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***The Life of Adam and Eve in Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer***

Although a rabbinic work, the eighth century Palestinian midrash *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* (*PRE*) enjoys the reputation of being a storehouse of motifs drawn from the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings of the Second Temple period<sup>1</sup>. It is thus seen as a work that revives ancient Jewish traditions, some of which were appropriated by Christianity and Islam in the interim. It is the first rabbinic work, for instance, to depict the fall of Satan from heaven and to associate the serpent with Satan<sup>2</sup>. It is also among the first rabbinic works to tell the story of the Watchers, a widespread Second Temple motif that was largely rejected by Christianity at the time of *PRE*'s composition<sup>3</sup>. One way in which it particularly recalls certain Second Temple writings is its form. Like the book of *Jubilees*, *PRE* comments on the Bible by retelling it. Therefore, *PRE* is also the first rabbinic writing to offer an extended narrative of the biblical history.

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<sup>1</sup> A point of view associated particularly with G. FRIEDLANDER, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer: The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer the Great: according to the text of the manuscript belonging to Abraham Epstein of Vienna*, New York, Hermon Press, 1970, p. xxi-lii, who gives an extensive list of alleged parallels.

<sup>2</sup> H. SPURLING and E. GRYPEOU, 'Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia*, vol. 4, 2007, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup>A. YOSHIKO REED, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic literature*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 190-235.

The *Life of Adam and Eve*<sup>4</sup> has proven fruitful ground for inquiry into the pseudepigraphal roots of *PRE*<sup>5</sup>. The two works do share a few major motifs. Both recount the fall of Satan, his association with the serpent, the penance of Adam in a river, and the burial of Adam in the region of Paradise. However, the differences are profound. The first difference is the chronology. While the *Life* begins immediately after the Fall and recapitulates past events through a series of flashbacks, *PRE* simplifies the chronology and retells each part of the story in its original order: first the jealousy of the angels, then the primordial sin, then Adam's penance, and finally the death and burial of the first parents. In this respect *PRE* resembles the Irish *Saltair na Rann* (10<sup>th</sup> century), which, like *PRE*, is an extensive retelling of the biblical narrative. Its Adam and Eve story also maintains a strictly chronological order.

Whereas the *Saltair*, however, retains most of the material found in the *Life*<sup>6</sup>, *PRE* preserves very little of the *Life's* story. The number of missing episodes is considerable and includes: 1) Adam and Eve's hunger and search for food, 2) the penitence of Eve in the Tigris, 3) the second transgression of Eve through Satan's deceit, 4) Satan narrating his fall to Adam, 5) Eve's departure to the West and the birth of Cain, 6) premonitions of Cain's murder of Abel, 7) Adam's sickness, and 8) the quest of Seth for

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<sup>4</sup> By this title, I intend to refer to the primary Adam literature's relatively stable set of traditions as found in the synoptic table in J.-P. PETTORELLI, J.-D. KAESTLI, A. FREY, et al. (eds.), *Vita latina Adae et Evae: latine, graece, armeniace et iberice (Corpus christianorum. Series Apocryporum 18-19)*, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 15-16.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. R. ADELMAN, *The Return of the Repressed: Pirqa de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 140)*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2009, p. 71-108.

<sup>6</sup> A translation can be found in D. GREENE and F. KELLY (eds.), *The Irish Adam and Eve story from Saltair na Rann*, Dublin, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1976. The *Saltair*, in fact, is based on a version of the *Life* close to the Latin manuscript found by J.-P. PETTORELLI.

the oil of life. In other words, the author of *PRE*, if he consulted the *Life* as a source, jettisoned most of the story.

The major motifs which remain—the fall of Satan, Satan’s partnership with the serpent, the penance of Adam, and Adam’s burial—are used quite differently in the two works. The fall of Satan and the burial of Adam, though resembling the motifs in the *Life*, seem to be dependent on later works, suggesting that the author of *PRE* is responding to intervening sources rather than preserving ancient traditions found in the *Life*. *PRE*’s treatment of the penance theme, however, might be based on the *Life*, although *PRE*’s use of this motif suggests the author deliberately changed it. An examination of these motifs reveals both the breadth of the author’s knowledge and the way he altered his sources for his own ends.

In the *Life*, Satan is cast out of heaven because he refuses to adore Adam with the other angels. This is the basis for his animosity against Adam. In *PRE*, Satan—or rather Sammael, as he is called in this text—is not cast out of heaven before Adam’s sin. Rather, he is jealous of Adam because of Adam’s wisdom in naming the animals. Sammael then descends of his own volition to conspire with the serpent against the first parents. The two stories are linked by the association of Satan with the serpent. The actual stories of the fall of Satan in the two sources have little to do with each other. The animal-naming contest is a rabbinic motif that can be found, for example, in *Genesis Rabbah* (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century), where Adam is pitted against the ministering angels<sup>7</sup>. *Genesis Rabbah* makes no mention of Satan or any cognate figure. Furthermore, the angelic worship of Adam does not appear in any unambiguously Jewish text until *Bereshit Rabbati* (11<sup>th</sup> century), the work of Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne. This text likely reflects knowledge of Christian appropriation of the *Life*<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> *Genesis Rabbah* 17, 4.

<sup>8</sup> J.-D. KAESTLI, 'Le Mythe de la chute de Satan et la question du milieu d'origine de la Vie d'Adam et Eve', in D. H. WARREN, A. G. BROCK and D. W. PAO (eds.), *Early*

One important text does combine the contest between Adam and the angels with the adoration of the angels, the fall of Satan, and Adam's sin. The Qur'an found the adoration of the angels important enough to recount this story seven times<sup>9</sup>, but only in Sura 2, 30-39 is this story prefaced by the animal-naming contest. In both *Genesis Rabbah* and the Qur'an, the story demonstrates the superiority of Adam's wisdom over the angels. In the Qur'an, the story even provides the pretext for the angelic worship of Adam. The disobedience of Iblis, the devil, is briefly recounted. Surprisingly, the fall of the devil is not described. Nor does Iblis complain of his innate superiority, as he does in many of the other Qur'anic versions of this story<sup>10</sup>. The text then tersely narrates the temptation of Adam and his wife, leading to their expulsion from Eden. The Qur'an provides a missing link between the rabbinic story in *Genesis Rabbah* and *PRE*. *PRE*, in fact, follows the Qur'anic account except that it omits the adoration of the angels. Although it is difficult to prove that *PRE* follows the Qur'an in this instance—especially when the animal-naming contest is already attested in rabbinic literature—the Qur'an at least provides evidence that the contest was linked with the fall of Satan before the writing of *PRE*.

The question remains why the author has chosen to omit the adoration of the angels, which is central to this narrative in both Muslim and Christian versions. A tentative hypothesis is that the adoration of Adam had Christological overtones—or at least a suggestion of idolatry—that the author wanted to avoid. These overtones may already be present in the

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*Christian Voices in Texts, Traditions, and Symbols: Essays in Honor of François Bovon* (*Biblical Interpretation Series*, 66), Boston Leiden, Brill, 2003, p. 348-350

<sup>9</sup> Sura 2, 30-39; 7, 11-25; 15, 26-42; 17, 61-65; 18, 50-51; 20, 115-124; 38, 71-85.

<sup>10</sup> As well as in unambiguously Christian parallels: *Questions of Bartholomew* 4, 54; *Cave of Treasures* 3, 2; *Didascalia Apostolorum* 23 (Greek). Cf. J.-D. KAESTLI, *op. cit.* p. 352, n. 47.

*Life*<sup>11</sup>, but in any case they become overt in later Christian works such as the *Cave of Treasures*<sup>12</sup>. The author has preserved the story in a form that omits this potentially troubling event. Elsewhere, *PRE* is at pains to show that Adam is not to be worshipped. In *PRE* 11, the animals<sup>13</sup> come to worship Adam at the moment of his creation, thinking him to be God. Adam dissuades them. In *PRE* 12, God creates Eve to show the animals that Adam is not unique. *Genesis Rabbah* 8, 9 has a similar tradition, where the angels are tempted to worship Adam until God sends Adam into a deep sleep. Therefore, *PRE*'s narrative is both traditional and innovative, preserving rabbinic motifs while responding to non-rabbinic sources.

Satan's association with the serpent to tempt Eve is the sequel to fall of Satan. In the *Life*, this event is the devil's revenge for his expulsion from heaven. In *PRE*, since Sammael has not yet been expelled from heaven, his plot with the serpent is borne out of pure jealousy. Despite this difference, a few things link these two particular narratives. First, they both present the serpent as a vessel for the devil<sup>14</sup>, against early traditions that refer to the devil alone<sup>15</sup> or imply that the serpent is the devil<sup>16</sup>. Second, in both the *Life* and *PRE* the serpent touches the fruit of the tree first. The context is different: in the *Life*, the serpent is injecting venom into the fruit,

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. J.-D. KAESTLI, *op. cit.*, p. 352-354. This hypothesis, of course, presumes a Christian provenance.

<sup>12</sup> G. S. REYNOLDS, *The Qur'an and its Biblical Subtext*, London, New York, Routledge, 2010, p. 39-54, argues that the Christological overtones are even present in the Qur'anic narratives, which Muslim exegetes attempted to downplay.

<sup>13</sup> Or the angels. G. FRIEDLANDER, , *op. cit.* (note 1), p. 79, n. 5, notes variations between the text of *PRE* and later midrash collections that quote *PRE*.

<sup>14</sup> *PRE* 13; *Life* 46, 4b (*Apocalypse of Moses* 16, 4b). All citations of the *Life* are based off the synopsis in J.-P. PETTORELLI, J.-D. KAESTLI, A. FREY, *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 761-905.

<sup>15</sup> Wisdom of Solomon 2, 24.

<sup>16</sup> Revelation 12, 9.

while in *PRE*, the serpent touches the tree to assure Eve that the tree is safe<sup>17</sup>. Finally, in both traditions, the serpent has limbs. The loss of these limbs is one of his punishments in the *Life*; *PRE* reports that Sammael rode the serpent like a camel<sup>18</sup>.

The significance of these parallels is difficult to evaluate. Despite these shared details, the actual narrative of Eve's seduction plays out differently in the two works. Furthermore, Satan's use of the serpent as a vessel is traditional in Christian literature<sup>19</sup>, while the limbs of the serpent are traditional in rabbinic literature<sup>20</sup>, which diminishes the possibility that *PRE* knew these traditions from the *Life* rather than from some other source. Indeed, these motifs are so common that the question of 'source' may be meaningless. The remaining parallel, the serpent touching the tree, occurs in such different contexts that it is difficult to posit any sort of relationship between the two works. There is no compelling reason to presume an exclusive dependence of *PRE* on the *Life* in this instance.

The penance scenes in the two works, however, do seem to be related. The penance of Adam in the river in *PRE* 20, like the fall of Satan and his association with the serpent, has no other parallel in rabbinic literature<sup>21</sup>. The only parallels seems to be the tradition found in the *Life* and in the Ethiopic work *The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan* (before 9<sup>th</sup> century), a secondary Adam book that probably, if indirectly, derives its penance scene from the *Life*<sup>22</sup>. The Ethiopic work, however, does not have

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<sup>17</sup> *PRE* 13; *Life* 49, 3 (*Apocalypse* 19, 3). This only occurs in the Greek and Armenian versions.

<sup>18</sup> *PRE* 13; *Life* 56, 2 (*Apocalypse* 26, 2). This is not attested in the Latin versions.

<sup>19</sup> See examples in H. SPURLING and E. GRYPEOU, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 223, n.20.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. *Genesis Rabbah* 19, 1; b. Sanhedrin 59b; b. Erubin 18a.

<sup>21</sup> Israël LEVI, 'Eléments Chrétiens dans le *Pirké Rabbi Eliézer*', *Revue des Etudes Juives*, vol. 18.1, 1889, p. 87.

<sup>22</sup> Book I, chapters xxxii-xxxiii, in S. C. MALAN, *The Book of Adam and Eve: also called the conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan, a book of the early Eastern Church*,

any apparent connection to *PRE*. Again, the version found in *PRE* is very different from the *Life*, barring a few particular details. First, in both versions Adam stands in the water until it reaches his neck<sup>23</sup>. Second, when Adam emerges from the water, he resembles a ‘species of seaweed’<sup>24</sup>, which is how Eve appears when she leaves the water in the *Life*<sup>25</sup>. These two details are missing in the *Conflict*. Therefore, the Ethiopic work preserves the general outline of the tradition but ignores certain details, while *PRE* presents the story in an entirely new context yet knows individual details.

The differences in *PRE*'s version of the story fit within the work's theological program, which suggests that the author knew the *Life* but willfully changed its contents. The first great divergence is the total absence of Eve's attempted penance in *PRE*. The absence of Eve's penance also means the absence of Eve's failure, so that Adam's sin is followed by a successful penance. This undercuts the gravity of Adam's sin and its consequences, a major theme of the *Life*. The second significant difference is that Adam undergoes his penance in the Gihon, while all versions of the *Life* place Adam's penance in the Jordan. Louis Ginzberg believed that *PRE* preserved the original tradition of the *Life*, since the Jordan recalls the baptism of Jesus, while the Gihon has no obvious Christian symbolism<sup>26</sup>. He presumes a Jewish provenance for the *Life*—which cannot be taken for

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*translated from the Ethiopic, with notes from the Kufale, Talmud, Midrashim, and other Eastern works*, London, 1882, p. 34-36. The *Conflict* is more clearly influenced by the *Cave of Treasures*, which, however, lacks the penance scene.

<sup>23</sup> *PRE* 20; *Life* 6, 2 - 7, 2 (*Apocalypse* 29, 11a).

<sup>24</sup> *PRE* 20; G. FRIEDLANDER, *op. cit.* (note 1), p. 147. Printed editions read ‘like a sieve’ (n. 6).

<sup>25</sup> *Life* 10, 1.

<sup>26</sup> L. GINZBERG, ‘Adam, Book of’, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (New York, 1916), p. 180.

granted<sup>27</sup>—and he overlooks that the Jordan also plays an important role in the history of Israel<sup>28</sup>.

The real mystery is why the author of *PRE* chose the Gihon at all, which not only lacks an obvious Christian association but an obvious Jewish one. In fact, the *river* Gihon, a river of Paradise (Gen 2, 13) sometimes associated with the Nile<sup>29</sup>, has no obvious symbolic significance, but the Gihon *spring*, the water source for Jerusalem (2 Chr 32, 30), does. *PRE* does not specify that Adam did penance in a river, although the author may have conflated the river with the spring. According to *PRE* 20, Mount Moriah—the Temple Mount<sup>30</sup>—lies just outside the Garden of Eden. The Temple Mount is in Jerusalem; therefore, Jerusalem is in the environs of Paradise. With this reconfiguration of sacred geography, the author can easily make the identification between the river Gihon and the Gihon spring. The Jordan is rejected presumably because it is neither a river of Paradise nor associated with Jerusalem, although elsewhere the author feels free to alter real-world geography to fit a ‘Jerusalemizing’ tendency.

This leads to the final major tradition shared between *PRE* and the *Life*, regarding the place of Adam’s burial. In the *Life*, God buries Adam in the region of Paradise, in the same place where he was created. His son

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<sup>27</sup> The issue of provenance is still highly contentious. E.g., J.-D. KAESTLI, *op. cit* (note 8), p. 341-354, argues for a Christian provenance, while J. DOCHHORN, *Die Apokalypse des Mose: Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 106)*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005, p. 149-172, argues for a Jewish Palestinian origin.

<sup>28</sup> For instance, the crossing of the Jordan in Joshua 3 - 5. Cf. G. A. ANDERSON, 'The Penitence Narrative in the Life of Adam and Eve', in G. A. ANDERSON, M. E. STONE, and J. TROMP (eds.), *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 15)*, Leiden, Brill, 2000, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> This identification is already found in FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS, *Jewish Antiquities* 1.3.

<sup>30</sup> According to 2 Chronicles 3, 1 and later Jewish tradition (e. g. *Jubilees* 18, 14).

Abel is buried with him at the same time<sup>31</sup>. In rabbinic tradition, Adam and Eve are buried in the cave of Machpelah in Hebron, in the same cave as Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah. The four couples within the cave explain the ancient name of Hebron, 'Qiriat Arba', meaning 'the City of Four'<sup>32</sup>. *PRE* maintains that Adam was buried in the cave of Machpelah—but he has changed the location of the cave from Hebron to outside Mount Moriah at the gates of Eden. According to *PRE* 12, the Temple Mount is also the place where Adam was created, which accords with earlier rabbinic tradition<sup>33</sup>. Adam is therefore buried close to his place of creation, this side of Paradise.

Once again, the tradition of *PRE* does not tally exactly with what is found in the *Life*. Although both works place Adam's tomb in the place of his creation, in the *Life* Adam is buried inside Paradise, while in *PRE* Adam is buried just outside. The motif that Adam was buried at the place of his creation is older than both works, since it is already found in the book of *Jubilees*<sup>34</sup>. *Jubilees* agrees with *PRE* in that Adam was created and buried outside of Paradise, but in *Jubilees*, this place is in the otherwise unknown land of Elda. *PRE* fuses the two traditions, at once placing Adam's burial outside of Paradise yet in a holy location close to Paradise. Adam's burial by the Temple Mount is *PRE*'s innovation.

The placement of Adam's tomb by the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, although innovative, seems to be a response to another text, the *Cave of Treasures*, a Christian work written sometime before the Muslim conquests and so anterior to *PRE*<sup>35</sup>. Like *PRE*, the *Cave of Treasures* has a vast

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<sup>31</sup> *Life* 70, 6 (*Apocalypse* 40, 6).

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, *Genesis Rabbah* 58, 4 and b. Erubin 53a.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 14, 8 ; j. Nazir 7, 56b.

<sup>34</sup> *Jubilees* 4, 29.

<sup>35</sup>A. TOEPEL, 'The Cave of Treasures: A New Translation and Introduction', in R. BAUCKHAM, J. R. DAVILA, and A. PANAYOTOV (eds.), *Old Testament*

scope, covering all of (Christian) biblical history until the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Adam stories of the two works have a remarkable number of similarities, including motifs that cannot be found in the *Life*<sup>36</sup>, such as the creation of Adam from four elements<sup>37</sup>, the expulsion of Adam and Eve on the same day of their creation (Day Six)<sup>38</sup>, and the birth of Cain and Abel along with their twin sisters, who doubled as their wives and incited the hostility between the brothers<sup>39</sup>. Both works are also eager to put Adam's final resting place in the center of the earth<sup>40</sup>, in Jerusalem—only, in the *Cave of Treasures*, Adam is not buried near the Temple Mount but on Mount Golgotha.

The *Cave* differs from *PRE* in that it does not identify Paradise with Jerusalem. Adam is in fact created in Jerusalem<sup>41</sup>, as in *PRE*, but Paradise itself is a cosmic mountain that can only be accessed through supernatural means<sup>42</sup>. Adam is initially buried in the eponymous Cave of Treasures on top of this mountain. His body is relocated to the point of his creation only after the Flood, when Noah takes up the body in the Ark. Adam is then buried in Jerusalem by Shem, who invests his descendant Melchizedek as

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*Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, Grand Rapids, Cambridge, Eerdmans, 2013, p. 535, notes that the work is attributed to Ephrem the Syrian (4th century) but first quoted in the *Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius*, written in the mid-seventh century in the wake of the conquests. Since the *Cave* does not mention the conquests, it was written at least slightly before this event.

<sup>36</sup>For other examples, A. TOEPEL, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im syrischen 'Buch der Schatzhöhle': eine quellenkritische Untersuchung (Corpus scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 119)*, Louvain, Peeters, 2006, frequently refers to *PRE*.

<sup>37</sup>*PRE* 11; *Cave* 2, 7-8. Citations of the *Cave* are based on A. TOEPEL, *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 531-584.

<sup>38</sup>*PRE* 11; *Cave* 5, 1.

<sup>39</sup>*PRE* 21; *Cave* 5, 18-20.

<sup>40</sup>*PRE* 11; *Cave* 22, 7.

<sup>41</sup>*Cave* 2, 16.

<sup>42</sup>*Cave* 3, 8.

a priest at Golgotha<sup>43</sup>. The author's intention is to connect Adam with Christ, which becomes quite explicit in the later part of the work when the author announces that Christ resembled Adam in everything<sup>44</sup>. Between Adam and Christ, the author offers Christological interpretations of key stories from the Hebrew Bible.

Both *PRE* and the *Cave* place Adam in the holiest location within Jerusalem, although that location differs according to the religious tradition of each work. This parallel is not a coincidence. In *PRE* 20, Adam worries that he will be inappropriately venerated. Therefore, when he constructs his own tomb in Machpelah, the 'double cave', he has his body placed deep within the cavern. In the *Cave*, not only are Adam and Christ closely associated, but Adam is installed in the middle of Ark as a symbol of the mysteries of the Church<sup>45</sup>. That Melchizedek functions as a priest over his tomb on Golgotha also implies that his body is venerated. *PRE* seems to be responding to this idea, if not this specific text.

Nor is this the only place in the two works where Moriah and Golgotha—or, rather, the Temple and the Cross—stand in opposition. In the *Cave*, the sacrifice of Isaac occurs on Golgotha, against the biblical tradition, while *PRE* maintains that it happened on Moriah<sup>46</sup>. When Rebekah is barren, Isaac consults Melchizedek on Golgotha in the *Cave*, while in *PRE* the patriarch returns to Moriah to pray for his wife<sup>47</sup>. Jacob's dream in the *Cave* is a vision of the cross; in *PRE* Jacob dreams on the Temple Mount<sup>48</sup>. Finally, the *Cave* is the first Christian work—to my knowledge—to record the legend that Jesus was crucified on a part of the

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<sup>43</sup> *Cave* 23, 1-23.

<sup>44</sup> *Cave* 49, 1.

<sup>45</sup> *Cave* 18, 3-6.

<sup>46</sup> *PRE* 31; *Cave* 29, 4-9.

<sup>47</sup> *PRE* 32; *Cave* 31, 5-6.

<sup>48</sup> *PRE* 35; *Cave* 32, 17-19.

Temple<sup>49</sup>; in *PRE*, Haman, a Jewish surrogate for Jesus<sup>50</sup>, is also hanged on wood from the Temple<sup>51</sup>.

In light of this evidence, it seems that Adam's burial by the Temple Mount in *PRE* is directed against the Christian tradition that Adam was buried on Golgotha. The Muslim historian Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> cent.) is an additional witness to the polemical value accorded to the location of Adam's creation and burial. In his *History of Prophets and Kings*, he reports that the elements used to create Adam came from the center of the earth, at the future location of the Kaaba. He also reports that many people say Adam was buried on a mountain just outside of Mecca<sup>52</sup>. This is an Islamic version of the tradition found in the *Cave* and in *PRE*. The idea that Adam was created and buried in the holiest place on earth ultimately goes back to the *Life*.

The foregoing examples show that *PRE* not only knows Adam traditions found in the *Life*, but it depends upon later Adam literature as well. In both cases the author of *PRE* has transformed the parallel traditions to fit within a theological framework that shuns idolatry and glorifies the Temple Mount of Jerusalem. This should give pause to anyone who wishes to claim

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<sup>49</sup> Part of the Holy Rood legend, which developed from the 'oil of life' tradition in the *Life*. The legend says that Seth planted a seed from Paradise on Adam's tomb. The resulting tree was used for the Temple before becoming the wood of the cross. Cf. B. MURDOCH, *The Medieval Popular Bible: Expansions of Genesis in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2003, p. 62-64.

<sup>50</sup> I. J. YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, transl. B. HARSHAV and J. CHIPMAN, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006, p. 165-167.

<sup>51</sup> *PRE* 50; *Cave* 50, 20.

<sup>52</sup> al-ṬABARI, *De la création à David: extrait de la chronique de Tabari*, transl. H. ZOTENBERG, Paris, Sindbad, 1984, p. 74, 91. He also reports that some believe Adam's body was taken by Noah and then buried in Jerusalem, i.e. the version found in the *Cave of Treasures*.

that *PRE* preserves traditions from a hypothetical original form of the *Life*. More positively, *PRE* can be used as an illustration of the *Life*'s continuing influence. The use of the later Adam traditions found in the Qur'an and the *Cave of Treasures* did not prevent the author of *PRE* from referring to the *Life* as well. Thus the later Adam literature builds upon the *Life* without replacing it. Furthermore, *PRE*'s use of Adam traditions from multiple religious sources shows that the author was a great collector and harmonizer of competing traditions. *PRE*'s profound influence on subsequent Jewish literature, from Rashi to the Zohar, bears witness to the success of his project.

#### SUMMARY

The late rabbinic work *Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer* (c. 8<sup>th</sup> century) shares a handful of motifs in common with the *Life of Adam and Eve*, including some that *PRE* introduces into rabbinic literature for the first time. *PRE*'s dependence on the *Life*, however, is slight. The author of *PRE* has used not only traditions known from the *Life* but traditions from other, later Adam books, which he has harmonized to fit within a rabbinic Jewish framework.

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