The "assumption" of the righteous dead in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Sayings Gospel Q

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Summary: The Wisdom of Solomon applies language from the Genesis reference to Enoch's assumption (Gen. 5:24 LXX) to the dead "righteous one" (Wis. 4:7-17). This unusual use of the motif of assumption, normally thought of as an escape from death, is facilitated by *topoi* drawn from Hellenistic consolation materials; however, the typical corollary of assumption in the Jewish tradition—heavenly or eschatological exaltation—is also applied to the righteous one in Wis. 5:1-5. This innovation is particularly instructive for Q, which may understand Jesus' post-mortem vindication and exaltation in terms of assumption (Q 13:35).

Résumé: La Livre de Sagesse utilise la langage de l'assomption d'Henoch (Gen. 5:24 LXX) pour décrire "le juste" qui est mort (Sag. 4:7-17). Cet usage exceptionnel du motif d'assomption, normalement conçu comme evasion du mort, est facilité au moyen de *topoi* adaptés des matières hellenistique de consolation; cependant, la corollaire caractéristique de l'assomption dans la tradition juive—l'exaltation celeste ou eschatologique—en même temps est appliqué au Juste en Sag. 5:1-5. Cette innovation est particulièrement significative pour Q, qui peut-être comprends l'assomption du Jesus comme les moyens de la vindication et exaltation post-mortelle du Jesus (Q 13:35).

1 Introduction

In the ancient world, traditions abounded in which human beings were removed, bodily or otherwise, permanently or temporarily, from earth to heaven. In his monumental study of the Lukan ascension narratives, *Die*

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Himmelfahrt Jesu (1971), Gerhard Lohfink showed that assumption in antiquity was a distinct species of ascent, with its own peculiar narrative form and motifs. Generally speaking, these are consistent from the beginnings of assumption theology in Mesopotamian mythology, to the traditions of the dormition and assumption of Mary.

Lohfink's results (1971: 32-75) may be summarized briefly. As a divine act, assumption is often expressed with passive verbs. Technical terms such as *harpazō* ("take/steal away") and *metatithēmi* ("transfer to another place") convey the suddenness and completeness of the removal. In addition, assumption narratives are normally reported from the perspective of those who are left behind, not the one taken away. For this reason, the idea of bodily disappearance and related terms such as *aphanizō* ("disappear") are important in removal stories (Pease 1942). In fact, the connection between disappearance and assumption was so strong in antiquity that the absence of a body or known gravesite was considered grounds for assumption speculation, as Josephus suggested concerning Moses (*Ant.* 4.8.48; Tabor 1989). Similarly, the battlefield disappearance of Aeneas led to a belief in his assumption, and to his veneration as a deity of local influence (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1.64.4).

As this last example suggests, the result of assumption was usually deification or exaltation. In the Greco-Roman tradition, the person joined the ranks of the immortals, those who had been deified (Lohfink 1971: 46-49; Talbert 1975). In Jewish literature, those figures who were assumed almost inevitably had some sort of special eschatological status, as either a recipient of revelation or as a returning judge or witness (Haufe 1961). In fact, in several cases persons who were expected to have an eschatological role came to have assumption attributed to them.[1]

One other feature of the ancient concept of assumption must be emphasized: it was a final and bodily removal from earth to heaven, an escape from death. Those who are assumed are taken into heaven while they are alive. In Greco-Roman literature this seems to be a general rule, although the translation of corpses—from tombs or funeral pyres—is not entirely unknown.[2] However, the idea of post-mortem assumption is practically unheard of in Jewish literature. As Lohfink put it, "Whoever is assumed does not taste death. And the opposite is true: whoever actually dies cannot be assumed" (1971: 74). Lohfink did allow that assumption can follow the death of an individual, if that death is first reversed by resurrection, so that the person is taken into heaven while alive (1971: 59). The clearest examples are the risen Jesus in the Lukan ascension narratives and the two witnesses in Rev. 11:3-13.

This essay explores the possibility that both the Wisdom of Solomon and the Sayings Gospel Q apply to figures who had died the traditional Jewish logic which connected assumption and heavenly exaltation or eschatological function. In the Book of Wisdom, this use of assumption is a remarkable innovation based upon *topoi* from the Hellenistic consola-

tion tradition. Assumption theology in Q could explain how Jesus' post-mortem exaltation was understood apart from resurrection theology.

2 Assumption in the Sayings Gospel Q?

A lost collection of Jesus' sayings (Q, short for the German *Quelle*) was first posited in the 19th century as the source of the material common to Matthew and Luke but not found in Mark. Practically since that time, scholars have recognized that Q contained no passion narrative, nor any explicit reference to the death or resurrection of Jesus (e.g., Harnack 1908 [1907]: 170-71). Q does show evidence of a belief in Jesus as a future eschatological figure, the "son of man" or the "coming one" (see Q 12:8-9[3]; Q 13:35). But without a resurrection theology (Kloppenborg 1990), how did the framers of Q envision this exaltation of Jesus?

According to Dieter Zeller (1985), the "Lament over Jerusalem" saying (Q 13:34-35) may contain a hint that assumption theology, rather than resurrection theology, lies behind Q's belief in an exalted post-mortem Jesus. That saying reads as follows:

> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you, how often have I wished to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks together under her wings, and you were not willing. Behold, your house is forsaken. I tell you, you will not see me until you say, "Blessed is the Coming One in the name of the Lord."

Zeller suggested that the clause "you will not see me," which speaks of the future absence or invisibility of Jesus, is actually a reference to an assumption-related disappearance. The language of this clause is very similar to that used in the Septuagint version of Elijah's removal (2 Kings 2:12 LXX: "and he did not see him any longer") and in other Hellenistic assumption narratives.[4] In Zeller's view, Q does not refer specifically to Jesus' death—despite its deuteronomistic emphasis on the murder of prophets—because assumption was typically understood as an escape from death. The Jerusalem Lament intentionally omits the death of Jesus, knowledge of which is implicit elsewhere in Q (Zeller 1985: 517-18; see Hultgren 1994: 31-41; Seeley 1992).

But if assumption, as shown above, is typically a pre-mortem category, how did Zeller approach the problem of how Q would come to apply assumption to the post-mortem Jesus? In his view, "the idea [of assumption] can also be employed with historical persons who die suddenly or disappear under unclear circumstances. . . . The one whom God assumed thus takes on eschatological significance for those who were left behind" (1985: 518). Zeller refers to Wisdom 4-5 as another source which applies assumption and subsequent eschatological function to someone who had died: the "righteous one" (so also Lohfink 1971: 55 n. 161). A cursory glance at the texts in question might lead one to believe that Zeller appealed to one enigma in order to clarify another.

3 Assumption in Wisdom of Solomon 4-5

For our purposes there are two important questions, each with two parts. First, are the references in Wisdom 4 correctly assessed as assumption language? And if so, on what basis did the author apply such language to the dead righteous one? Second, does the righteous one appear in Wisdom 5 as an exalted figure? And if so, is there evidence that this exaltation is connected with the assumption motif used in Wisdom 4?

The Book of Wisdom (Wis. 4:10,14) uses language drawn from the reference to Enoch in Gen. 5:21-24 (LXX). The two points of linguistic contact between these texts are the verbs *euaresteō* ("be pleasing") and *metatithēmi* ("remove/translate"). This combination of terminology shows that the author of the Book of Wisdom alludes to the Greek-language tradition concerning Enoch's assumption. However, the allusion does not have Enoch in view, but the "righteous one" (Kolarcik 1991: 96; Schmitt 1976: 184).

Wis. 1:16-5:23 contains, interspersed with wisdom materials, the story of a righteous man (*ho dikaios*), a representative figure who dies as the victim of a conspiracy of the ungodly (*hoi asebeis*), and who appears in a post-mortem judgment scene. The line "being well-pleasing to God, he was loved, and while living among sinners he was translated" (Wis. 4:10), refers to the righteous one who according to verse 7 dies early. The righteous one is mentioned explicitly again in 4:16 as "the righteous one who has died." The reader would recall the murderous conspiracy of the ungodly against the righteous one in the first part of the story, Wis. 2:10-20 (especially vv. 17-20). Is it possible that assumption is not understood here as an escape from death?

4 *Topoi* from consolation literature

The Book of Wisdom uses an expression for assumption that is atypical in Hellenistic Jewish materials: the verb *harpazō* ("take/steal away," 4:11). "He was taken away, lest wickedness alter his understanding or deceit lead his soul astray." As Lohfink found (1971: 42), this is a technical term for assumption in classical literature, but *harpazō* is not used anywhere else in the Septuagint to connote assumption. The usual verbs for assumption in the Hellenistic Jewish tradition are *metatithēmi* ("remove/translate") and *analambanō* ("take up"), since the Septuagint translates the Hebrew verb *lqḥ* ("take") in Gen. 5:24 (Enoch) with the former and in 2 Kings 2:9-10 (Elijah) with the latter (Lohfink 1971: 73). In addition, the author makes use of other motifs which properly belong to the theme of early death: the ideas of being loved by God (4:10) and being preserved from evil (4:11-14), and the verb *speudō* ("hasten") to signify an early departure from earth (4:14). The verb *harpazō* and these ideas just mentioned appear in Greek epitaphs dedicated to people who died before their time, and in other materials that may be classed as consolation literature

(Schmitt 1976: 191; 1986; Winston 1979: 140). The similarity in language and theme between certain epitaphs and Wis. 4:10-11 is striking.

In this epitaph (Gythium, c. 75 B.C.E.), *harpazō* and the theme of divine love appear together.

> At fifteen years, the cruel thread of the Fates [Moiras] stole you away [*hērpase*],
> Attalos, the delight of your most noble mother, Tyche,
> you who practice wisdom and [. . .] all good things,
> Attalos, whose life was well-blessed by Fate:
> Do not be overly sorrowful; for though you are young, as some people say,
> if one is befriended by the gods, death comes swiftly. (*IG* 5.1.1186; Vérilhac 1978: 1.92-96)

There are a number of features worthy of note here. First, the last line of this stanza expresses the common view that, in the words of Menander, "the one whom the gods love dies young." A similar sentiment is present in Wis. 4:10: "he was beloved by God" (Winston 1979: 140-1; Schmitt 1986: 66-7). Second, here as elsewhere, *harpazō* is used stereotypically: often it is Hades or Fate, described with some negative epithet, who snatches away a child (Vérilhac 1978: 2.179-85). In this example it is the "cruel thread of the Fates"; later the same epitaph castigates Moira for her hastiness in stealing Attalos away. Notice too that while the epitaph blames the Fates for the early death of Attalos, the boy is also described as "well-blessed by Fate." It is a remarkable (but not atypical) contradiction that the themes of divine love and divine malice appear together.

The verb *harpazō* has a negative connotation whenever it is used for early death, whether or not the divinity at fault is mentioned explicitly. In the *Letter of Condolence to Apollonius*, attributed to Plutarch, *harpazō* is used to describe the grieving complaints of parents whose children die too young. For example, the author writes, "We must regard as vain and foolish such exclamations as these: 'But he ought not to have been snatched away [*anarpagēnai*] while young!' " (*Cons. Apoll.* 18; trans. Babbitt et al. 1949-76). The author disparages such sentiments, advocating instead an acquiescence to destiny; nevertheless, because the passive voice implies a malicious agent, the cry of grief here echoes the accusatory tone noted in the epitaphs.

The idea of an over-eager deity is evident in the next two examples, and, as in Wisdom 4, *harpazō* and *speudō* appear together. Here (Athens, c. 150 C.E.) Hades hastens to steal an infant from his parents.

> Why did you hasten [*speusas*], Hades, and steal away [*hērpasas*] our baby,
> sweet Solon, whom you have taken down without pity—
> our six month old baby, our beautiful baby? What bitter anguish
> you have caused, Destiny, to these sorrowful parents! (*IG* 2.12629; Vérilhac 1978: 1.223-24)

In a similar way, the following lines from a bilingual epitaph (Rome, 2-3 C C.E.) castigate an "insatiable Hades" with a formula that appears in other epitaphs of similar age and provenance (Vérilhac 1978: 2.192-3).

> Insatiable Hades, why did you steal away [*hērpases*] my child so suddenly?
> Why do you hasten [*speudeis*]? Are we all not owed to you? (*CIG* 3.6227, *CIL* 6,15038; Vérilhac 1978: 1.220-21)

In both these examples, both *harpazō* and *speudō* are used in an accusatory manner. The divine agent blamed for the early death is accused of both robbery and undue haste.

The idea of haste in an early death was not limited to the deities at fault, however. The one who died early was often thought of as fleeing the evils of the world. Consider the following example (Rome, 3rd century C.E.), where the soul hastens to the divinity:

> This tomb contains the unmarried Kalokairos, because the immortal soul
> has left the body of the young boy;
> for it hurried [*speuden*] on its way to the divinity, leaving behind
> the anxieties of this bitter life, going up as a pure spirit. (*IG* 14.1729; Peek 1960: 174)

Similarly, according to the *Letter of Condolence to Apollonius*, those who die young are "spared many evils," but they also avoid "any grossness of conduct as is wont to be the concomitant of a long old age" (*Cons. Apoll.* 34). They thus avoid not only potential troubles and sorrows, but also the pollution of good character. This is the sense in which *speudō* occurs in Wis. 4:14a: "For his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore it hastened [*espeusen*] from the midst of evil." The author reprises the idea, seen already in verses 11 and 12, that the Lord removes the *dikaios* in order to prevent his pollution and to preserve his righteousness.

The combination of themes from both the Jewish assumption tradition and the Hellenistic consolation materials appears to be consistent with the compositional method of the author of the Book of Wisdom. David Seeley has recently argued that "Pseudo-Solomon combines a number of narrative patterns from both the Hebraic and Hellenistic vectors of his syncretistic culture" (1990: 76). Seeley demonstrates that the author of Wisdom used *topoi* from Hellenistic moral philosophy. For example, the sudden movement of the ungodly from hedonism to the violent oppression of the righteous one (Wis. 2:9-10) may be explained on the basis of "an apparent *topos* in Greco-Roman moral philosophy which associates the pursuit of pleasure with aggressive wrongdoing" (1990: 68; see also 71-72).

Here the author of the Book of Wisdom makes use of *topoi* from consolation literature and from the Jewish assumption tradition. The lynchpin is the verb *harpazō*: since it is used commonly for both early death and assumption, an overlap of themes is exploited in a remarkable way. Although *harpazō* in the epitaphs and consolation literature is typically used negatively, in Jewish thought assumption was understood only as a divine blessing. Hence, when the Book of Wisdom uses *harpazō* in connection with the early death of the righteous one, the accusatory tone usually directed at the deity in such cases is completely absent, for the emphasis is

on God's benevolent purposes. Thus, the author is able to apply assumption language, normally reserved for the living righteous taken up bodily into heaven, to the dead righteous one. Because the *dikaios* was pleasing to God, his early death is equated with the divine blessing of assumption (Kolarcik 1991: 95).

One example from a roughly contemporary Jewish source can be cited. In the *Testament of Job*, a text from about the turn of the era, Sitis, Job's wife, implores Eliphas to search through the ruins of their house in order to recover the bones of the children killed when it collapsed (*T. Job* 39:8-11). As the men go off to dig, Job forbids them, saying, "Do not trouble yourself in vain. For you will not find my children, since they were taken up [*anelēphthēsan*] into heaven by the Creator their King" (*T. Job* 39:11-12; trans. Spittler 1983). Those who hear express disbelief (39:13). Then Job tells Sitis to look to the east, and she sees a vision of their children "crowned with the splendour of the heavenly one" (40:3). Consoled by this vision, Sitis dies at peace (40:4-6).

The motifs of unsuccessful search and exalted heavenly status show that the dead children were assumed. There is no indication why God would bestow such a special honour on the children of Job, particularly since Job's own death is narrated as an ascent of the soul (*T. Job* 52). R. P. Spittler suggests that if the post-mortem assumption of the children is inconsistent with other beliefs in the afterlife suggested in the *Testament of Job*, "it is only because TJob reflects a stage in the development of Jewish eschatology where considerable diversity appeared" (1983: 859 n. *e*). This is hardly satisfying, especially since Jewish tradition tends to reserve the blessing of assumption only for a select few. It is tempting to suggest that the assumption of Job's children has something to do with their early and untimely death, especially since the vision appears to have a consolatory function, but such a suggestion would have to remain tentative.

5 The exalted status of the *dikaios*

Besides the consolatory function of assumption language in Wisdom 4, another issue is at work in the story of the *dikaios*, the immortality of the soul, as Robert J. Miller has recently argued (1996). In spite of the presence of non-narrative wisdom material, the story may be counted among the so-called "Wisdom Tales," stories that "dramatically demonstrate the ultimate validity of wisdom/righteousness by narrating the vindication of righteous sages caught in seemingly hopeless situations, victims of the schemes of evil opponents" (209). In stories where the sage is killed, says Miller, the only vindication possible is a post-mortem one (see Nickelsburg 1972: 66). Thus, in his view, "the immortality of the soul in Wisdom 2-5 is a wisdom tale solution to the problem of martyrdom" (Miller 1996: 209; see Nickelsburg 1972: 88). However, the idea of the soul's immortality cannot account for the elevated status and role of the *dikaios* in Wis. 5:1-5.

There are at least two indications that the *dikaios* appears after his death as an exalted figure. First, the ungodly affirm the righteous one is now one of the sons of God, one of the holy ones (Wis. 5:5). At the very least, this salvation is an unexpected paradox for his onetime oppressors (5:2). It has been suggested, however, that the expressions "sons of God" and "holy ones" signify angelic beings (Nickelsburg 1972: 60-61). A second and clearer indication that the *dikaios* has received an exalted heavenly status is found in his appearance at the judgment of the *asebeis.* Apparently, this judgment is not a final or universal one, for the only ones present in 5:1-14 are the *dikaios* and his persecutors. The scene is remarkable because no divine judge appears to be present: the ungodly quake with miserable fear before the righteous one himself. His silent presence and proven vindication are accusation enough, and he stands "with great boldness before those who oppressed him" (5:1).

The ungodly quake because the *dikaios* has been exalted to a forensic role in the heavenly court, as Wis. 3:8 and 4:16-17 predict. The latter text foretells that "the dead righteous one will condemn the ungodly who are alive." It could be argued that the condemnation here involves the *dikaios* only in a passive way, so that his vindicated heavenly presence alone accuses and condemns the ungodly. But the dead righteous one who condemns seems to validate the expectation, found in Wis. 3:8, that the righteous (plural) will judge the nations as the viceregents of the Lord: "they will judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever." Thus, the *dikaios* has been exalted to an active role in judgment.

It may be noted parenthetically that several other sources use the term "righteous one" for an exalted or eschatological figure (Hays 1989). Most notable is Isa. 52:13-53:12, the Fourth Servant Song, which is usually regarded as the primary inspiration for the tale of the *dikaios* in Wisdom 2-5 (e.g., Suggs 1957). Isa. 53:11b-12 in particular has a post-mortem exaltation of the suffering servant (here called "the righteous one") in view. Other sources include the Similitudes of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 37-71), where the epithet "Righteous One"—though not the usual title for the enthroned "Son of man" figure—connotes a representative relationship between the exalted one and the community of the righteous elect (Collins 1980). Interestingly, a similar relationship between the *dikaios* (singular) and the *dikaioi* (plural) is evident in Wisdom 2-5, as suggested by the parallel judging roles noted above. Finally, the idea of wrongful death and exaltation is also evident in Acts 3:13-15 and 7:51-53, where Jesus is the murdered righteous one.

One important issue remains: Was the exaltation typically found in Jewish assumption traditions the basis of the post-mortem vindication of the righteous one in the Book of Wisdom? Wis. 4:16-17 explicitly connects the death of the *dikaios* with his forensic role: "the righteous one who has died will condemn the ungodly who are alive." The removal of the *dikaios,*

described as an assumption, is a divine safeguard directly connected with his role in judgment. It may be concluded that his post-mortem exaltation is based upon the logic that connected assumption and special eschatological function.

6 Conclusion

The motif of assumption and post-mortem vindication is applied to dead persons in later biblical and apocryphal literature as well. Two examples will be briefly discussed here. First, in Luke's parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31), the rich man died and was buried, but Lazarus died and was carried off (*apenechthēnai*) into heaven by angels. It is not clear whether the *body* of Lazarus is carried off to heaven, nor why Lazarus should receive such an honour, but there are a few similarities between the parable and the material in Wisdom 4-5. In Wis. 4:10-19, assumption language is used of the *dikaios* while the corpses of the *asebeis* are dishonoured; in Luke's parable there is a similar contrast between the bodily fates of the two characters. Further, in the post-mortem scene, the one who was oppressed remains silent, just as in Wis. 5:1-5, so that the blessed state of Lazarus shames the wrongdoer.

The late second century *Protevangelium of James* reports the post-mortem assumption of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, who seems to be confused with another Zechariah who was murdered in the temple (Q 11:51; 2 Chron. 24:20-22). This Zechariah is murdered by Herod's henchmen (*Prot. Jas.* 23), and when the other priests finally enter the sanctuary, they find his blood (which had turned to stone, 24:4) but they do not find his corpse (24:9). In the view of Ronald Hock, this could mean that "the murderers had carried away his body and buried it in an unmarked grave" (1995: 77), but "not finding" is the language of an assumption-related disappearance (Gen. 5:24 LXX, 2 Kings 2:17 LXX). Zechariah's post-mortem assumption is clearer in the late fourth century *Apocalypse of Paul*. In a concluding scene which only survives in the Coptic version, Paul meets John the Baptist, his father Zechariah, and Abel (who is mentioned with Zechariah in Q 11:51). Zechariah says to Paul: "I am he whom they killed while I was presenting the offering to God; and when the angels came for the offering, they carried up my body to God, and no one found where my body was taken" (Elliott 1993: 644). The language is that of assumption: he was carried up to God, and his body was not found. The post-mortem status of this Zechariah is not certain, although he is numbered among the saints who greet Paul in Paradise.[5]

Wisdom 2-5 appears to contain the clearest and earliest example, then, in the Jewish tradition, of assumption language being applied to a dead person. What does this mean for the interpretation of Q 13:34-35? Properly, this question ought to be addressed in a much longer study, but some tentative observations may be made. First, if Zeller is correct that the

Lament saying contains a hint of assumption theology, then the logic of Q's view of the post-mortem Jesus—identified as the Coming One and the Son of man—becomes somewhat clearer. Earlier scholars appealed to a belief in the resurrection, of which there is not even a hint in Q, as the theological impetus behind the identification of Jesus and the Son of man or Coming One (see Hoffmann 1982: 142; Tödt 1965 [1959]: 268). However, if the "you will not see me until" clause is understood correctly as a reference to Jesus' assumption, then it appears that Q (in its final form, at least) held that Jesus had been removed and exalted, and was being reserved in heaven for his future eschatological role.[6]

Second, since the lament looks ahead to the future disappearance of Jesus, it could be interpreted as an assumption prediction, presuming a foreknowledge of assumption. This is not an uncommon feature in assumption narratives: in 2 Kings 2, for example, Elijah and the other characters know beforehand that he will be taken up into heaven. The idea of foreknowledge was exploited in an interesting way in later apocalyptic literature (Haufe 1961: 106; Lohfink 1971: 60-61). The person who was to be assumed received divine revelation not just concerning the assumption, but also about the events of the end. The time between the revelation and the assumption itself was intended as a period in which the seer would instruct the people of God (see, for instance, *1 Enoch* 81:5-6; *4 Ezra* 14:9; *2 Baruch* 76:2-5). Perhaps the eschatological material at the end of Q could be understood in light of this apocalyptic motif.

Third, although it has been noted elsewhere that Q has a corporate view of suffering and persecution (Kloppenborg 1990: 82), it may also have a corporate view of vindication and exaltation. Q 22:28-30 envisions the community as sharing in the judging or governing office of the Son of man, as a reward for either faithful discipleship (Matt. 19:28) or perseverence in trials (Luke 22:28-29). The representative function of exalted heavenly figures, such as Wisdom's murdered and assumed righteous one and the Danielic/Enochic "son of man" (Collins 1980), may provide an analogy for Q's association of the community's vindication with that of Jesus.

Notes

1 The clearest examples are Ezra (*4 Ezra* 14:8-9,13, and the conclusion to Chapter 14 in the non-Latin versions), Baruch, (*2 Baruch* 76:1-5) and Tabitha (*Apocalypse of Elijah (Coptic)* 4:1-6; Pierpont Morgan Library Coptic Theological Texts 3.9v [Pearson 1976]).

2 For instance, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1.64.4 (Aeneas); Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.14.1-3 (Aristeas); Plutarch, *Rom.* 28 (Alcmena); Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. Hist.* 4.38.4 (Herakles); Chariton, *Chaer.* 3.3 (Callirhoe).

3 It is conventional to cite texts from Q according to their Lukan chapter and verse (i.e., Q 12:8-9 refers to the Q material used as the source for Matt. 10:32-33 and Luke 12:8-9). This convention does not necessarily imply that Luke preserves the original wording or order of Q.

4 See Berossos, *Babyloniaca* frag. 4a (Xisouthros); Plutarch, *Rom.* 27.5 (Romulus); Lucian, *Peregr.* 39 (Proteus).

5 By the end of the fifth century C.E., the tradition concerning the post-mortem assumption of Mary (see Elliott 1993: 691-723) was already widespread. In most versions of the tradition, the assumption of Mary's body follows the ascent of her soul and results in her exaltation and the incorruptibility of her body.

6 Some scholars, beginning with Elias Bickermann (1924), have viewed Mark's "empty tomb" narrative (Mark 16:1-8) as a narrative of an assumption-related disappearance. According to Bickermann, in the circle in which the "empty tomb" narrative originated, "the idea of [Jesus'] death ... plays little importance: the only important thing was the identification of the crucified Jesus with the Son of Man seen in heaven" (1924: 290).

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