

Société des études byzantines et slaves,
St. Pétersbourg

SCRINIUM

Revue de patrologie, d'hagiographie critique
et d'histoire ecclésiastique

Tome 4

PATROLOGIA PACIFICA
Selected papers presented
to the Western Pacific Rim Patristics Society
3rd Annual Conference
(Nagoya, Japan, September 29 – October 1, 2006)
and other patristic studies



Axiōma
Saint-Pétersbourg
2008

SUMMARY

To sum up, Eunomius' argumentation "from names" should not be simplified and reduced to the statement that names are mystical expressions of the essence of the named or the identification of the lexical meaning as its ontological correlate. In the *Apology* Eunomius believed that he knew the natures of the Father and the Son, and wanted to attach definite terms to them by means of an intermediate element between thought and word, namely, by "meaning," perhaps following the practice adopted by the Stoic School. Based on Aristotle's paradigm, Basil's strategy was aimed at destroying Eunomius' word-referent relation. Considering the polemics between Eunomius and Basil in terms of the paradigm of "dispensing names" of Antiquity shows that Basil's position was in line with Aristotle's scheme of establishing names by people's convention. Eunomius' position was in line with the scheme widespread in the Hellenistic time but not alien to the Stoics — establishing names by a dispenser in accordance with the nature of what was named.

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**THE JEWS
IN THE NEGLECTED CHRISTIAN WRITING
"THE WORD OF SAINT BARSABAS,
ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM,
ABOUT OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST AND
THE CHURCHES"
OF THE SECOND — EARLY THIRD
CENTURY***

The only manuscript to which we owe the transmission of "The Word of Saint Barsabas, Archbishop of Jerusalem, about our Saviour Jesus Christ and the churches [and about the chief priests],"¹ is the Old Georgian manuscript *Athos Ivion* 11 dating to the 10th century. The text was published with a French translation and introductory notes in 1982 in *Patrologia Orientalis* by the Belgian Jesuit Michel van Esbroeck. However, this seems to have produced little reaction in the scholarly milieu apart from the registration of the writing in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (no. 1685) and in some other patristic handbooks.²

Meanwhile, the editor's claims concerning the date of the probably Greek original of the text (2nd century) and its place of provenance (Palestine, possibly Jerusalem), as well as its archaic theology coupled

(*) The references to the scholarly works and journals are abbreviated in accordance with *Theologische Realenzyklopädie. Abkürzungsverzeichnis, 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage, zusammengestellt von S. M. SCHWERTNER* (Berlin—New York, 1994). TEG which is absent in this list means "Traditio exegetica graeca." The patristic authors and their writings are quoted according to the abbreviations used in G. W. H. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961) XI–XLV.

(1) The words "and about the chief priests" are a later addition to the title, see M. VAN ESBRÖECK (introd., éd. du texte géorgien inédit et trad. française), *Barsabé de Jérusalem sur le Christ et les églises* (Turnhout, 1982) (PO 41/2) 29–31.

(2) See, however, F. MANNS, Une nouvelle source littéraire pour l'étude du judéo-christianisme, *Henoah* 6 (1984) 165–180 and S. C. MIMOUNI, La tradition des évêques chrétiens d'origine juive de Jérusalem, *SP* 40 (2006) 452.

with the considerable length of the document (over 40 PO pages), calls for an examination of van Esbroeck's theses and for further efforts in the contextualization of the "Word" in the history of early Christian literature.

In this article I will present some observations concerning the role of the Jews in the text of Barsabas. Dealing with this question, we shall touch upon the problem of the different sources of the "Word" and its overall purpose. Incomplete and preliminary as it is, this article is to be understood as a kind of invitation for further study of Barsabas' work. In order to give a general impression of the document to be discussed, a summary of its contents and van Esbroeck's considerations about the author and the dating should be offered.

Content

The "Word of Saint Barsabas" can be described as a collection of Old Testament testimonies³ about Christ and the Church. With this hermeneutical principle in mind, the author goes through several biblical stories, starting with the first chapter of the book of Genesis and reaching Moses at the end of his discourse. In particular, he looks at the stories of Adam in Paradise, Noah and the flood, the annunciation to Sarah and her laughter, Isaac's benediction of Jacob and Esau's reaction, Jacob's benediction of his sons, Joseph's story, and Moses and the Exodus. Thus, the continuous typological Christ-and-Church-oriented exegesis of the Old Testament can be seen as the primary concern of the author.⁴

(3) We use this word in a non-terminological sense, even though the study of the relationship of the "Word" to the genre of testimonies, i.e. "Bibelkommentare, die entweder eine Folge von Zitaten mit jeweils daran anschließenden Interpretation oder lediglich interpretierende Paraphrasen der entsprechenden atl. Texte bringen" (M. KAMPTNER, Art.: Testimoniensammlung, in: S. DÖPF, W. GEERLINGS (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur* (Freiburg—Basel—Wien, 2002), 674a), would certainly be rewarding.

(4) Cf. Barsab., Christ. 1 (PO 41, 64,9–10): ყოველივე წერილი ქრისტის თვის და ეკლესიათა თვის გამოხსნებთან; "the whole Scripture becomes clear because of Christ and the Churches," the English translation here and in the following excerpts is mine, unless the translator is named. About the term "Scripture(s)" (წერილი / წერილები) as designation of the Old Testament in contrast to the Gospel(s) (სახარებაჲ / სახარებანი), see below.

Author

The editor shows that the "Archbishop Barsabas" who is named in the title of the "Word" appears in a few Christian sources as the third bishop of Jerusalem, Barsabas Justus, the man whose exact place in the bishop list of the Jerusalem See and whose very historicity remain a matter of discussion.⁵ Van Esbroeck seems to presuppose the existence of a Jerusalem bishop, named Barsabas in the 2nd century, but is nevertheless skeptical that he was the real author of the "Word."⁶ In view of Barsabas' being an unknown figure in Christian literature, van Esbroeck, who identifies the author simply as Barsabas, is certainly right in saying that the additional "Pseudo" before his name would be unnecessary.

Dating

In addition to van Esbroeck's considerations about the dating,⁷ one could observe that the terminological distinction between the Gospels and the "Writings" (meaning the Old Testament), as made in ch. 42, fits the second century situation with the canon of the Holy Scripture and is less likely the more we move away from this period.⁸ Despite van Esbroeck's skepticism concerning the originality of the term "Trinity" in ch. 26,⁹ it seems not to contradict directly the early dating of the text of Barsabas as this term is evidenced for the first time in the

(5) VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 12–31.

(6) Ibid, 31.

(7) Ibid., 59–60 with conclusion "quelque part au IIe siècle à Jérusalem" (Ibid., 59).

(8) Cf. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. γραφή. Barsabas' usage of the terms "Scripture(s)" and "Gospel(s)" corresponds approximately to that of St. Irenaeus of Lyon, cf.: "Einige Male nimmt er diese Bücher (i.e. the Gospels) auch mit dem Alten Testament zusammen und bezeichnet sie dann ohne Unterschied mit den altgeheiligten Namen als Herrenschriften, "die Schriften" oder "die Schrift." Doch geschieht dies nicht regelmäßig, sondern nur gelegentlich und fast wie im Versehen. Im allgemeinen hängen diese Begriffe ... immer noch an den Büchern des Alten Testaments. Man erkennt daraus beides: einerseits die tatsächliche Bedeutung, die die neutestamentlichen Schriften für Irenäus bereits besitzen, und andererseits die Neuheit und fehlende Sicherheit ihres Geltungsanspruchs und ihrer Autorität" (H. F. VON CAMPENHAUSEN, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel* (Tübingen, 1968) (BHTh 39) 220).

(9) Cf.: "Nous pensons que le terme «Trinité» a naturellement été introduit par une copiste" (VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 48).

second part of the 2nd century.¹⁰ The fact that most of the traditions which Barsabas shares with other Christian authors can be found in St. Hippolytus of Rome († 235) makes the dating in the late 2nd – early 3rd century an acceptable starting point to continue efforts in searching for a balanced approach to the problem of the dating.¹¹

Polemics against the Jews

An appropriate question to start with in the discussion about the work of Barsabas is his interpretation of the role of Jews in Sacred History. A remarkable point is that Barsabas avoids speaking about the rejection of the Jewish people by God or even about the inferiority of their election.¹² Van Esbroeck summarizes Barsabas' position as "the complementarity of two callings,"¹³ i.e. of the Jews and the Gentiles. We shall now have a closer look at the meaning of this description.

One of the relatively few places where we find a saying that may shed some light on what Barsabas thought about the place of the Jews in the history of salvation is his brief comment on two verses from Jacob's blessing of Judah in Gen. 49:11a (LXX): "To the vine he tethers his colt, and to the tendril of the vine the colt of his donkey" (ch. 36).

(10) Thphl. Ant., Autol. 2:15 (SC 20, 138,19, Bardy). However, St. Theophilus' naming of the persons of the Holy Trinity as God, Logos and Sophia could presuppose an earlier stage in the development of the Trinitarian terminology than Barsabas' speaking about, "Father, Son and the Holy Spirit" (ch. 26).

(11) About the localization see our concluding remark below.

(12) In an early Christian text as long as Barsabas' where the controversy with the Jews is a theme throughout (see more about this below) such a reserved attitude deserves to be noticed. We don't find statements in Barsabas like those in Barn. 4:6–7: "Do not imitate certain people ... saying: "Their covenant is ours also." Ours, indeed; but they lost it once and for all", translation slightly altered according to J. A. KLEIST, (trans., notes), *The Didache, The Epistle of Baranabas, The Epistles and the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, The Fragments of Papias, The Epistle to Diognetus* (Westminster, MD—London, 1948) (ACW 6) 41. Cf. also Ps.-Cypr., adv. Jud. 5: interfecerunt enim Dominum et latronem liberaverunt. ob hanc ergo causam coactus est Dominus facere novum testamentum; "for they murdered the Lord and set free a thief. Therefore the Lord was moved to make a new covenant" (CSEL III/3, 138,4–6, Hartel), and Ps.-Cypr., adv. Jud. 7: hic est qui rupit vetus suum testamentum et scripsit novum; "He is the One Who tore up His old covenant and wrote a new one" (CSEL III/3, 140,15–16, Hartel).

(13) "La complémentarité des deux choix" (VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 49).

Barsabas addresses his explanations to an abridged quotation from the Biblical text where the second part of the verse is shortened:¹⁴

“გამოაბას ვენაკსა ვირი იგი მისი და კაცუ იგი” გამოაცხადებს ორსა მას ერსა მომავალსა მას მერმესა ერსა, ხოლო ვენაკი იგი ჭეშმარიტად ქრისტე არს ვითარცა თვით წამებს: “მე ვარ ვენაკი ჭეშმარიტი.”

"He will tether to the vine his donkey and the colt" means two nations, <two> coming future nations. But the vine is truly Christ, as He witnesses Himself: "I am the true vine."¹⁵

Michel van Esbroeck, whose translation of the passage differs slightly from ours, brings a number of close parallels to this exegesis from early Christian writers. A careful reading of the parallels, both known and unknown to van Esbroeck, shows that the Christian authors of the second and third centuries interpreted the two colts of Gen. 49:11 as two callings to Christ and/or of Christ. Properly speaking, there is only one calling of Christ directed to the Jews and the Gentiles respectively. The most expressive example can be given from Hipp., antichr. 10 (GCS Hippolyt I, 10,10–14, Achelis):

“δεσμεύων πρὸς ἄμπελον τὴν ὄνον αὐτοῦ,” τουτέστι τὸν ἐκ περιτομῆς λαὸν πρὸς ἑαυτοῦ κλησιν, αὐτὸς γὰρ ἦν ἡ ἄμπελος, “καὶ ἐν τῇ ἔλικι τὸν πῶλον τῆς ὄνου αὐτοῦ,” τὸν λαὸν τὸν ἐξ ἔθνῶν ὡς νέον πῶλον εἰς αὐτὸν ἐνῶν, ὡς περιτομὴν καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν εἰς μίαν πίστιν καλῶν.

"To the vine he tethers his donkey,"¹⁶ that means <His> calling to Himself the nation of circumcision, for He Himself was the vine.¹⁷ "And to the tendril of the vine the colt of his donkey"¹⁸ <means His> joining with Himself like a young colt the nation of the pagans in order to call the circumcised and uncircumcised people into one faith.

The comparison of this and other patristic commentaries on Gen. 49:11a–b¹⁹ with the passage from the 36th ch. of "Word" of Barsabas

(14) Barsab., Christ. 36 (PO 41, 94,14–18).

(15) John 15:1.

(16) Gen. 49:11a.

(17) Cf. John 15:1.

(18) Gen. 49:11b.

(19) Cf. Just., dial. 53:1–4 (PTS 47, 156,1–158,28, Marcovich), Hipp., fr. 22–23 in Gen. (GCS Hippolyt I, 59,17–60,7, Achelis), Hipp., ben. Jac.18 (PO 27,1/2, 80,8–11, Brière) and Greg.-Illib., Tract. Orig. 6,330–385 (CChr.SL 69, 51,330–53,389, Bulhart). About Gregory of Elvira's dependence of St. Hip-

makes it clear that “two nations” can only mean Jews and Gentiles. The interpretation of the “vine” as Christ²⁰ shows that Barsabas most probably follows here the exegetical traditions mentioned above²¹ and couldn’t have understood the tethering of the two colts to the vine in any other way than the calling of *both* the Gentiles *and* the Jews to Christ.²²

An indirect confirmation of this interpretation can be seen in Barsabas’ exegesis of two miraculous feedings in the Gospel of Mathew: Matt. 14:13–21 and Matt. 15:32–39 in ch. 26–27. Barsabas deals with these two texts in connection with his comment on Gen. 27:27–28 in ch. 18ff where he understands Isaac’s words of blessing to his son Jacob, “God give you dew from heaven and the richness of the earth, corn and new wine in plenty,” as foreshadowing the sacrament of the Eucharist. According to Barsabas, Esau came to receive his father’s blessing, heard that Jacob took it away and, “started weeping because he hadn’t become worthy to receive the bread of the offering and the cup. He is the nation of the Jews, which didn’t become worthy of the New Testament, but the new nation became worthy of the benediction of the cup of the Communion wine.”²³

In the ch. 26 of “Word,” Barsabas uses the two feeding stories of Matt. 14 and Matt. 15 to corroborate his idea that the first or elder brother — that is Esau, who means the Jews — didn’t receive the Eu-

polytus see D. BONWETSCH, *Der Weissagungsbeweis aus Gen. 49 in der älteren Kirche, Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 20 (1909) 882 (here the *Tractatus Origenis* are still dealt with as a work of Novatian).

(20) Cf. Barsabas’ reference to John 15:1 and the allusion to the same Scripture in the cited text of Saint Hippolytus.

(21) Cf. e.g. Hipp., ben. Jac. 18 (PO 27,1/2, 80,8–9, Brière): εἶτα φησὶν “δεσμεύων πρὸς ἄμπελον τὴν ὄνον αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆ ἔλυκι τὸν πῶλον τῆς ὄνου αὐτοῦ,” σημαίνων τὰς δύο κλήσεις πρὸς αὐτὸν ὡς ἄμπελον δεσμευόμενας.

(22) This is more ambiguous in the following interpretation of Isaac’s blessing of Manasseh and Ephraim in Gen. 48:8ff by Hipp., ben. Jac. 11 (PO 27,1/2, 46,11–48,2, Brière): ἐν γὰρ τῷ ἐναλλάξει τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὸν νεώτερον υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ, λέγω δὴ τὴν Ἐφραΐμ, εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μεθιστάναί, τὸν δὲ Μανασσήν τὸν πρωτότοκον εἰς τὰ ἀριστερά, ἔδειξεν δι’ αὐτῶν δύο κλήσεις καὶ δύο λαοὺς γιγνομένους: καὶ τὸν μὲν νεώτερον διὰ πίστεως εἰς δεξιὰν τοῦ Χριστοῦ εὐρισκόμενον, τὸν δὲ πρεσβύτερον λαόν, τὸν ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καυχώμενον, εἰς ἀριστερὰν μετατιθέμενον.

(23) See the Georgian text in Barsab., Christ. 25 (PO 41, 84,2–6, van Esbroeck).

charist, whereas the blessing received by the younger one foreshadows that it shall be given to the Christians.

Barsabas understands two similar stories in the Gospel of Mathew as two brothers. The first story in Matt. 14 corresponds to the elder brother, Esau, while the feeding in Matt. 15 illustrates the giving of the Eucharist to the Christians and is connected with Jacob. Three points in Matt. 14 are put forward: first, Christ didn’t break the bread but simply gave it; second, the people were lying on the grass, which indicates their fleshly nature because flesh is compared with grass by the prophet Isaiah;²⁴ third, the people stayed only one day. On the other hand, in Matt. 15 Christ blessed, broke and gave the bread;²⁵ then He told the people to sit on the earth, which means the preaching of the Gospel through all the earth (Ps. 18:5 LXX), and they stay with Christ for three days: a sign of the Holy Trinity.

By means of this exegesis, the author argues that, whereas in the second feeding (Matt. 15:32–39) the sacrament of the Eucharist is revealed, in the first feeding (Matt. 14:13–21) the mystery of the bread and wine is not given to the Jews. The striking point is that, according to Barsabas, Christ preformed His miracle of multiplying bread for both groups, i.e. for the Gentiles *and* the Jews as well, which in my eyes, can be compared with the twofold calling of the pagans and the Jews in the commentary on Gen. 49:11a in ch. 36.

In ch. 25 Barsabas provides some further remarks which make his position concerning the calling of the Jewish people even clearer. Barsabas says, that Christ’s words about the new and old wine-skins in Matt. 9:17 mean the old nation of the Jews and the “calling of the pagans.”²⁶

ჩინება წარმართთა ახალი თხიერი, ხოლო თხიერი ძუეელი ერი ოგი ძუეელი ჰურიითაჲ, რამეთუ არა შეიწყნარნეს მცნებანი ქრისტესნი.

The calling of the pagans <is> the new wine-skin, the old wine-skin <is>, however, the old nation of the Jews, because they did not accept the teaching of Christ.

The chance not to become the “old wine-skins” lies in the acceptance of Christ’s teaching, which the nations performed and the Jews

(24) Jes. 40:6.

(25) Actually, Matt. 14:18 uses almost the same words as Matt. 15:36: εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἔδωκεν in the first case, and εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἐδίδου in the second.

(26) Barsab., Christ. 25 (PO 41, 84,10–12, van Esbroeck).

failed to do. According to the quotation, the "calling" is equal to the "teaching" or "commandments"²⁷ of the Lord, which was directed likewise to the Gentiles and the Jews.

Thus, "the complementarity of two callings" in Barsabas means two callings of Christ simultaneously addressed to the Gentiles and to the Jews. A calling independent of Christ is unknown to Barsabas. According to him, the Jews are actually excluded from the Christian mysteries and have no part in the New Covenant with God, but they were and, maybe, even are invited to both.

The general recognition of Christ by the Jews will take place in His second glorious coming. The text of the 38 ch., where this event is described, leaves the possibility open that recognition will not necessarily entail conversion, but independent of this detail, the traditional pattern of the blindness of Israel²⁸ lasting till the eschatological time justifies the suggestion that the author probably put not too much hope in a change of mind soon among the Jews not believing in Christ.

On the other hand, Barsabas explains in ch. 35 the praising of the Lord by children in Ps. 112:1–3 (LXX) as being made by the Gentiles and then mentions the praising by the elders in Ps. 106:32 (LXX). Though no explicit connection of this second praising with the Jews is established, nothing seems to contradict the conclusion that the Church of Barsabas consisted of former Gentiles and a perhaps numerically smaller group of converted Jews.

These observations lead us to the question about the general role of the Jews in the "Word." Simply going through the work of Barsabas makes it clear that the author permanently insists on the deeper meaning of the Holy Scripture being favorable to Christians from a Gentile background and, accordingly, unfavorable to the Jews. We find this kind of argumentation in chs. 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 26, 28, 33, 35, 38 and 41. In chs. 30, 33, 40 and 42, Barsabas explicitly refutes the false exegetical opinions of the Jews, which provides the author with the opportunity to introduce Christian ones.

Therefore, we would hardly be wrong in stating that, starting with the 11th chapter of his work, Barsabas uses the typological exegesis of the Old Testament in order to encourage his Gentile fellow-believers in a situation where the influence of the Jewish understanding of the Old Testament was a considerable factor.

(27) The literal translation of მცნებანი.

(28) Cf. e.g. Rom. 11:25.

This notion is supported by Barsabas' borrowing from a source which was also used by St. Hippolytus in his commentary on Jacob's blessings. Manlio Simonetti demonstrated, that in his exegesis of Gen. 49 St. Hippolytus is dependent on some — in Simonetti's view — probably oral traditions going back to the middle of the 2nd century. The main concern of these traditions is, according to Simonetti's analysis, exactly the same as those of the chapters of Barsabas' work, which come after the 10th: Christ and His Church as foreshadowed in the Old Testament writings in the situation of theological discussions with the Jews.²⁹ M. van Esbroeck is of the opinion that Barsabas and Hippolytus were independent of each other using a source for their explanation of Jacobs blessings,³⁰ which can hardly be another one than that reconstructed by Simonetti. The usage and extension in its own sense of the unknown source by Barsabas indicates the similarity of the situation, which produced the text of Barsabas and his and St. Hippolytus' common source.

Another point that demonstrates that Barsabas' work appeared in an environment where the Christian relationship with the Jews was of great importance to the Christian community is the case of borrowing Jewish exegetical traditions in chs. 3–4 and 10. This case deserves a thorough examination.

While commenting on Gen. 2:15 in ch. 4, Barsabas says:³¹

“დაადგინა ადამი სამოთხესა საქმედ და ცვადა.” ვის თვის სცვიდა? ვინ იყენეს მპარავე? ადამ მარტომ იყო ცოლითურთ. ანუ რასა იქმოდა სამოთხესა შინა? რადმეთუ სრულიად სიტყვთა ღმრთისადათა აღშენებულ იყენეს ნერგნი იგი, არამედ საიდუმლოდ წერილ არს, რადმეთუ დაადგინა იგი სამოთხესა შინა, ესე არს ეკლესია, რადთა იქმოდის სიმართლესა და დაიმარხნეს მცნებანი.

“He [God] put Adam in Paradise to work <it> and to guard <it>.”³² What did he guard against? Who were the thieves? Adam was alone with <his> wife. Or, what did he work at in Paradise? For these plants were edified [or: made to grow?] by the word of God alone. But, what is written is a mystery. For He put him in Paradise, that is, the Church, to work <at> righteousness and to keep the commandments.

(29) M. SIMONETTI, Note su antichi commenti alle Benedizioni dei Patriarchi, *Annali delle Facoltà di Lettere-Filosofia e Magistero dell' università di Cagliari* 28 (1960) 449.

(30) VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 37–39.

(31) Barsab., Christ. 4 (PO 41, 66, 11–18, van Esbroeck).

(32) Gen. 2:15.

The task of working and guarding imposed upon Adam in Gen. 2:15 is thus applied to the righteousness and the commandments of God. This theme is developed further in ch. 10:³³

უკუეთუ სამოთხე იგი ეკლესია არს ღმრთისად, შენ ხარ ადამი, პირველი იგი კორციელი. შეიმოსე შენ დიდება, იქმენ ფრთხილ და ნუ გარდასუად მცნებათა, არამედ იქმოდე სიმართლესა, და ყავ მშუღობად, რადთა შეხვდე სამოთხესა მას შინა, რომელ არს ეკლესია ღმრთისად, და მოვიდეთ სასუფეველსა მას ცათასა. If Paradise is the Church of God, you are Adam, the first carnal <man>.³⁴ Put on the glory, be vigilant, don't offend the commandments, but work <at> righteousness and make peace so that you will come into Paradise, which is the Church of God, and we shall reach the kingdom of heaven.

The preoccupation of the first man in Paradise with the commandments of God is considered here a model for all Christians. As a parallel to working and guarding in Gen. 2:15 applied to the commandments of God, van Esbroeck points to the Palestinian Targum, which extends the scripture in question in the following way:³⁵

The Lord God took Adam ... and made him dwell in the garden of Eden to labour in the law and to keep its commandments.

(33) Barsab., Christ. 10 (PO 41, 70,16–21, van Esbroeck).

(34) VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 71 n. 46 suggests that the Greek original word rendered at this place was προτοπλάστης.

(35) VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 209, n. 10. The English translation is quoted according to M. MAHER (trans., introd., notes), *The Aramaic Bible*, vol. 1B, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (Edinburgh, 1992) 23. The same idea can be found in the Christian apologetic of the 2nd century St. Theophilus of Antioch, Autol. 2:24 (SC 20, 158,22–25, Bardy). M. van Esbroeck's reference to "Ad Autolicum, 3 (SC 20), p. 118," cf. M. VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé*, 209, n. 10 is not correct. Cf. also Cyr., dial. Anth. et Steph. 25: ἀνθιμος· ἐρεῶσαμ ὄναϋ ἡε μπάτφπαρβα. κύριλλος· ἐφτντων ἐκωην ἐτῶμπα ἐτμμάϋ· φῶτπ ζῶαϋ ἡκαρπῶς ἐτενετολη μπχοις ἡε, "Anthimus: Of what kind had Adam been (literally: is) before he disobeyed (παράβαίνω)? Cyrillus: He was (literally: is) like the trees <which were> there, being himself laden with fruits (καρπός), that is, the commandments (ἐντολή) of the Lord," cited according to the edition of W. E. CRUM (Hrsg. und übersetzt), A. EHRHARD (Beitrag), *Der Papyruscodex saec. VI–VII der Phillippsbibliothek in Cheltenham. Koptische theologische Schriften* (Straßburg, 1915) (Schriften der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft in Straßburg 18) 8,10–12. The authorship of St. Cyril has been asserted by A. EHRHARD, Zur literarischen und theologischen Würdigung der Texte, in: *ibid.*, 145–154, cf. also CPG 5277.

Another close parallel to the exegesis of Barsabas can be found in the *Questiones in Genesin* I:14 by Philo of Alexandria:³⁶

Why does (God) place the man in Paradise for two things, to work and guard it, when Paradise was not in need of work, for it was complete in all things as having been planted by God, and was not in need of a guardian, for who was there to be harmed?

A short note from the Jewish text known as the *Slavonic Apocalypse of Enoch* (2 Enoch), which, as well as Philo's work, was written in the first century AD, demonstrates an acquaintance with the same tradition, cf. slHen 31:1:³⁷

And I (i.e. God) created a garden in Edem, in the east, so that he (i.e. Adam) might keep the agreement and preserve the commandment.

Thus, both Barsabas's idea of applying the working and guarding from Gen. 2:15 to the righteousness and the commandments of God and the argumentation for doing so have antecedents in the Jewish exegesis of this biblical verse. This choice turns out to have some surprising consequences. As we have seen, Barsabas understands Paradise as the Church.³⁸ This understanding is very common in early Christian literature, its characteristic mark being the interpretation of the trees of the garden of Eden in their multiplicity as an allusion to the Church as the society of the holy ones. A conclusive example can be advanced

(36) The English translation from the Armenian is quoted according to R. MARCUS (trans.), *Philo, Supplement I, Questions and Answers on Genesis* (London—Cambridge, 1961) 9.

(37) The English translation according to F. I. ANDERSEN, 2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch (Late First Century A.D.) with the Appendix: 2 Enoch in *Merilo Pravednoe*, in: J. H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1: *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York, 1983) 152. About the dating of 2 Enoch cf.: "Das Hen(sl) ist somit in das I. Jh.n.Chr. noch vor dem Jahre 70 zu datieren." (CH. BÖTTTRICH, *Das slavische Henochbuch* (Gütersloh, 1995) (Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischen Zeit V 1–9) 813). For a list of rabbinical evidences, see T. KRONHOLM, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian with particular reference to the influence of the Jewish exegetical tradition* (Uppsala, 1978) (Coniectanea biblica Old Testament series 11) 76, n. 96.

(38) Cf. Barsab., Christ. 10: "If Paradise is the Church of God ..." and Barsab., Christ. 3 (PO 41, 64,21, ed. van Esbroeck): "What is Paradise if not the Church of God?" (PO 41, 70,14, van Esbroeck).

from the 3rd century commentary on the book of Daniel by St. Hippolytus of Rome:³⁹

Ὅτι δὲ ὁ παράδεισος ἐν Ἐδέμ ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ φυτευθεὶς εἰς τύπον καὶ εἰκόνα ἐγένετο τῆς ἐκκλησίας, σαφέστατά ἐστιν ἐπιγινῶναι τοὺς φιλομαθεῖς <...> Ἐδ<ἐ>μ οὖν <εἰ>ρηται τόπος τρυφῆς, <ουτέστ>ι<ν> παράδεισος: "κατὰ ἀνατολὰς" ἐφυτεύετο, ξύλοις ὠραίοις καὶ καρποῖς παντοδαποῖς κεκοσμημένος, ὥστε ἔστι νοῆσαι τὸ σύστημα τῶν δικαίων τόπον εἶναι ἅγιον, ἐν ᾧ ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐφυτεύετο. οὔτε γὰρ ψιλὸς τόπος δύναται καλεῖσθαι ἐκκλησία, <οὔτε> οἶκος διὰ λίθου καὶ πηλοῦ ᾧκοδομημένος: οὔτε αὐτὸς καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἄνθρωπος δύναται καλεῖσθαι ἐκκλησία: οἶκος γὰρ καταλύεται καὶ ἄνθρωπος τελευτᾷ. τί οὖν ἐστιν ἐκκλησία; σύστημα ἁγίων ἐν ἀληθείᾳ πολιτευομένων. ἢ οὖν ὁμόνοια καὶ ἡ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῶν ἁγίων ὁδὸς τοῦτο γίνετα ἐκκλησία...

Those who love learning can clearly realize that the Paradise in Eden planted by God became a type and an image of the Church <...> So Eden means "a place of delight," that is Paradise. It was planted "in the east" and adorned with fruit-bearing trees and fruits of every kind, so that one can understand that the congregation of the righteous ones is <that> holy place where the Church was planted. For neither bare land nor a house built of stones and clay can be called "the Church," not even a man by himself can be called a Church: since a house is exposed to destruction and a man is subject to death. What, then, is the Church? It is the community of the saints living according to the truth. Therefore, it is the unanimity and the common way of the saints in the unity which makes up the Church.

This imagery of the community as a group of plants cultivated by God has Biblical roots⁴⁰ and was explored in the Essene literature from Qumran, where it takes clear paradisaic traits: the members of the Qumran community are described as trees of life watered with the waters of holiness.⁴¹ The Christian usage of this image belongs to the very center of the mystery of baptism: the person being baptized is spoken to as a tree which will be planted by God in His Garden,

(39) Hipp., Dan. 1,18 (GCS Hippolyt I/1, 40,19–21; 42,6–15, Bonwetsch and Richard). About Church as society in St. Hippolytus' ecclesiology, see A. HAMMEL, *Kirche bei Hippolyt von Rom* (Gütersloh, 1951) (Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie 49) 42–46.

(40) Cf. e.g. Jes. 60:21.

(41) 1QH 8,4–13. Another pre-Christian evidence is PsSal. 14:2 (324,2. Vi-teau): ὁ παράδεισος τοῦ κυρίου, τὰ ξύλα τῆς ζωῆς, ὅσοι αὐτοῦ.

i.e., the Church.⁴² One of the earliest witnesses of this idea is found in the 11th Ode of Solomon with its unmistakable baptismal context, cf. OdSal 11:16.18–19 (52,35–36; 53,9–13, Charlesworth):⁴³

And He took me to His Paradise,
Wherein is the wealth of the Lord's pleasure ...
And I said, Blessed, O Lord, are they
Who are planted in Thy land,
And who have a place in Thy Paradise;
And who grow in the growth of Thy trees,
And have passed from darkness to light.

Keeping in mind this understanding of the trees of Paradise widely accepted in early Christian literature, we can state that the author of the "Word," while also understanding Paradise as the Church, uses a different Jewish tradition which interprets the task of working and guarding imposed upon Adam in Gen. 2:15 as having in mind not the plants of Paradise, but the commandments of the Lord. Because Adam's state in Paradise is transmitted to every Christian in ch. 10, not only the first

(42) Concerning baptism as the entry into Paradise in the early Christian period, cf.: "Que d'abord le baptême soit une entrée au Paradis, c'est un des thèmes de la catéchèse baptismale élémentaire" (J. DANIELOU, *Sacramentum futuri. Études sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Paris, 1950) (Études de théologie historique 16); for patristic evidence, see *Ibid.*, 16–17, *Idem*, *Catéchèse pascale et retour au Paradis*, MD 45 (1956) 100–103, *Idem*, *Liturgie und Bibel. Die Symbolik der Sakramente bei den Kirchenvätern* (München, 1963) 42ff, and P. MIQUEL, Art. Paradis. Dans la tradition chrétienne, in: *DSp 12* (Paris, 1984) 193. The baptismal context is evident also in Barn. 11:10–11, where the trees planted by the river are associated with recently baptized Christians, though the Paradise motif is not explicit here. About the baptismal connotations in Barn. 11:10–11, see F. R. PROSTMEIER, *Der Barnabasbrief*, (Göttingen, 1999) (Kommentar zu den apostolischen Vätern 8) 430–432 and J. N. RHODES, *The Epistle of Barnabas and the Deuteronomical Tradition. Polemics, Paraenesis, and the Legacy of the Golden-Calf Incident* (Tübingen, 2004) (WUNT 188) 63–64; for further literature on the question, see *Ibid.*, 63 n. 96. Cf. also Or., Cant. III 8,9 (SC 376, 572,4–10, Brésard, and Crouzel): „In quo loco possumus nos catechumenos ecclesiae intelligere, super quos ex parte aliqua confirmatur ecclesia. Habet enim et in ipsis non parum fiduciae et spei plurimum quod et ipsi fiant aliquando arbores fructiferae, ut plantentur in paradiso Dei ab ipso agricola Patre. Ipse enim est qui plantat huiusmodi arbores in ecclesia Christi, quae est paradisos deliciarum..." and Or., ad Gen. 2:15–17 (TEG 1, 180,1–5, Petit).

(43) See J. DANIELOU, Art. Odes de Salomon, in: *Dictionnaire de la bible. Supplément 6* (Paris, 1960) 682–683. The translation by Charlesworth is quoted.

man but also everyone in the Church is seen by Barsabas as alone (Adam's wife doesn't play any role in the "Word") and confronted only with the tasks of being just and working at righteousness, cf. ch. 4:

"He [God] put Adam in Paradise to work <it> and to guard <it>." ...
Adam was alone with <his> wife.

and ch. 10:

If Paradise is the Church of God, you are Adam, the first carnal
<man>. Put on the glory, be vigilant, don't offend the commandments,
but work <at> righteousness ...

One of the few Christian writers known to us who use at length this Jewish exegesis found in Barsabas⁴⁴ is St. Ephrem the Syrian in his commentary on Genesis 2:15.⁴⁵ St. Ephrem's ecclesiology in general is, however, in perfect agreement with the understanding of the Church as the community of the saints, cf. Ephr., de parad. 6,7,1 (CSCO 174 Syr.78, 21,1, Beck) and Ephr., de parad. 6,8,1 (CSCO 174 Syr. 78, 21,7, Beck):

He planted the magnificent garden, ܕܒܪܟܬܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ
He built the pure Church.

The congregation of the holy ones is ܕܥܕܢܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ
a type of Paradise.

Another not less surprising feature of the first ten chapters of Barsabas' work is his radical disconnection of Adam and Christ, which is the more unusual in a text dedicated to the types of Christ in the Old Testament. As we have seen, Adam is the type of every believer, not that of Christ.⁴⁶ This circumstance has probably to do with the total absence

(44) The same idea can be found also in the Christian apologetic of the 2nd century St. Theophilus of Antioch, Autol. 2:24 (SC 20, 158,22-25, Bardy) as well as in Sever., creat. 5:5 (PG 56, 478,7-31, Montfaucon) and in Proc. G., ad Gen. 2:15 (PG 87.I, 160C-D, Mai) whereas Procopius partly depends on Severus. In all three cases, however, the conclusion about Adam's being alone in Paradise is not drawn and no ecclesiological implications from the exegesis in question are discernable.

(45) Ephr., comm. in Gen. 2:7 (CSCO 152, Syr. 71, 29,16-28, Tonneau).

(46) According to VAN ESBRÖECK, *Barsabé...*, 57-59, it is the author's polemics against the Ebionites which accounts for this odd absence of any reference to Christ in connection with Adam. In my opinion, van Esbroeck's arguments for the presence of such polemics in the work of Barsabas are less than convincing. The question deserves further investigation.

of any mention of Jews in chapters one to ten. The main concern of the author here is the appeal which is several times repeated to remain in Paradise, i.e. in the Church (ch. 3, 6 and 10). This practical attitude is in its turn not represented in the rest of Barsabas' text, which hints at the possibility of two different sources of chapters 1 to 10 and 11 to 44 being mechanically combined at the last phase of an editing process.

At this point, one could summarize that, on the one hand, the combination of the moderated polemics against the Jews together with leaving the door open for them to follow Christ's calling, and, on the other hand, the borrowing in a unique way from the Jewish exegetical traditions forms one of the remarkable characteristics of our text.

Finally, in conclusion I would like to add an observation. The role of the Jews pointed out above does not, of course, contradict van Esbroeck's localization of the original version of the "Word" as being Palestine. Some details, however, leave open the possibility of alternatives to the Palestinian localization. For example, commenting on Joseph's coloured robe from Gen. 37 in ch. 39, Barsabas says that it prefigured the incarnation of Christ who in His human body put on like a garment all nations believing in His name. He names as examples of these nations, "Jews and Gentiles: Assyrians and Persians."⁴⁷ Although the acquaintance with both latter nations is not impossible in Palestine, their mention might sound more natural closer to the borders of the Persian empire, somewhere in Syria or Mesopotamia.

SUMMARY

Die Veröffentlichung des „Wortes des hl. Barsabas über unseren Erlöser Jesus Christus und über die Kirchen“ in 1982 wurde in der einschlägigen Fachliteratur kaum wahrgenommen. Indes laden sowohl der Inhalt dieses Werkes (archaisch anmutende Auslegung des Buches Genesis auf Christus und die Kirche) als auch seine von dem Herausgeber M. van Esbroeck angenommene Datierung und Verortung (2. Jh., Jerusalem) zu einer eingehenden Beschäftigung mit der Schrift des Barsabas ein. Die vorliegende Studie liefert neue Beobachtungen, die für das hohe Alter des Dokuments (möglicherweise spätes 2. – frühes 3. Jh.) sprechen, und versucht die Stellung des Autor gegenüber den Juden zu bestimmen. Die Analyse der Exegese des Barsabas lässt auf ein Milieu schließen, in dem die Christen mit paganen Hintergründen zwar überwiegen, die jüdische Präsenz andererseits eine bedeutende Rolle spielt.

(47) Barsab., Christ. 39 (PO 41, 102,18-19, van Esbroeck).