.*, 1:75–76.

To the evidence for the Hippocratic impact on the ideas of Ben Sira about the physician and his art, one should also add the evidence of Sir 37:27–31, the passage preceding Sir 38:1–15. There, Ben Sira discusses the moderation one should exert with regard to eating and drinking, urging his readers to have a moderate regimen so as to retain their health. This idea is in line with the Hippocratic ideas on regimen as a preventative measure against sickness. In the Hippocratic treatise *Regimen for Health*, a diet is proposed according to the changes of season:

‘The ordinary man should adopt the following regimen. During winter, he should eat as much as possible, drink as little as possible and this drink should be wine as undiluted as possible. Of cereals, he should eat bread, all his meat and fish should be roasted and he should eat as few vegetables as possible during winter-time. Such a diet will keep the body warm and dry. When spring comes, he should take more to drink ... He should take softer cereals and less of them, substituting barley-cake for bread ... During the summer he should live on soft barley-cake, watered wine in large quantities and take all his meat boiled ... In the autumn the cereals should be increased and made drier, and likewise the meat in the diet ... This will keep him in good health and he will feel the cold less, for the season is cold and wet.’⁹⁴⁷

The closing chapter of *Regimen for Health* stresses the significance of health:

‘A wise man ought to realize that health is his most valuable possession and learn how to treat his illness by his own judgement.’⁹⁴⁸

The Alexandrian physicians also shared the Hippocratic notion of preventative medicine. Erasistratus considered that regimen is more significant than a therapeutic treatment:

‘Regimen is not only considered to be a part of medicine but is also classed as being superior to therapeutics. For it is far better not to allow sickness to develop in the first place than to get rid of it. Just as it is preferable for a helmsman to complete his voyage before encountering a storm than to escape it after being storm-tossed and in danger.’⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁷ *A Regimen for Health* 1. Quotation is taken from G. E. R. Lloyd (ed.), *Hippocratic Writings*.

⁹⁴⁸ *A Regimen for Health* 9.

⁹⁴⁹ Pseudo-Galen, *Introductio seu medicus* 8 (= XIV. 692K). Quotation is taken from Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 153.

Similarly, Herophilus is said to have written on regimen (δαιτητικόν), believing in prevention for the preservation of health.⁹⁵⁰ Having being influenced by the Hippocratic dietetics, Philo acknowledges that a good diet contributes to good health,⁹⁵¹ and often speaks of regimen prescriptions given by physicians for the patient's recovery.⁹⁵²

The preservation of health by means of preventative medicine is thus prominent in both the Hippocratics and the Alexandrians. It is very likely that Ben Sira was influenced by the Greek way of medical thinking regarding the prevention of sickness and the God-physician relationship which adapted them in a way to fit the traditional Jewish belief that God is the only true healer. What he actually managed by doing so is to present the medical advances of his time as part of the providential plan of the one God of Israel.

2.4.8. Sir 38:15: The treatment of the sinner

Sir 38:15^{MS B} says that the one who sins against God presents himself strong (i.e. is defiant) to the physician. Sir^{GI} (in agreement with Sir^{MS B mg}) states that the sinner will fall into the hands of the physician. The wording of Sir 38:15^{MS B} suggests the worth of the physician's work is fully acknowledged. This is not to say that Sir^{GI} does not acknowledge the role of the physician. The tone of scepticism concealed in ἐμπέσοι should be understood in relation to the reference to sin in the first part of verse 15. The emphasis of Sir^{GI} lies in the connection of sin and sickness;⁹⁵³ it is sin, not a natural cause, that will make one sick and thus the sinner will fall into the physician's hands. In other words, the scepticism of ἐμπέσοι lies in the cause of sickness, that is, sin. Snaith argues that the author, connecting sin with sickness, 'spoils the argument of the section',⁹⁵⁴ namely the positive disposition towards the

⁹⁵⁰ Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* XI. 50.

⁹⁵¹ *De mutatione nominum* 230.

⁹⁵² *Legum allegoriarum* 3.226; *De Decalogo* 12. For further comments on this see Sly, *Philo's Alexandria*, 157.

⁹⁵³ The connection between sin and sickness is found in Num 12:10–12; cf. Deut 28:22, 27, 35; Lev 26:14–16.

⁹⁵⁴ Snaith writes: 'Ben Sira has not dispensed completely with the traditional view, and has thus not followed his own argument through to the end': Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 184.

medical profession. But the connection between sin and sickness does not necessarily suggest refutation of the effectiveness of the physician's treatment and disregard of the medical profession as a whole. The verse does not imply that the physician can less effectively treat a sinner. It is thus preferable to say that the author wishes to include into his discussion the Jewish belief that sin may lead to sickness (Num 12:10–12), just as he used the biblical image of the sweetening of water by means of a twig to show not the miraculous activity of God but the healing properties of herbal substances (Sir 38:5; cf. Ex 15:25). If this is the case, then verse 15 contains concealed hope that even the sinner, who falls sick due to his repulsive deeds, can be cured in the hands of a capable physician, and further introduces the idea of divine providence for the sinners. This consequently means that the concealed scepticism of ἐμπέσοι is a seeming inconsistency and the author does not deviate from his initial argument on the usefulness of the medical profession. In short, it appears that Ben Sira introduces the idea that even a sinner is entitled to healing which he can find in the physician whom God provided with the healing knowledge (Sir 38:2a^{MS B}, 3a^{GI, MS B}, 6a^{GI, MS B}).⁹⁵⁵

In summary, Ben Sira attempts to justify theologically the medical profession by ascribing a divine origin to the physician and his medicines (38:1a^{GI, MS B}, 4a^{GI, MS B}, 12a^{GI, MS B}). The medicines are presented as God-given gifts to humanity for the treatment of sickness (Sir 38:4a^{GI, MS B}, 6a^{GI, MS B}) and for this reason they should not be despised (Sir 38:4b^{GI, MS B}). The physician is God's mediator of healing in the world (Sir 38:7^{GI, MS B}). He is capable of treating the sick effectively because God has given him the knowledge to do so (Sir 38:2a^{MS B}, 3a^{GI, MS B}, 6a^{GI, MS B}, 7^{GI, MS B}). The physician is respectful towards God as he prays to him for assistance in his medical activity. For these reasons, everyone should acknowledge the rightful place in the world of both physicians and medicines.

Ben Sira's positive attitude towards the physician's medicine suggests that he embraced the scientific progress of his time that mainly took place in Alexandria

⁹⁵⁵ This notion of the sinner's treatment would have been in opposition to the Deuteronomic view that God afflicts the sinners (i.e. the disobedient towards the divine ordinances) with diseases that lead to death (Deut 28:22) and/or that cannot be healed (Deut 28:27, 35).

from the third century BCE onwards. The proved effectiveness of the medical advances of the Alexandrian physicians did not leave Ben Sira indifferent.⁹⁵⁶ Moreover, the development of Alexandria into the most important cultural and scientific centre of its time under the Ptolemies' patronage and the flourishing of the Alexandrian Library into one of the greatest centres of scholarship in antiquity facilitated the spread of Greek scientific knowledge, and Hippocratic medicine among it. To the many experiences Ben Sira acquired in his travels (Sir 34:9–12), one should add his acquaintance with the medical ideas and values of the Hippocratics, as his poems on temperate diet (Sir 37:27–31) and rational medicine (Sir 38:1–15) suggest echoes of Hippocratic ideas.

2.5. Ben Sira's target audience

Ben Sira addresses those who were sceptical of consulting doctors and viewed the use of medicines suspiciously. A prominent example of such scepticism, as already discussed, occurs in Tobit 2:10, where Tobit discards the physicians' pharmaceutical treatment. Traditionally, ancient Israel believed that God is the one who afflicts with sickness and the one who can offer healing (cf. Ex 15:26). Sickness was viewed as the result of sin (Num 12:10–12) and thus the right cure was repentance, prayer and offerings to God.⁹⁵⁷ According to this faith, there was no room for the physician. Ben Sira overrules the clash between divine healing and scientific medicine, arguing that the physician is God's mediator of healing and his therapeutics (i.e. earthly medicines) are a God-given gift for the preservation of health. Ben Sira's reference to both the physician's work and medicines may well be an indirect response to Tobit's criticism of the medical profession. Writing not very long after Tobit, Ben Sira may well have had in mind Tobit's fervent rejection of the medical art, as well as the overall hostility of his fellow Jews towards the consultation of physicians. The author of Tobit saw only the bad side of the Hellenistic medical advances (e.g. experiments on patients, untested medical compounds, etc.), whereas Ben Sira attempts to show to his readers that scientific progress can do good to humanity because it is all part of God's providential plan. It may well be that Sir 38:4b^{GI, MS B} refers to Tobit's rejection of pharmaceutical

⁹⁵⁶ The Alexandrian physicians were in fact considered to be the elite of physicians in late antiquity. The Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus (fourth century CE) reports that it was enough recommendation for a medical practitioner to be able to say that he was educated in Alexandria; *Roman History* 22.16.18.

⁹⁵⁷ Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 184.

treatment; it is to say that those who do not acknowledge the significance of healings herbs are foolish. In brief, Ben Sira shows that religiosity is not incompatible with the practice of medicine, aiming to refute the extremist attitude of his contemporaries who, like the author of Tobit, viewed the physicians' work with redundant scepticism, and thus to create afresh medical awareness.

3. CONCLUSION

Among the various issues of daily life that Ben Sira discusses is the theme of the physician and medical treatment. In Sir 38:1–15, the author attempts to legitimise the role of the physician and the pharmaceutical treatment on the basis that both belong to God's providential plan. The healing properties of the flora (38:4a^{GI, MS B}) are the knowledge God endowed the physician with in order to relieve the pain in sickness (38:7^{GI}, 7a^{MS B}). They are God-given gifts in favour of humanity. Ben Sira does not question that God is the only true healer; on the contrary, the belief in God's healing power is amply stated throughout the 15 verses (direct references: 38:2a^{GI}, 8^{GI}, 9^{GI, MS B}, 14^{GI, MS B}; indirect references: 38:2a^{MS B}, 4a^{GI, MS B}, 6^{GI, MS B}). In Sir 38:9–11^{GI, MS B}, Ben Sira demonstrates that the practice of medicine is not incompatible with religious practice. The man in sickness should repent and clean his heart from all sin, pray and sacrifice to God. Ben Sira blends the traditional way of healing (i.e. repentance, prayer, offerings) with consultation of the physician, presenting the latter as a creature of God (38:12^{GI}; cf. 38:1b^{GI, MS B}) who also prays to God to assist him in his medical duty (38:14^{GI}, 13b^{MS B}). In this way, the author demonstrates that entrusting the physician in sickness is not a sinful deed, as it is presented in 2 Chronicles 16:12–13, and is definitely not incompatible with the belief that God is the only healer. On the contrary, faith in God and religious alertness in sickness complements the work of the physician and vice versa. Besides, the physician himself has the ability to heal because he draws his knowledge/wisdom (i.e. pharmaceutical treatment) from God (38:2a^{GI, MS B}). Thus, Ben Sira urges for constancy to religious duties in sickness together with resorting to the physician, the divinely authorised mediator of healing. Furthermore, in Sir 38:15^{GI, MS B} it appears that the author wishes to introduce the unorthodox idea for Jewish standards that even a sinner can find healing in the hands of the physician, showing in an indirect way that the omniscient God of Israel made provision for the sinners, too.

The favourable light that Ben Sira throws on the physician's medicine emanates from his acknowledgment of the medical progress of his time. Major advances were accomplished in pharmacology, anatomy, physiology, pathology, gynaecology, obstetrics, surgery and medical technology already from the third century BCE onwards in Alexandria under the auspices of the Ptolemies. The spread of the Greek

scientific knowledge in the Near East largely played its part in this scientific progress. The great Alexandrian scientists were educated in Greek medical schools before coming to Alexandria. Herophilus was a student of Praxagoras of Cos and Erasistratus studied medicine in the medical school of Cos. Hence, the scientists themselves were bearers of Greek medical tradition which served as the basis for the developments of new medical theories and methods, as well as medical technology. Furthermore, the Hippocratic treatises which found their way in the Library of Alexandria contributed to the spread of Greek medical thought. Ben Sira was the first Jewish author who appreciated the scientific progress of his time and was influenced, to a certain extent, by Greek medical ideas that he encountered in his travels (cf. 34:12). In particular, his description of the physician as a professional who supplicates to God suggests influence from Hippocratic ideas on the notion of the divine and its connection with medical practice. The Hippocratics did not see medicine as an adversary of religiosity. This is evident in the treatise of *The Sacred Disease* where the author discards the purifications of witch-doctors but acknowledges (in an indirect way) the effectiveness that the supplications to gods can have in the treatment of an illness. Indeed, the Hippocratic physicians did not question the notion of the divine—the appellation *Asclepiads* they acquired for themselves indicates that they viewed themselves as descendants of Asclepius—or temple medicine but rather they acknowledged the usefulness of the latter. The influence of Hippocratic ideas is also seen in Sir 37:27–31, the poem that precedes the speech on the medical profession. There, Ben Sira admonishes his readers to have a temperate regimen for the preservation of health. In other words, he acknowledges the significance of preventive medicine, as did the Hippocratics and later the Alexandrian physicians. Without losing his Jewish orientation, Ben Sira ventures ‘to integrate traditional Jewish belief with new Greek ways of thinking.’⁹⁵⁸ This is not to say that Ben Sira embraced features of the Greek world uncritically. On the contrary, the adaptation of certain Greek medical ideas into traditional Jewish beliefs about healing can be understood as an intelligent way to downgrade in the eyes of his fellow Jews the involvement of the Greek culture in the achievements of the scientific progress of the time, presenting at the same time

⁹⁵⁸ Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 184.

Jewish religion as a forerunner in the understanding of the humanitarian character of medicine and its compatibility with the belief in the healing power of God.

The overall aim of Ben Sira in Sir 38:1–15 is to legitimise the existence of the medical profession and the significance of pharmaceutical treatment in the healing process. The reason for such an attempt is the general scepticism of the Jews towards both the physician and the use of medicines. Ben Sira attempts to counterbalance the extremist views of his compatriots, like the author of Tobit (cf. Tob 2:10), who fervently disregarded the physicians' medicine. He thus presents the physician and medicines as part of God's providential plan. However, for him, as for his fellow Jews, it is God who will eventually bring healing.

CHAPTER 5

HERBAL MEDICINE AND THE LANGUAGE OF HEALING IN JUBILEES

1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is to examine the medical material of Jubilees 10:10–13 and the healing language attested in Jubilees 1:29 and 23:29–30. In Jubilees 10:10–13, the angels of God are said to have revealed to Noah herbal remedies to be used against the demonic illnesses inflicted upon Noah’s grandchildren. My aim is to offer some fresh insight regarding Noah’s connection with the instruction of herbal medicine and, moreover, to explain the reasons that prompted the attribution of an authoritative status to herbal remedies. Furthermore, in Jubilees 1:29 the theme of healing is placed in the context of the new cosmic creation and is particularly related to the renewal of luminaries, whereas in Jubilees 23:29–30 healing is the outcome of a new age that will come when the people of Israel return to the study of the Torah (v. 29) and God is identified as the source of healing (v. 30). My goal is to investigate whether the references to healing can shed some light on medical practices contemporary with the author’s time.

1.1. The Book of Jubilees

The Book of Jubilees⁹⁵⁹, often called *Λεπτὴ Γένεσις* (‘Little Genesis’), is an elaboration of the biblical narrative from the creation of the world to the giving of the covenant on Mt. Sinai. Jubilees contains additions, omissions and alterations of the original biblical narrative,⁹⁶⁰ and it therefore falls into the category of ‘rewritten scripture.’⁹⁶¹ Jubilees also claims a revelatory status, as throughout the text an angel of presence by divine order reveals to Moses the content of the heavenly tablets at Mt. Sinai.⁹⁶² Jubilees is thus also considered to be ‘revelatory narrative.’⁹⁶³

⁹⁵⁹ The title derives from the distinctive chronological system employed by the author, namely events are arranged according to jubilee years (i.e. forty-nine-year periods).

⁹⁶⁰ John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees*, CBQMS 18 (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 4.

⁹⁶¹ James C. VanderKam, ‘Recent Scholarship on the Book of Jubilees’, *CBR* 6 (2008), 409–410. The genre of ‘rewritten scripture’ includes the retelling of biblical stories accompanied ‘with variations and insertions’; Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, SJSJ 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 43.

⁹⁶² VanderKam, ‘Recent Scholarship’, 410–411.

⁹⁶³ Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 4.

1.1.1. Date of composition

Although scholars agree that Jubilees is a writing of the second century BCE, its exact date of composition is subject to ongoing debate. Scholarly discussion around the dating of Jubilees focuses mainly on three issues: first, the pin-pointing of passages that possibly reflect historical events; second, the connection of Jubilees to Enochic writings; and, finally, the isolation of certain passages which might be considered additions to the original core of the book. In what follows, I shall address the most influential views among scholars on the dating of Jubilees.

1.1.1.1. Reflection of historical events

To begin with, Charles dated the book between 109 and 105 BCE because he thought that chapter 30 reflects John Hyrcanus' destruction of Samaria in 110 BCE.⁹⁶⁴ VanderKam originally suggested as a possible date sometime between 161 and 152 BCE, because he considered that Jubilees reflected the Maccabean wars and hinted to a calendar discussion which should have taken place after 164 BCE.⁹⁶⁵ More recently, however, VanderKam has become less determined regarding the veracity of his first argument. He now admits that his view on the dating of Jubilees is not entirely conclusive, mainly because, if the book were actually written in Hasmonean times (140–37 BCE), it might have been expected to refer to the decrees of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes).⁹⁶⁶

Other scholars have already previously expressed similar concerns and therefore opted for an earlier date. First, Goldstein, aiming to refute the late dates suggested by Charles and initially by VanderKam, argues that Jubilees was written between 175 and 167 BCE, and more precisely between 169 and 167 BCE.⁹⁶⁷ Goldstein supports his argument by referring to Jubilees 22:16–18 where Abraham advises Jacob to 'separate from the nations.' He explains the need for such a commandment:

⁹⁶⁴ Robert H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or The Little Genesis* (London: A. and C. Black, 1902), lxiii–lxvi.

⁹⁶⁵ James C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, HSM 14 (Missoula MT: Scholar Press, 1977), 283–284.

⁹⁶⁶ VanderKam, 'Recent Scholarship', 408.

⁹⁶⁷ Jonathan A. Goldstein, 'The Date of the Book of Jubilees', *PAAJR* 50 (1983), 64.

‘The rigorist author faced a situation in which it was easy for Jews to violate the laws of separation and in which it was argued that those laws were a detrimental addition to the pristine religion of patriarchs.’⁹⁶⁸

Goldstein further argues that the author of Jubilees was not aware of the decrees of Antiochus and thus Jubilees should have been written sometime before Antiochus’ decrees in 167 BCE.⁹⁶⁹ Second, Nickelsburg argues that the book of Jubilees was written in the early 160 BCE, because the author is negatively disposed towards the practices related to ‘nudity and uncircumcision (Jubilees 3:31; 15:33–34); ... the lunar calendar (6:35); intermarriage (20:4; 22:20; 25:1; 27:10; 30:1–15); idolatry (20:7–9; 22:16–18); and consuming blood (6:12–14; 7:30; 21:6).’⁹⁷⁰ He does not reject a possible later date of composition, but he maintains that there is no certainty that the author actually refers to the Maccabean wars.⁹⁷¹ Finally, Knibb is in agreement with the latter view, as he considers that Jubilees includes no reference to the decrees imposed by Antiochus in 167 BCE which sparked the Maccabean revolt.⁹⁷²

1.1.1.2. Connection to Enochic writings

Rather interesting is VanderKam’s attempt to determine the *terminus post quem* for Jubilees with respect to the Enochic corpus. In particular, he believes that Jubilees should have been composed after the Dream Visions (1 En 83–90) was written, that is, 164 or 163 BCE.⁹⁷³ Knibb agrees with VanderKam in that Jubilees—particularly v. 4:19—actually reflects the Book of Dreams.⁹⁷⁴ Van Ruiten, however, questions the literary dependency of Jubilees upon 1 Enoch and argues that it is not possible to prove the actual use of the Dream Visions in the book of Jubilees.⁹⁷⁵ He writes:

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 69. See more in *ibid.*, 70–72.

⁹⁷⁰ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 73.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁹⁷² Michael A. Knibb, ‘Jubilees and the Origins of the Qumran Community’, in his (ed.), *Essays on the Book of Enoch and Other Early Jewish Texts and Traditions*, SVTP 22 (Brill: Leiden, 2009), 252.

⁹⁷³ Jacques van Ruiten, ‘A Literary Dependency of Jubilees on 1 Enoch’, in Gabriele Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2005), 91.

⁹⁷⁴ Michael A. Knibb, ‘Which Parts of 1 Enoch were known to Jubilees? A Note on the Interpretation of Jubilees 4.16–25’, in J. Cheryl Exum, and H.G.M. Williamson (eds.), *Reading from Right to Left. Essays on the Hebrew Bible in Honour of David J.A. Clines*, JSOTSup 373 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 258.

⁹⁷⁵ Van Ruiten, ‘A Literary Dependency’, 91.

‘Both Jubilees and the later parts of 1 Enoch might be dependent either on a common text or on a common (Enoch) tradition. Although the author of Jubilees was certainly aware of many of the early traditions which surrounded Enoch, it is impossible to identify the source Jubilees is referring to. One can hardly speak about quotations from 1 Enoch in Jubilees.’⁹⁷⁶

VanderKam comes to answer van Ruiten’s criticism with the following:

‘We should not minimize the significance of the fact that Jubilees underscores that Enoch left written works behind ... We may not have all the Enochic texts written in antiquity, but when the ones we do have correspond quite closely in theme if not in wording with the descriptions in passages such as Jubilees 4:17–26, it seems more economical to assume dependence on these written sources than to appeal to unknown ones.’⁹⁷⁷

Although VanderKam’s statement is rather appealing, the question of a literary or thematic dependence of Jubilees particularly on the Dream Visions can be answered taking into account the possibility that Jubilees reflects an earlier redactional stage of the Dream Visions. Most notably, Nickelsburg argues that although the final composition of Dream Visions was made between 165 and 163 BCE, 1 Enoch 90:6–19 provides evidence for an elaboration of an earlier form of the book.⁹⁷⁸ It is thus possible that Jubilees reflects an earlier redactional stage of the Dream Visions and not its final form. Beyond this, it is also likely that Jubilees depends on—if not a common Enochic tradition, as van Ruiten argues—other Enochic writings which date earlier, such as the BW and the Astronomical Book.⁹⁷⁹

1.1.2. Redactional theories

Scholarly discussion also focuses on the question of whether Jubilees was written all at once or it was a product of further redaction, that is, certain portions were added sometime later to the original stratum of the book. In 1960, Testuz argued that Jubilees 1:7–25, 28; 23:11–32; and 24:28b–30 were later interpolations to the

⁹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁹⁷⁷ James C. VanderKam, ‘Response: Jubilees and Enoch’, in Gabriele Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2005), 164.

⁹⁷⁸ See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 360–361.

⁹⁷⁹ Knibb argues with certainty that the author of Jubilees besides the *Book of Dreams* was certainly aware of the *Astronomical Book* and the BW; Knibb, ‘Which Parts’, 260.

original text of Jubilees⁹⁸⁰ and that the final redaction of the book took place in Qumran between 65 and 38 BCE.⁹⁸¹ Nearly a decade later, Davenport maintained that the book of Jubilees was subject to a redactional activity of three layers: the original edition, the first and the second redaction.⁹⁸² In particular, he argued that Jubilees 1:4b–26; 23:14–20, 21–31; and 50:5 were added to the original text by the first redactor (R₁) in the early Maccabean period,⁹⁸³ while Jubilees 1:10b, 17a, 27–28, 29c; 4:26; 23:21; and 33:14 were the work of the second redactor (R₂)⁹⁸⁴ which took place in Hasmonean times.⁹⁸⁵ In particular, Davenport maintains that only the phrase ‘the angel of presence who was going along in front of the Israelite camp, took the tablets (which told) of the divisions of the years ... for the weeks of their jubilees, year by year in their full number ...’⁹⁸⁶ (1:29) belongs to the original edition of Jubilees,⁹⁸⁷ while the rest of the verse belongs to the first redaction of Jubilees, because the words ‘law’ and ‘testimony’ reflect the terminology attested in Jubilees 1:4b–26 which is also considered to be the work of the first redactor.⁹⁸⁸ Furthermore, Davenport holds that the phrase ‘until the time the temple of God shall be created’ (1:29) belongs to the ‘sanctuary-oriented’ redactor who was not the same as the redactor of 1:4b–26 and 23:14–31.⁹⁸⁹ Davenport suggests that such a ‘sanctuary-oriented’ redaction would have taken place in Qumran sometime about 140–104 BCE.⁹⁹⁰ Moreover, he believes that Jubilees 23:14–31 belongs to the first redaction,⁹⁹¹ as well as that Jubilees 23:24–29 and 23:30–31 were ‘separate descriptions’⁹⁹² that were possibly joined together by the first redactor.⁹⁹³

More recently, Berner argued that the critical analysis of the text of Jubilees showed that one cannot speak of a comprehensive chronological framework. Most notably,

⁹⁸⁰ Michel Testuz, *Les Idées Religieuses du Livre des Jubilés* (Genève: E. Droz, 1960), 39–42.

⁹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 165–177.

⁹⁸² Gene L. Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees*, StPB 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 12.

⁹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁹⁸⁴ According to Davenport, this second redaction is ‘sanctuary-oriented’, for the second redactor appears to place a particular emphasis on the matter of the sanctuary; see *ibid.*, 75.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁹⁸⁶ Quotations from Jubilees are taken from James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text*, CSC 511, Scriptorum Aethiopicorum 88 (Lovanii: Peeters, 1989).

⁹⁸⁷ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), 12–13.

⁹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

⁹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*, 33.

⁹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 34.

he holds that Jubilees 1:5–26, 23:14–31 and 50:5 are later additions to the text⁹⁹⁴ which can be dated from the formation of the Qumran community.⁹⁹⁵ Finally, Segal believes that the literary complexity of Jubilees indicates that the book was not composed as a whole, but certain passages were redacted at different times.⁹⁹⁶ Most notably, he regards Jubilees 1:1–29; 6:32–38; 15:25–34; and 23:9–32 as belonging to a redactional stage of Jubilees⁹⁹⁷ which should have taken place within the Qumran sect.⁹⁹⁸

Although not all the Jubilees' verses proposed above overlap fully, the above-mentioned scholars agree in that portions of Jubilees are additions to the original text and that the final redaction would have been made at Qumran. Nevertheless, the predominant view within scholarly circles is that there are no traces of redactional activity within Jubilees and there is an agreement that the book is a unity.⁹⁹⁹ Most notably, VanderKam treats Jubilees as 'a unified book.'¹⁰⁰⁰ The telling differences he finds between Jubilees and the Qumran writings¹⁰⁰¹ strengthen his view that Jubilees was not composed within the Qumran community.¹⁰⁰² More precisely, he sees chapter 23 as a unified work which 'does not express a separatist or sectarian point of view'.¹⁰⁰³ VanderKam supports his argument by referring to one of the characteristic traits of Jubilees, namely the complete exclusion of the moon for calendar purposes.¹⁰⁰⁴ Jubilees could not have been written by the Qumran community as the Qumran writings, despite their witness to the 364-day calendar, made use also of the moon for calendar purposes.¹⁰⁰⁵ The preference of the author of Jubilees for using the solar calendar, together with the argument that, in Jubilees 4:16–25, the author appears to be familiar with the Book of Dreams

⁹⁹⁴ Christoph Berner, *Jahre, Jahrwochen und Jubiläen. Heptadische Geschichtskonzeptionen im Antiken Judentum*, BZAW 363 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2006), 239–248.

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 250–254.

⁹⁹⁶ Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 321.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 321.

⁹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁹⁹⁹ VanderKam, 'Recent Scholarship', 410.

¹⁰⁰⁰ James C. VanderKam, 'The Origins and Purposes of the Book of Jubilees', in Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange (eds.), *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, TSAJ 65 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 19; cf. VanderKam, 'Recent Scholarship', 410.

¹⁰⁰¹ For the differences between Jubilees and the Qumran texts, see VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 280–282.

¹⁰⁰² *Ibid.*, 282–283.

¹⁰⁰³ *Idem*, 'Recent Scholarship', 409.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Idem*, 'The Origins', 16–18.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Idem*, 'Recent Scholarship', 409.

which dates back to ca. 164 BCE, are sufficient to say that the composition of Jubilees antedates the founding of the Qumran sect (ca. 140 BCE).¹⁰⁰⁶ VanderKam's theory is also strengthened by the fact that the existence of 'significant portions of both chs. 1 and 23 ... on copies of Jubilees from Qumran ... raises doubts about them and indicates that these sections were present in the book at an early time.'¹⁰⁰⁷ Finally, Knibb, demonstrating the links between the book of Jubilees and the Qumran writings, is certain that Jubilees is not a sectarian composition.¹⁰⁰⁸

The foregoing arguments place the composition of Jubilees earlier than the formation of the *yaḥad* while making the possibility for a redactional activity less prominent.

In summary, the dominant scholarly opinion is that Jubilees dates back to the middle of the second century BCE. In an attempt to narrow the time framework of Jubilees further, one should take into account the following details. First, the author of Jubilees was aware of the Greek educational institutions of the *gymnasion* and the *ephebeion* that the High Priest Jason established in 175 BCE.¹⁰⁰⁹ The prohibition of nudity and uncircumcision allude to the athletic practices which took place at the above institutions. This means that Jubilees should be dated after 175 BCE. Second, the book of Jubilees seems to be a polemic against Antiochus and Hellenism, but a particular objection to the decrees of Antiochus cannot be traced with certainty. Therefore, the most plausible date is sometime between 175 and 167 BCE.

1.1.3. Purpose and authorship

Jubilees, written in the land of Israel¹⁰¹⁰ forms an opposition to the negligence of the Jewish laws due to the cultural practices that Hellenization introduced. The author aims to awake his compatriots, tells them that the covenant with God is

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Idem*, 'The Origins', 20; *idem*, 'Recent Scholarship', 408–409.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Idem*, 'Recent Scholarship', 424.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Knibb, 'Jubilees', 251–252.

¹⁰⁰⁹ See more in Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 67.

¹⁰¹⁰ Hogan, *Healing*, 79.

broken and reminds them that the latter should be renewed. VanderKam suggests that the author of Jubilees is opposed to a specific attitude of a group of Jews that is described in 1 Maccabees 1:11.¹⁰¹¹ This group believed that a closer unity with non-Jews is desirable, because ‘the Jews had suffered disasters since they separated from gentiles.’¹⁰¹² VanderKam argues that ‘Jubilees is an all-out defence of what makes the people of Israel distinctive from the nations and a forceful assertion that they were never one with them.’¹⁰¹³

Furthermore, scholars of Jubilees agree that the author of the book would have stemmed from priestly circles.¹⁰¹⁴ Most notably, it is suggested that he might have been a ‘proto-Essene’ before the establishment of the *yaḥad*, as Jubilees, besides the differences, also shares many similarities with the Qumran writings.¹⁰¹⁵

1.1.4. Language and versional evidence

There has been much controversy about the original language of Jubilees, as some scholars reckoned that Hebrew should have been the original language, while others opted for Greek.¹⁰¹⁶ The discovery, however, of Jubilees’ manuscripts at Qumran threw new light on the discussion. Given the evidence that the Qumran Jubilees’ texts were all written in Hebrew, scholarship reached a consensus that the original language of the book was Hebrew.¹⁰¹⁷

The book of Jubilees was lost for centuries but in the nineteenth century a text of the book was found in Ethiopia and in the second half of the twentieth century a number of Hebrew Jubilees’ manuscripts were unearthed in Qumran.¹⁰¹⁸

The original Hebrew text of Jubilees was first translated into Greek and Syriac, whereas the Greek translation served as the basis for the Ethiopic and Latin

¹⁰¹¹ James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 140.

¹⁰¹² *Ibid.*, 140.

¹⁰¹³ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 141–142; Knibb, ‘Jubilees’, 253.

¹⁰¹⁵ VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 282–283; cf. *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (2001), 143.

¹⁰¹⁶ *Idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, 2–4.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4–5; cf. *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), vi–vii; Knibb, ‘Jubilees’, 243.

¹⁰¹⁸ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (2001), 13.

versions.¹⁰¹⁹ The Greek version of Jubilees¹⁰²⁰ is lost and only near citations from and allusions to it remain in the writings of several Greek authors (Epiphanius, Cyncellus, Cedrenus, etc).¹⁰²¹ The same situation stands for the Syriac Jubilees. A Syriac version of Jubilees should once have existed but no copy of it is extant today.¹⁰²² In 1921, Cardinal Tisserant published 16 citations of a Syriac version of Jubilees from an anonymous Syriac chronicle discovered by the Patriarch of Antioch, Ignace Ephrem II Rahmani.¹⁰²³ Tisserant argued that the Syriac translation was not necessarily dependent on a Greek translation mainly because there were no Greek loan words in a series of citations.¹⁰²⁴ Furthermore, Jubilees is partly preserved in a Latin manuscript published in 1861 by Antonius Maria Ceriani. This manuscript preserves chapters 13, 15–42 and 45–49 and dates to the fifth or sixth century CE. The Latin version of Jubilees is considered to have been translated from the Greek¹⁰²⁵ and ‘both in quantity and quality ... is second only to the Ethiopic version.’¹⁰²⁶

Jubilees is fully preserved only in Ethiopic. Today nearly thirty manuscripts of the Ethiopic Jubilees are available to scholarship.¹⁰²⁷ VanderKam notes that ‘although the manuscript evidence is considerably late, it appears almost certain that the book was translated into Ethiopic at a relatively early date. Jub. owes its preservation primarily to the fact that it occupied a place on the periphery of the Abyssinian canon and was valued by the Falashas, and this implies that it was well-known and highly esteemed from early Christian times in Ethiopia.’¹⁰²⁸ VanderKam proposes as a possible date for the Ethiopic translation of Jubilees in ca. 500 CE.¹⁰²⁹ He assures us that the Ethiopic version can be used with confidence, as ‘it preserves a solid representation of the second-century Hebrew text.’¹⁰³⁰

¹⁰¹⁹ *Idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 6; cf. *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (2001), 14 and Knibb, ‘Jubilees’, 243.

¹⁰²⁰ VanderKam estimates its date before 220 CE; VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xi.

¹⁰²¹ *Idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xiv.

¹⁰²² *Ibid.*, xv–xvi.

¹⁰²³ *Idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 9.

¹⁰²⁴ *Idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xv. See more details on Tisserant’s examination of the Syriac citations in *idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 9.

¹⁰²⁵ *Idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 10–11; *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xviii.

¹⁰²⁶ *Idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xviii.

¹⁰²⁷ *Idem*, ‘Recent Scholarship’, 406.

¹⁰²⁸ *Idem*, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 15.

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁰³⁰ *Idem*, ‘Recent Scholarship’, 407.

Moreover, fourteen manuscripts of Jubilees were found in the caves at Qumran.¹⁰³¹ Although these preserve only a small part of the entire work, their textual examination has proved that the Hebrew text closely matches the Ethiopic version of Jubilees, even though the latter was not translated directly from the Hebrew but from a Greek version.¹⁰³² Finally, Endres sees the Qumran textual discoveries as evidence that strengthens the belief that Jubilees was written in Palestine.¹⁰³³

¹⁰³¹ See for details of their publication *ibid.*, 406.

¹⁰³² VanderKam argues that a possible reason for this is ‘the book’s close connection with the familiar storyline of Genesis-Exodus’: *ibid.*, 407.

¹⁰³³ Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 236.

2. HERBAL MEDICINE IN JUBILEES

The present section focuses on the angelic instruction of herbal medicines found in Jubilees 10:10–13. According to this passage, an angel or angels of God teach(es) Noah herbal remedies to be used as a cure for demonic harassment. I will cite the Ethiopic text with its translation followed by a verse-by-verse analysis in an effort to explain the association of Noah's patriarchal figure with herbal medicines, as well as to examine the more profound reasons that lie behind the acknowledgment of herbal medicine.

2.1. The narrative framework of Jubilees 10:10–14

The Noah material in Jubilees covers seven chapters (chs. 4–10). Noah is first mentioned in chapter 4. There the author of Jubilees describes in detail the genealogy of the patriarchs from Adam to Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (4:7–33). The birth of Noah is mentioned in Jubilees 4:28. Noah is the central character of the next chapter. Chapter 5 begins with the marriage of the angels with the daughters of men with whom the angels beget giants (5:1). As the earth was filled with corruption and wickedness (5:2–3), God decided to leave only Noah alive upon the earth (5:5). First, he commands his angels to tie the Watchers up in the depths of the earth (5:6; 5:10). The offspring of the Watchers were all obliterated from the presence of the earth (5:7–11). Favour was given only to Noah because he was righteous, and therefore, God saved him and his children from the flood (5:19). After instructing Noah to make an ark (5:21), God brings a deluge on earth which lasts for 150 days (5:24–27). Right after the flood Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice and a burnt offering to God (6:1–3). God makes a covenant with him that there would be no other flood (6:4; 6:15–16). The rest of chapter 6 deals with the commandments about the consumption of blood and the celebration of the covenantal festivals (6:7–36). Noah plants a vine at the mountain Lubar and makes wine from it (7:1–2). He offers a burnt offering to God for his and his sons' atonement (7:3–5). Noah prescribes to his grandsons every commandment he knew (7:20). For it was due to fornication, uncleanness and injustice caused by the illicit intercourse of the Watchers with women that there was a flood on the earth (7:21). In the following verses Noah describes the situation which caused the flood: injustice and wickedness filled the earth after the Watchers begot sons (7:22–24).

Noah fears that his sons will err after his death and will be obliterated from the earth (7:27) and he warns them against shedding human blood or consuming blood from an animate being (7:28–33). In the next chapter Kainan, Noah’s great-grandson, found an inscription that contained the Watchers’ teaching of observing the omens of the heavenly phenomena (i.e. sun, moon, stars, etc.). He copied it without telling Noah about it (8:3–4). In the rest of chapter 8 and the whole of chapter 9 Noah divides the earth among his sons. Chapter 10 begins with Noah’s prayer to God for his grandchildren’s deliverance from the evil spirits (10:1–14). This is the pericope where the angels teach Noah herbal remedies as an antidote for the diseases caused by the unclean spirits. Right after this story follows Noah’s death (10:15). It is rather interesting that Noah’s prayer for the deliverance from the evil spirits comes at the very end of Noah’s life. It can thus be described as his last effort to secure his descendants’ existence upon earth. Chapter 10 closes with the description of the construction of the tower of Babel and its consequences for the human race (10:19–25).

2.2. Content and remarks on Jubilees 10:1–14

Jubilees 10:1–14 is considered an ‘addition’ to the biblical story of Genesis, as there is no equivalent of it in the biblical text,¹⁰³⁴ and it is the narration of the demonic affliction of Noah’s descendants. The author makes use of the Babylonian belief that demons are the cause of illness to describe the unceasing activity of evil in the world and the divine intervention to ease the suffering of people with the instruction of herbal remedies.

The content of Jubilees 10:1–14 can be outlined as follows:

- Impure demons lead astray Noah’s grandchildren. Noah’s sons inform him about the situation (10:1–2);
- Noah prays to God for protection from the wicked spirits (10:3–6);
- God orders the angels to bind them all (10:7);
- Mastema asks God to let some of the spirits remain before him (10:8);
- God allows one tenth of the unclean spirits to be under Mastema’s dominion (10:9);

¹⁰³⁴ Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History*, 339.

- God orders one of his angels to teach Noah all the medicines (10:10);
- The angels imprison the evil spirits but leave one tenth on earth (10:11);
- The angels teach all herbal medicine(s) to Noah (10:12);
- Noah writes everything in a book (10:13);
- Noah gives all his books to Shem (10:14).

As VanderKam points out, this story ‘provides an explanation for the ... presence of evil on the earth after the flood.’¹⁰³⁵ The problematic situation, which forms the main theme of Noah’s prayer, is stated already at the beginning of the pericope: Noah’s grandchildren are led astray and are destroyed by impure spirits.¹⁰³⁶ The reason why these unclean spirits harassed Noah’s grandchildren is not clear. Mastema’s reasoning for the earthly existence of the evil spirits could form an answer here: ‘For they are meant for (the purposes of) destroying and misleading’ (10:8).

The wicked spirits are identified in verse 5 with the Watchers’ offspring. Previous references to demons in Jubilees can be helpful in order to understand Noah’s agitation and the reason he asks for God’s assistance. In previous chapters, the demons are associated with idolatry (1:7–8, 11), with the story of the Watchers (5:1, 6–10), and with the shedding and consuming of blood (7:26–28).¹⁰³⁷ Already in chapter 7, Noah expressed his anguish for his descendants and described the impious situation that caused the flood. The illicit intercourse of the Watchers with women brought uncleanness and injustice upon the earth. The offspring of both the Watchers and mankind all started to devour one another (7:22–24). God thus brought the flood to obliterate everyone on earth (7:25). Noah feared that after his death his sons might err and consequently be obliterated from the earth (7:27). For this reason, Noah prescribed to his grandsons every commandment he knew (7:20) and warned his sons against shedding human blood or consuming blood from an animate being (7:28–33). Although in 7:25 it is said that God has obliterated everyone from the earth but Noah, in 10:5 Noah says that some of the spirits (i.e. the Watchers’ offspring) have remained alive upon earth. One can therefore assume

¹⁰³⁵ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (2001), 43.

¹⁰³⁶ The author uses different wordings to characterise these spirits: ‘wicked spirits’ (v. 3), ‘evil ones’ (v. 11) and ‘evil spirits’ (v. 13).

¹⁰³⁷ See more in VanderKam, ‘The Demons’, 340–342.

that the situation these spirits caused on earth was analogous to the one that brought the flood waters, that is, fornication, uncleanness, injustice, shedding or consuming blood. The demonic spirits led Noah's grandchildren towards such deeds which were in fact a violation of the covenant (6:7–10). Noah thus fears that such a violation might cause the destruction of his descendants.

Beyond this, in chapter 8 the author reports that the impact of the Watchers' teaching was substantial on earth even after the flood. In particular, Kainan, Noah's great-grandson, copied an inscription of the Watchers' instruction concerning the observation of celestial omens (8:3–4). According to Nickelsburg, this reading replaces the forbidden teaching of the Watchers (cf. 4:15; 5:6) which is omitted in Jubilees, 'connecting postdiluvian astrology with the prediluvian teaching.'¹⁰³⁸ What prompted Kainan to proceed to such an impious act is not stated. It is possible, however, that the author insinuates that the remaining spirits were already acting against humanity and particularly against Noah's descendants, and proof of this is Kainan's sinful deed. Kainan did not inform Noah about his action and this might also be the reason that Noah was at first unaware of the demonic harassment against his grandchildren and needed to be informed by his sons about the situation (10:2).

The imminent destruction of Noah's descendants from the malicious spirits might prevent the fulfilment of God's commandment for the repopulation of the earth after the flood (6:5, 9). Noah worries that he would, through the interruption of his family line, violate the covenant he made with God. He therefore asks for God's blessing so that his offspring may continue to exist, increase and become numerous upon the earth (10:4).¹⁰³⁹ Noah's fear for the destruction of his descendants led him to beg God for protection against these spirits. Lange has accurately described Noah's prayer as a 'hymnic exorcism.'¹⁰⁴⁰ The removal of nine tenths of the unclean spirits comes as a response to Noah's prayer (10:11).

¹⁰³⁸ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 73.

¹⁰³⁹ See more on the relation of the repopulation of the earth after the flood with the demonology of Jubilees in VanderKam, 'The Demons', 350–351.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Lange, 'The Essene Position', 383.

After Noah's plea for deliverance from the evil spirits, God commands his angels to tie them up. However, the story continues with Mastema's¹⁰⁴¹ request to God to preserve some of the spirits so as to exercise his authority among mankind (10:8). God hears Mastema's request favourably¹⁰⁴² and leaves one tenth of the spirits on earth (10:9, 11), while his angels imprison the rest of them (10:11). God then commands his angels to teach Noah all the medicines in order to confront the diseases caused by the unclean demons (10:12). Noah writes everything down in a book (10:13). The story finishes with Noah giving all his books to his son, Shem (10:14).

2.3. The instruction of herbal medicine in Jubilees 10:10–13

The verses of interest here are 10–13, as they contain the actual reference to the angelic instruction of herbal medicine. As noted above, the above pericope exists only in Ethiopic. I hereby cite the Ethiopic text¹⁰⁴³ with its English translation.¹⁰⁴⁴

2.3.1. The text

10:10 ወለአሐዱ ፡ እምነ ፡ ይቤ ፡ ከመ ፡ ንምህሮ ፡ ለኖኅ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ፈውሶሙ ፡ እስመ ፡ ያአምር ፡ ከመ ፡ አኮ ፡ በርትዕ ፡ ዘየሐውሩ ፡ ወአኮ ፡ በጽድቅ ፡ ዘይትባአሱ ።

And he told one of us that we should teach Noah all their medicine because he knew that they would neither conduct themselves properly nor fight fairly.

10:11 ወገበርነ ፡ በከመ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ቃሉ ፡ ወኩሎ ፡ እኩያነ ፡ እለ ፡ ይጸውጉ ፡ አሰርነ ፡ ውስተ ፡ መካነ ፡ ደይን ፡ ወዐሥራቶሙ ፡ አትረፍነ ፡ ከመ ፡ ይኩንኑ ፡ ቅድመ ፡ ሰይጣን ፡ ዲበ ፡ ምድር ።

And we acted in accord with his every word. And all of the evil ones who were savage we tied up in the place of judgment, while we left a tenth of them to rule on the earth before the satan.

¹⁰⁴¹ Mastema is also mentioned as 'Satan' in verse 11. It may be that 'Satan' is used here as a noun ('adversary') to describe Mastema's function ('enmity'); see Eric Eve, *The Jewish Context of Jesus' Miracles*, JSNTSup 231 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 170. For the association of Mastema with Satan in Jubilees cf. *ibid.*, 169–172.

¹⁰⁴² God also appears to hear favourably Mastema's suggestion to test Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac (Jub 17:16; 18:1–2). In Job, Satan suggests to God to test Job's faith (1:9–11; cf. 2:4–5) and God permits Satan to do so (1:12; cf. 2:6).

¹⁰⁴³ All quotations from Ethiopic Jubilees are taken from VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (510).

¹⁰⁴⁴ All English translations of Ethiopic Jubilees are my own, in consultation with VanderKam's translation; *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (511).

10:12 ወፈውስ ፡ ደዌሆሙ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ነገርናሁ ፡ ለኖኅ ፡ ምስለ ፡ አስሕቶቶሙ ፡ ከመ
፡ ይፈውስ ፡ በዕፀ ፡ ምድር ።

And we told Noah all the medicine for their disease with their errors so that he could cure [them] by means of the earth's wood.

10:13 ወጸሐፈ ፡ ኖኅ ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ዘከመ ፡ መሀርናሁ ፡ በመጽሐፍ ፡ በኩሉ ፡ ትዝምደ ፡
ፈውስ ፡ ወተዕፅዉ ፡ መናፍስት ፡ እኩያን ፡ እምድኅሬሆሙ ፡ ለውሉደ ፡ ኖኅ ።

And Noah wrote everything in a book as we have taught him regarding all the kinds of medicine, and the evil spirits were precluded from after the sons of Noah.

2.3.2. A note on VanderKam's translation

Before commenting on the above verses, it is useful to make a brief note on VanderKam's translation. VanderKam attempted to translate the Ethiopic text of Jubilees in an 'acceptable English style.'¹⁰⁴⁵ He therefore avoided using archaic words and expressions, as well as the repetition of the conjunction 'and.' Moreover, he often translates words that are originally in the singular as if they were in the plural. For example, in verses 10 and 12 he translates the singular noun ፈውሶሙ ('their medicine') in the plural. The same stands for the noun ደዌሆሙ ('their disease', v. 12) which is singular but VanderKam translates it as if it were in the plural.¹⁰⁴⁶ Finally, in verse 12, he renders the wording በዕፀ ፡ ምድር as 'of the earth's plants.' However, ዕፀ is not plural and its first meaning is 'tree, shrub, bush, wood, stick, staff (of spear)' and only in its plural form it can mean 'herbs.'¹⁰⁴⁷ VanderKam is aware of these meanings but believes that a more general meaning of the word is required.¹⁰⁴⁸ However, I have attempted to produce a more word-for-word translation in order to be precise.

¹⁰⁴⁵ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xxxi.

¹⁰⁴⁶ I translate below ፈውሶሙ and ደዌሆሙ as 'their medicine(s)' and 'their disease(s)', respectively. The parentheses point to VanderKam's translation of these words in the plural.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, 57; cf. August Dillmann, *Lexicon linguae Aethiopicae: cum indice Latino* (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1865), 1025.

¹⁰⁴⁸ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), 60.

2.4. Comments on Jubilees 10:10–13

2.4.1. Verse 10

2.4.1.1. The angel-instructor

The phrase ‘and he told one of us’ indicates that a particular angel instructed Noah in medicine(s). The angelic role is essential, ‘as the kind of tradition known through the *Book of Watchers* is reconfigured.’¹⁰⁴⁹ According to Charles, the angel should be Raphael.¹⁰⁵⁰ A retelling of the story of the demonic affliction of Noah’s descendants is preserved in Haggadic literature, according to which the angel who taught Noah plant remedies is said to be Raphael.¹⁰⁵¹ The introduction of the medieval *Book of Asaph the Physician*, which depends on Jubilees 10:1–14,¹⁰⁵² also mentions Raphael.¹⁰⁵³

As mentioned elsewhere, the root of the angelic name is רפא (‘to heal’). Raphael appears in other places in ancient Jewish literature connected to the issue of healing. In 1 Enoch 10:7, Raphael is sent by God to heal the earth from the corruption of the Watchers. In 1 Enoch 40:9, Raphael is set ‘over every disease and wound of the children of men.’ In Tobit, Raphael was sent to heal Tobit’s illness and Sarah’s misery (Tob 3:17; 12:14). Both in Tobit and Jubilees the angel serves as the intermediate link between God and man and as the channel of transmission of medical knowledge. Thus, it makes perfect sense to identify the angel here with Raphael.¹⁰⁵⁴

2.4.1.2. The righteous figure of Noah

The recipient of the angelic teaching is Noah. Only a righteous man stands the chance of receiving divine revelation. Noah’s righteousness is shown by his vigorous obedience of the covenantal ordinances that God gave him after the flood

¹⁰⁴⁹ Stuckenbruck, ‘The Book of Tobit’, 261 (italics in the original).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Robert H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or The Little Genesis*, TED Series I. Palestinian Jewish Texts (Pre-Rabbinic) 4 (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1917), 80.

¹⁰⁵¹ Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1913), 1:173.

¹⁰⁵² Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 171; 174.

¹⁰⁵³ For the English translation of the introduction of the *Book of Asaph*, see Martha Himmelfarb, ‘Some Echoes of Jubilees in Medieval Hebrew Literature’, in John C. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the Threads. Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, SBLEJL 6 (Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 129–130; cf. Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 171.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Cf. Hogan, *Healing*, 87.

(Jub 6:7, 17, 23–28). Due to his righteousness, God reveals to him through his angels all kinds of medicine so that he and his offspring remain intact from the demonic affliction. Discussing Noah’s righteousness, VanderKam argued that the angelic instruction of medicine is related to the author’s attempt to attribute ‘a priestly role to Noah because in Israel as in the Ancient Near East generally priests bore a number of medical responsibilities such as identifying illnesses and excluding people with contagious diseases from society.’¹⁰⁵⁵

2.4.1.3. ‘their medicine(s)’ (𐤅𐤍𐤔𐤍𐤕)

The noun ‘medicine(s)’ is accompanied by the personal pronoun ‘their’ which is quite enigmatic. Hogan prefers to interpret ‘their medicine(s)’ as referring to the remedies that men would use against the illnesses caused by the wicked spirits and ‘they’ in the next phrase of the verse as referring to mankind, since he believes that Jubilees 10:1–14 deals not only with the continuous existence of evil in the world but also with the sins of men.¹⁰⁵⁶ However, if ‘their’ refers to men, then why would the angels teach medicine(s) that men already knew? Instead, it is more consistent with the flow of the text for ‘their’ to refer to the evil spirits. In this way, the verse indicates two things. First, the medicine(s) originally belonged to the demonic realm. The malicious spirits use their medical knowledge to harm mankind because ‘they are meant for ... destroying and misleading’ (10:8). Second, the angels of God were acquainted with the medicines of the wicked spirits because they revealed them to Noah. The catastrophic activity of the demonic spirits is also strengthened from the last half of verse 10: ‘they would neither conduct themselves properly nor fight fairly.’ This sentence should refer to the future activity of the one tenth of the spirits that God left under the dominion of Mastema (Jub 10:9) and the medicine(s) may be used as a protecting shield against such an activity. Moreover, the author wishes to underline here two possible ways medical knowledge can be used: first, the evil spirits can use their medicine(s) to do harm and, second, man can use medical knowledge to protect himself from the demonic activity. These two ways

¹⁰⁵⁵ James C. VanderKam, ‘The Righteousness of Noah’, in John J. Collins and George W. E. Nickelsburg (eds.), *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms*, SBLSCS 12 (Chico CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 22–23. This holds true for ancient Egypt where the art of medicine was practised by the priests in the Temple of Heliopolis. Himmelfarb, however, does not embrace VanderKam’s view and argues that such activity does not match with the priestly duties described in Leviticus 13–14; Himmelfarb, ‘Some Echoes’, 133.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Hogan, *Healing*, 86.

are like the two sides of a coin. The author wants to say here that medicine itself should not necessarily be viewed as something bad—besides the text implies that both angels and demons were familiar with it—but it is the one using it who can make it harmful or not.

2.4.2. Verse 11

Verse 11 is a re-elaboration of verse 9. There, the angels execute God's commands: they tie the evil spirits up in the place of judgment but leave one tenth of them under Satan's dominion. This is the second part of God's official response to Noah's plea for protection from the evil spirits while Mastema's request (Jub 10:8) is also executed.

Although the angels who carry out God's command are anonymous here, the personal pronoun 'we' at the beginning of the verse (cf. v. 12) should stand for the 'angels of presence.'¹⁰⁵⁷

2.4.3. Verse 12

Although in verse 10 God commanded only one of his angels to teach medicine(s) to Noah, in verse 12 the personal pronoun 'we' denotes that more than one angel executed his commandment. This plural is often encountered throughout Jubilees when the angels carry out God's will (e.g. Jub 2:18; 5:6; 48:13), or report to God what takes place on earth (e.g. Jub 4:6), or accompany God in his plans (e.g. Jub 10:22).

2.4.3.1. **ḏḏ**: 'wood' or 'plants'?

In verse 12, the 'medicine(s)' become more precise and they are particularly associated with flora. This is evident from the wording **ḏḏ** which can mean tree, shrub, bush, wood, etc.¹⁰⁵⁸ What is interesting here is that **ḏḏ** is preserved in the singular. It may be that **ḏḏ** functions as a collective noun here, referring to the flora

¹⁰⁵⁷ Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 6. VanderKam points out that such an appellation has the literal meaning 'angel of the face', 'with the "face" being God's face. In other words, an angel of the presence is one who serves before God himself': VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (2001), 87.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, 57.

as a whole. Dillmann notes that in the Wisdom of Solomon 7:20 **ḏṭ** stands for the Greek φυτά ('plants').¹⁰⁵⁹ VanderKam points out that **ḏṭ** is preserved in the plural in the late manuscript 25 which has important textual value and was 'treated as the greatest authority' in his edition,¹⁰⁶⁰ and thus opts for a plural rendering of **ḏṭ** ('plants').¹⁰⁶¹ The Hebrew Book of Noah¹⁰⁶² favours this rendering, reading **יצ**.¹⁰⁶³ **יצ** is often used as a collective noun in the HB (e.g. Gen 1:11; 2:16; 3:1–2, 8; Ex 10:15; Lev 19:23; 23:40; Deut 20:20; Neh 9:25).¹⁰⁶⁴ However, it is only the plural of **ḏṭ** that denotes 'herbs'.¹⁰⁶⁵ Also, **ḏṭ** is found in the singular in the oldest Ethiopic manuscripts.¹⁰⁶⁶ Might the singular form of **ḏṭ** be the error of an early Ethiopian scribe that later copyists aimed to correct, or does it reflect the original reading? Had the author of Jubilees a particular tree or wood in mind? Some observations can perhaps shed some light on this. Not only is **ḏṭ** preserved in the singular but also the words for 'medicine' in verses 10 (**ፈውሶ**; lit. 'their medicine') and 12 (**ፈውሰ**), respectively. This suggests that there is perhaps some connection between the singular forms. It may be that the word **ḏṭ** is an elucidation of **ፈውሰ** in verses 10 and 12. In addition, verse 12 also preserves **ፈውሶ** ('their disease') in the singular. All these singular forms suggest that it is possible the author to have had in mind a specific tree or wood to be used as medicine for a specific disease. In this respect, Eusebius' account can be enlightening. The Christian historian, quoting Abydenus who in turn quoted from Berossus' *Babyloniaca*¹⁰⁶⁷, reports that the ark of Noah (whom the Chaldeans call Xisouthros or Sisithros or Xisithros¹⁰⁶⁸), when stranded in Armenia provided the inhabitants (of

¹⁰⁵⁹ Dillmann, *Lexicon linguae Aethiopicae*, 1025.

¹⁰⁶⁰ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), xxi.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰⁶² Charles claimed to have reconstructed the original text of the lost Book of Noah by means of A. Jellinek's edition of the Hebrew Book of Noah (in the collection *Bet ha-Midrash*); Robert H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 179, Appendix I. Jellinek's edition contains the late work *Sefer Noah* which consists of three books: the *Book of Asaph*, the *Book of Fazel* and the *Book of Mysteries*; Florentino García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic. Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran*, STDJ 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 24.

¹⁰⁶³ Charles, *The Ethiopic Version*, 179, Appendix I.

¹⁰⁶⁴ BDB, 781.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, 57.

¹⁰⁶⁶ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (511), 60.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Χαλδαϊκά according to Syncellus; *EC* 56, L. 60.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *PE* 9.12.5. Syncellus also preserves the same information; cf. *EC* 42, L. 36; 70, Ll. 17, 19, 29.

Armenia) with wood to make amulets as antidotes to poisons.¹⁰⁶⁹ Josephus, quoting Nicolaus of Damascus on this, mentions that the remains of the timber of the ark, which was stranded on the Armenian mountain Baris, were largely preserved (τὰ λείψανα τῶν ξύλων ἐπὶ πολὺ σωθῆναι).¹⁰⁷⁰ The Jewish historian also refers to Berossus' account according to which some people took off pitch from the ark to use it for averting evils (i.e. as amulets). The passage reads:

‘This flood and the ark are mentioned by all who have written histories of the barbarians. Among these is Berosus the Chaldean, who in his description of the events of the flood writes somewhere as follows: “It is said, moreover, that a portion of the vessel still survives in Armenia on the mountain of the Corydeans, and that persons carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they use as talismans (πρὸς τοὺς ἀποτροπιασμούς).”’¹⁰⁷¹

Similarly, Syncellus, quoting Alexander Polyhistor's testimony of Berossus' *Babyloniaca*, says that some scrape off pitch from the ark to be used as talismans:

‘And the ship having alighted in Armenia, a part of it still remains in the mountains of the Korydaioi of Armenia. And some scrape off asphalt (ἀποξύοντας ἄσφαλτον) from the ship and take it away and use it as talismans (πρὸς τοὺς ἀποτροπιασμούς).’¹⁰⁷²

The Babylonian priest Berossus appears to have narrated in his chronicle the story of the Flood—which is presented very differently from the biblical account—in which he connects the wood of the ark of Noah (for Berossus, the hero is Xisouthros) with the making of (wooden) amulets as antidotes to poisons. Berossus further highlights the apotropaic use of the pitch of the wood of the ark. Such a tradition is in line with the account of Jubilees 10:10, 12. It is well known that in the ancient world amulets were used for protection against demonic beings which were

¹⁰⁶⁹ τὸ δὲ πλοῖον ἐν Ἀρμενίῃ περίπτα ξύλων ἀλεξιφάρμακα καὶ τοῖσιν ἐπιχωρίοισι παρέχeto: *PE* 9.11.5. Quotations from *PE* are from K. Mras, *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 8: *Die Praeparatio evangelica*, GCS 43 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1954, 1956). Cf. *EC* 70, Ll. 26–27.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *JA* I. 95; cf. *PE* 9.11.3–4.

¹⁰⁷¹ *JA* I. 93–94; cf. *PE* 9.11.2–3.

¹⁰⁷² *EC* 55, Ll. 28–30; 56, L.1. Unless stated otherwise, the English translations of Syncellus' *Chronography* is taken from Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography*.

thought to cause illnesses. Such amulets were often of vegetal origin.¹⁰⁷³ It is thus no surprise that Berossus wrote about the use of wood and pitch (i.e. floral substance and tree-product, respectively) in the making of amulets. Also, Berossus' account stresses two properties of wood which are inextricably connected: first, its exorcistic powers (i.e. amulets) and, second, its pharmaceutical properties (i.e. antidote to poisons). The use of **ḏṥ** in the sense of 'wood' in the narrative of Jubilees may therefore be similar to the use of wood and pitch by the Armenians according to the *Babyloniaca*: the wood will be used for the making of remedies to cure the demonic illnesses and, in effect, to keep the demons away (curative-exorcistic purpose). It is thus possible that the author of Jubilees drew from a tradition similar to the one attested in the *Babyloniaca* about the pharmaceutical properties of the ark's wood and thus the singular form of **ḏṥ** found in the oldest Ethiopic MSS might be a reference to the wood of the ark of Noah. If this were the case, then the reasons for the association of the patriarchal figure of Noah with the instruction of herbal antidotes would be evident.

The development of the tradition around the healing properties of the wood of Noah's ark should have been founded in the divine ordinance for the construction of the ark. In Genesis 6:14, God orders Noah:

‘Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch’ (NRSV).

NRSV translates עצי-גפר with ‘cypress wood’ but the meaning of גפר is rather uncertain.¹⁰⁷⁴ The LXX does not throw any light on this, as it translates ἐκ ξύλων τετραγώνων (‘from square woods’). It is possible, however, that the wood was understood to be from the cedar tree because such wood was used both for ship-building in antiquity¹⁰⁷⁵ and the extraction of pitch.¹⁰⁷⁶ In any case, the divine

¹⁰⁷³ Cf. *MM* IV.61, 132; *NH* XXIV. LVI.94; XXIV. LVII.95.

¹⁰⁷⁴ BDB, 172.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *EP* V. VII.1–2. Theophrastus refers to the Syrian cedar here.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *EP* IX. II.3. Theophrastus refers to the Phoenician cedar here.

command to make an ark out of the tree-wood suggests that the use of wood receives some sort of legitimisation.

In sum, it is possible that the singular **dh** is an implication of the wood of the ark of Noah and the tradition about its prophylactic powers lies in the background. This interpretation would explain the singular forms of ‘disease’ and ‘medicine’ of verse 12 (cf. v. 10). Also, it would account for the reasons the author put the angels of God to instruct particularly Noah herbal medicine. However, the reading ‘all kinds of medicine’ in verse 13 is a reference to all herbal substances, not to a particular one. It is possible that the author attempts to combine two different traditions: on the one hand, the tradition about Noah and the therapeutic qualities of the wood of the ark; on the other hand, the prominent belief in the medicinal properties of all herbal substances.

2.4.3.2. ‘their disease(s)’

The reading ‘their disease(s)’ refers to the diseases that the evil spirits caused to Noah’s grandchildren. Although in Genesis and Exodus there is no mention of demons,¹⁰⁷⁷ the author of Jubilees builds on the Babylonian belief that demonic beings are the cause of illness to ground his story on the aetiology of medicine.

The identification of the evil spirits with the inflictors of diseases against Noah’s grandchildren (cf. Jub 10:1) infers that these disease(s) had a magical implication. Noah’s offspring are described as demonically possessed (cf. Jub 10:1) and, in effect, the herbal medicines aimed to cast the demons away. The exorcistic use of floral substances is evident from Josephus’ account about the exorcism of Eleazar with a ring that contained a herb.¹⁰⁷⁸

But magical association is also inferred for the inflictors of these diseases. In order to understand such an association, one needs to reflect on the harmful effects—especially those that could cause an illness—of magic in antiquity. As already mentioned in the second chapter, there were two kinds of magic, the ‘apotropaic’ and the ‘aggressive.’ The former aimed to protect (e.g. the making of charms and

¹⁰⁷⁷ VanderKam, ‘The Demons’, 339.

¹⁰⁷⁸ See JA VIII. 46–47; cf. the root ‘baaras’ in JW VII.180.

amulets), whereas the latter aimed to inflict pain, illness and every kind of harm on people. The most-often attested case of ‘aggressive’ magic that aimed to inflict an illness (mental or bodily) on somebody were the preparation and administration of magical philtres and poisons.¹⁰⁷⁹ The basic ingredients of the latter were herbal substances, as certain plants were poisonous and had harmful properties.¹⁰⁸⁰ The side-effects of these noxious potions could be effaced by antidotes also made of floral substances.¹⁰⁸¹ This interpretation leaves room to suggest that the evil spirits here can be a metaphor of sorcerers and poisoners in the author’s time, and that the herbal remedies at the end of verse 12 may well refer to vegetal antidotes against magical potions and poisons. In brief, it is possible that the author had in mind poisoning which he described as a demonic disease and the herbal remedies were to function as natural antidotes.

2.4.3.3. ‘with their errors’

The reading ‘with their errors’ is quite enigmatic. Some further observations can perhaps cast some light on its meaning. As mentioned above, certain plants were thought to be dangerous, as they could affect mental powers and can cause delusions, insanity or death when administered in large doses.¹⁰⁸² The phrase ‘their errors’ may well refer to these harmful properties of plants and plant-products and, in effect, may mean the transmission of knowledge about the hurtful powers of plants. Furthermore, the wording ‘error’ may be an implicit reference to the insufficient knowledge of the properties of plants on the part of the ‘demons’ (i.e. poisoners). As already mentioned, folk healers (i.e. root-cutters, drug-sellers, sorcerers) alleged that they were proficient in plants and used the latter for the making of herbal remedies. Despite their allegations, it is possible that they were not acquainted with the powers of plants¹⁰⁸³ with the result of prescribing erroneous herbal remedies to their clients. This is also strengthened by the fact that they were not medically trained and thus an ‘error’ in the preparation and administration of medicines was likely to happen. Also, Hogan suggests that the reading ‘with their

¹⁰⁷⁹ *JW* I. 583; *SL* 3.17.95, 98; *JA* IV. 279; XV. 89, 93, 223–231; XVIII. 53; *Ann.* 2.69; 3.7; cf. relevant discussion in ch. 2: 4.2.3; 5.1.

¹⁰⁸⁰ See, for instance, *EP* IX. XI.6; IX. XIX.1; *NH* XXIV. CII.163–164; cf. *Cyropaedia* VIII. VIII.14

¹⁰⁸¹ The first four books of *MM* mention a great number of plants that are used as natural antidotes against poisons.

¹⁰⁸² *EP* IX. XI.5; IX. XIX.1; *NH* XXIV. C.157; XXIV. CII.160–164.

¹⁰⁸³ Cf. ch. 2: 5.1.

errors' might refer to 'demons who led men astray perhaps through deliberately prescribing faulty medication.'¹⁰⁸⁴

In short, it is possible that the evil spirits are a metaphor of poisoners, the reading 'their diseases(s)' may refer not only to demonic possession but also to poisoning, and 'their errors' may refer to the insufficient knowledge of the harmful properties of plants and, in turn, to the preparation of erroneous herbal remedies, or to the deliberate prescription of faulty medication. In this way, the angelic medicines would serve as a protecting shield against the arbitrary administration or the deliberate prescription of poisonous compounds.

2.4.3.4. Herbal remedies of divine origin

Since herbal remedies were revealed to Noah by the angels after God's command, their effectiveness cannot be called into question. This view is in line with the author's theology about the origin of evil in the world; the latter was introduced to earth due to Adam and Eve's disobedience of God's command,¹⁰⁸⁵ not due to the Watchers' descent on earth and their revelation of repugnant crafts to mankind (1 Enoch 7:1; 8:3). This was apparently the reason God sent his angels in the first place 'to teach mankind and to do what is just and upright upon earth' (Jub 4:15). Neither is there any implication that their descent on earth was their own choice nor that their teaching is forbidden. On the contrary, the verse implies that God has sent them to teach mankind and do good upon earth.¹⁰⁸⁶ This finds support in Jubilees 5:6 where it is said that God himself has sent his angels on earth.¹⁰⁸⁷ This divine command renders the Watchers' presence on earth completely legitimate. By attributing thus to herbal medicine a divine origin in Jubilees 10:12, the author skilfully restores the pharmaceutical nature of herbal substances whose properties were misused by folk healers and poisoners, and he further underplays their

¹⁰⁸⁴ Hogan, *Healing*, 87.

¹⁰⁸⁵ This is in agreement with 'the author's intention of placing more importance on human responsibility': Liliana Rosso Ubigli, 'The Historical-Cultural Background of the Book of Jubilees', in Gabriele Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2005), 138.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 72.

association with the realm of magic¹⁰⁸⁸ and, in particular, with ‘aggressive’ magic.¹⁰⁸⁹

2.4.3.5. Restoration of the world’s balance

Beyond this, the angelic instruction of herbal remedies serves another aim: to bring balance upon the earth. Since God is the one who permits the existence of one tenth of the malevolent spirits upon the earth (v. 11), he is also the one who restores the balance by revealing to Noah herbal antidotes for demonic afflictions. The permission of the existence of one tenth of the evil spirits is a literary ploy of the author to explain the existence of illness in his time, as well as of contemporary sorcerers and poisoners. In other words, the latter exist in the world because God allowed them to exist. God, however, has not left humans defenceless in the face of demonic harassment but he gave them herbal remedies to confront the demonic illnesses (i.e. poisons).

Furthermore, the angelic teaching of herbal medicines serves as a counterweight to the Watchers’ forbidden teaching of herbal medicine and botany in the BW. The world’s balance that was disturbed by the Watchers’ instruction of secret crafts (1 En 7:1; 8:3) and the procreation of demonic offspring, the Giants (1 En 7:2), whose misdeeds further contributed to the world’s imbalance (1 En 7:3–6), is restored by means of the angelic revelation of herbal remedies to an angelic-like offspring, Noah (cf. 1 En 106:5–6).¹⁰⁹⁰

¹⁰⁸⁸ Hogan notes that ‘because the medical remedies are to be used against the workings of evil spirits the author cannot eliminate entirely all exorcistic/semi-magical association, but he minimizes this association by mentioning only herbs of the earth’: Hogan, *Healing*, 92.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Hengel characterises the angelic instruction of herbal medicaments as ‘white magic.’ He writes: ‘As the sicknesses were of demonic magical origin, they could only be effectively combated by a kind of “white magic” taught by the good angels’: Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:241. This is also reminiscent of the rabbinic distinction between ‘black’ and ‘healing’ magic; the former is prohibited, whereas the latter is on occasion legitimate; see Steven C. Muir, ‘Mending Yet Fracturing: Healing as an Arena of Conflict’, in Ian H. Henderson and Gerbern S. Oegema (eds.), *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity, and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity*, JSRZ 2 (München: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), 64.

¹⁰⁹⁰ In 1 Enoch 106:5–6, Lamech, the father of Noah, says to his father, Methuselah, about his child: ‘An alien son has been born to me; he is unlike any human and resemble the children of the angels of heaven! He is of a different type—not at all like one of us. His eyes are like the rays of the sun, and his face is glorious. It seems to me that he has not sprung from me but from an angel ...’ Unless stated otherwise, quotations from 1 Enoch are from Olson, *Enoch*. The author of Jubilees was most probably aware of the tradition that wanted Noah to resemble angelic offspring, an element that suggests scribes’ tendency to depict Noah as a counterpart to the Giants of the BW. Thus, the appointing of Noah as the receiver of angelic revelation of herbal remedies is not to be viewed as accidental.

2.4.4. Verse 13

2.4.4.1. The act of recording

In verse 13, Noah writes down in a book all the kinds of medicine that the angels taught him. Such an act reveals the significance of the angelic teaching. The act of recording is important for two reasons. First, it makes the tradition of the angelic instruction of herbal medicine authoritative not only because it comes from God but also because it is a written one.¹⁰⁹¹ Second, its future transmission is secured. This could be of particular comfort to Noah as his anguish was great considering that the life of his offspring would be at stake after his death. As the Giants continued their fathers' work, namely the preservation of imbalance in the world (1 En 7:3–6), Noah will preserve the angelically revealed herbal medicines in a book to guard his descendants from future demonic affliction and hence to contribute to the restoration of balance within the world. Finally, this verse evinces a prominent stream of traditions that wanted Noah to be either the carrier of a book that also included medical remedies, or the writer of a medical treatise (or a herbal).

2.4.4.2. Noah as the first herbalist

The connection of the figure of Noah with floral substances has its roots in Genesis 9:20 where the patriarch is said to be 'a man of the soil' and the first to plant a vineyard. Just as the angels of God instructed Adam how to work the Garden of Eden (Jub 3:15; cf. Gen 2:15), to gather and eat its fruits (Jub 3:16; cf. Gen 1:29), in the same way they revealed to Noah how to compound herbal antidotes so that his line will not cease to exist. God appoints Noah as the first herbalist just as he appointed Adam the first farmer to ensure that both will continue to live.

The judaicization of arts—in the case of Jubilees 10:10–13 herbal medicine—is not to be solely attributed to the author of Jubilees. There was in fact a tendency among Jewish authors of the second century BCE to attribute a Jewish origin to sciences that met a particular boost in their time. For instance, Pseudo-Eupolemus¹⁰⁹² and Artapanus record Abraham as the first astrologer,¹⁰⁹³ the author of Jubilees appoints

¹⁰⁹¹ As Najman points out, 'for embodiment in writing is central to Jubilees' notion of authoritative tradition': Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 119.

¹⁰⁹² *PE* 9.17.2–9.

¹⁰⁹³ *PE* 9.18.1, 27.1–38.

Enoch as the first astronomer (Jub 4:17)¹⁰⁹⁴ and Noah as the first herbalist (Jub 10:13).¹⁰⁹⁵ Such a tendency aimed to preserve the religious and cultural pedigree of the Jewish nation. The man thus who survived the Deluge now becomes the first herbalist to whom the angels of God reveal herbal antidotes to cure demonic harassment. In this way, medical knowledge acquires a Jewish origin and it is passed on from a righteous man like Noah to his righteous son Shem (v. 14).¹⁰⁹⁶

2.4.4.3. ‘all kinds of medicine’ (በኩሉ : ትዝምደ : ፈውስ)

The verse contains an additional element with respect to the content of the angelic instruction, that is, the writing down of ‘all kinds of medicine.’ This wording may refer to the different types of herbal remedies, that is, salves, poultices, decoction, medicinal wines, etc. In other words, it may refer to the variety of shapes that plants and plant-products can take when transformed into medicaments.

2.5. The progress of pharmacology: The discovery of antidotes

Despite the existence of travelling healers and sorcerers who vastly used herbal substances in magico-medical cures, as discussed in the second chapter, the author of Jubilees does not reject herbal medicine like the author(s) of the BW but rather invents the story of the demonic harassment of Noah’s grandchildren to present herbal medicine as a God-given gift and Noah as the first man to write down the herbal antidotes against poisons. This suggests that there should have been a particular reason which led the author of Jubilees to view herbal remedies positively and stress the therapeutic properties of flora. According to the above analysis, the herbal remedies may refer to vegetal antidotes against poisons. Bearing this in mind, one should look for the inner reasons of Jubilees’ acknowledgement of herbal medicine in the use of herbal antidotes in Second Temple period.

The progress achieved in Hellenistic medicine most certainly influenced the author’s view of herbal medicine. Already from the third century BCE the field of

¹⁰⁹⁴ The author of Jubilees was apparently familiar with the difference between astronomy and astrology, because in Jubilees 12:16–22 he rejects astrology; cf. Van der Horst, ‘Jewish Self-Definition’, 97.

¹⁰⁹⁵ About one and a half century later Josephus appoints Solomon as the first exorcist; see *JA* 8.2.5 (44–49).

¹⁰⁹⁶ Hogan, *Healing*, 88.

medicine was boosted with the growth of pharmacology. The increase in the variety of floral substances undoubtedly contributed to this growth.¹⁰⁹⁷ The abundance of herbal products led to the finding of new drugs. A number of botanical treatises was composed to record the new drugs and the new botanical techniques.¹⁰⁹⁸ The third century BCE pharmacologist Apollodorus (flourished 280 BCE) was thought to be the first to write on poisons.¹⁰⁹⁹ Also, Andreas of Carystus (died 217 BCE), one of the physicians to Ptolemy IV Philopator, and Mantias (ca. 165–90 BCE), both followers of Herophilus, wrote on medical botany.¹¹⁰⁰ Not only did learned physicians and botanists have a great interest in pharmacology but also kings. Attalos III of Pergamon (ruled 138–133 BCE) is said to have developed an interest in poisons and antidotes. Most notably, Galen reports that Attalos used to test poisons (φάρμακα) on criminals who were condemned to death.¹¹⁰¹ But the best-known king with a proved interest in pharmacology was Mithridates VI Eupator, King of Pontus (120–63 BCE), who was engaged in the study of poisons and venoms and their antidotes so as to secure immunity for himself against poisoning. Pliny writes on Mithridates' medical activity:

‘By his unaided efforts he thought out the plan of drinking poison daily, after first taking remedies, in order that sheer custom might render it harmless; he was the first to discover the various antidotes, one of which is even known by his name; he also discovered the mixing with antidotes of the blood of Pontic ducks, because they lived on poison ...’¹¹⁰²

The most famous antidote Mithridates discovered, called after his name, was *Mithridateion* (Μιθριδάτειον). No doubt his discovery was based on the progress marked in the past years of experimentation on new medicines and antidotes. The

¹⁰⁹⁷ Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, 141.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹¹⁰¹ Ἀτταλος, ἔσπευσεν ἐμπειρίαν ἔχειν ἀπάντων σχεδὸν τῶν ἀπλῶν φαρμάκων, ὅσα τοῖς ὀλεθρίοις ἀντιτέτακται, πειράζων αὐτῶν τὰς δυνάμεις ἐπὶ πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὃν θάνατος κατέγνωστο: *De antidotis* XIV. 2. Quotations from Galen's *De antidotis* are taken from G. G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, vol. 14 (Leipzig: Knobloch, 1827). On this see also *De compositione de medicamentorum per genera*, XIII. 416.

¹¹⁰² *NH* XXV. III.6.

exact ingredients contained in *Mithridateion* cannot be known;¹¹⁰³ nevertheless, it can be assumed with certainty that it contained vegetal substances. In his *De Medicina*, Cornelius Celsus (ca. 25 BCE–ca. 25 CE) records thirty-six ingredients, almost all of vegetal origin, from which *Mithridateion* was compounded. He writes:

‘But the most famous antidote is that of Mithridates, which that king is said to have taken daily and by it to have rendered his body safe against danger from poison. It contains costmary 1.66 grams, sweet flag 20 grams, hypericum, gum, sagapenum, acacia juice, Illyrian iris, cardamom, 8 grams each, anise 12 grams, Gallic nard, gentian root and dried rose-leaves, 16 grams each, poppy-tears and parsley, 17 grams each, casia, saxifrage, daniel, long pepper, 20.66 grams each, storax 21 grams, castoreum frankincense, hypocistis juice, myrrh and opopanax, 24 grams each, malabathrum leaves 24 grams, flower of round rush, turpentine-resin, galbanum, Cretan carrot seeds, 24.66 grams each, nard and opobalsam, 25 grams each, shepherd’s purse 25 grams, rhubarb root 28 grams, saffron, ginger, cinnamon, 29 grams each, These are pounded and taken up in honey. Against poisoning, a piece the size of an almond is given in wine. In other affections an amount corresponding in size to an Egyptian bean is sufficient.’¹¹⁰⁴

Also, Pliny refers to a herbal antidote which bears the name of Mithridates. He writes:

‘When the mighty king Mithridates had been overcome, Cn. Pompeius found in a private note-book in his cabinet a prescription for an antidote written in the king’s own hand-writing:—two dried nuts, two figs, and twenty leaves of rue were to be pounded together with the addition of a pinch of salt; he who took this fasting would be immune to all poison for that day.’¹¹⁰⁵

Furthermore, Galen mentions that the Alexandrian physician Zopyros exhorts Mithridates in his letter accompanied by a man condemned to death, to test the efficacy of his [Zopyros’] antidote on that man.¹¹⁰⁶

¹¹⁰³ Laurence M. V. Totelin, ‘Mithridates’ Antidote: A Pharmacological Ghost’, *ESM* 9, no. 1 (2004), 1; 7.

¹¹⁰⁴ *DM* V. XXIII.3. Pliny also reports that *Mithridateion* was a compound of fifty-four ingredients; see *NH* XXIX. VIII.24.

¹¹⁰⁵ *NH* XXIII. LXXVII.149.

¹¹⁰⁶ ‘Ἐπὶ ταύτης τοιοῦτόν τι φέρεται, ὅτι Ζώπυρος δι’ ἐπιστολῆς προτρέπει τὸν Μιθριδάτην εἰς ἐπίκρισιν τῆς ἀντιδότου, μεταπεμψάμενος ἓνα τῶν κατακρίτων, τούτῳ θανάσιμον δίδόναι φάρμακον, καὶ τότε παραινεῖ ἐπιπίνειν τὴν ἀντίδοτον: *De antidotis* XIV. 150.

The progress marked in the discovery of antidotes had also an effect on literature. The poems of Nicander of Colophon (ca. 130–20 BCE) contain contemporary knowledge about poisons of plants and venomous creatures and their antidotes. Most notably, in his *Alexiphramaca*, Nicander describes the side-effects from hemlock beverage and reports its antidote which compounds vegetal (i.e. oil, wine, laurel, pepper, etc.) and animal products (i.e. milk, honey).¹¹⁰⁷ Similarly, in *Theriaca*, he describes remedies against snakebites which are also a mixture of vegetal and animal products.¹¹⁰⁸ For example, a paste of a plaster to be wrapped around the wound is said to be made by lees of wine and sheep droppings.¹¹⁰⁹

The above information demonstrates the prominent status of pharmacology in the Hellenistic period. For the author of Jubilees such pharmacological achievements did not pass unnoticed; instead, they made such an impression that urged him to create the literary tools to legitimise the existence of (herbal) antidotes. The activity of the shabby healers and sorcerers did not blind him so as not to be able to discern the valuable developments for humans in the field of pharmacology. By ascribing to herbal remedies a divine origin, the author applies an authoritative status to herbal medicine, wipes out any criticism towards contemporary pharmacological achievements and succeeds, as Lange puts it, ‘to integrate the medical practices of Hellenism into Jewish monotheistic thought.’¹¹¹⁰ Long before the Hellenistic pharmacological achievements, it was the god of the Jews who revealed to Noah herbal antidotes against poisons. The Jewish claim of possessing the *avant-garde* in pharmacology was a necessity so that the Jews would continue to believe in the pedigree of their nation about being the elect people of God.

Summarising the discussion thus far, the author of Jubilees acknowledges the therapeutic value of herbal substances. His reworking of the account of Genesis undoubtedly played a central role in his positive view of floral substances. From the beginning of the world’s creation God placed every kind of plant in the service of man (Gen 1:29) and placed him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of

¹¹⁰⁷ *Alexipharmaca* Ll. 186–206.

¹¹⁰⁸ *Theriaca* Ll. 921–933.

¹¹⁰⁹ *Theriaca* Ll. 930–933. For the Greek text and an English translation of Nicander’s poems see A. S. F. Gow, and A. F. Scholfield (eds. and trans.), *Nicander: The Poems and Poetical Fragments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953).

¹¹¹⁰ Lange, ‘The Essene Position’, 384.

the land (Gen 2:15). Hence, there is no theological hesitation for the author in acknowledging the rightful existence of flora. The Noah story is thus a theological justification of herbal remedies on the basis that God has appointed flora in the service of man and thus there is no reason that man should not use them. Furthermore, the author's positive disposition towards herbal medicines is in line with his tracing of the origin of evil to the time of Adam and Eve, not in the Watchers' fall. For him, there is no hesitation in accepting the properties of herbs and plants as these are not distorted by the Watchers, the instigators of evil in the world according to the BW, but were legitimately revealed by the angels of God. Moreover, the rise of pharmacology in the third-century-BCE Alexandria and—the particular progress it met in the second century BCE with the discovery of new medicines and new antidotes against poisons—played a decisive role in the author's acknowledgement of herbal medicine. Most notably, it was the wholehearted engagement of Hellenistic royal men and prominent physicians and scientists that led to new pharmacological achievements. To these pharmacological achievements the author of Jubilees attributes a Jewish origin by having God revealing to Noah through the angels vegetal antidotes against poisons. In an environment where every scientific achievement was an emanation of the Hellenistic culture, the Jubilees' author presents the Jewish monotheistic religion to have the lead in medical science long before the coming of Hellenism.

3. HEALING IN JUBILEES

In Jubilees 1:29 and 23:29–30, healing is described as part of a renewed world. Both passages, preserved only in the Ethiopic, are parts of wider thematic sections (1:5–29 and 23:8–31, respectively) and are viewed to contain the eschatological message of the book mainly due to the author's referencing of impending events.¹¹¹¹ My aim here is to examine whether the healing language of these passages points to specific ideas of medicine widespread in the author's time.

3.1. The narrative framework of Jubilees 1:29

Jubilees begins with a discussion between God and Moses. God predicts a period of decline for Israel due to the disobedience of the covenantal law (1:1–29). Most notably, God reveals to Moses how his people will stray from the covenant in the course of history and how they will then seek God (1:5–18). Moses asks God to protect his people (1:19–21) and God affirms that his people will eventually return to him (1:22–25). Finally, God commands the angel of presence to dictate to Moses the content of the tablets (1:27, 29). The long verse 29 comes as the final verse of the first chapter of Jubilees. There the time of the new creation and the renewal of all creatures is discussed. The reference to healing in this verse will be separately examined in a moment.

Jubilees 1:5–29 shares much in common with Jubilees 10:1–14. To begin with, two patriarchal figures have a leading part in each story: Moses and Noah, respectively. Both are in distress because the future of their posterity is at stake. On the one hand, Moses, worrying about the content of God's revelation (1:5–18), prays for the protection of his people from sinning. On the other, Noah (10:3–6) prays for salvation from the wicked spirits which rule his grandchildren. The common element in the two prayers is salvation and an everlasting establishment upon earth. Furthermore, Moses identifies the reason that his people would go astray with Belial (1:20) and Noah, as already seen, attributes the illnesses of his grandchildren to demonic harassment. The demons thus play an active role in the two pericopes. But God responds positively to their petitions for protection (1:22–27; 10:10–12). Moreover, a further common element is the act of recording. Moses is ordered to

¹¹¹¹ VanderKam, 'Recent Scholarship', 423. For the eschatology of Jubilees see *ibid.*, 423–426.

write down everything God revealed to him (1:26; 1:5, 7) and Noah records in a book the herbal remedies the angels instructed to him (10:13). Finally, in Jubilees 1:27, God orders an angel of the presence to dictate to Moses everything from the time of the creation until when the temple of God will be built. The pattern of revealed knowledge through angelic mediation is also employed in Jubilees 10:10–12.

3.2. Healing in Jubilees 1:29

3.2.1. The text¹¹¹²

1:29 ወነሥሐ : መልአከ : ገጽ : ዘየሐውር : ቅድመ : ተዓይኒሆሙ : ለእስራኤል : ጽላተ : ዘኩፋሌ : ዓመታት : እምአመ : ፍጥረተ : ሕግ : ወለስምዕ : ለሱባዔሁ : ለኢየሴልዎን : በበ : ዓመት : በኩሉ : ፕልቆሙ : ወኢየሴልዎን : እምዕለተ : ፍጥረት : ሐዳስ : አመ : ይትሐደስ : ሰማያት : ወምድር : ወኩሉ : ፍጥረቶሙ : በከመ : ጎይላቲሆሙ : ለሰማይ : ወበከመ : ኩሉ : ፍጥረተ : ምድር : እስከ : አመ : ይትፈጠር : መቅደስ : እግዚአብሔር : በኢየሩሳሌም : በደብረ : ጽዮን ። ወኩሉ : ብርሃናት : ይትሐደሱ : ለፈውስ : ወለሰላም : ወለበረከት : ለኩሎሙ : ጎሩያነ : እስራኤል : ወከመ : ይኩን : ከማሁ : እምይእቲ : ዕለት : ወእስከ : ኩሉ : መዋዕለ : ምድር ።

And the angel of presence who was going before the camp of Israel, took the tablets of the divisions of the years from when the law and the testimony were created for the weeks of its jubilees year by year in all their number, and its jubilees from the day of the new creation¹¹¹³ when the heavens and the earth and all their creatures shall be renewed like the powers of the heaven and like all the creatures of the earth, until the time the temple of God shall be created in Jerusalem on Mount Zion. And all the luminaries shall be renewed for healing and (for) peace and (for) blessing for all the good (elect) ones of Israel and so that it shall be in this way from that time and until all the days of the earth.

3.3. Comments on Jubilees 1:29

3.3.1. The meaning of healing in Jubilees 1:29

The notion of healing is used here in a figurative way. It occurs within the context of a new creation when an overall renewal will be made in the cosmos. Most notably, healing appears in association with the renewal of the luminaries and it

¹¹¹² According to Milik, 4Q217 is a copy of Jubilees and preserves fragmented bits of the Hebrew Jubilees 1:29. Vanderkam, however, considers this ‘most uncertain’, arguing that ‘if he [Milik] were correct, we would have to posit substantial differences between the Hebrew and Ethiopic texts of Jubilees at this point’: James C. VanderKam, ‘The Manuscript Tradition of Jubilees’, in Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (eds.), *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees* (Grand Rapids MI; Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2009), 6.

¹¹¹³ VanderKam restores the text here, translating ‘from [the time of the creation until] the time of the new creation.’

possesses the first place in the triptych healing-peace-blessing that the elect of Israel shall eventually acquire.¹¹¹⁴

The breach of the covenant (1:5) is a breach in the relationship of Israel with God. Israel will turn away from God and follow the nations (1:9) and God will eventually disappear from Israel (1:13). The achievement of the redemptive triptych healing-peace-blessing presupposes the restoration of Israel's relationship with God. This will be achieved only with the return to the Torah. Healing refers to the restoration of the lost Torah-oriented state of mind and spirit. Peace can mean 'peace of mind', functioning as a counterweight of the erroneous state of mind that idolatry caused to Israel (1:11, 19) and blessing can mean a ceasing of destruction (1:10) and return to reproduction and longevity. Thus, the notion of healing is employed not in the sense of a medical treatment of a physical injury but rather as a way of portraying the therapeutic treatment for the spiritual affliction caused by the breach of the covenant and the engagement in foreign customs. From now until eternity Israel will acquire 'a pure mind and a holy spirit' exactly as Moses requested from God (1:21, 23).

3.3.1.2. New Creation: A cosmological and anthropological metamorphosis of the cosmos as a pattern of comfort

It is suggested that Jubilees 1:29 was inspired by the eschatological content of Isaiah 65–66.¹¹¹⁵ There, Isaiah describes the consequences of Israel's disobedience, the reward of the righteous, the renewal of heaven and earth, the punishment of the unfaithful and the honour that the other nations will eventually pay to the God of Israel. Most notably, in Isaiah 65:17–18 it is said:

'For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as delight.'¹¹¹⁶ (NRSV)

¹¹¹⁴ The renewal of the luminaries for the elect of Israel might be a hint of resurrection. In Daniel 12:3, it is said that the righteous will shine like stars in the firmament. In Jubilees 1:29, however, the righteous of Israel are not to be identified with the luminaries but rather they are the recipients of the luminaries' renewal which is part of the overall renewal of the universe. Moreover, there is no hint that the elect ones are the deceased righteous. Hence, it is difficult to assume that the author refers to resurrection.

¹¹¹⁵ Hogan, *Healing*, 80.

¹¹¹⁶ Cf. Isaiah 66:22: 'For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your descendants and your name remain' (NRSV).

The above passage is particularly reminiscent of the Jubilees reading ‘... from the day of the new creation when the heavens and the earth and all their creatures shall be renewed like the powers of the heaven and like all the creatures of the earth, until the time the temple of God shall be created in Jerusalem on Mount Zion’ (1:29). Like in Isaiah 65:17–18 (cf. Isa 66:22) where the new creation involves both a cosmological and anthropological renewal,¹¹¹⁷ the same pattern can be discerned in Jubilees 1:29.¹¹¹⁸ As the prophet addresses encouraging words about an imminent new creation to his fellow Jews who return to their land after the Babylonian exile, the author of Jubilees employs the same pattern to comfort his compatriots from the pains Hellenism brought with it.

3.3.1.3. Luminaries and healing

The reference to healing is particularly connected with the luminaries.¹¹¹⁹ More precisely, it is the renewed luminaries that will bring healing. Hogan has pointed out that ‘the connection between increase of light of the luminaries and the Lord’s healing is made in Isaiah 30.26.’¹¹²⁰ He also considers it probable that the association of the luminaries with healing in Jubilees 1:29 reflects a midrash on

¹¹¹⁷ Moyer V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul’s Letters and Thought*, SNTSMS 119 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 17.

¹¹¹⁸ The pattern of (new) creation where God will establish his people and will build his temple is also found in 11QTemple Scroll^a (11Q19 [11QT^a]) Col. XXIX, Ll. 7–10: ‘... They shall be for me a people and I will be for them for ever and I shall establish them for ever and always. I shall sanctify my temple with my glory, for I shall make my glory reside over it until the day of creation, when I shall create my temple, establishing it for myself for ever, in accordance with the covenant which I made with Jacob at Bethel.’

¹¹¹⁹ In Genesis 1:14 (cf. v. 15), מַאֲרֵת may refer to the sun and moon inferred in Genesis 1:16: ‘God made two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night ...’ (NRSV). Von Rad argues that the wording ‘lights’ as used here is ‘prosaic and degrading. These created objects are expressly not named “sun” and “moon” so that every tempting association may be evaded; for the common Semitic word for sun was also a divine name’: Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, [rev. ed.] 1972), 55. Furthermore, in 4Q216 (4QJub^a), Col. 6, L. 13 (= Jub 2:12), it is the sun that shines upon the creatures of the earth. The Hebrew text has מְרַפֵּה which means ‘healing, cure, health’ (BDB, 951) and hence the sun is associated with wellbeing. For the text and translation see Florentino García Martínez, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 1:462–463. In Ezekiel 32:8, however, the wording כָּל-מְאֹרֵי אוֹר (‘all the lamps of light’) refers most probably to the heavenly luminaries mentioned in verse 7, that is, the stars, the sun and moon; see Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48*, NICOT (Grand Rapids MI; Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 1998), 2:206. Also, Psalm 74:16 reads ‘the luminary and the sun’ (מְאֹר וְשֶׁמֶשׁ). מְאֹר may well refer to the stars. Weiser translates ‘stars’: see Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, trans. Herbert Hartwell, OTL (Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1962), 517. In Jubilees 1:29, the luminaries may refer not just to the sun and moon, but all the heavenly bodies. Besides, the reading ‘all the luminaries’ (Jub 1:29) suggests a collective understanding of the luminaries.

¹¹²⁰ Hogan, *Healing*, 80.

Isaiah 30:26, as later attested in Genesis Rabbah 3:6.¹¹²¹ There it is said that ‘in messianic times when a person is sick God will order the sun to heal him, a sun which is 49 times brighter than before.’¹¹²² The midrash further refers to Malachi 3:20 (4:2 in NRSV) where the sun of righteousness will bring healing to the righteous.¹¹²³ Jubilees, however, does not speak of ‘messianic’ times at all. Also, the detail of a 49-times-brighter sun in Genesis Rabbah is not found in Jubilees. It is therefore more probable that Jubilees and Genesis Rabbah are two traditions that refer similarly, though with different details, to the healing capacity of the heavenly bodies in the eschaton.

Beyond this, why does the author specifically relate healing to the luminaries? As already discussed in the second chapter, in the Mesopotamian world stars were considered to possess healing powers and for this reason the medicines were often exposed to astral irradiation to become efficacious. The celestial bodies were further associated with healing deities; for instance, the healing goddess Gula was identified with the Goat constellation. It may well be that the author’s reference to the healing luminaries is an allusion to the Babylonian belief in the healing qualities of stars and planets, a concept that had been revived through the renewed interest in astrology and the astro-medical teaching of Berossus in the third century BCE onwards. This does not mean that the author embraces astral medicine. On the contrary, his implicit reference to astral medicine may be a veiled attack against contemporary physicians who, by means of astral prognostications, were attempting to predict the course and outcome of an illness. Besides, such a reference could not have been an acknowledgment of astral medicine since the author rejects astrology throughout his work (8:3; 12:16–22).¹¹²⁴ He is nothing like Artapanus and Pseudo-Eupolemus who legitimised astrology by making Abraham the first astrologer. Instead, his aim is to use a picture with which contemporary people were familiar in order to speak of the impending new era that will bring healing (i.e. the restoration of the relationship with God) for the elect of Israel. Besides, it is the renewed luminaries which will bring healing, not the old ones (i.e. gentile astral healing deities).

¹¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

¹¹²² *Ibid.*, 83.

¹¹²³ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹¹²⁴ Hogan, *Healing*, 82.

Furthermore, the use of the motif of astral healing is a further proof that astral medicine was still popular at the author's time. This further means that the astral deities of gentiles continued to pose a threat to the monotheistic ideal that the Jewish scribal circles wished to establish. The author, borrowing an image emerging from astro-healing practices, attempts to confront contemporary astro-medical tendencies. He declares that it is God who in due time will renew the creation and transform the luminaries for the purpose of healing. In other words, the author proclaims that it is not the gentile star-gods but the one God of Israel who will bring healing. The luminaries are simply agents of transmission of the divine healing, not the source of healing. This is also in line with Jubilees 12:17–18 where Abram realises that all the celestial bodies are under God's control.¹¹²⁵ In short, this illustration of astral healing is simply a means to make his teaching that God is the only healer more prominent among his fellow-Jews who were certainly acquainted with the concept of astral healing and might even have made use themselves of astro-oriented medical means.

3.4. The narrative framework of Jubilees 23:29–30

Jubilees 23:29–30 is part of a wider pericope (Jubilees 23:8–31) that follows Abraham's death (22:1; 23:1–3). The author refers to Abraham's lifetime (23:8; 23:10) so as to begin a new discourse about how life for the future generations will be (23:11–31). In other words, Jubilees 23:10 serves as a transitional verse into a new thematic section. The future generations will grow old prematurely (23:11); they will live many fewer years than the previous generations and their lives will be full of difficulties and pains (23:12) 'because (there will be) blow upon blow, wound upon wound, distress upon distress, bad news upon bad news, disease upon disease, and every (kind of) bad punishment like this ... disease and stomach pains; snow, hail, and frost; fever, cold, and numbness; famine, death, sword, captivity, and every (sort of) blow and difficulty' (23:13). All these will happen to the evil generation which will commit every kind of sin and wickedness (23:14) and will violate the covenant (23:16). Due to such impurities (23:17–21), God will bring

¹¹²⁵ God's control over the heavenly bodies is also evident in Ezekiel 32:7: 'When I [the LORD God; cf. Ez 32:3] blot you out, I will cover the heavens, and make the stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light' (NRSV).

punishment (23:22) and ‘will arouse against them the sinful nations’ (23:23). The wicked generation will pray for its salvation from the nations yet its request will not be hearkened to (23:24). But ‘in those days the children will begin to study the laws, to seek out the commands, and to return to the right way’ (23:26). Their lifetimes will be increased (23:27) and they will live peacefully in ‘times of blessing and healing’ as the evil will be destroyed (23:29). God will heal his servants and will expel the enemies (23:30). This thematic section on the lives of the future generations ceases in Jubilees 23:31 with the promise that the spirits of the deceased righteous will rest in peace. Finally, similarly to Jubilees 1:26, God orders Moses to write down everything that was revealed to him and denotes the importance of the revelatory message which is also written on the heavenly tablets (Jubilees 23:32).

Jubilees 23:16–31 is often considered an apocalypse.¹¹²⁶ Nickelsburg argues that this section of Jubilees has its roots in the last chapters of Deuteronomy (31–34) where the so-called ‘retribution pattern’ is found.¹¹²⁷ This pattern is composed of the following four elements: sin (23:16–21), divine punishment (23:22–25), turning point (23:26) and salvation (23:27–31).¹¹²⁸

The evil generation is held responsible for making the earth sin through ‘sexual impurity, contamination, and ... detestable actions’ (23:14). From such deeds were the offspring of Abraham advised to keep away (20:3, 6) so that their lives would not have the same outcome as that of the giants and the people of Sodom (20:5–6). Analogous warnings for the consequences of straying from the path of the Lord occur in chapter 7 where Noah, detecting misbehaviour in his sons’ deeds (7:26), describes the situation which caused the flood (7:22–25) and warns them against shedding human blood or consuming blood from an animate being (7:28–33), because he fears that his offspring will err after his death and will be obliterated from the earth (7:27). Both warnings stem from the fear of the patriarchs that non-compliance with the covenantal law will lead their posterity to extermination. In a way, in Jubilees 23:11–31 the author envisages the fulfilment of the future downfall of humanity which is written on the heavenly tablets (23:32).

¹¹²⁶ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*, HTS 26 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 32.

¹¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

Sin and injustice will arise in the time of the evil generation (23:16) that will result in contamination and corruption (23:17, 21). The situation is described as a crisis among the people of Israel and prominent are the images that point to a civil war: ‘the children will find fault with their fathers and elders’ (23:16), ‘one group will struggle with another—the young with the old, the old with the young’ (23:19). But who is this wicked generation that will cause such a crisis within second century BCE Judaism? The author most probably refers to a certain Jewish group described in 1 Maccabees 1:11–15.¹¹²⁹ This group made an agreement with the gentiles (1 Mac 1:11) and embraced their customs (e.g. building of a gymnasium in Jerusalem, removal of circumcision marks and abandonment of the covenantal law),¹¹³⁰ for they believed that from the time the Jews were separated from the gentiles tragic consequences followed for the Jews. In support of this view, VanderKam says the following:

‘1 Macc 1:11 may be pointing to this sort of theory: a Jewish group, wishing to live in the Hellenistic world, sought to do away with the commands of the Torah that separated Jew and non-Jew, arguing that such laws were not original. There was an ancient, better time, a golden age, when such separatist legislation was not in force.’¹¹³¹

Jubilees 23:19 may well thus refer to these aspects of Jewish religion that were neglected by these Jewish rebels: ‘for they have forgotten commandment, covenant, festival, month, sabbath, jubilees, and every verdict.’ The connection of the renegade Jewish group with gentile customs makes the continuous reference to contamination and corruption explicable (23:17, 21). The author attempts to inform his compatriots about the consequences of straying from the covenant and warn them against the threat of Hellenism. According to Nickelsburg, the situation described in these verses (23:16–21) probably refers to the events that happened before the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes.¹¹³²

¹¹²⁹ VanderKam, ‘The Origins’, 20.

¹¹³⁰ Mac 1:13–15.

¹¹³¹ VanderKam, ‘The Origins’, 21. Such a ‘golden’ age, however, never existed; see more on this in *ibid.*, 21–22.

¹¹³² Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 46.

The straying of the evil generation from the covenant will be followed by a great punishment (23:22) when God ‘will arouse against them the sinful nations’ (23:23). Nickelsburg points out that this judgment is a response to an actual unjust situation caused by the evil generation.¹¹³³ The sinful nations should not be understood here as an adversary but as God’s instrument for the attribution of justice. A further characteristic of this time will be the unusual aging of the people (23:25).¹¹³⁴ This incident denotes that longevity, which was always considered as a blessing from God, will cease to exist. Instead, human lifespan will end in distress (23:25).¹¹³⁵ According to Nickelsburg, Jubilees 23:22–25 should portray the Syrian invasion, an event which fits well the early date of the passage (23:16–21).¹¹³⁶

The turning point from such a situation is the study of the laws (23:26). The return to the Torah will restore the lost longevity (23:27) and give eternal youth (23:28). Human lives will be peaceful and joyful accompanied by blessing and healing (23:29). The author declares that God will heal all his servants and the righteous will receive the vindication they deserve (23:30–31).

Jubilees 23:11–31 follows the same pattern as Jubilees 1:5–29. Both pericopes refer to the future generations that will go astray by abandoning the divine commandments; they both contain a warning for the grave consequences of such a deed (1:5–18; 23:16–25) and both attest that the return to the Torah (1:24; 23:26) will bring salvation.

¹¹³³ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹¹³⁴ The same illustration is attested to in Jubilees 23:11 where the author notes that all generations will grow old rather quickly.

¹¹³⁵ This lack of longevity is closely related to the biggest fear of the patriarchs for an imminent extermination of the future generations due to the violation of the covenant.

¹¹³⁶ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 47. Nickelsburg maintains that the events described in Jubilees 23:22–25 should refer to the slaughter made by Antiochus and Apollonius in Jerusalem in 168 BCE; *ibid.*, 47.

3.5. Healing in Jubilees 23:29–30

3.5.1. The text

23:29 ወኩሉን ፡ መዋዕሊሆሙ ፡ በሰላም ፡ ወበፍሥሓ ፡ ይፈጽሙ ፡ ወይሐይዉ ፡ ወአልቦ ፡ መነሂ ፡ ሰይጣን ፡ ወአልቦ ፡ መነሂ ፡ እኩየ ፡ ዘያማስን ፡ እስመ ፡ ኩሉን ፡ መዋዕሊሆሙ ፡ መዋዕለ ፡ በረከት ፡ ወፈውስ ፡ ይከውና ፡

And they shall complete and live all their days in peace and happiness. And there is neither any satan nor anyone evil that shall destroy. For all their days shall be days of blessing and healing.

23:30 አሜሃ ፡ ይፈውስ ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ አግብርቲሁ ፡ ወይትነሥኡ ፡ ወይሬእዩ ፡ ሰላም ፡ ዐቢየ ፡ ወይሰድድ ፡ ጸላእቶ ፡ ወይሬእዩ ፡ ጸድቃን ፡ ወያኣኩቱ ፡ ወይትፈሥሑ ፡ እስከ ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ በፍሥሓ ፡ ወይሬእዩ ፡ በፀሮሙ ፡ ኩሉ ፡ ኩነኔሆሙ ፡ ወኩሉ ፡ መርገሞሙ ፡

At that time God will heal his servants. And they will rise and will see great peace. And he will banish his enemies. And the righteous will see (this) and they will praise and they will rejoice till forever and ever in happiness. And they will see all their punishment and all their curse on their enemy¹¹³⁷.

3.6. Comments on 23:29–30

Jubilees 23:29–30 belongs to the salvation-section of the so-called ‘retribution pattern’ (23:16–31) and provides further reference to healing. Hogan holds that Jubilees 23:29–30 reflects, as Jubilees 1:29, Isaiah 65–66.¹¹³⁸

3.6.1. Jubilees 23:29

The return of Israel to the Torah (23:26) marks the beginning of a new age when the days and the lifetimes will be lengthened again (23:27) and everyone will be as a youth (23:28). Peace and joy will prevail and there will be neither Satan nor evil but blessing and healing (23:29). The reference to a peaceful life goes back to Jubilees 23:12 where it is said that all generations will suffer ‘difficulties, toil, and distress without peace’ until the time of the great judgment. The return to the study of the laws (23:26) will restore the lost peace. The redemptive triptych found in Jubilees 1:29 appears here, too, only in a different order (peace-blessing-healing).

¹¹³⁷ VanderKam translates ‘enemies’. **ፀሮሙ**, however, here is singular. The same stands for **ኩነኔሆሙ** and **መርገሞሙ**. Both are in singular but VanderKam translates them in plural.

¹¹³⁸ Hogan, *Healing*, 90.

The reference to healing goes back to Jubilees 23:13 where it is said that a number of afflictions (wounding, distress, diseases, extreme weather conditions, etc.) will fall upon the evil generation due to the violation of the covenant. The author uses the biblical idea that God sends diseases, injuries and every kind of affliction to his people as a punishment for their disobedience.¹¹³⁹ The author refers to wounds, diseases, stomach pains and fever yet his aim is not to emphasise on corporal afflictions but rather to refer to the wider frame of tribulations that will follow the straying from the covenant. Healing should thus be understood as salvation from such grave circumstances and, as in Jubilees 1:29, and restoration of the relationship with God.

3.6.2. Jubilees 23:30

In this verse, the author becomes more precise. God is the one to bring healing to his servants. This illustration is reminiscent of Exodus 15:26 and Deuteronomy 32:39 where God appears to be the ultimate healer. Hogan also adds Isaiah 30:26 where God appears to heal the wounds and injuries of his people.¹¹⁴⁰ The ‘servants’ are those Jews who remained faithful to the Torah, kept themselves intact from every sin and injustice and fought in order to bring back those who strayed from the right way (23:20). God’s healing, as Davenport rightly points out, ‘is ... not of the physical bodies of the citizenry, but of the nation as a military, political unit.’¹¹⁴¹ Similarly, Endres argues that the expression ‘they will rise’ (23:30) should not be taken to refer to bodily resurrection but ‘to some type of salvation that the author expected to occur in his era.’¹¹⁴² The author further confirms that God will expel his enemies who would be those Jews who were hostile towards the covenant (23:19, 21), and the righteous will see this and rejoice (23:30). The ‘enemy’¹¹⁴³ will cease to exist in the new era and the afflictions he caused will disappear with him.¹¹⁴⁴

¹¹³⁹ Lev 26:25; Deut 28:21–22, 27–28; 2 Kings 15:5; 2 Chr 7:12, 21:18, 26:20; Ps 39:11; Jer 8:14; Ez 14:19, 28:23.

¹¹⁴⁰ Hogan, *Healing*, 90.

¹¹⁴¹ Davenport, *The Eschatology*, 40.

¹¹⁴² Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 60. Nickelsburg also has doubts whether in Jubilees 23:30 the author refers to resurrection; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 32–33.

¹¹⁴³ ‘enemy’ refers here to Satan; see Hogan, *Healing*, 90. This is the reason the word is in singular.

¹¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

3.7. Metaphorical use of healing language

The language of healing found in Jubilees 1:29 and 23:29–30 is used in a figurative way. In both cases, healing should be understood as redemption from the dramatic consequences that shall follow the period of decline for Israel. This is not without a parallel but it is often encountered in the prophetic books.¹¹⁴⁵ There, healing language points to the deliverance from the tribulations stemming from the straying from the Torah. These tribulations may refer not only to physical maladies (e.g. plague or leprosy) but also to other types of sufferings such as civil crisis, wars, captivity, etc. Hence, healing is to be understood as the elimination of these afflictions.

3.8. Proximity to God as a definition of health

The breach of the covenant means that Israel ceases to be close to God. The proximity with God is what can keep Israel in a ‘healthy’ state. There is no definition of health in the Bible yet there are some characteristics that describe the idea of being healthy. According to Wilkinson, the characteristics of a healthy state in the Bible are six: well-being; righteousness; obedience; strength; fertility; and longevity.¹¹⁴⁶ All these stem from the close relationship with God. The straying from the covenantal law results in the destruction of this relationship and, consequently, in an unhealthy state. The progression route from being healthy to being unhealthy and vice versa can be summarised as follows:

- Health = proximity to God = obedience to his law \Rightarrow wellbeing, righteousness, strength, fertility, longevity;
- Disobedience to the law \Rightarrow unrighteousness, loss of well-being, weakness, infertility (i.e. non-proliferation), short life-span;
- Return to the law \Rightarrow restoration of the relationship with God = health.¹¹⁴⁷

The above schema is encountered throughout Jubilees 1 and 23 where references to healing occur.

¹¹⁴⁵ Hos 6:1, 14:5; Is 19:22, 30:26, 57:18–19; Jer 8:15, 14:19.

¹¹⁴⁶ John Wilkinson, *The Bible and Healing: A Medical and Theological Commentary* (Edinburgh: The Handsel Press LDT, 1998), 11.

¹¹⁴⁷ = for ‘synonymous’; \Rightarrow for ‘outcome’.

As a final remark to this chapter, the medical material of Jubilees 10:10–13 and the healing evidence in Jubilees 1:29 and 23:29–30, all demonstrate the consistency of the author's view about healing. In Jubilees 10:10–13, the angels after God's command teach Noah herbal remedies to be used against demonic harassment. In Jubilees 1:29, God will proceed to a new creation where everything will be renewed, along with the luminaries for the purpose of healing. Finally, in Jubilees 23:29–30, healing is presented as the outcome of a renewed future age (v. 29); its source will be no other than God himself (v. 30). Either with the acknowledgement of herbal medicines or with healing as the outcome of the new creation or a renewed future age, the common element in all three instances is that God is the ultimate source of healing.

4. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on Jubilees 10:10–13 where the theological justification of herbal medicines occurs, and examined the healing material attested in Jubilees 1:29 and 23:29–30 in an effort to investigate whether they reflect contemporary medical tendencies and, moreover, to examine the consistency of the author's teaching on healing methods.

In Jubilees 10:1–14, the author legitimises the use of herbal remedies by attributing to the latter a divine origin. It is possible that the singular form of **ֵד** ('tree, wood') of verse 12 refers to the tradition of the prophylactic/exorcistic properties of the wood of the ark of Noah found in Berossus' *Babyloniaca*. The author might have had this tradition in mind when he described the patriarchal figure of Noah as the receiver of the angelic revelation of herbal medicine. The author, however, appears to connect this tradition to the belief in the therapeutic properties of all floral substances (cf. 'all kinds of medicine' of v. 13).

Furthermore, the fact that it was demons that afflicted Noah's offspring suggests a magical association for both the inflictors and their diseases (cf. v. 12). In antiquity, the most often attested kind of illness that was closely connected with the realm of magic was poisoning. Indeed, there were a number of folk healers and sorcerers of the Second Temple period who prepared and administered poisons. The administration of poison might have been out of ignorance, as folk healers were not medically trained, or deliberately, as they might have been particularly employed to poison somebody. Thus, the author may well have had in mind here contemporary poisoners and the herbal remedies may refer to antidotes against poisons.

The need for a theological justification of herbal medicines arose as a result of the massive discovery of new medicines and antidotes. Pharmacology showed a rapid growth from the third century BCE onwards. The Alexandrian physicians and scientists, supplied with a large variety of plants, herbs and spices from the Near East, were engaged in the finding of new drugs. To this, one has to add the medical activity of kings, such as Attalos and Mithridates, who were themselves engaged in the discovery of antidotes against the poisons of plants and venomous creatures.

The author of Jubilees did not stay apathetic towards such pharmacological achievements but rather saw the invention of new herbal medicaments as medical progress in the service of man. The only thing for him to do was to legitimise the art of pharmacology. He thus put the angels of God to instruct Noah herbal remedies for the cure of demonic afflictions. The knowledge of herbal remedies is infallible because such remedies stem from God. Noah becomes the first herbalist, who passes on his knowledge to his beloved son, Shem, by giving him all his books (cf. Jub 10:14), and in this way herbalism acquires a Jewish origin. For the author's mind, herbal medicine is a Jewish accomplishment.

However, he did not have the same view with respect to astrological medicine. In Jubilees 1:29, the author embodies the Babylonian belief that stars and planets possessed healing properties—a concept that should have been prominent in his time due to the renewed interest in astrology and the spread of the astro-medical teaching of Berossus which began in the third century BCE—into his speech of a new creation¹¹⁴⁸ where he says that the luminaries will be renewed for the purpose of healing. The author employs such a concept to strike astrological medicine to its foundations. By describing the luminaries as God's agents of healing, the author makes clear that stars are not gods but are the agents of healing of the one God who is the only real source of healing. Thus, the author appears to have used two distinct verbal ways to speak of God as the only healer, namely the angelic instruction of herbal remedies to Noah and God's renewal of the heavenly luminaries for the purpose of healing. This attitude is further in agreement with Jubilees 23:29–30 where God is also depicted as the source of healing (v. 30). In short, the author boldly legitimises a magico-oriented medical practice (i.e. herbal medicine) which showed scientific advances at his time and employs a gentile concept (i.e. astral healing) to push forward the idea that God is the ultimate healer.

¹¹⁴⁸ The author was inspired by the new cosmic creation motif attested in Isaiah 65–66, and the connection between the increase of the luminaries' light and God's healing probably alludes to Isaiah 30:26; see Hogan, *Healing*, 80; 82–83.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has investigated the references on medicine and healing found in Jewish traditions of the third and second centuries BCE and, in particular, those found in the books of 1 Enoch (focusing on the BW and the Epistle), Tobit, Ben Sira and Jubilees. These literary works were composed in the time that followed the coming of the Hellenistic period when the changes the latter brought with it began to be more apparent in every aspect of daily life in the Near Eastern world. The campaigns of Alexander the Great facilitated a mutual wisdom-exchange between the nations of the Near East and their conquerors. This cultural exchange also had an impact on the field of medicine, where rational thinking began to be manifest. Medicine of this period is dominated by a range of medical practices, for instance, magical healing, astral medicine, pharmacology, scientific medicine. This plurality of medical practices is well reflected in the medical and healing material of the literary compositions discussed here. If it were not for this plurality of Hellenistic medicine, Second Temple Judaism might have expected to have a more unified attitude towards the use of medicine. Instead, divergent attitudes were developed within the Jewish circles of the third and second centuries BCE; some Jewish authors were hostile towards certain healing practices, whereas others were allies of different medical approaches. In any case, they were by no means apathetic towards the use of medicine but were engaged in a discussion about the legitimisation of contemporary medical phenomena.

The medical and healing references of each of the aforementioned writings have been treated in a separate chapter. For each one, I have provided an introduction where I have discussed issues that range from date and authorship to manuscript tradition. Next, I have given the narrative context where these references occur and I have displayed the manuscript evidence in the original together with an English translation. I have then compared the textual evidence and offered textual notes. Finally, in my analysis, I have aimed to explore the historico-cultural background in which these texts are set in an effort to account for the attitudes towards the use of medicine they present.

1. The Rejection of magical healing practices in the BW and healing language in the Epistle

The BW addresses the problem of the use of magico-medical cures in the Second Temple Judaism. In particular, in 1 Enoch 7:1 and 8:3a, root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs are presented as part of the secrets the Watchers revealed to humanity. I have argued that the craft of root-cutting and the knowledge of herbs allude to herbal medicine and botany, and are rejected as the illicit teaching of the Watchers because of their association with magical healing practices. Similarly, the astrological teaching of the Watchers (cf. 1 En 8:3) is rejected as such in view of its connections with idolatrous astro-medical practices. In particular, I have suggested that the instruction of sign lore might be an implicit reference to astral medicine. The latter received a particular boost in the early third century BCE due to a renewed interest in astronomy/astrology and was spread in the Orient by means of the astrological teaching of the Babylonian priest Berossus.

Furthermore, the representation of magically oriented healing practices as the reprehensible teaching of the Watchers suggests that contemporary Jews made use of such practices. This is no surprise as the HB gives ample evidence to the inclination of ancient Israel to magical practices (e.g. Ex 22:28; Deut 18:10–11).

Moreover, these practices are contrasted in an indirect way with the presentation of God as a healer. In particular, in 1 Enoch 10:7, it is God who sends Raphael to heal the earth from the corruption the Watchers' teaching brought upon humanity, inferring that God is the one who brings healing through his angels. Hence, in the BW, God's healing activity is indirectly opposed to magical healing offered by root-cutters and drug-sellers, magicians, soothsayers and diviners. The healing of the latter is a 'pseudo-healing', as it effected only problems upon humanity (cf. 1 En 7:2–5; 8:2, 4); but God, the only true healer, can heal these evils. In this way, divine healing is contrasted to magical healing (God vs. pseudo-healers).

What is more, in 1 Enoch 95:4 and 96:3, the author of the Epistle uses healing language to describe the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous, respectively. In 1 Enoch 95:4, the author refers to the pronouncement of irrevocable curses on the part of the wicked, employing a language that alludes to the magico-

medical content of the Watchers' teaching (1 En 8:3; cf. 1 En 7:1). The reference to 'curses' may well indicate that the author had in mind magical formulas used in healing practices. In 1 Enoch 96:3, the author admonishes the righteous not to fear because they will receive healing. The references to 'light' (cf. Mal 4:2; 4Q374 2 ii 8) and 'sound of rest from heaven' (cf. 1 En 8:4) infers that the author views God as the source of healing.

2. The Rejection of the pharmaceutical treatment of the physicians and legitimisation of magico-medical cures in Tobit

In Tobit 2:10, the author of Tobit vigorously criticises the pharmaceutical treatment of the physicians. I have suggested that he might have had in mind here physicians of Jewish origin, perhaps educated in Alexandria, who adopted Hippocratic rationalism into medical treatment. It was not the rationalism itself but rather what it represented, namely the Hellenistic culture, that made the author of Tobit view the medical care of the physicians as a fraud. This negativity towards the physicians' treatment may further reflect that there was no unanimous treatment for tending an illness in contemporary medical circles but each medical sect (e.g. Dogmatists, Empiricists) would suggest a different approach to it. In addition, I have argued that Tobit's criticism of the medicines of the physicians might have been due to the experimental activity of the Alexandrian scientists, as well as the experimental stage of pharmacology (hence of new medicines) in the third century BCE. In particular, the author might have heard of cases of patients as it were treated like guinea pigs by physicians who wished to test the efficacy of new medical compounds.

Contrary to the BW, for Tobit it is the magico-medical cures that are considered of divine origin; it is not a fallen angel but an angel of God (i.e. Raphael) who reveals them to Tobias for the cure of Tobit and Sarah's illness. The author's preference for magico-medical cures rather than the physician's medical care is related to the rapid progress of scientific medicine that began in third-century-BCE Alexandria. This progress was something relatively new for the people of that time and contemporary Jews or, to be more precise, some contemporary literate Jews like the author of Tobit, might have seen these new scientific advances and fresh approaches to medicine as a threat to their current view of healing. To this, one can add that this

scientific progress was of non-Jewish origin but was actually a corollary of Hellenism and of the desire of the Ptolemies for scientific progress. Hence, the author of Tobit chose sides: he rejected the newly launched rational treatment of the physicians but gave credit to the already known magico-medical cures that the Jews had been long accustomed with. This further suggests that the author of Tobit views the use of magic differently from the BW and builds a frame within which magic is legitimately to be used under certain circumstances (i.e. in healing and when God decides to so). Finally, by describing them as God-given remedies, he manages to acknowledge God as the ultimate healer (Tob 3:16–17).

3. The physician and herbal medicines as both created by God: The legitimisation of the medical profession in Ben Sira

In Sir 38:1–15, Ben Sira attempts to legitimise the role of the physician and his pharmaceutical treatment on the basis that both were created by God. He harmonises the belief that God is the ultimate healer with the need for the existence of the medical profession. Whereas in Tobit—like in the BW (1 En 10:7) and Jubilees (Jub 10:10–13)—Raphael is the mediator of divine healing, in Ben Sira the physician assumes this intermediary function. Ben Sira ventures to counterbalance the extremist views of his compatriots, like the author of Tobit (cf. Tob 2:10), who fervently disregarded the medical care of the physicians.

Ben Sira's favourable discussion about the medical profession suggests that he was influenced by the major advances in medicine (e.g. pharmacology, anatomy, physiology, etc.) that took place in Alexandria, the greatest scientific centre of the time, under the auspices of the Ptolemies. In fact, Ben Sira himself appears, as I have argued, to have been influenced by Hippocratic medical thought which he may have encountered on his travels (cf. 34:12), either by socialising with Hippocratically-oriented scientists and physicians in Alexandria or by reading for himself Hippocratic treatises that had found their way into the Alexandrian Library.

4. Herbal medicine and healing language in Jubilees

In Jubilees 10:1–14, the author attempts to legitimise herbal medicine by ascribing to it a divine origin; it is God who orders his angels to teach Noah herbal remedies

(v. 10). I have suggested that it is possible the singular form **ֵאֵל** ('tree, wood') of Jubilees 10:12 to refer to the tradition of the prophylactic/exorcistic properties of the wood of the ark of Noah found in Berossus' *Babyloniaca*. This interpretation would account for the presentation of Noah as the first herbalist. However, the wording 'all kinds of medicine' in verse 13 suggests that the author had in mind all herbal substances. I have proposed that the author attempts to integrate here the two traditions; on the one hand, the tradition about the medicinal powers of the wood of the ark of Noah and, on the other hand, the belief in the healing properties of all floral substances, prominent throughout antiquity.

Furthermore, I have argued that the need for the theological justification of herbal medicines arose as a result of the massive discovery of new medicines and antidotes that began in the third century BCE and reached its zenith in the second century BCE. By the attribution of a divine origin to herbal medicine, the author succeeds, first, to justify theologically the use of herbal medicaments; second, to present God as the ultimate source of healing; third, to present the pharmacological progress of his time as of Jewish origin; fourth, to present the Jews as the only nation who had the privilege to possess knowledge of herbal medicines long before the pharmacological progress of the third and second centuries BCE achieved; and, fifth, to downgrade the contribution of Hellenistic culture to the medical progress of his time.

Finally, in Jubilees 1:29, it is said that the luminaries will be renewed for the purpose of healing. The author employs the Babylonian belief that stars and planets possessed healing properties, a concept that should have been prominent in his time due to the renewed interest in astronomy/astrology and the spread of the astro-medical teaching of Berossus. By describing the luminaries as God's agents of healing, the author makes it clear that stars are not gods but intermediaries of healing from the one God who is the true healer for Israel. This same idea is further illustrated in Jubilees 23:29–30.

In light of the above observations, it appears that these authors were engaged in a discussion about the legitimisation of contemporary medical practices. Tobit, Ben

Sira and Jubilees make use of an identical approach to legitimise certain medical phenomena; they all claim a divine origin for them. The approach of the BW on this is somewhat different; it describes magico-medical practices as the illicit teaching of the Watchers, demonstrating thus that they are illegitimate because they were revealed without God's consent. Hence, the legitimisation of a medical practice is grounded on whether or not draws its existence from God.

5. God as the ultimate healer and the plurality of Jewish attitudes towards the use of medicine

The common element among the aforementioned literary compositions is that all share the belief in God as the ultimate healer (1 En 10:7; 96:3; Tob 3:16–17; 8:2–3; 11:11–13; Sir 38:2a^{GI}; 8^{GI}; 9^{GI, MS B}; 14^{GI, MS B}; Jub 10:10; 23:30). As already discussed in the introduction of the present thesis and previous chapters, the association of healing with the divine realm was prominent in nations along with Israel long lived together (e.g. Gula's connection with astral healing, the healing temples of Asclepius, etc.). The demonstration that the God of Israel is the one who brings healing to his people attempts to downgrade the healing role of gentile deities and, in effect, the effectiveness of their healing. In other words, it is the one God, not the gentile gods (e.g. Gula, Sekhmet, Asclepius), who can truly heal Israel.

Beyond this, however, one sees different attitudes towards the use of medicine: the BW is against magico-medical cures (1 En 7:1; 8:3) while presenting God as the one who heals (1 En 10:7). It appears that the initial distinction regarding the use of medicine in ancient Israel was between the healing of God and the magical practices of folk-healers. In the course of time and when new advances were achieved in the medical field, the Jews began to feel some tension and perhaps to be threatened by the rapid scientific growth. This is obvious in the author of Tobit; he embraces the 'old' magico-medical cures (Tob 6:5, 8–9) that he was accustomed to, whereas he rejects the scientific treatment of the physicians (Tob 2:10). But a more widely travelled Jewish author like Ben Sira sees the same situation differently; he is favourably disposed towards the physicians (Sir 38:1–3, 7, 12–14) and their pharmacological treatment (Sir 38:4–8). Moreover, the author of Jubilees is not concerned with the physicians but he puts an emphasis on the pharmaceutical properties of herbal substances (Jub 10:10–13). Whereas the BW disavowed root-

cutting and the knowledge of herbs as the forbidden teaching of the Watchers (1 En 7:1; 8:3a), Jubilees presents herbal medicine as a completely legitimate art since it originates with God.

This study has shown that there was a plurality of Jewish traditions with regard to the use of medicine in the third and second centuries BCE and that the Jewish writers of that time had different approaches towards contemporary medical practices. Their reaction towards medical phenomena suggests the existence of different schools of medical thought among the Jewish circles of this period. This further indicates that ancient Judaism was far from being a monolithic set of beliefs and ideas but, as the discussion on the use of medicine has shown, it encompassed the different views of its adherents. The ongoing shaping and/or re-shaping of medical beliefs by the Jewish authors of this period also suggests how complex the reality of being a Jew at that time might have been. Contemporary Jews might have felt confused not only by the changes in the historico-cultural setting, but also by the existence of different attitudes (e.g. in the use of medicine) introduced by the Jewish circles of this period. The findings of this project may assist future research in exploring a better understanding of what it was to be a Jew at that time and how the average Jews of this period might have understood their Jewish identity.

To summarise, I argue that there was no unified approach towards the use of medicine in the Jewish circles of the third and second centuries BCE; each author, in his own unique way, ventured to create afresh medical awareness to his fellow Jews. Furthermore, I suggest that the plurality of Jewish attitudes towards medicine should be viewed as different ways to understand the manifold Jewish identity of this period.

Finally, the medical and healing material examined in the present thesis provides evidence of the different types of medical care and of healers and medical practitioners in the Hellenistic period. Therefore, the Jewish texts discussed here should be taken seriously as literary evidence for the history of ancient medicine, and here particularly of medicine in the Hellenistic period.

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