

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

BETWEEN THE LITERAL AND THE ALLEGORICAL:
BIBLICAL PARAPHRASE AND THE MEDIATION OF SCRIPTURE IN PHILO OF
ALEXANDRIA'S AND GREGORY OF NYSSA'S LIVES OF MOSES

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To my loving and devoted wife, Shannon, and our kids, Ivy and Sloane, without whose constant support and sacrifices none of this would have been possible.

Epigraph

βρεκεκεκὲξ κοὰξ κοὰξ
βρεκεκεκὲξ κοὰξ κοὰξ

Aristophanes, *The Frogs*

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Abbreviations

The abbreviations in this study for biblical books, other ancient texts, journals, and academic series generally follow the rules recommended by the *SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd edition (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) with a few exceptions. The *SBL Handbook of Style* provides the standard abbreviations for Philo's works. The abbreviations for Gregory's works follow the list provided by the *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden: Brill, 2010). When ancient texts were not included in the *SBL Handbook of Style*, I consulted the list of abbreviations in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition (Oxford: Oxford Classical Press, 2012) and Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961). As the two primary authors of this study, the abbreviations for Philo and Gregory have been gathered below for easy access for the reader in addition to the abbreviations for secondary texts.

ANCIENT TEXTS CITED

PHILO'S TEXTS

<i>Abr.</i>	Philo, <i>De Abrahamo</i>
<i>Agr.</i>	Philo, <i>De agricultura</i>
<i>Cher.</i>	Philo, <i>De cherubim</i>
<i>Contempl.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita contemplativa</i>
<i>Deus</i>	Philo, <i>Quod Deus sit immutabilis</i>
<i>Ebr.</i>	Philo, <i>De ebrietate</i>
<i>Fug.</i>	Philo, <i>De fuga et inventione</i>
<i>Her.</i>	Philo, <i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i>
<i>Hypoth.</i>	Philo, <i>Hypothetica</i>

<i>Leg.</i>	Philo, <i>Legum allegoriae</i>
<i>Migr.</i>	Philo, <i>De migration Abrahami</i>
<i>Mos.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita Mosis</i>
<i>Opif.</i>	Philo, <i>De opificio mundi</i>
<i>QE</i>	Philo, <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum</i>
<i>QG</i>	Philo, <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin</i>
<i>Praem.</i>	Philo, <i>De praemiis et poenis</i>
<i>Prob.</i>	Philo, <i>Quod ombis probus liber sit</i>
<i>Sacr.</i>	Philo, <i>De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i>
<i>Somn.</i>	Philo, <i>De somniis</i>
<i>Spec.</i>	Philo, <i>De specialibus legibus</i>

GREGORY'S TEXTS

<i>Antirrh.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Antirrheticus adversos Apollinarium</i>
<i>Beat.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De beatitudinibus</i>
<i>Cant.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In Canticum canticorum</i>
<i>Diem lum.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In diem luminum</i>
<i>Diem nat.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In diem natalem</i>
<i>Epist.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Epistulae</i>
<i>Eun.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Contra Eunomium</i>
<i>Infant.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De infantibus praemature abreptis</i>
<i>Inscr.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In inscriptiones Psalmorum</i>
<i>Maced.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Adversus Macedonianos, De Spiritu Sancto</i>

<i>Macr.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Vita s. Macrinae</i>
<i>Op. hom.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De hominis opificio</i>
<i>Or. cat.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Oratio catechetica magna</i>
<i>Or. dom.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De oratione dominica</i>
<i>Ref. Eun.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutatio confessionis Eunomii</i>
<i>Salut. Pasch.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In sanctum et salutare Pascha</i>
<i>Thaum.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi</i>
<i>Theod.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De sancto Theodoro</i>
<i>Vit. Moys.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>De vita Moysis</i>

SECONDARY SOURCES

AB	Anchor Bible
ACO	Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
BEHEH	Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études: Sciences historiques et philologiques
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CW	Philo of Alexandria. <i>Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt</i> . Edited by Leopold Cohn, Paul Wendland, et al. 7 vols. Berlin: Typis impensis Gerogii Reimeri, 1896–30.
CWS	Classics of Western Spirituality

ECF	Early Church Fathers
FC	Fathers of the Church
GCS	Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GE	<i>The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek</i> . Edited by Franco Montanari, Madeleine Goh, and Chad Schroeder. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
GELS	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Takamitsu Muraoka. Leuven: Peeters, 2009.
GNO	Werner Jaeger, ed. <i>Gregorii Nysseni Opera</i> . 10 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1952–
GOTR	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>
HeyJ	<i>Heythrop Journal</i>
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
LG	<i>Lexicon Gregorianum</i>
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
PGL	<i>Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> . Edited by Geoffrey W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon,

1961.

PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
PMS	Patristic Monographs Series
PW	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> . New edition by Georg Wissowa and Wilhelm Kroll. 50 vols. in 84 parts. Stuttgart: Metzler and Druckenmüller, 1894–1980
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SEAug	Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum
StPatr	Studia Patristica
<i>SPhilo</i>	<i>Studia Philonica</i>
<i>SPhiloA</i>	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
SPhiloM	Studia Philonica Monographs
<i>SMSR</i>	Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VCSup	Vigiliae Christianae Supplements
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
YCS	Yale Classical Studies

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Abstract

Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa each composed a two-volume work entitled the *Life of Moses*. While a few scholarly treatments have been written on how these two treatises have retold the story of Moses as depicted in scripture, a full analysis has yet to appear that investigates how they use the art of ancient paraphrase to reshape scripture. By performing a comparative literary analysis of the two *Lives of Moses*, both externally with the LXX and internally between episodes within each *Life*, this study sets out to examine how paraphrase serves a mediatorial role in the interpretation of scripture in the hands of Philo and Gregory. Building on scholarship in the fields of ancient rhetoric and biblical hermeneutics, I argue that paraphrase serves as an interpretive mode somewhere between the literal and allegorical. Both authors use it as a kind of interpretive bridge that mediates between the LXX and, ultimately, the reader.

In the body of this study, I analyze episodes that appear twice in the two *Lives*. By examining such episodes, we are able not only to determine how Philo and Gregory recast the LXX depiction of Moses, but also how their initial paraphrase of events relates to the second version of the same episode. In this way, we study how paraphrase mediates externally between the LXX and each *Life* and how it mediates internally within the text itself. Moreover, by performing such an analysis on both *Lives*, we are able to determine the influence that Philo's treatise and his method had on Gregory's own *Life*.

This study has implications well beyond a better understanding of each individual *Life*. In addition, the results of the inquiry provide a better understanding for how biblical hermeneutics operate in the ancient world. While paraphrase is often perceived as a literal form of exegesis, I

demonstrate that the paraphrase actually stands between the literal and the allegorical as it mediates between reader and text.

Chapter 1

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Task at Hand

This project began with a simple intent. I wanted to study how Gregory shaped the LXX account in Book 1 of his *Life of Moses* through paraphrase in such a way that the allegorical readings of scripture in Book 2 were already subtly present in the narrative in Book 1. The motivating idea behind this was to determine whether Book 1 provided simply a “literal” reading of scripture—as is often stated in scholarship—or also allegorical, less literal ones. It soon became clear that such a study would need to take account of Philo of Alexandria’s own *Life of Moses* due to the influence that Philo had on Gregory. As the project progressed, I came to realize that it held more significant implications for a better understanding of biblical exegesis than I initially thought. For this reason, I undertook a thorough analysis of how both Philo and Gregory recast the biblical narrative in their *Lives*.

Through a comparative analysis of both *Lives* with the LXX account, my analysis revealed that Philo and Gregory use paraphrase as a way to mediate the LXX text. As a composition positioned between the reader and scripture itself, the biblical paraphrase becomes a vehicle that can convey allegorical readings under the form of the literal text of scripture. While paraphrase has this mediatory role in the hands of both Philo and Gregory, each exegete makes use of the method for different ends and in different ways. It is this question of how paraphrase functions to mediate the meaning of the biblical text that the following chapters seek to answer.

In those chapters, I shall lead the reader through a comparative analysis of the two *Lives* on both external and internal levels. On the one hand, I shall compare the LXX with Philo’s and Gregory’s paraphrase in order to determine how each one shapes and focuses the biblical account

by responding to certain significant questions they have.¹ On the other hand, I shall study internal relationships within the two *Lives* between episodes that appear twice in order to investigate how the initial mediation of scripture functions internally within the works.

In both works, certain episodes appear twice in the final book or section of the treatise. In the case of Philo, only four such episodes appear in the final section of Book 2. In the case of Gregory, every episode appears a second time in Book 2. Because both texts contain such double episodes, we have a unique opportunity not only to determine how they modify the meaning of scripture by retelling it but also how that meaning functions internally within the works. Many other examples of biblical paraphrase or rewritten scripture do not contain such double episodes. By undertaking such an internal comparative analysis, we shall answer questions such as how Philo and Gregory pivot from the initial paraphrastic mediation of scripture to capitalizing upon it later in the account, what role the initial paraphrase plays internally, and do the readings found in the initial appear again the second time around. Most crucial of all, this internal comparison allows us to answer how the mediation of scripture operates in both works. Does it function as an intermediary vehicle of meaning between the LXX and the reader directly or does it serve to convey the meaning between the LXX and the second appearance of the events? In other words, does the mediation of scripture operate externally toward the reader or also internally within the treatise? Through this analysis, not only will we problematize the “literal” depiction of paraphrase in both works, but we will also provide the realm of biblical exegesis with a better understanding of how paraphrase serves this mediatory role.

¹ For more on the way that paraphrase can act as a focusing mechanism, see Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 109–110.

1.2 A Brief Sketch of Philo of Alexandria and his *Life of Moses*

Philo of Alexandria was born in the city of Alexandria to a Jewish family in the Roman province of Egypt around 20–10 BCE. He came from a wealthy family from among the city's elite. His family's resources allowed him to receive the best education available. It is likely that he even had some formal philosophical training after the school of the grammarian. While other members of his family pursued civil careers, Philo devoted himself to studying theology and scripture. Over the course of his life, Philo penned numerous works. While not all of them have survived, the majority—over thirty—are extant. These writings covered a wide array of topics, ranging from the practical to the philosophical.

During Philo's life, a violent riot erupted in Alexandria against the Jewish population in 38 CE. Much has already been written on these events in efforts to clarify the background and sequence of what occurred. Relevant for our study, after the violence in Alexandria, the emperor summoned a delegation from the city. Philo took part in the Jewish delegation to Rome between 38 and 41 CE. It is in the context after these events that Philo wrote his *Life of Moses*. It is to the background of this text that we now turn.²

² For background on Philo's life, see Maren R. Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: An Intellectual Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 1–22; Daniel R. Schwartz, "Philo, His Family, and His Times," in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, ed. Adam Kamesar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9–31; Torrey Seland, "Philo of Alexandria: An Introduction," in *Reading Philo: A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria*, ed. Torrey Seland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 3–16.

Philo likely composed his *Life of Moses* sometime between 40–49 CE³ as an introduction to his *Exposition of the Laws of Moses*.⁴ The *Exposition* was a series that served to acquaint unfamiliar readers with the basics of Judaism and the Mosaic law by paraphrasing key sections of the LXX.⁵ As an introduction to the *Exposition*, the *Life of Moses* would have introduced

³ According to Maren Niehoff, it likely dates to some point between the start of his embassy to Gaius in Rome (ca. 38–41 CE) and before his death (ca. 49 CE), but she believes that the period between 40–49 is most likely (see Maren R. Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 959–960; Niehoff, *Intellectual Biography*, 11, 246.; for a contrary opinion, see David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, Anchor Bible 43 [Garden City: Doubleday, 1979], 20–25).

⁴ Erwin R. Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and His *De Vita Mosis*," *The Harvard Theological Review* 26, no. 2 (1933): 109–125; Jenny Morris, "The Jewish Philosopher Philo," in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, ed. Géza Vermès, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2014), 854–855, 847 n.137; Albert C. Geljon, *Philonic Exegesis in Gregory of Nyssa's De Vita Moysis*, *Studia Philonica Monographs* 5 (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2002), 45; Gregory E. Sterling, "'Prolific in Expression and Broad in Thought': Internal References to Philo's Allegorical Commentary and Exposition of the Law," *Euphrosyne* 40 (2012): 74; Gregory E. Sterling, "Philo of Alexandria's *Life of Moses*: An Introduction to the Exposition of the Law," *Studia Philonica Annual* 30 (2018): 31–46. See also the suggestion in Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, Revised ed., 3 vols., ed. Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973–87), 3:855. See also Niehoff, "Life of Moses," 959. James Royse places *Mos.* in a category of apologetic works that also includes *Hypoth.* and *Contempl.*

⁵ See Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time*, *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 46. Borgen argues that works from the *Exposition* demonstrate features from the category of rewritten Bible. Although he draws on the criteria for what constitutes rewritten Bible that Philip Alexander established, he critiques somewhat. Philip Alexander had argued that examples of rewritten Bible were not theological although they may incidentally serve theological purposes. However, Borgen demonstrates how Philo's *Exposition* follows Alexander's criteria for rewritten Bible, yet demonstrates theological interpretation: "The core of these treatises is a chronological sequence of events. The connection between biblical history and law is kept by Philo, with an emphasis on an interpretive rewriting of the Law. Theological and philosophical aims are made explicit and in this way Jewish and Greek traditions and ideas are fused together. At places Philo relates the biblical material to his own time" (Borgen, *An Exegete*, 65). Borgen thus critiques Alexander's criteria of what constitutes the category of rewritten Bible as too restrictive, and he broadens its definition. For him, the category must take into account intentional interpretive aims that the act of rewriting entails (Borgen, *An Exegete*, 78).

readers to the person and work of Moses himself before they proceeded to read about the more philosophical significance of the Mosaic law in the *Exposition* itself.⁶ It is likely that in the *Exposition* Philo had in mind a mixed readership consisting of both non-Jews and a Jews who might desire a further grounding in their history.⁷

⁶ Claude Mondésert, "Philo of Alexandria," in *The Early Roman Period*, ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy, Cambridge History of Judaism 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 881–882.

⁷ Scholarly opinion is divided regarding the intended audience. For arguments that it was written to a broad audience that included Jews and non-Jews, see Ellen Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes*, Studia Philonica Monographs 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 19–20; Sarah J.K. Pearce, "King Moses: Notes on Philo's Portrait of Moses as an Ideal Leader in the *Life of Moses*," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 57 (2004): 45; Geljon, *Philonic Exegesis*, 40, 45. For scholars who think that it was written primarily as an introduction to the Pentateuch and Judaism for non-Jews unfamiliar with Judaism or that it served as a kind of apology for Judaism via Moses, see Louis Massebieau, *Le classement des œuvres de Philon*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses 1 (Paris: Ernest Loroux, 1889), 38; Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and His *De Vita Mosis*," 114–125; Erwin R. Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 33; Bernard Botte, "La vie de Moïse par Philon," *Cahiers Sioniens* 8 (1954): 60; Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, 855; William J. Robbins, "A Study in Jewish and Hellenistic Legend with Special Reference to Philo's Life of Moses" (PhD Dissertation, Brown University, 1947), 47; Mireille Hadas-Lebel, *Philo of Alexandria: A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora*, trans. Robyn Fréchet, Studies in Philo of Alexandria 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 142; Burton L. Mack, "Philo Judaeus and Exegetical Traditions in Alexandria," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II 21.1 (1984): 133; Niehoff, "Life of Moses," 959. According to Louis Feldman, "it would seem that *Mos.* is an apologetic treatise addressed primarily to non-Jews [. . .], or that it was addressed to wayward Jews who had imbibed Greek culture and who had raised questions about the Bible. [. . .]. Rather, it appears to be an introduction to the ideals of Judaism as exemplified by Moses" (Louis H. Feldman, *Philo's Portrayal of Moses in the Context of Ancient Judaism, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity* 15 [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007], 12). As Niehoff asserts, "Philo's turn to biography and his interest in the hero's daily life can be explained in the context of Stoic philosophy in Rome. The Stoics differed from other Hellenistic schools by acknowledging an impressive variety of exemplary figures as moral authorities, including thinkers from other schools and politicians. Moral authority followed from the usefulness of the model. Such role models were depicted in real life situations, which could easily be identified by the reader, rather than in an idealized state. [. . .]. Philo echoes this approach of Roman Stoicism when presenting heroes of the Jewish past in a highly personal fashion. The reader experiences them in their daily lives, when they confront difficult situations

While Moses always held a significant position in early Judaism, it is within the matrix of Hellenistic Judaism that traditions about Moses take on new life. During this time, such traditions were reworked. In recent decades, scholarship has analyzed the many ways in which exegetes reworked narratives in this period. While examples of this include innerbiblical exegesis, the Qumran scrolls, and the writings of the New Testament, it was in Egypt that the figure of Moses took on particular importance. Philo represents a vital part of this dynamic Egyptian exegetical tradition.

The *Life of Moses* contains a paraphrase of Moses's life, from his birth to his death, by taking the LXX as its primary model. Unlike his other extant biographical works (i.e., *Life of Moses*, *Life of Abraham*, and *Life of Joseph*), the *Life of Moses* breaks up Moses's life into a two-volume structure. Within these two volumes Philo treats the events of Moses's life under four headings, namely, philosopher-king, legislator, priest, and prophet. While the *Life of Abraham* contained instances where an event from Abraham's life was narrated followed by an articulation of the allegorical meaning of those events, Philo's *Life of Abraham* is almost exclusively paraphrase, with very little sections where he lays out a clear explanation for events already paraphrased. However, the *Life of Moses* is unique in that four events, contained in the section on prophecy, occur for a second time. Whether or not Philo is inspired by his prior method in Abraham and provides allegorical meanings of events in this prophetic section remains to be determined.

and make good use of opportunities that offer themselves. Much like their Stoic counterparts, Philo's biblical heroes are 'socially embedded.' Their virtues consist in a proper mediation of social roles, political responsibilities, and moral convictions. This philosophical background prompts Philo to indulge in anecdotes as a key to understanding the moral character of his heroes" (Niehoff, "Life of Moses," 959–960).

In the preface to Book 1, Philo provides a rhetorical self-presentation of how the reader should approach the treatise. According to him, he seeks to compose a more accurate portrayal of Moses's life than any of his predecessors had done. He states that he will do so by weaving together (συνύφαινον) things from scripture (βίβλων τῶν ἱερῶν) with traditions from some of the Jewish elders (παρά τινων ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους πρεσβυτέρων).⁸ Because he entwines scripture and tradition, Philo acknowledges that his paraphrase interprets events in the very act of retelling them.⁹ He leaves his reader wondering, however, about the places where he thought his predecessors were not accurate and why he believed this. One also wonders how his retelling of scripture serves to create a more accurate depiction.

1.3 The Role of Prophecy in Philo's *Life*

Because Philo's second telling of events occurs in a section that explores Moses as a prophet, we must define what he regards prophecy as. For Philo, prophecy is above all related to scripture's inspired composition and interpretation. Just as Moses received inspiration for the composition of scripture, so the exegete must be inspired to interpret it correctly. According to Robert Grant, interpreters like Philo believed that meaning laid hidden within scripture, and it needed to be found through prophetic inspiration: "ultimately Philo regards his own exegesis as

⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 1.4: μὴ γινώσκω μαθὼν αὐτὰ καὶ βίβλων τῶν ἱερῶν, ὅς θανμάσια μνημεῖα τῆς αὐτοῦ σοφίας ἀπολέλοιπε, καὶ παρά τινων ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους πρεσβυτέρων· τὰ γὰρ λεγόμενα τοῖς ἀναγινωσκομένοις ἀεὶ συνύφαινον καὶ διὰ τοῦτ' ἔδοξα μᾶλλον ἐτέρων τὰ περὶ τὸν βίον ἀκριβῶσαι. Daniélou suggests that some of these prior traditions could have included other scriptural texts beyond the Pentateuch (Jean Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie* [Paris: Fayard, 1958], 121).

⁹ Prior authors had adopted this language in order to describe the literary act of composition (see, for example, Homer, *Od.* 13.303; Plato, *Pol.* 305e; *Rhet. Alex.* 1439a31; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Comp.* 23).

inspired. A spiritual gift is necessary for the understanding of an inspired text.”¹⁰ Because of the significance that inspiration had for proper exegesis, Philo saw a close link between it and allegorical interpretation: “a prophet does not declare anything that is entirely his own. But he is an interpreter while another suggests everything that he proclaims, all the while he is inspired.”¹¹ Above all, a prophet for Philo is one who is divinely inspired. This inspiration makes one an interpreter, either an interpreter of the will of God in the act of composition or an interpreter of the meaning of divinely inspired scripture. As such, it is only through prophetic inspiration that one uncovers hidden symbolic meanings and allegories in scripture.

Philo devotes the final section of his *Life* to an exploration of how Moses acted in his role as prophet. According to Philo, everything in scripture is a divine oracle delivered through Moses.¹² However, he identifies three ways in which these oracles are delivered by Moses, as a prophet who acts as an interpreter for God who speaks, as a prophet who asks questions of God who responds, and as a prophet who under inspiration foretells future events. It is this third category that is most characteristic of Moses, according to Philo.¹³

Philo spends his section on prophecy analyzing eight events. Four of them demonstrate how Moses functioned as a prophet who asked questions of God while God responded. Four of them show how Moses was a prophet who proclaimed things while under inspiration. In this latter section, the four events Philo explores are all episodes that have already appeared once in the *Life*: the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14), the descent of the manna (Exod 16), the forging

¹⁰ Robert M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), 34.

¹¹ Philo, *Spec.* 4.49 (CW 5.219.22–24): προφήτης μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἴδιον ἀποφαίνεται τὸ παράπαν, ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἑρμηνεὺς ὑποβάλλοντος ἑτέρου πάνθ’ ὅσα προφέρεται, καθ’ ὃν χρόνον ἐνθουσιᾷ.

¹² Philo, *Mos.* 2.188 (CW 4.244.9–10): πάντ’ εἰσι χρησμοί, ὅσα ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς βίβλοις ἀναγράφονται, χρησθέντες δι’ αὐτοῦ.

¹³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.190.

and destruction of the golden calf (Exod 32), and the rebellion by Korah in the desert (Num 16). Because Philo elsewhere associates divine inspiration with an understanding of God's will in either the composition or interpretation of scripture, it is particularly noteworthy that he gives a second account of these events in this section. It poses in the mind of the reader the question of how Philo uses this section that reexamines events in order to discover their deeper symbolic meanings.

1.4 An Overview of Scholarship on Philo's *Life*

Leopold Cohn and Paul Wendland prepared the way for the modern era of scholarship on Philo with the publication in 1896 of the first volume of their critical edition,¹⁴ which remains the standard. The introduction of a critical text facilitated the translation of Philo into multiple modern languages, including German between 1909–1964,¹⁵ English in the Loeb Classical Library series between 1929–1962¹⁶ that replaced an older one by C. D. Yonge from 1854–55,¹⁷ French beginning in 1961,¹⁸ Spanish in 1975–1976,¹⁹ and Italian beginning in 1978.²⁰ While

¹⁴ Leopold Cohn et al., eds., *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Reimer, 1896–1930).

¹⁵ Leopold Cohn et al., eds., *Die Werke Philos von Alexandria in deutscher Übersetzung*, 7 vols. (Breslau: M & H Marcus, 1909–1964).

¹⁶ *Philo: with an English Translation*, trans. F. H. Colson and George Herbert Whitaker, 12 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929–1962).

¹⁷ *The Works of Philo Judaeus, The Contemporary of Josephus*, trans. C. D. Yonge, 4 vols. (London: H. G. Bohn, 1854–1855).

¹⁸ Roger Arnaldez, Jean Pouilloux, and Claude Mondésert, eds., *Les oeuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961–).

¹⁹ *Obras completas de Filón de Alejandría*, trans. José María Triviño, 5 vols., Colección Valores en el tiempo (Buenos Aires: Acervo Cultural, 1975–1976).

²⁰ *Filone di Alessandria*, *Classici del pensiero: sezione 1 Filosofia classica e tardo-antica* (Milan: Rusconi, 1978–).

Cohn and Wendland's edition opened the door for modern research, scholarship did not begin in earnest until the introduction of the French translation of his works.

Several significant monographs on Philo had already appeared in German, English, and French. These increased the visibility of his works among a broader community of scholarship. Especially among the scholars in France, such as those among the *ressourcement* movement interested in early biblical exegesis, there was a desire for a French translation. However, the lack of such a translation hampered more widespread study of his texts. Because of his outsized influence on early patristic exegesis, the *Sources chrétiennes* series began discussions to publish volumes on Philo. He received relatively early inclusion in the series with the edition of the *Migration of Abraham* in 1957.²¹ Because of its immediate popularity, an entire French translation of his corpus was soon in progress with the first volume appearing in 1961.²²

According to David Runia, these French translations “ushered in the modern period of Philonic study.”²³

²¹ René Cadiou, *Philon d'Alexandrie: La migration d'Abraham*, Sources chrétiennes 47 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1957). This treatise is particularly noteworthy for the study of Philo's allegorical methods because it demonstrates that while Philo himself employed allegorical interpretation, he disagreed with extreme allegorists. This becomes especially clear in *Migr.* 86–93, where he addresses some exegetes who “stress the symbolic meaning and neglect the literal observance” of the laws of Moses (Peder Borgen, “On the Migration of Abraham,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman [Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013], 951). The work thus provided a useful entrée to the study of Philo's use of allegory to complement the prior patristic works in *Sources chrétiennes*.

²² While this series was not part of the *Sources chrétiennes* itself, it came about as a result of an agreement between the University of Lyon and the Éditions du Cerf under the direction of Claude Mondésert, Roger Arnaldez, and Jean Pouilloux. As a director of *Sources chrétiennes*, Mondésert represented a significant link between the two series (see Etienne Fouilloux, *La Collection "Sources chrétiennes": Éditer les pères de l'église au XXe siècle* [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2011], 217–218).

²³ David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, *Philosophia Antiqua* 44 (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 11.

Around this same time, the Jesuit priest Jean Daniélou began to turn his attention to the study of Philo in order to gain a better appreciation for how he influenced the patristic allegorical tradition. In addition to his influential monograph on Philo, *Philon d'Alexandrie*,²⁴ Daniélou wrote several studies on the relationship between Philo and early Christian exegetes, especially Gregory of Nyssa.²⁵ Although he studied several Philonic works, Daniélou showed little interest in the *Life of Moses*. This was because, according to him, it contained a “très littérale” form of exegesis, especially compared to the *Life of Abraham* and the *Life of Joseph*.²⁶ Because he was interested in studying how Philo influenced the Christian allegorical tradition, the *Life of Moses* held little interest for him.

Daniélou's assertions about Philo's *Life of Moses* would go on to influence how later scholarship viewed the treatise.²⁷ It would take several decades, in fact, before other scholars took up a deeper examination on the exegetical relationship between Philo's and Gregory's two

²⁴ Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*. See also the earlier work by Völker, which Daniélou himself cites (Walther Völker, *Fortschritt und Vollendung bei Philo von Alexandrien: Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Frömmigkeit*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 49 [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1938]).

²⁵ See, for example, Jean Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," *Cahiers Sioniens* 8 (1954): 385–400; Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*; Jean Daniélou, "Philon et Grégoire de Nysse," in *Philon d'Alexandrie. Lyon, 11–15 septembre 1966: colloques nationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris: CNRS, 1967); Jean Daniélou, "Les tuniques de peau chez Grégoire de Nysse," in *Glaube, Geist, Geschichte: Festschrift für Ernst Benz zum 60. Geburtstag am 17. November 1967*, ed. Gerhard Müller and Winfried Zeller (Leiden: Brill, 1967).

²⁶ The lack of allegorical elements is especially pointed for Daniélou in relation to Philo's *Abr.* and *Ios.* (see Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*, 140). While some allegorical elements appear in the sections on the tabernacle and the priestly vestments, Daniélou argues that these are due to traditional Alexandrian exegesis that Philo incorporates (Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*, 88).

²⁷ For the influence of Daniélou on later literature, see, for example, Ronald E. Heine, *Perfection in the Virtuous Life: A Study in the Relationship between Edification and Polemical Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's De Vita Moysis*, Patristic Monograph Series 2 (Cambridge: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1975), 1–4.

Lives. More recent scholarship, however, has recognized that Philo's *Life* contains several allegorical elements, and it is not simply a "literal" reading of scripture. Scholars who argue this include Peder Borgen, Brian McGing, and Finn Damgaard.²⁸ At the same time, scholarship has also begun more thorough analysis of the exegetical relationship between Philo's and Gregory's *Lives*.²⁹

Based on the current state of research on Philo's *Life of Moses*, the present study sets out to study how Philo seeks to provide a more accurate depiction of Moses's life by paraphrasing the LXX account. As we investigate this, we shall pay especial attention to the way that Philo uses paraphrase to mediate the meaning of the biblical text to the reader. In addition, we will study how that initial act of paraphrase functions in relation to the second paraphrases of the same events. Do both paraphrases mediate scripture in the same way? Do they do so differently? How does the first paraphrase mediate scripture both for the reader and for the second paraphrase simultaneously? Does Philo guide the reader from scripture to the first paraphrase to the second

²⁸ See, for example, Borgen, *An Exegete*, 46; Brian C. McGing, "Philo's Adaptation of the Bible in His *Life of Moses*," in *The Limits of Ancient Biography*, ed. Brian C. McGing and Judith Mossman (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 118; Finn Damgaard, *Recasting Moses: The Memory of Moses in Biographical and Autobiographical Narratives in Ancient Judaism and 4th-Century Christianity*, *Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity* 13 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013), 66. Damgaard gives as examples the interpretation of the tabernacle (2.81–108), the priestly vestments (2.117–135), the blooming of Aaron's staff (2.180–186). Book 1 contains shorter allegories. These include the burning bush (1.67–70), Marah and Elim (1.188–190), and the battle against Amalek (1.217–219).

²⁹ Marguerite Harl, "Review of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (7:1): *De vita Moysis*, by Herbert Musurillo," *Gnomon* 38, no. 6 (1966): 555–557; David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey*, *Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum* 3.3 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993), 257; Geljon, *Philonic Exegesis*; Albert C. Geljon, "Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa on Moses at the Burning Bush," in *Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity*, ed. George H. van Kooten, *Themes in Biblical Narrative* 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–236.

in some kind of unified way or does each paraphrase function independently? It is these questions that we will answer in the chapter on Philo.

1.5 A Brief Sketch of Gregory of Nyssa and his *Life of Moses*

We now turn to the second figure of our study, Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory was born in the 330s CE in the Roman province of Cappadocia.³⁰ He was born to a strong Christian family of nine children, three of whom including Gregory became bishops. Because their family was well off, Gregory received a first-class education. In his studies, Gregory would have learned rhetorical techniques. While Gregory is often associated with his older brother Basil, whom he credits with much of his education, Gregory was a strong writer and thinker in his own right. In the year 372, Gregory was made bishop of the see of Nyssa by his brother, Basil.³¹ It is in this period when Gregory serves as bishop to a congregation that his writings come. They reflect an ecclesial context and pastoral concerns.³²

³⁰ Richard A. Norris, Jr., *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 13 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), xv.

³¹ Norris, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs*, xvi.

³² For introduction to Gregory's life, see Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood: St. Valdimir's Seminary Press, 1995); Norris, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs*, xiii–xix; Frances M. Young and Andrew Teal, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 135–142.

Likely dating to some time in the last decades of his life,³³ Gregory pens his *Life of Moses* in response to a letter asking for counsel on attaining the life perfect in virtue.³⁴ Ronald Heine has argued that Gregory has the priesthood in mind as his audience. It is for this reason that Moses, a kind of priest and leader par excellence, serves as the example of the virtuous life

³³ While the debate regarding the dating of *Vit. Moys.* is by no means settled, there are two main groups. Following Daniélou, many date the treatise to the tail end of Gregory's life, after around 387 when Gregory had retired from public life and devoted himself to writing. Daniélou suggested this as the probable date of the treatise due to Gregory's statement in *Vit. Moys.* 1.2 that he wrote with "grey hair" (Jean Daniélou, *Grégoire de Nyssa: La vie de Moïse*, 3rd ed., Sources chrétiennes 1 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968), 15; Jean Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," (New York: Scribner, 1961), 10; Werner Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius* (Leiden: Brill, 1954), 118–119; J. E. Hennessy, "The Background, Sources, and Meaning of Divine Infinity in St. Gregory of Nyssa" (PhD Dissertation, Fordham University, 1963), 23.). However, more recent scholarship has pointed out that this is a rhetorical *topos* and provides little firm basis upon which to date the treatise (see, for example, Gerhard May, "Die Chronologie des Lebens und der Werke des Gregor von Nyssa," in *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nyssa*, ed. Marguerite Harl [Leiden: Brill, 1971], 64; Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 11–15; Ann Conway-Jones, *Gregory of Nyssa's Tabernacle Imagery in its Jewish and Christian Context*, Oxford Early Christian Studies [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 26; Anthony Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*, Early Church Fathers [London: Routledge, 1999], 99; Runia, *Survey*, 256). The *topos* about grey hair is also used in other works that have been typically placed in the years prior to 387 (e.g., *Eun.* 2.605 [GNO 1.403.3]; *Ep.* 11.7 [GNO 33.42.15–16]). Heine argues that Gregory addresses contemporary theological disputes in *Vit. Moys.* and suggests a probable *terminus post quem* sometime after the beginning of the Eunomian controversy (Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 193–194). Heine himself suggests a probable date in the mid 380s (Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 15). While Eunomius first publishes his works around 378, there would likely need to be a few years for the controversy to mature and for Gregory to have time to write his treatise in response. For the dating of Eunomius's first works, see Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 77; Raymond Winling, *Grégoire de Nyssa: Contre Eunome: 1*, Sources Chrétiennes 521 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2008), 37. According to Manlio Simonetti, "non ci sono nell'opera elementi che permettano di fissarne la datazione; ma dal punto di vista esegetico e spirituale essa appare della piena maturità dell'autore" (Manlio Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria: un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 23 [Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1985], 154 n.175).

³⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.2–3, 15.

that should be imitated.³⁵ For the priest to be virtuous, he must follow the correct orthodox understanding of the faith, not falling into heresy or schism. According to Heine, the exegesis of Moses's life provides such a model in light of contemporary theological debates.³⁶ This exegesis occurs in two books, each of which has a different character.

Scholars have long recognized the influence that Philo's *Life of Moses* had on Gregory's own *Life of Moses*. Although separated by more than three centuries, many striking similarities

³⁵ See Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.13–15. For the argument that Gregory writes for a priest as recipient, see Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 22–25; Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 258–261. For the argument that Gregory wrote to a monk, see Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," 9–10; Manlio Simonetti, "De vita Moysis," in *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 788; Joseph W. Trigg, "Selections from Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*," in *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, ed. Stephen E. Fowl (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997), 104; George S. Bebis, "Gregory of Nyssa's *De Vita Moysis*: a Philosophical and Theological Analysis," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 12 (1967): 369.

³⁶ See Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 25. Heine argues that orthodox doctrine and ethics were vital components of this. See also Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 261. For the didactic function of lives in Late Antiquity, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 257–263; Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*, Sather Classical Lectures 55 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 56–57; Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 62–65, 96–118; Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 125–131; Claudia Rapp, "Comparison, Paradigm, and the Case of Moses in Panegyric and Hagiography," in *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. Mary Whitby (Boston: Brill, 1998), 277–298; Anna Wilson, "Biographical Models: The Constantinian Period and Beyond," in *Constantine: History, Historiography, and Legend*, ed. Samuel N.C. Lieu and Dominic Montserrat (New York: Routledge, 1998), 107–135; Michael J. Hollerich, "The Comparison of Moses and Constantine in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Life of Constantine*," *Studia Patristica* 19 (1989): 80–95.

exist between the two works,³⁷ including both carrying the same Latin title,³⁸ both using Moses as a model for the virtuous life, both giving a running paraphrase of the LXX, both interpreting events of Moses's life, and both dividing the treatise in a two-volume structure with an initial preface and final conclusion. While these similarities demonstrate that Philo left an undeniable impact on Gregory's *Life of Moses*, the use of paraphrase to exegete Moses's life within a two-book structure is perhaps the most salient connection between the two works.

While Gregory adopts the two-book structure from Philo, the two authors arrange their content very differently within these volumes. In the case of Gregory, each book examines the same events from Moses's life in a different mode of exegesis. While Book 1 paraphrases Moses's life, Book 2 explains the significance of those events. In this way, all the events of Moses's life appear twice, once in Book 1 and once in Book 2. In the case of Philo, it is thematic concerns that distinguish the two books from one another while paraphrase dominates throughout the whole of the two books. While Book 1 depicts Moses in the position of philosopher-king, Book 2 represents him in the roles of legislator, priest, and prophet. Because of this different arrangement of materials, only four events appear twice, namely the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14), the descent of the manna (Exod 16), the golden calf incident (Exod 32), and the

³⁷ For literature on Philo's influence on Gregory's *Vit. Moys.*, see Runia, *Survey*, 243–260, especially 256–261; Geljon, *Philonic Exegesis*, 51–53; Daniélou, *Vie de Moïse*, 16–25; Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," 385–400; Daniélou, "Philon et Grégoire," 333–345; Jean Daniélou, *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 85–93; Manlio Simonetti, *La vita di Mosè* (Milan: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, 1984), xxvi–xxxvi.

³⁸ According to David Runia, Gregory's *Vit. Moys.* "is the only patristic work to carry the same Latin title as a Philonic work" (David T. Runia, "Philo and the Early Christian Fathers," in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, ed. Adam Kamesar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 222). Moreover, in some of the Greek manuscripts, the two treatises have remarkably similar titles (Runia, *Survey*, 256 n.106). See the reference to Runia's *Survey* for an analysis of the titles of Gregory's manuscripts.

rebellion in the desert (Num 16). For Philo, these events are ideally suited to depict Moses in two of his functions simultaneously. Therefore, while they appear in prior thematic sections of the treatise, each of these four events also occurs in the final section of the treatise, where Philo explores their deeper prophetic significance.

This two-book format is one of the most defining characteristics of Gregory's *Life of Moses*. His first book, known as the *historia* (ἱστορία),³⁹ contains a paraphrase of Moses's life based primarily on the LXX version of scripture.⁴⁰ Here, Gregory provides a running paraphrase of the events of Moses's life in which individual episodes occur in roughly chronological order from his birth to his death, largely following the arrangement of Exodus, Numbers, and the end of Deuteronomy.⁴¹ His second book, the *theoria* (θεωρία),⁴² repeats the same order of events while this time giving explicit literal and allegorical interpretations of them. Gregory creates a strong parallelism between the two volumes due to the fact that every incident in Book 2 already appeared in Book 1.⁴³ In effect, he constructs a literary diptych with two facing icons of Moses's life. While each icon represents the same events of Moses's life, they employ different

³⁹ While Book 1 has traditionally been referred to as the *historia*, most of the manuscripts do not reflect such a title. Instead, they typically give a title for the entire work while referring to the number of volumes in the treatise—either introducing the current volume one or speaking of the entire two volumes (see the critical note in GNO 25.1Tit). The one manuscript that does use the verb ἱστορέω in the title of Book 1 (Vat 444) is included among the “mixed or contaminated” manuscripts by Musurillo, who notes that Daniélou included it within his original critical apparatus of the Sources chrétiennes. See also the minor mention of the *historia* in the title of Book 2 in the note for GNO 25.33.Tit).

⁴⁰ I am here using LXX to refer to the Greek Pentateuch.

⁴¹ See Daniélou, *Vie de Moïse*, 16; Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 5; Young and Teal, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 171; Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 66.

⁴² Most manuscripts refer to Book 2 as the *theoria* (see the apparatus criticus at GNO 25.33.Tit).

⁴³ See Geljon, *Philonian Exegesis*, 65.

iconographic media to do so (e.g., one side contains an encaustic icon while the other a mosaic icon), thus necessitating different constraints and techniques. Gregory himself describes his two-step exegetical procedure in the work's preface.

According to Gregory, the two books represent two steps of a single exegetical process, in which Book 2 builds upon Book 1. While Book 1 recounts Moses's life in summary, Book 2 investigates the inner meaning (διάνοια) of those events:

We shall first recount (διελθόντες) his life in a summary (ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ), as we have learned it from scripture, then we shall investigate the inner meaning (διάνοια)⁴⁴ suitable for the *historia* (ἱστορία) as counsel with virtue.⁴⁵

Because of his use of certain terms popular in fourth century exegesis, scholarship has taken Gregory's depiction here at relative face value. According to the scholarly consensus, Book 1 contains the "literal sense" of scripture (ἱστορία) while Book 2 gives the allegorical sense (διάνοια/θεωρία). Things are not quite so simple, however.

According to his own words, Book 1 will recount (διέρχομαι) Moses's life in a summary (ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ). At the conclusion of Book 1, he looks back and uses strikingly similar language: "we have narrated (διηγησάμεθα) for you in a summary (ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ) the things that we have learned from the *historia* at hand of the man."⁴⁶ By using the verbs διέρχομαι ("to recount") in 1.15 and διηγέομαι ("to narrate") in 1.77, Gregory draws on the language of narrative. The use of this language suggests that he views his composition not as a simple unbiased statement of facts

⁴⁴ For this meaning of *dianoia*, see *LG*, s.v. "διάνοια" II.B: "Gedanke, Sinn, Bedeutung von Gesprochenem, Geschriebenem, von Worten, Begr."; *LSJ*, s.v. "διάνοια" A.IV: "thought expressed, meaning"; see also *GE*, s.v. A: "significance, sense."

⁴⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.15 (GNO 25.6.25–7.2): οὗ τὸν βίον πρῶτον ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ διελθόντες καθὼς παρὰ τῆς θείας γραφῆς μεμαθήκαμεν, οὕτω τὴν πρόσφορον τῇ ἱστορίᾳ διάνοιαν εἰς ἀρετῆς ὑποθήκην ἀναζητήσωμεν.

⁴⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.77 (GNO 25.33.3–4): ταῦτα μὲν ὅσα ἐκ τῆς προχείρου τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἱστορίας ἐμάθομεν, ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ σοι διηγησάμεθα.

but rather as a selective narration of past events.⁴⁷ In conjunction with the noun ἐπιδρομή, which typically denotes a kind of abridged summary or synopsis of a longer work,⁴⁸ Gregory portrays his treatise as a selectively abridged narrative of Moses’s life as depicted in the LXX. But Gregory states that he will do more than merely abridge the biblical account of Moses’s life. At the conclusion of Book 1, Gregory states that the subject of his treatise often compelled him to amplify the biblical account:

We have narrated (διηγησάμεθα) for you in a summary (ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ) the things that we have learned from the *historia* at hand of the man, although there are certain ways in which the subject⁴⁹ has amplified⁵⁰ the account out of necessity.⁵¹

In other words, Gregory states that he both abbreviates and amplifies the account of Moses’s life according to his exegetical aim.

⁴⁷ See LSJ, s.v. “διέρχομαι” A.6: “go through in detail, recount”; *GE*, s.v. “διέρχομαι” B: “narrate, expound, recount”; *LG*, s.v. “διέρχομαι” 2.c (in relation to a text, representation, or undertaking): “durchgehen, durcharbeiten, durchlesen, erzählen, vortragen.” The entry in *LG* provides similar uses of the verb in Gregory’s corpus, including a noteworthy parallel in Gregory’s *Inscr.* There, Gregory states that David discusses things already recounted (διέρχομαι) by way of a summary (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις) (Gregory of Nyssa, *Inscr.* GNO 21.62.7–11). See also LSJ, s.v. “διηγέομαι” A: “set out in detail, describe”; *GE*, s.v. “διηγέομαι” “to expound in detail, narrate, describe”; *LG*, s.v. A.1: “δ. τι etw. erzählen, berichten von.” Such a narrative often occurs in the context of judicial proceedings where an advocate selectively recounts and shapes a presentation of the facts in order to focus on a specific version of events.

⁴⁸ See LSJ, s.v. “ἐπιδρομή” A.2: “brief notice, summary”; *GE*, s.v. “ἐπιδρομή”: “quick mention, allusion, summary”; *LG*, s.v. “ἐπιδρομή” 2.c: “flüchtig, gerafft, (die einzelnen Punkte) zusammenfassend, kursorisch.” The term ἐπιδρομή was often employed for a synopsis of an earlier, longer work (see, for example, Diogenes Laertius, 7.48).

⁴⁹ See LSJ, s.v. “ὑπόθεσις” A.II.3: “subject of a poem or treatise”; *GE*, s.v. “ὑπόθεσις” C: “matter, subject”; *LG*, s.v. “ὑπόθεσις” 2: “der Stoff, das Thema, der Gegenstand - (als Grundlage einer Rede, eines Dramas, eines Festes).”

⁵⁰ See LSJ, s.v. “πλατύνω” A.4: “amplify”; *GE*, s.v. “πλατύνω” 1: “amplify”; *LG*, s.v. “πλατύνω” 2.a: “eine Untersuchung verbreitern, erweitern, weiter ausdehnen.”

⁵¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.77 (GNO 25.33.3–6): ταῦτα μὲν ὅσα ἐκ τῆς προχείρου τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἱστορίας ἐμάθομεν, ἐν ἐπιδρομῇ σοι διηγησάμεθα, εἰ καὶ πως ἡ ὑπόθεσις ἐστὶν ἐν οἷς τὸν λόγον ἀναγκαίως ἐπλάτυνε.

It is these very moves for which the art of paraphrase provides Gregory the tools. With paraphrase, exegetes learned how to recast ancient texts in new ways. According to Quintilian, abbreviation and amplification were two significant features of the paraphrastic art. Moreover, ancient examples of biblical paraphrase demonstrate how abbreviation and amplification often went hand-in-hand⁵² as exegetes made use of the paraphrastic techniques of addition, omission, substitution, and rearrangement. While Gregory likely learned such skills in his grammatical education, he now uses these techniques himself in order to paraphrase the LXX text for his own rhetorical ends.

1.6 The Role of Allegory in Gregory's *Life*

Gregory's Book 2 is titled the θεωρία of the text, but what implications does this hold for Gregory. While patristic exegetes use θεωρία to refer to the allegorical sense of the text, Gregory's concept of θεωρία is more complex. In the preface of his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, he argues that the θεωρία of a text can lie either in its literal or allegorical sense. According to him, if the literal sense is beneficial to the reader, then that is the text's inner meaning. However, if the literal sense is of no value, then the exegete must look deeper. That deeper meaning serves as the text's θεωρία. Since Book 2 is identified as the θεωρία, one might expect it to contain only allegorical readings and to have exclusive rights to them. However, this is not the case.

In actuality, Book 2 contains a mixture of literal and allegorical readings. In many cases, Gregory first provides a small summary paraphrase of the events as a way to remind the reader

⁵² See Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.5.4. See also Michael Roberts, *Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity* (Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1985), 164–165, 172, 185.

of his presentation in Book 1. He then often gives a more literal interpretation of events before finally giving his fully articulated allegorical reading. By giving the fully articulated allegory last, the arrangement of material indicates that Gregory intends that to be his ultimate aim. While Gregory might ultimately intend to provide fully fleshed out allegorical interpretations for the events of Moses's life, because Book 2 contains both literal and allegorical aspects, the title of θεωρία for Book 2 is misleading.

What we wish to consider in this study is whether a similar problematization of Book 1 is also in order. While Gregory refers to Book 1 as the ιστορία of the treatise, does it contain a similar mixture of literal and allegorical readings? The term ιστορία actually holds a fair bit of complexity, since it can signify the text itself, the text's literal meaning, the events narrated in the text, or—in the case of Gregory's *Life*—the contents of Book 1.⁵³ Gregory himself uses the term in all of these senses. In many places, he uses the term multiple times with ambiguity about what meaning he intends. This is likely a deliberate move on Gregory's part. Does this ambiguity of the term ιστορία suggest that Book 1 provides something more complex than a simple “literal sense of scripture,” as is often asserted? Has the title of *historia* obscured the possibility that both

⁵³ *Historia* can refer to the very text of scripture, the text's literal meaning, the events narrated in the text, or—traditionally, in the case of *Vit. Moys.*—the text of Book 1 itself. *LG*, s.v. “ιστορία” II: “Bericht, Darstellung, Erzählung, Geschichte” (and see especially under II.B.1); *PGL*, s.v. “ιστορία” A.II: “narrative, history” (but see also the more narrow definition as the “*literal* sense of scripture [v. ἀναγωγή, θεωρία]” [C.3]. It then goes on to list Gregory's *Vit. Moys.* as one example [C.3.b]); *GE*, s.v. “ιστορία” C: “telling, exposition, account, history,” with the additional sense of “literal sense, of Sacred Scriptures” (with Gregory's *Vit. Moys.* as the explicit example with the θεωρία the stated opposite); *LSJ*, s.v. “ιστορία” A.II: “narrative, history” and “generally, story, account”; Giulio Maspero, “History,” in *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Lucas F. Seco (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 390–396; Giulio Maspero, “ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑ, ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑ ε ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ: La teologia della storia di Gregorio di Nissa,” *Excerpta e dissertationibus in Sacra Theologia* 45 (2003): 383–450.

literal and allegorical readings may exist side-by-side like in Book 2? Are both halves of the treatise far more complex than the simple *historia* (literal)/*theoria* (allegorical) dichotomy?

1.7 An Overview of Scholarship on Gregory's *Life*

Although Maximus the Confessor (mid seventh century) praised him as “teacher of the world,”⁵⁴ the Second Council of Nicaea (787) hailed him as “father of fathers,”⁵⁵ and Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos (early fourteenth century) acclaimed him as “star of the Nyssaean,”⁵⁶ Gregory of Nyssa's works fell into relative neglect during much of the second millennium CE. However, scholarly interest in Gregory witnessed a dramatic resurgence over the course of the twentieth century.⁵⁷ While Werner Jaeger initiated the modern study of Gregory with the

⁵⁴ Maximus the Confessor, *Opusc.* 15 (PG 91.161A): Ὁ δὲ τούτου ὁμώνυμος τῆς Νυσσαέων γενόμενος καθηγητής, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς οἰκουμένης διδάσκαλος. For the probable dating of this treatise, see Marek Jankowiak and Phil Booth, “A New Date-List of the Works of Maximus the Confessor,” in *Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*, ed. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 80. John Chrysostom had used the same epithet for Paul almost sixty times in his corpus (see, for example, Margaret M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002], 383; David Rylaarsdam, *John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of His Theology and Preaching*, Oxford Early Christian Studies [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 159–166; Benjamin A. Edsall, *The Reception of Paul and Early Christian Initiation: History and Hermeneutics* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019], 182–196).

⁵⁵ Nicaea II, Act 6 (ACO 2/3.708.33): ὁ πατὴρ πατέρων.

⁵⁶ Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos, *H.E.* 11.19 (PG 146.628B): ὁ τῶν Νυσσαέων φωστήρ. For the dating of the work, see Günter Gentz, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos und ihre Quellen*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 98 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966).

⁵⁷ See, for example, Harold F. Cherniss, *The Platonism of Gregory of Nyssa* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1930); Endre von Ivánka, “Von Platonismus zur Theorie der Mystik (Zur Erkenntnislehre Gregors von Nyssa),” *Scholastik* 11 (1936): 163–195; Anselme Stolz, *Théologie de la mystique* (Chevetogne: Éditions des Bénédictines d’Amay, 1939); Jean Daniélou, “L’Apocatastase chez Saint Grégoire de Nyse,” *Recherches de science religieuse* 30 (1940): 328–347; Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nyse* (Paris: Éditions Montaigne, 1944); Jean Daniélou,

publication of the first volume of the Gregorii Nysseni Opera in 1921,⁵⁸ it was thanks in large part to the efforts of the group of Jesuit scholars in Lyon-Fourvière, France, led by Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, and Claude Mondésert, that scholarship on Gregory proliferated as rapidly as it did. As part of the *ressourcement* movement, they sought to return to patristic

"Akolouthia chez Grégoire de Nysse," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 27 (1953): 219–249; Jean Daniélou, "La typologie biblique de Grégoire de Nysse," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 38 (1967): 185–196; Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Présence et pensée: Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1942); Walther Völker, *Gregor von Myssa als Mystiker* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1955); Heine, *Virtuous Life*; Paulos Mar Gregorios, *Cosmic Man: The Divine Presence: The Theology of St. Gregory of Nyssa* (New York: Paragon House, 1988); Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*; Michel R. Barnes, *The Power of God: Δύναμις in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001); *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003); Martin S. Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith: Union, Knowledge, and Divine Presence*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Morwenna Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa: Ancient and (Post)modern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II. An English Version with Supporting Studies*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 82 (Leiden: Brill, 2007); *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Conway-Jones, *Tabernacle Imagery*; *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III. An English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2014); *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I. An English Translation with Supporting Studies*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2018). For an overview of modern scholarship, see Young and Teal, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 165.

⁵⁸ This began with the publication of *Eun.* as the first volume of the Gregorii Nysseni Opera (GNO) series in 1921. The GNO and the *Lexicon Gregorianum* (*LG*) are among the greatest testaments to twentieth-century scholarship on Gregory. While each of these contain ten volumes in print, they have now appeared in an online format. In the present study, all citations from Gregory's works are taken from the GNO online edition. I have two primary reasons for making this decision. First, the online edition provides a modern, readily accessible way to access Gregory's works. It is searchable and allows cross-reference to the online *LG*. Second, the editors of the online edition have assigned each work an individual number, from 1–60. This provides greater efficiency and clarity for citations than the print volumes. While each work is individually numbered in the online format, the pagination and line numbering remain consistent between online and print editions. Therefore, while the online version represents a significant step forward in terms of the organization of Gregory's corpus, it still allows relatively easy cross-reference between print and online formats. Moreover, resources exist for scholars who use one or the other format to find a citation made in the other (e.g., the preliminary material in the *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* and the online *LG*).

sources of theology and exegesis.⁵⁹ Because of their interest in the Alexandrian tradition of allegory, their research focused primarily on biblical exegetes such as Philo of Alexandria, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Maximus the Confessor.⁶⁰

The significance that Gregory of Nyssa would hold for this circle of scholars—especially for Daniélou himself—cannot be overemphasized. His works provided fertile ground for a rich examination of patristic exegetical methods, especially on the topic of allegory. His *Life of Moses* soon attracted considerable scholarly attention since it contains what is arguably his most sophisticated allegorical treatment of the biblical text.⁶¹ Signaling the significance of Gregory's allegorical method for these patristic scholars, Daniélou selected his *Life of Moses* to inaugurate the Sources chrétiennes series in 1942.⁶² While Daniélou made several subsequent investigations

⁵⁹ See Michel Fédou, "Sources chrétiennes: Patristique et renaissance de la théologie," *Gregorianum* 92, no. 4 (2011): 787–796.

⁶⁰ On the initial choice of texts, see Fouilloux, *La Collection "Sources chrétiennes": Éditer les pères de l'église au XXe siècle*, 22–24. On the importance of this Alexandrian exegetical tradition, see Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit*, 85–104; Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007); Malherbe and Ferguson, *Life of Moses*, 3–9; Henri Crouzel, "Grégoire de Nysse, est-il le fondateur de la théologie mystique?," *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 33 (1957): 189–202; Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition from Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). In addition to the works on Gregory mentioned above, works on other Alexandrian authors also proliferated, for example, Claude Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Introduction à l'étude de sa pensée religieuse à partir de l'écriture* (Paris: Aubier, 1944); Jean Daniélou, *Origène* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1948); Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*; Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et esprit: L'intelligence de l'écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Éditions Montaigne, 1950).

⁶¹ Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," 9–10; Malherbe and Ferguson, *Life of Moses*, 5–9. His *Cant.* is typically regarded as the other highly significant allegorical treatise (see, for example, Heine, *Virtuous Life*, 4).

⁶² The volume on *Vit. Moys.* has a complex publication history. Due to the fact that World War II was taking place, Daniélou was only able to publish a translation in the initial 1942 edition. The second edition of 1955 reprinted this translation along with a critical Greek text by Daniélou. A

on Gregory's exegesis in the following years, he would often return to the *Life of Moses*.⁶³

According to him, since work came at the end of Gregory's life, it represented the zenith of his exegetical ability.

Prior scholarship on the *Life of Moses* has focused almost exclusively on the allegorical exegesis of Book 2⁶⁴ while largely neglecting the substantial exegetical work done via paraphrase in Book 1. Scholars such as Daniélou and de Lubac, who had a significant impact on

third edition appeared in 1968, which contained a revision of the text. For some history on the beginning of the Sources chrétiennes and the Lyon-Fourvière Jesuits in Lyons, see Fouilloux, *La Collection "Sources chrétiennes": Éditer les pères de l'église au XXe siècle*; Paolo Prosperi, "The Birth of *Sources Chrétiennes* and the Return to the Fathers," *Communio* 39 (2012); Bernard Pottier, "Daniélou and the Twentieth-Century Patristic Renewal," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 250–262; Jon Kirwan, *An Avant-garde Theological Generation: The Nouvelle Théologie and the French Crisis of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Fédou, "Sources chrétiennes: Patristique et renaissance de la théologie," 781–796. See also Daniélou's own programmatic essay for the "ressourcement" movement in Jean Daniélou, "Les orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse," *Études* 249 (1946): 5–21.

⁶³ See, for example, Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse*; Daniélou, "Akolouthia chez Grégoire de Nysse," 219–249; Jean Daniélou, "La résurrection des corps chez Grégoire de Nysse," *Vigiliae Christianae* 7, no. 3 (1953): 154–170; Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," 385–400; Jean Daniélou, "Chronologie des sermons de Grégoire de Nysse," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 29, no. 4 (1955): 346–372; Jean Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966); Jean Daniélou, "L'adversus Arium et Sabellium de Grégoire de Nysse et l'origénisme cappadocien," *Recherches de science religieuse* 54 (1966); Daniélou, "La typologie biblique de Grégoire de Nysse."; Daniélou, *L'être*; Jean Daniélou, "La θεωρία chez Grégoire de Nysse," *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972).

⁶⁴ See, for example, the comments and analysis in Herbert Musurillo, *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings* (New York: Scribner, 1961), 289 n.281; Bebis, "Gregory of Nyssa's De vita moysis," 369–393; Everett Ferguson, "God's Infinity and Man's Mutability: Perpetual Progress according to Gregory of Nyssa," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 18 (1973): 59–78; Patrick F. O'Connell, "The Double Journey in Saint Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28 (1983): 301–324; Philip Kariatlis, "'Dazzling Darkness': The Mystical or Theophanic Theology of St Gregory of Nyssa," *Phronema* 27, no. 2 (2012): 99–123.

later scholarship, were interested in investigating Gregory's use of allegory. As a result, they examined Book 2 in the belief that all the real exegetical potential laid there. To the extent that they did examine Book 1, they did so in order to investigate the historical grounding of typology. Following their lead, later scholars have tended to focus on Book 2 at the expense of Book 1 while continuing the assumption that Book 1 is primarily literal.⁶⁵ When these modern studies call Book 1 literal, it has less to do with its mode of exegesis than it does with a perceived contrast with Book 2. In comparison with Book 2, Book 1 is not allegorical like Book 2. In other words, Gregory closely imitates his biblical source material in Book 1 in contrast to Book 2.⁶⁶ As a result, the exegesis of Book 1 has received far less investigation than it warrants in the work as a whole. Upon closer inspection to the preface, Gregory's exegetical method proves far more complex than simple literal (ἱστορία)/allegorical (θεωρία/διάνοια) schema.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Scholars logically turn to Book 2 when wanting to investigate Gregory's allegorical exegetical method, where he provides a ready-at-hand allegorical presentation of the biblical material, while at the same time mostly overlooking Book 1. See, for example, Simonetti, who asserts that "Gregorio ha voluto rilevare che l'adozione del modulo ermeneutico alessandrino non ha significato per lui il sacrificio della lettera del testo sacro. Perciò, dopo una programmatica introduzione sul tema della perfezione cristiana, prima di illustrare il tema mediante l'esempio di Mosè, presenta secondo la lettera la storia del personaggio, perchè nessuno gli potesse obiettare di averne sacrificato la realtà storica a beneficio della simbologia. Ma ovviamente è questa che sta a cuore al Nisseno, sì che, dopo questa prima, più breve parte, egli risponde uno per uno gli stessi fatti or ora narrati e li interpreta allegoricamente" (Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria: un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica*, 155).

⁶⁶ That is, the imitation of the biblical text's basic episodes, sequence, and plot rather than to an exegetical method per se. Even when scholars refer to a literal interpretation or sense, it is unclear if they mean exegesis in the strict understanding of the term. See, for example, the statement made by Malherbe and Ferguson that the *historia* is the "simple account of the facts, or literal sense" (Malherbe and Ferguson, *Life of Moses*, 7).

⁶⁷ For the significance of διάνοια in exegesis, see, for example, Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 29–45; Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit*, 125–126; Simonetti, "Exegesis," 333; Mariette Canévet, *Grégoire de Nysse et l'herméneutique biblique: étude des rapports entre le langage et la connaissance de Dieu* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1983), 42; Manlio Simonetti, "La tecnica esegetica di Gregorio di Nissa nella Vita di Mosè," *Studi storico-religiosi* 6 (1982): 401–418.

We may see this dichotomy in the way most scholarship introduces the *Life of Moses*. These works describe Book 1 as the “literal” or “historical” sense of scripture while Book 2 is the allegorical or typological. In most of these classifications, it seems to be understood that the literal sense inherently lacks exegesis while the allegorical in Book 2 contains the primary exegetical focus of the treatise. Since this is the dominant consensus in scholarship on the *Life*, a sampling of these scholarly assertions will suffice. For example, Jean Daniélou asserts that Book 1 is “une exégèse littérale édifiante.”⁶⁸ Charles Kannengiesser refers to it as the “summarized literal content of the biblical narrative.”⁶⁹ Malherbe and Ferguson’s introduction to their translation calls the text “the literal treatment of Moses’s life” in contrast to Book 2 as the “allegorical or nonliteral interpretation.”⁷⁰ According to Albert Geljon, in Book 1, “Gregory retells Moses’s life in a literal way.”⁷¹ In all of these cases, Book 1 is the literal sense of scripture, and thus often lacks exegetical meaning, while Book 2 provides the true allegorical meaning of the text.⁷²

⁶⁸ Daniélou, *Vie de Moïse*, 20. According to Daniélou, this literal exegesis contains features of Jewish haggadic exegesis (see Daniélou, “Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse,” 385–394; Daniélou, *Vie de Moïse*, 16–20.).

⁶⁹ Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 753. See also similar descriptions of Book 1 as a summary of the biblical account of Moses’s life in Young and Teal, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 171; Malherbe and Ferguson, *Life of Moses*, 5.

⁷⁰ Malherbe and Ferguson, *Life of Moses*, 5. Malherbe and Ferguson draw on Daniélou and assert that this literal treatment contains the features of Jewish haggada.

⁷¹ Geljon, “Burning Bush,” 231. See also his earlier monograph where he classifies it as an “historical sketch” (Geljon, *Philonic Exegesis*, 64.).

⁷² For additional examples of Book 1 as “literal” or the “literal interpretation,” see Paul M. Blowers, “Mystics and Mountains: Comparing Origen's Exegesis of the Transfiguration and Gregory of Nyssa's Exposition of the Sinai Theophany,” *Phronema* 20, no. 2 (2015): 9; Kariatlis, “Dazzling Darkness,” 103. Another common way to classify Book 1 is “historical” in some way. This follows twentieth-century studies on typological exegesis that seeks to see typology as affirming the historical reality of the biblical account (see, for example, Jean Daniélou, *The Lord*

This juxtaposition between Books 1 and 2 as the literal and allegorical interpretations of scripture is so pervasive that we see such an assumption appear in foundational lexical tools, including the *Patristic Greek Lexicon* and the *Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Both resources give a possible definition of ἱστορία as the “literal sense of scripture” in opposition to the θεωρία. According to both lexical entries, Gregory’s *Life of Moses* appears as the literary example of such a meaning. The *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* entry on “history” also reflects a similar understanding of the treatise.⁷³ All of these studies have in common the fact that they consider Book 1 to correspond in purpose to the sense of the exegetical term ἱστορία while Book 2 aligns with the exegetical term θεωρία.

This understanding of the exegesis and structure of the treatise stems from its apparent adoption of the language of fourth-century biblical exegesis. As has been demonstrated, the language of ἱστορία and θεωρία ultimately derives from terms used by exegetes to appeal to the literal and allegorical levels of scripture. Following the example of Paul, who distinguished between the letter and the spirit,⁷⁴ patristic exegetes often differentiated between these two

of History: Reflections on the Inner Meaning of History, trans. Nigel Abercrombie (London: Longmans, 1958), 5–6, 140–141, 214–140; de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*; Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), especially 132–141.; see also Daniélou’s comments that allegory no longer has any interest today while at the same time he affirms typology in Gregory as something distinct and of value for his readers [Daniélou, “Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse,” 387 n.383.]. For examples of such assertions of Book 1 as “historical,” see, for example, Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, 66; Conway-Jones, *Tabernacle Imagery*, 27; Geljon, *Philonian Exegesis*, 64.

⁷³ Maspero, “History,” 390. According to Maspero, the treatise “is structurally divided into a first, more literal, part (ἱστορία) and a second, centered on spiritual interpretation (θεωρία).” See also Maspero, “La teologia della storia,” 383–450.

⁷⁴ See, for example, 2 Cor 3:6.

levels. Certain constellations of vocabulary had developed, to which interpreters could appeal.⁷⁵ While ἱστορία was associated with the literal, θεωρία and διάνοια were connected to the allegorical. Not only do the terms ἱστορία and θεωρία appear for the two-part structure of the treatise, but Gregory refers to the ἱστορία and the διάνοια in his preface. Although this would seem to confirm the standard scholarly judgment about the dichotomous exegesis of the treatise, this vocabulary proves far more ambiguous in its actual usage.

A few examinations have been published that suggest that Book 1 contains more than simply literal exegesis. The most consequential for our present study are those of Frances Young and Anthony Meredith. Likely taking her inspiration from Daniélou, who argued that Book 1 was an edifying literal interpretation with features of Jewish haggada,⁷⁶ Frances Young asserts that in Book 1 “Gregory has summarized the story, yet amplified it to bring out its spiritual intention.”⁷⁷ Young here implies that Gregory composes Book 1 with a view to his allegorical interpretation in Book 2. But does he craft the narrative in Book 1 in such a way that he weaves those allegories into the narrative fabric of the account itself? And if so, what method does he use to do so? By not providing an analysis of how Gregory’s amplification functions exegetically, Young does not demonstrate how he brings out this spiritual intention. Further, as Gregory’s preface itself suggests, he makes use both of amplification and abbreviation in composing Book 1. Therefore, we can advance this idea further by making more explicit the idea

⁷⁵ For a non-exhaustive list, see Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit*, 120–142.

⁷⁶ Daniélou, *Vie de Moïse*, 17; Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," 388.

⁷⁷ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 261. Significantly, Daniélou considered this amplified narrative part of the inheritance from Philo’s non-allegorical, as he considered it, *Mos*. (Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," 388.).

that he weaves the allegorical readings into the narrative of Book 1 while also looking for the actual method that Gregory uses to do this weaving.

In his monograph on Gregory of Nyssa, Anthony Meredith offers another term aside from “literal” or “historical” by which to classify Book 1. According to him, the text represents an “expanded paraphrase” of scripture.⁷⁸ While the possibility that Book 1 is a form of paraphrase has a lot to offer, Meredith does not himself analyze Book 1 in order to demonstrate how Gregory makes use of the techniques afforded by the art of ancient paraphrase as he recasts scripture. This is not the purpose of Meredith’s study, which is dedicated to offering an overview of as many of Gregory’s texts as possible in order to introduce students to a more complete picture of him as an individual and writer. As a result, while he offers a suggestive description for Book 1, an analysis of how it functions as has yet to be performed.⁷⁹

Another scholar, Paul Blowers, has observed in the case of the Mt Sinai theophany how “the inner sanctuary of divine initiation” (τὸ ἄδυτον τῆς θεῖας μυσταγωγίας) in Book 1 corresponds to Moses being “initiated into the ineffable mysteries in the same inner sanctuary” (ὁ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἀδύτῳ μνηθεὶς ἀπόρρητα) in Book 2.⁸⁰ Because similar theological terms appear in both volumes as Gregory discusses the same events, Blowers argues that “the ‘literal’ and the ‘spiritual’ accounts bleed together.”⁸¹ Blowers himself is concerned with the theological

⁷⁸ Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 100.

⁷⁹ See also Margaret Beirne, “Spiritual Enrichment Through Exegesis: St Gregory of Nyssa and the Scriptures,” *Phronema* 27, no. 2 (2012): 90. Beirne follows Meredith in designating Book 1 as a paraphrase, but she also does not analyze Book 1 according to the theory of ancient paraphrase.

⁸⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.164 (GNO 25.87.19–20).

⁸¹ Blowers, “Mystics and Mountains,” 9.

implications of this observation.⁸² However, we can also consider the exegetical significance for the whole of the treatise. Moreover, by describing this as a bleeding together of the “literal” and “spiritual” accounts, Blowers continues to affirm the traditional notion that Book 1 contains the literal sense of scripture while Book 2 possesses the allegorical. But does the way that Gregory interweaves allegorical elements from Book 2 into the very narrative fabric of Book 1 suggest that Book 1 contains both literal and allegorical characteristics?

In addition, there have been no in-depth investigations into the complex exegetical relationship between Books 1 and 2. Following Daniélou, scholars have seen Books 1 and 2 as functioning largely independently from one another.⁸³ According to Daniélou, the two books offered two very different forms of exegesis. While Book 1 gave an edifying literal account, Book 2 provided the typological exegesis.⁸⁴ For Daniélou the *historia* served as an essential base for the *theoria* because it affirmed the historical reality of the typology contained therein. Even though the *historia* had this significance, scholarship often pointed to scripture rather than the *historia* when analyzing a specific interpretation in Book 2. But as Ellen Muehlberger has recently stated, “if there is a central text that the *Life of Moses* interprets it is the ‘history’ that

⁸² That he is concerned with theological rather than exegetical matters is clear from the conclusion that he draws: “It is clear to him that the Sinai theophany and lawgiving is not just a historical narrative concerning Israel’s constitution as a people of Torah. The story must *literally* be about theophany, about pious approach toward the ineffable God individually and ecclesially, and about the sublime mysteries of *theologia*” (Blowers, “Mystics and Mountains,” 9).

⁸³ This is especially clear in Daniélou, “Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse,” 387–400.

⁸⁴ Daniélou, “Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse,” 387. According to Daniélou: “Moïse est considéré comme figure du Christ, et les événements de sa vie comme figures de ceux de la rédemption.”

forms the first one-third of the work.”⁸⁵ Yet, scholarship often points to biblical parallels when examining Gregory’s allegories in Book 2 rather than his paraphrase in Book 1. While scholars readily acknowledge that the two volumes have a relationship to one another, how the two books correspond exegetically remains unclear.⁸⁶ In this analysis, we will better investigate how Book 1 prepares the reader for the explicit exegesis contained in Book 2.

As a result, further questions need to be asked regarding the exegetical relationship between the two volumes. How does the paraphrastic *historia* in Book 1 exegetically prepare the reader for the articulated allegories Book 2 by inscribing them in Book 1’s narrative? How does Book 1 mediate the meaning of scripture for the reader? How does it do so for Book 2? In other words, how does Book 1 serve narratively to tee up the allegorical explanations in Book 2. Since prior scholarship has not fully appreciated the complex exegetical nature of Book 1 and the relationship between the two volumes, this study will explore this new ground.

⁸⁵ Ellen Muehlberger, "The Ascetic Leader in Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*," in *The Christian Moses: From Philo to the Qur'ān*, ed. Philip Rousseau and Janet A. Timbie (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 153.

⁸⁶ See, for example, Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 100; Simonetti, "De vita Moysis," 788; Trigg, "Selections from Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*," 103–113, especially 104; Musurillo, *Glory to Glory*, 289–290 n.281.

Chapter 2

Ancient Paraphrase: Responding to Problems

2.1 Introduction

Ancient exegetes were steeped in a literary culture. This was a world in which “literacy, in public or in private, was a way of living, a way of working and a way of thinking.”¹ During their education (*paideia*) as youth, Greeks and Romans received the skills necessary for the reading, analysis, and composition of a variety of textual sources. A wide variety of tools were available to ancient biblical interpreters working in Greek from the first through the fourth centuries. Two significant tools in the toolkit of the ancient exegete were the procedures of paraphrase and problems and solutions (*προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις*). Because Gregory and Philo were thoroughly enmeshed in the literary culture of their day, both exegetes would have been well acquainted with these two methods, as well as the ways in which authors used them.

This chapter aims to root the current study in both the ancient sources and the relevant secondary literature on these two procedures. In doing so, we will seek to do two things. First, we shall examine how *προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις* served as an exegetical method in the hands of exegetes to point out and resolve various “vexing questions” (*προβλήματα*), “disputed questions” (*ζητήματα*), and “points of perplexity” (*ἀπορίαι*).² Second, we shall investigate how the art of paraphrase functioned as one possible exegetical strategy to formulate solutions (*λύσεις*) for

¹ Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2–3.

² Here, I have borrowed the translations for each of these key terms from Margaret M. Mitchell to try to get at the heart of these key terms differ from one another (Margaret M. Mitchell, “‘Problems and Solutions’ in Early Christian Biblical Interpretation: A Telling Case from Origen’s Newly Discovered Greek Homilies on the Psalms (*Codex Monacensis Graecus* 314),” *Adamantius* 22 (2016): 40.).

προβλήματα/ζητήματα/ἀπορίες by reshaping the biblical narrative. By examining how biblical exegetes made strategic use of these method, especially in concert with one another, we will establish a basis from which to analyze how Philo and Gregory employ the art of paraphrase as a way to resolve problems (προβλήματα/ζητήματα/ἀπορίες) in subsequent chapters.

2.2 Problems and Solutions

Scholars have long recognized the significance of προβλήματα και λύσεις or ἐρωταποκρίσεις for the study of ancient exegesis. Problems and solutions appears as both a distinct literary genre and an exegetical and rhetorical procedure. Προβλήματα και λύσεις enjoyed immense popularity in the ancient world across a long chronological span, as attested by such works as Zeno's Προβλήματα Ὀμηρικά (fifth century BCE); Aristotle's Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά (fourth century BCE);³ Heraclides Ponticus's Λύσεις Ὀμηρικαί (fourth century BCE); Ps.-Aristotle's Προβλήματα φυσικά (first century BCE); Ps.-Heraclitus's Ὀμηρικὰ προβλήματα (late first century CE); Seneca's *Naturales quaestiones* (first century CE); Philo's *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin* and *in Exodum* (first century CE); Plutarch's Πλατωνικά ζητήματα, *Quaestiones Barbaricae, Graecae, naturales, and convivales* (late first-century CE); Alexander of Aphrodisias's *Quaestiones* (early third century CE); Porphyry's Ὀμηρικὰ ζητήματα (third

³ While the Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά is no longer extant, we know of it from Diogenes Laertius (see Diogenes Laertius, 5.26). See Lorenzo Perrone, "Questions and Responses," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Paul M. Blowers and Peter W. Martens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 198; Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 9; Sean A. Adams, "Philo's *Questions* and the Adaptation of Greek Philosophical Curriculum," in *Second Temple Jewish Paideia in Context*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 228 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 170.

century CE); Eusebius of Caesarea's *Tὰ ἐν τοῖς εὐαγγελίοις ζητήματα καὶ λύσεις*;⁴ Diodore of Tarsus's series of extant ζητήματα devoted to the Octateuch;⁵ and Theodoret of Cyrillus's *Quaestiones* (ζητήματα) in *Octateuchum* and *Quaestiones* (ζητήματα) in *libros regnorum et paralipomenon*,⁶ to name but a few.

While προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις predates Aristotle, he influenced its later development.⁷

The twenty-fifth chapter of his *Poetics*, which carries the title "On problems and solutions" (περὶ δὲ προβλημάτων καὶ λύσεων),⁸ categorizes five types of criticisms (ἐπιτιμήματα) that arise from literary analysis of a text. These include impossibilities (ἀδύνατα), illogical actions (ἄλογα), unethical/harmful or inappropriate actions (βλαβερὰ or ἀπρεπεῖς), contradictions (ὕπεναντία), and violations of artistic standards (παρὰ τὴν ὀρθότητα τὴν κατὰ τέχνην).⁹ Later literary critics

⁴ Text reconstructed in Eusèbe de Césarée, *Questions évangéliques*, ed. Claudio Zamagni, Sources chrétiennes 523 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2008).

⁵ Fragments reconstructed in Diodore de Tarse, *Essai sur la chaîne l'Octateuque avec une édition des commentaires de Diodore de Tarse*, ed. Joseph Deconinck, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études: Sciences historiques et philologiques (Paris: Librairie ancienne honoré champion, 1912).

⁶ See *Theodoret of Cyrus: The Questions on the Octateuch*, trans. Robert C. Hill, 2 vols., Library of Early Christianity (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2007); Natalio Fernández Marcos and José Ramón Busto Saiz, eds., *Theodoretus Cyrensis Quaestiones in Octateuchum*, Textos y Estudios: Cardenal Cisneros 17 (Madrid: CSIC, 1979); Natalio Fernández Marcos and José Ramón Busto Saiz, eds., *Theodoretus Cyrensis Quaestiones in Reges et Paralipomena*, Textos y Estudios: Cardenal Cisneros 32 (Madrid: CSIC, 1984). See also Markus Dubischar, "Typology of Philological Writings," in *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. Franco Montanari, Stephanos Matthaios, and Antonios Rengakos (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 564; Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 40–41.

⁷ Adams, "Philosophical Curriculum," 170.

⁸ Aristotle, *Poet.* 25 (1460b6). On this textually (and otherwise) difficult passage, see the commentary by Donald W. Lucas, *Aristotle: Poetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 232–51.

⁹ Perrone, "Questions and Responses," 201; Lorenzo Perrone, "Sulla preistoria delle 'quaestiones' nella letteratura patristica: Presupposti e sviluppi del genere letterario fino al IV sec.," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 8, no. 2 (1991): 494; A. E. Johnson, "Rhetorical Criticism in Eusebius's Gospel *Questions*," *Studia Patristica* 18 (1985): 33–39; Lorenzo Perrone, "'Quaestiones et responsiones' in Origene: Prospettive di un'analisi formale dell'argomentazione

made use of this scheme while sometimes employing variant terminology.¹⁰ One place we see the adoption of these methods occurs with Hellenistic scholarship on the Homeric text in the city of Alexandria.¹¹

While Alexandrian academics began employing a question and answer method to resolve perceived problems in the Homeric text, scholars soon began applying such techniques to questions beyond the literary. The procedure was suited to address a whole host of προβλήματα/ἀπορίες/ζητήματα, including literary, theological, ethical, philosophical, cultural,

esegetico-teologica," *Cristianesimo nella storia* 15 (1994): 14; Alfred Gudeman, "Λύσεις," *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* 13.2 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1927), 2516–2517; Elsa Bouchard, "The Meaning of βλαβερὸν in the *Poetics*," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 50 (2010): 309–336. Gudeman's 1927 *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie* article on λύσεις helpfully categorizes these five headings according to the Aristotelian schema:

- I. τὰ ἀδύνατα
 1. ἔστι κατὰ τέχνην
 2. ἔστι συμβεβηκός
- II. τὰ ἄλογα
 1. ἔστι οἷα ἦν ἢ ἔστιν (historisch beglaubigt)
 2. ἔστι οἷα φασιν καὶ δοκεῖ
 3. ἔστι οἷα εἶναι δεῖ (Idealisierung)
- III. τὰ βλαβερὰ (= τὸ ἀπρεπές)
 1. οὐ μόνον σκεπτέον εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πεπραγμένον ἢ εἰρημένον...ἀλλὰ καὶ...πρὸς ὃν ἢ ὅτε ἢ ὅτῳ ἢ οὐ ἔνεκα κτλ.
- IV. τὰ ὑπεναντία
 1. ἐν οὕτῳ σκοπεῖν ὥσπερ οἱ ἐν λόγοις, ἔλεγχοι εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡσαύτως κτλ.
- V. παρὰ τὴν ὀρθότητα τὴν κατὰ τέχνην
 1. ἔστι γλῶσσα ἢ μεταφορά
 2. κατὰ προσφθίαν
 3. κατὰ διαίρεσιν
 4. ἔστι ἀμφιβολία
 5. κατὰ τὸ ἔθος τῆς λέξεως

(Following Gudeman, "Λύσεις," 2516–2517)

¹⁰ Gudeman, "Λύσεις," 2517.

¹¹ For an excellent overview of such scholarship, see Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*, 9–12.

natural-historical, scientific, political, rhetorical, medicinal, grammatical, legal, etc.¹² Texts such as Ps.-Aristotle's Προβλήματα φυσικά; Seneca's *Naturales quaestiones*; Plutarch's *Quaestiones Barbaricae, Graecae, naturales, and convivales*; and Alexander of Aphrodisias's *Quaestiones* provide evidence of such investigations. While authors may examine a single kind of problem within a text (e.g., Ps.-Aristotle's Προβλήματα φυσικά, Plutarch's *Quaestiones Barbaricae*, or Seneca's *Naturales quaestiones*), they may also seek to investigate multiple types of problems in a single work (e.g., Ps.-Heraclitus's Ὀμηρικὰ προβλήματα).¹³ The procedure thus proved quite flexible in the hands of exegetes.

Alexandrian Jewish exegetes soon adopted the procedure from Homeric scholarship and began applying them in their exegesis of scripture. For the Greek-speaking Jewish population of Alexandria, this meant applying the procedure to the LXX version of scripture, which was believed to be divinely inspired. The earliest Jewish authors we have evidence of using the methods of ἐρωταποκρίσεις were Demetrius the Chronographer and Aristobulus, both of whom probably lived sometime in the second century BCE.¹⁴ Our greatest wealth of material from a

¹² For some of these many possible questions προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις could answer, see for, example, Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 42; Yannis Papadoyannakis, "Instruction by Question and Answer: The Case of Late Antique and Byzantine Erotapokriseis," in *Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism*, ed. Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 91–92. See also the excellent bibliographic references collected in Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 41 n.48.

¹³ See the helpful introduction for Ps.-Heraclitus's Ὀμηρικὰ προβλήματα in Donald A. Russell and David Konstan, *Heraclitus: Homeric Problems*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 14 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), xi–xxx.

¹⁴ See Demetrius, frags. 2 and 5; Aristobulus, frag. 2. See also Gregory E. Sterling, "The School of Moses in Alexandria: An Attempt to Reconstruct the School of Philo," in *Second Temple Jewish Paideia in Context*, ed. Jason M. Zurawski and Gabriele Boccaccini, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 228 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 158; Pieter W. van der Horst, "Philo and the Rabbis on Genesis: Similar Questions, Different Answers," in *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context*, ed. Annelie Volgers

Jewish author who uses both the procedure and the genre of προβλήματα και λύσεις comes from Philo of Alexandria, writing in the first century CE. Multiple studies in recent decades have demonstrated how Philo uses προβλήματα και λύσεις exegetically.¹⁵

and Claudio Zamagni, *Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology* 37 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 57; Pieter W. van der Horst, "The Interpretation of the Bible by the Minor Hellenistic Jewish Authors," in *Essays on the Jewish World of Early Christianity*, ed. Pieter W. van der Horst (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1990), 196–200; Elias Bickerman, *Studies in Jewish and Christian History*, 2 vols., ed. Amram Tropper, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 618–630; Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*, 38–57; Borgen, *An Exegete*, 89. While a third century dating for Demetrius had been traditional, and is still taken as the norm for many scholars, Niehoff questions this consensus and dates him to the end of the second century BCE (Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*, 38, 55). For an earlier opposing viewpoint on Aristobulus, see van der Horst, "Philo and the Rabbis," 58. Van der Horst observes that we do not know of Jewish authors in the centuries between Demetrius and Philo that make use of the format; however, "it would be unwise to assume that in these centuries no other Jewish scholar made use of this literary form. That Philo and, after him, other exegetes make clear that they stand in a venerable tradition makes it probable that the fact that such sources are not extant does not necessarily imply that they did not exist. They are simply lost" (van der Horst, "Philo and the Rabbis," 58). For additional scholarship on Aristobulus's use and adaptation of the Septuagint, see Nikolaus Walter, *Der Thorausleger Aristobulos* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964); Markus Mülke, *Aristobulos in Alexandria: Jüdische Biblexegese zwischen Griechen und Ägyptern unter Ptolemaios VI. Philometor*, Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 126 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018).

¹⁵ See, for example, Valentin Nikiprowetzky, "L'exégèse de Philon d'Alexandrie," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 53 (1973): 309–329; Valentin Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'Écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie* (Leiden: Brill, 1977); Valentin Nikiprowetzky, "L'exégèse de Philon d'Alexandrie dans le *De Gigantibus* et le *Quod Deus*," in *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: A Commentary on De Gigantibus and Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*, ed. John Dillon and David Winston, Brown Judaic Studies 25 (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), 5–75; David M. Hay, ed., *Both Literal and Allegorical: Studies in Philo of Alexandria's Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus*, Brown Judaic Studies 232 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); Sze-kar Wan, "Philo's *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim*: A Synoptic Approach," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1993 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 32 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1993); Peder Borgen and Roald Skarsten, "Quaestiones et Solutiones: Some Observations on the Form of Philo's Exegesis," *Studia Philonica* 4 (1976–77): 1–15; Borgen, *An Exegete*, 80–101; Maren R. Niehoff, "Questions and Answers in Philo and *Genesis Rabbah*," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods* 39 (2008): 337–366; Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*; Maren R. Niehoff, *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters*, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2012); David T. Runia, "Secondary Texts in Philo's

Following in the footsteps of Philo, Christian exegetes also made use of προβλήματα και λύσεις for biblical exegesis. Abundant scholarly studies have demonstrated that early Christian interpreters knew and used it for a range of purposes in their work.¹⁶ Although Tatian (second century) wrote a—no longer extant—series of προβλήματα without accompanying solutions,¹⁷ it is Origen (third century) who gives us our first real view of a Christian exegete employing the procedure.¹⁸ Situated in an Alexandrian context, Origen would have been familiar with both the Homeric scholarship of Alexandria and Philo’s biblical exegesis.¹⁹ Inspired by interpreters like

Quaestiones," in *Both Literal and Allegorical: Studies in Philo of Alexandria's Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus*, ed. David M. Hay, Brown Judaic Studies 232 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991). It has even recently been suggested that there is evidence of lost Philonic *quaestiones et solutiones* in the newly discovered Origen homilies on the Psalms (Michael B. Cover, "A New Fragment of Philo’s *Quaestiones in Exodum* in Origen’s Newly Discovered *Homilies on the Psalms*? A Preliminary Note," *Studia Philonica Annual* 30 [2018]: 15–30).

¹⁶ Gudeman, "Λύσεις," 2511–2529; G. Bardy, "La littérature patristique des ‘Quaestiones et responsiones’ sur l’Écriture sainte," *Revue biblique* 41 (1932): 210–236, 341–369, 515–537; G. Bardy, "La littérature patristique des ‘Quaestiones et responsiones’ sur l’Écriture sainte," *Revue biblique* 42 (1933): 14–30, 211–229, 328–352; *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004); Claudio Zamagni, "Une introduction méthodologique à la littérature patristique des questions et réponses: le cas d’Eusèbe de Césarée," in *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context*, ed. Annelie Volgers and Claudio Zamagni (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 7–24; Papadoyannakis, "Instruction," 91–106; Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 40–55; Perrone, "Preistoria," 485–505; Lorenzo Perrone, "Il genere delle *Quaestiones et responsiones* nella letteratura cristiana antica fino ad Agostino," in "*De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*," "*De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*" di Agostino D’Ippona, ed. Lorenzo Perrone (Roma: Città Nuova, 1996), 11–44; Perrone, "Preistoria," 492; Robert W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: Supplement to On the Soul* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004); Marie-Pierre Bussièrès, ed., *La littérature des questions et réponses dans l’Antiquité profane et chrétienne: de l’enseignement à l’exégèse*, *Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia* 64 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

¹⁷ As such, it does not represent a true member of the problem and solution category. Unfortunately, his text is no longer extant for our analysis (Perrone, "Questions and Responses," 201).

¹⁸ Perrone, "Questions and Responses," 201. Although Tatian wrote this set of προβλήματα, since it has no solutions, it does not present a full προβλήματα και λύσεις procedure.

¹⁹ Zamagni, "Introduction méthodologique," 7–8; Perrone, "Preistoria," 492–496. For the relationship between Philo and Origen, see David T. Runia, "Philo of Alexandria," in

Philo and Origen, subsequent Christian biblical exegetes, including Eusebius of Caesarea, Diodore of Tarsus, and Theodoret of Cyrus, attest to the continued prevalence of problems and solutions in the fourth century. During this time, exegetes commonly employed the procedure for the Octateuch and the Gospels. While the genre of questions and answers became popular beginning in the fourth century, scholars have demonstrated that early Christian exegetes used the procedure in a wide variety of genres, including homilies, commentaries, dialogues, and other kinds of treatises.²⁰ The procedure thus represents a “broad and varied exegetical tradition in antiquity.”²¹

Ancient authors would use προβλήματα/ζητήματα for a number of purposes, including apology, polemic, exegesis, philosophy, ethics, theology, and catechesis.²² While the procedure

Westminster Handbook to Origen, ed. John Anthony McGuckin (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 169–171; Runia, *Survey*, 157–183.

²⁰ Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 41; Bardy, "Quaestiones," 210–236.

²¹ Peder Borgen, "Philo—An Interpreter of the Laws of Moses," in *Reading Philo: A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria*, ed. Torrey Seland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 90. See also Christoph Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese*, Theophaneia 23 (Cologne: Hanstein, 1974), 49–51.

²² For the vast literature on the functions of προβλήματα και λύσεις, see Perrone, "Questions and Responses," 199; Lorenzo Perrone, "Le *Quaestiones evangelicae* di Eusebio di Cesarea: Alle origini di un genere letterario," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 7 (1990): 434–435; Perrone, "Preistoria," 503–504; Zamagni, "Introduction méthodologique," 13–19; Marie-Pierre Bussières, "Conclusions: Questions (Encore) sans Réponses," in *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context*, ed. Annelie Volgers and Claudio Zamagni (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 184; Adams, "Philosophical Curriculum," 182–183; Averil Cameron, "Texts as Weapons: Polemic in the Byzantine Dark Ages," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 198–215; Averil Cameron, "Disputations, Polemical Literature, and the Formation of Opinion in the Early Byzantine Period," in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East: Forms and Types of Literary Debates in Semitic and Related Literatures*, ed. Gerrit J. Reinink and H. L. J. Vanstiphout, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 42 (Leuven: Department Oriëntalistiek, 1991), 91–108; Jean-Noël Guinot, "Les Questions sur l'Octateuque et les Règnes de Théodoret de Cyr: oeuvre originale ou simple compilation?," in *La littérature des questions et réponses dans l'Antiquité profane et chrétienne: de l'enseignement à l'exégèse*, ed. Marie-Pierre

could be employed for a number of reasons, the engagement of early Christian exegetes with the form προβλήματα/ζητήματα was often situated within polemic or apology:

The engagement with προβλήματα/ζητήματα on Scripture was situated within “pagan” polemic against Christians and their self-contradictory scriptures, or “heretics” who read differently (and read different books) and fellow readers who came to different conclusions, all set within what I have termed “the agonistic paradigm” of early Christian biblical interpretation.²³

Biblical exegetes drew on traditional collections of προβλήματα/ζητήματα. As they did so, they placed themselves within a tradition of biblical interpretation.²⁴ While part of a tradition, they put the procedure to work for creative purposes. They developed new solutions to old questions, as well as new questions with equally new answers, as they updated προβλήματα/ζητήματα to reflect their own contemporary circumstances. By asking new προβλήματα/ζητήματα and solving them, exegetes could engage with questions that reflected disputes of their own day.²⁵

By making use of standard zetetic phraseology, exegetes introduce the questions to be investigated and their solutions for them. Among the terms used to introduce problems are words derived from the roots ζήτεω (e.g., ζήτεω [“to inquire”], τὸ ζητούμεον [“the object of inquiry”],

Bussièeres, *Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia* 64 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 183–184; Yannis Papadogiannakis, "Didacticism, Exegesis, and Polemics in Pseudo-Kaisarios' *erotapokriseis*," in *La littérature des questions et réponses dans l'Antiquité profane et chrétienne: de l'enseignement à l'exégèse*, ed. Marie-Pierre Bussièeres, *Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia* 64 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 177–214. For the didactic function of the format in Philo specifically, see Sterling, "School of Moses," 158; Gregory E. Sterling, "The School of Sacred Laws: The Social Setting of Philo's Treatises," *Vigiliae Christianae* 53, no. 2 (1999): 158–160; Wan, "Synoptic Approach," 37–38, 53.

²³ Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 42.

²⁴ David M. Hay, "References to Other Exegetes," in *Both Literal and Allegorical: Studies in Philo of Alexandria's Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus*, ed. David M. Hay, *Brown Judaic Studies* 232 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 84–85; Papadoyannakis, "Instruction," 95–97.

²⁵ Papadoyannakis, "Instruction," 95–97. As David Hay observes, Philo will refer to exegetes from prior generations that he draws on as “fellow exegetes” (Hay, "References to Other Exegetes," 85).

ζήτησις [“an inquiry”], ζήτημα [“a disputed question”], ἀπορέω (e.g., ἀπορέω [“to puzzle”], τὸ ἐπαπορούμενον [“the object of puzzlement”], ἀπορία [“a point of perplexity”], and ἀπόρημα [“a puzzling question”]),²⁶ ἐρωτάω (e.g., ἐρωτάω [“to ask a question”],²⁷ ἐρώτησις [“a questioning”], and ἐρώτημα [“a question”]),²⁸ in addition to πρόβλημα (“a vexing question”) and πρότασις (“a proposed question”).²⁹ Moreover, the terms ἀπολογία (“defense”), ἔγκλημα (“accusation”), (ἐπι)μέμφομαι (“find fault”),³⁰ αἰτιάομαι (αἰτιάομαι [“accuse”]³¹ and αἰτία [“accusation”]),³² and κατηγορέω (e.g., κατηγορέω [“accuse”]³³ and κατηγορία [“an accusation”]), among others, have technical senses for indicating προβλήματα.³⁴ Typical terms for indicating solutions include words from the roots λύω (e.g., [κατα/δια/ἐπι]λύω [“to solve”], λύσις [“solution”]), ἀποδίδωμι (e.g., ἀποδίδωμι [“to explain”]³⁵ and ἀπόδοσις [“an explanation”]),³⁶ ἀποκρίνομαι (e.g., ἀποκρίνομαι [“to answer”],³⁷ ἀπόκρισις [“answer”]), and προτείνω (“propose”).³⁸ In addition to such standard

²⁶ See LSJ, s.v. “ἀπόρημα” A: “matter of doubt, question, puzzle.”

²⁷ See LSJ, s.v. “ἐρωτάω” A.

²⁸ See LSJ, s.v. “ἐρώτημα” A: “that which is asked, question.”

²⁹ See LSJ, s.v. “πρότασις” A.3: “question proposed, problem.”

³⁰ See LSJ, s.v. “μέμφομαι” A.6: “find fault, complain.”

³¹ See LSJ, s.v. “αἰτιάομαι” A: “accuse, censure.”

³² See LSJ, s.v. “αἰτία” A: “accusation.”

³³ See LSJ, s.v. “κατηγορέω” A.3: “allege in accusation.”

³⁴ See Guinot, *Les Questions sur l’Octateuque et les Règnes de Théodoret de Cyr: oeuvre originale ou simple compilation?*, 196; Zamagni, “Existe-t-il une terminologie technique dans les *Questions* d’Eusèbe de Césarée?,” 85; Perrone, “Le *Quaestiones evangelicae* di Eusebio di Cesarea: Alle origini di un genere letterario,” 432.

³⁵ See LSJ, s.v. “ἀποδίδωμι” A.11: “interpret, explain.”

³⁶ See LSJ, s.v. “ἀπόδοσις” A.II.3: “interpretation, explanation.”

³⁷ See LSJ, s.v., “ἀποκρίνομαι” IV: “give answer to, reply.”

³⁸ See LSJ, s.v. “προτείνω” A.II.4: “propose.” On this standard terminology, see Zamagni, “Terminologie technique,” 81–85; Perrone, “Le *Quaestiones evangelicae* di Eusebio di Cesarea: Alle origini di un genere letterario,” 432–433; Gudeman, “Λύσεις,” 2511–2529; James G. Lennox, “Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* and the Aristotelian *Problemata*,” in *The Aristotelian Problemata Physica: Philosophical and Scientific Investigations*, ed. Robert Mayhew, *Philosophia Antiqua* 139 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 36–60; Guinot, *Les Questions sur l’Octateuque*

language, exegetes often ask questions, which indicate how exegetes diagnose the kind or problem they seek to investigate.

When asking such questions, interpreters draw from a standard set of interrogative formulations, including τί (“what”), διὰ τί (“why”), πῶς (“how”), τίς (“who”), πόθεν (“from where”), ἀπὸ τίνοϛ (“from what/whom”), ποῖον/ὅποῖον (“of what kind”), ποῦ/πότε (“where”/“when”). While not introducing a question, exegetes may introduce a problem with an appeal to an interpretive tradition the phrase τινές φασιν (“some say”).³⁹ When the problem to be investigated is not clearly marked with such interrogative questions, scholars have labeled these instances of “versteckte ζητήματα” (“hidden questions”).⁴⁰ While the exegete still solves the problem, the reader must imply the problem under analysis due to the lack of clear identification. According to van der Horst, one reason to do this is that some problems are so well known that they become unnecessary for exegetes to restate.⁴¹ In the case of a paraphrastic narrative, for

et les Régnes de Théodoret de Cyr: oeuvre originale ou simple compilation?, 187–188. Zamagni lists other words that are more distinctly Eusebian in use, including ἀπόδειξις, ἀποδείκνυμι, ἔρμηνεύω, λόγος, διαφωνία, and διαφωνέω (Zamagni, “Terminologie technique,” 85–88).

³⁹ Most authors will favor certain formulations to introduce their questions. The most popular seem to be questions of cause (διὰ τί), definition (τί), and process (πῶς). For example, Philo prefers to ask questions like “why” (διὰ τί) and “what is X/what does X mean” (τί ἐστίν) whereas Eusebius asks questions like “why” (διὰ τί) and “how” (πῶς) (Hadas-Lebel, *Thinker*, 127; Adams, “Philosophical Curriculum,” 179; Sterling, “School of Moses,” 157; Gregory E. Sterling, “The Interpreter of Moses: Philo of Alexandria and the Biblical Text,” in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism*, ed. Matthias Henze [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012], 417; Wan, “Synoptic Approach,” 33–34; Zamagni, “Terminologie technique,” 88–98; Lennox, “Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* and the Aristotelian *Problemata*,” 39–60; Guinot, “*Les Questions sur l’Octateuque et les Régnes de Théodoret de Cyr: oeuvre originale ou simple compilation?*,” 188–191). Wan argues that, while most authors identify the problem to be discussed, Philo will quote the biblical lemma to be analyzed without explicitly identifying a problem. This often leaves ambiguity about the problem (Wan, “Synoptic Approach,” 33–34).

⁴⁰ van der Horst, “Philo and the Rabbis,” 58–59; Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 89.

⁴¹ van der Horst, “Philo and the Rabbis,” 58–59.

example, the exegete responds constantly to *versteckte ζητήματα* due to constrictions of the format of paraphrase. The author cannot explicitly name every *ζητήματα* that they wish to answer. Instead, as they write a narrative, they respond silently to these *versteckte ζητήματα*.

Exegetes have a variety of different strategies at their disposal to craft and argue for solutions (*λύσεις*) for their proposed questions (*προβλήματα/ζητήματα*), including invoking a number of hermeneutical techniques (e.g., appealing to the letter or the spirit, explaining contradictions by appealing to specific historical circumstances or to philosophical beliefs about the world, rewriting part of the text to show how it would have looked if their opponent was right).⁴² Several recent scholarly contributions have demonstrated how Second Temple interpreters, including Demetrius the Chronographer and Philo of Alexandria, made innovative use of paraphrase as a strategy to solve various kinds of questions. In the case of Demetrius and Philo, the paraphrase of scripture often provides a solution to unexpressed questions. By identifying technical language associated with the procedure, scholars have demonstrated how these paraphrastic media participate in the procedure of *προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις* by solving various questions.⁴³

For Philo, scholars have argued that his *Exposition* uses the procedure to solve various questions. For example, Peder Borgen has identified several passages where Philo uses technical terminology associated with the procedure, including *Opif.* 72–75 and 77–88, *Dec.* 2–17, 36–43,

⁴² Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, 18–37, especially 23–24; Adams, "Philosophical Curriculum," 170; Zamagni, "Introduction méthodologique," 9.

⁴³ As Maren Niehoff states regarding Demetrius's text, he "innovatively combin[es] the question and answer style with a continuous paraphrase of Scripture" (Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*, 38–39). In Niehoff's analysis, she demonstrates how he uses the methods of Homeric scholarship with problems and solutions in order to deal with the problems of contradiction and verisimilitude in the biblical text, yet he does so by paraphrasing the biblical account (Niehoff, *Homeric Scholarship*, 39–51).

and 176–178, *Mos.* 2.47, and 2.215.⁴⁴ While scholars have recognized the way that paraphrase can function as a solution for unexpressed questions (ζητήματα), further analysis is warranted on how Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa each employ paraphrase as such an exegetical strategy in their respective *Lives of Moses*. For this, a deeper understanding of the ancient art of paraphrase is required first.

2.3 Paraphrase

Authors ranging from classical antiquity to the Byzantine period engaged in the ancient art of paraphrase as a compositional procedure and a literary genre. While a distinct genre of paraphrase appeared relatively late—around the fourth century CE—we have clear references to a procedure of paraphrase as early as the first century BCE. However, the practice likely dates even further back into antiquity, as evidenced by various rhetorical and scribal practices in both classical Greece and the Ancient Near East.⁴⁵ Such works as Cicero's *De oratore*, Theon's *Progymnasmata*, Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, Byzantine commentaries on Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata*, and Libanius's *Chreiai* demonstrate that paraphrase constituted a significant component of the curriculum of ancient *paideia*.⁴⁶

Ancient handbooks and theorists provide the same basic definition of paraphrase, namely

⁴⁴ Borgen, *An Exegete*, 82; Borgen, "An Interpreter," 87.

⁴⁵ Theon, Plutarch, and Cicero all attest to the antiquity of the practice while referencing older authors (Theon, *Prog.* 1 [62–63; Patillon 4–6]; Plutarch, *Dem.* 8.2; Cicero, *De or.* 1.34.154). See also David McLain Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); David McLain Carr, "Torah on the Heart: Literary Jewish Textuality Within Its Ancient Near Eastern Context," *Oral Tradition* 25, no. 1 (2010): 17–40.

⁴⁶ See Cicero, *De or.* 1.34.154; Theon, *Prog.* 1 (62–63; Patillon 4–6), 15 (139.22–23; Patillon 107); Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.9.

that it consists of a compositional method by which one retells one or more prior texts by varying its style while retaining the meaning of the original. For example, Theon states that paraphrase entails “changing the form of expression while keeping the thoughts,”⁴⁷ while Quintilian defines it as a procedure “by which it is permitted to abbreviate (*breviare*) and embellish (*exornare*) some parts, provided that the poet’s sense (*sensus*) is preserved.”⁴⁸ While this definition remained remarkably static in antiquity—even through the Byzantine era—⁴⁹ it proves

⁴⁷ Theon, *Prog.* 15 (139.22–23; Patillon 107). See also Theon, *Prog.* 1 (62.14; Patillon 4). There, he states that paraphrase aims to present the same “meaning” (διάνοια) in a different form. Because Theon’s fifteenth chapter survives only in Armenian, I will be using the translation provided in George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, ed. D. A. Russell, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

⁴⁸ Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.9.2–3: *qua et breviare quaedam et exornare salvo modo poetae sensu permittitur*. See also the description of the practice in Cicero’s dialogue *De or.* There, Lucius Crassus describes his own use of paraphrase as a child: “After setting verses as weighty as possible or after having read some speech, which I was to take hold of in my memory, to the end, I would declaim the content itself, which I had read, by selecting differing words, as much as possible” (*ut aut versibus propositis quam maxime gravibus aut oratione aliqua lecta ad eum finem, quem memoria possem comprehendere, eam rem ipsam, quam legissem, verbis aliis quam maxime possem lectis, pronuntiarem*) (Cicero, *De or.* 1.34.154 [OCT (Wilkins) 1:33–34]). Cicero, however, does not mention the preservation of the meaning of the original. One could infer that he would agree with this sentiment, however (Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 16).

⁴⁹ See, for example, the various commentaries on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* by John of Sardis, the P-Scholia, and Doxapatres (John of Sardis, *Comm. in Aphth.* 5.13 [Rabe 15:46; Hock 62]; the P-Scholia on Aphthonius, 3.8.7–8 [Walz 2:590.29–33; Hock 122]; and Doxapatres, *Hom.* 3.35–36 [Walz 2:270.2–5; Hock 224]). Note that I have taken Hock’s section numeration for the above texts. In the Byzantine period, several grammarians wrote commentaries on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata*. Due to the rather sparse treatment Aphthonius gives on many topics—and the fact that his text was used to prepare students for the fuller treatments in Pseudo-Hermogenes—many commentaries arose to explain the text (Ronald F. Hock, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Commentaries on Aphthonius's Progymnasmata*, ed. Ronald F. Hock, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 31 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012], 5). As a result, the text of Aphthonius provides us an interesting example where theory and the ideal way to practice a concept (i.e., the exercises in the *progymnasmata* themselves) meet later theory and practice (i.e., the commentaries). In fact, the commentaries display a scholarly tradition on paraphrase that remains remarkably similar to that found centuries earlier in Theon and Quintilian. Bishop John of Sardis, dating to the ninth century, represents the earliest commentary

problematic in light of actual paraphrastic practice in literary texts, which demonstrate a wide degree of fidelity to and novelty from the meaning of the original texts.

This discrepancy between theory and practice likely arises from the fact that such definitions were intended primarily for students in a school setting who were learning the fundamentals of rhetoric.⁵⁰ The definitions given in the *progymnasmata* represent a kind of ideal for rhetoricians. At this stage, the grammarian would assign a limited scope of material while students focused on obtaining proficiency in the techniques of the act of paraphrase. After these basics were achieved, they eventually moved on to larger compositional exercises.⁵¹ As the amount of content increases, it becomes more difficult to preserve the meaning of the original.⁵² Moreover, authors sought to set their work apart by creating unique compositions that varied in significant ways from the original.

At the heart of ancient paraphrase is a tension between imitation and struggle with respect to the original. Quintilian perhaps embodies this tension best with his concept of *certamen atque*

on the text (see Hock, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Commentaries on Aphthonius's Progymnasmata*, 11).

⁵⁰ As such, the handbooks had in mind a limited scope of operation. However, when authors employ the same methods on whole texts, things prove more complicated. When paraphrasing the wording of an exemplar, the meaning of the text cannot always, in fact, remain unchanged.

⁵¹ According to Theon, one begins learning paraphrase with small units—such beginning with exercises of memory then passing onto individual arguments in a speech—and expanding from there as one's skill improves. Eventually, one gains enough mastery to paraphrase an entire speech or text (Theon, *Prog.* 15 [142; Patillon 110]).

⁵² Because the context within the whole determines meaning, altering any part of the whole affects the meaning of the whole. While at the micro level (i.e., a word, phrase, or even a sentence) it is possible that the sense of a text can be preserved, at the macro level (i.e., paragraphs, passages, and whole works) it is virtually impossible. The limited scope of the content the grammarians assigned students for paraphrase in the *progymnasmata* meant that students could focus developing their proficiency with the techniques of paraphrase while more or less preserving the source of the original. As the content increased, the preservation of the meaning became less likely.

aemulatio:

I do not want paraphrase to be a mere interpretation (*interpretationem tantum*), but [I want it] to imitate and struggle (*certamen atque aemulationem*) with the same thoughts (*circa eosdem sensus*).⁵³

According to Quintilian, the act of paraphrase consists of the exegete taking the source material while simultaneously imitating it and struggling against it (*certamen atque aemulatio*).⁵⁴ In every paraphrastic decision made, the paraphrast either adheres closely to the original in imitation or varies from it in competition. As a result, the paraphrase stands in a constant tensive relationship with the original in terms of faithfulness and freedom.⁵⁵

When navigating tensions of faithfulness and liberty, paraphrasts must take account of matters of both content (*λόγος/πρᾶγμα*) and style (*λέξις*).⁵⁶ According to Theon, the art of paraphrase provides the paraphrast with four techniques with which to alter the source material's content and style. These techniques are addition (*πλεονασμός/adiectio*), omission (*ἔνδεια/detractio*), rearrangement (*μετάθεσις/transmutatio*), and substitution

⁵³ Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.5.5 (OCT [Winterbottom] 608). The basic definition provided for *aemulatio* in the OLD is “an assiduous striving to equal or excel another in any thing.”

⁵⁴ The terms *certamen* and *aemulatio* prove particularly significant. On the one hand, *aemulatio* has a twofold meaning. It can indicate a basic act of imitation, or it can suggest a kind of jealous rivalry. On the other hand, *certamen* indicates more of an active struggle. Together, these words indicate that Quintilian considers paraphrase to have a tension at its heart between attempting to both imitate the original and surpass it at the same time. The paraphrast seeks not just to equal the original but to surpass it. This is further emphasized when Quintilian states that paraphrase is valuable since it allows one to compete (*contendere*) against an exemplar (Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.5.7). See also Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, trans. Matthew T. Bliss, Annemiek Jansen, and David E. Orton, 2nd ed., ed. David E. Orton and R. Dean Anderson (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 483–484; Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 17.

⁵⁵ For an analysis of the importance of the resemblance of the paraphrase to the original, see Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2006), 76.

⁵⁶ For the distinction between content and style, see Theon, *Prog.* 5 (83.15–19).

(ἐναλλαγή/ἀντίθεσις/*immutatio*).⁵⁷ Addition consists of the insertion into the whole of one or more elements that did not previously belong to it.⁵⁸ Omission entails the removal of one or more elements from the whole.⁵⁹ Rearrangement involves switching the order of elements that appear in a certain sequence.⁶⁰ Substitution comprises replacing one or more elements of the whole with

⁵⁷ For a description of these four techniques, see Theon, *Prog.* 15.

⁵⁸ Because the section of Theon in which these techniques are given is only extant in Armenian, I will rely on the terms provided in Lausberg, who draws from other Greek texts on the topic. According to Lausberg, there are three varieties of addition: an addition of new material to the front of a whole unit (*prothesis*/πρόθεσις), an insertion of new material in the middle of a unity (*epenthesis*/ἐπένθεσις), and the attaching of the new material to the end of the whole unit (*paragoge*/παραγωγή) (Lausberg, *Handbook*, 218). According to Roberts, addition had as its goals “the embellishment of the original by the incorporation of tropes, figures and the modes of the sentence (*ornatus*); the variation of similar subject matter (*varietas/variatio*); and above all the employment of verbal abundance (*copia verborum*)” (Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 29).

⁵⁹ According to Lausberg, there are three varieties: removal of the first component(s) from the whole unit (*aphaeresis*/ἀφαίρεσις), removal of one or more components from the middle of a unity whole (*syncope*/συγκοπή), and the removal of the last component(s) in a sequence from the unit whole (*apocope*/ἀποκοπή) (Lausberg, *Handbook*, 218–219). One goal of omission is to achieve rhetorical *brevitas* and eliminate any repetitious or redundant language (Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 108.). As noted with Gregory Thaumaturgus, he employed omission in *Eccl.* in order to remove semitisms. Via omission one could remove entire events, or simply parts of those events, thereby abbreviating a longer episode (Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 108–127).

⁶⁰ There are two varieties: rearrangement when the components are near one another (*anastrophe*/ἀναστροφή) and when they are distant (*hyperbaton/transgressio*/ὑπερβατόν) (Lausberg, *Handbook*, 219). Lausberg gives brief examples for rearrangement in proximity and at a distance. Rearrangement in contact would happen, for example, of two neighboring components trade places (e.g., xyz → yxz). *Transmutatio* at a distance happens, for example, when a component moves outside the immediate vicinity. There are two subvarieties. First, separation between new and old locations by at least two components (e.g., xyz → zxy). Second, separation between new and old locations by internal structural boundary (e.g., x[yz] → y]x[z] (Lausberg, *Handbook*, 219–220). As we have noted above, one of the common ways for the paraphrast to employ rearrangement is to change the order of events or thoughts in order to offer a more logical sequence. Rearrangement has the effect of making certain elements more prominent and can help the paraphrast concentrate on the subject he wishes to address in the paraphrase. According to Roberts, it can be used “in conjunction with abbreviation to achieve narrative economy and a more rational or effective sequence of events” (Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 127). Lausberg likens rearrangement to “removing a stone from one place in a house and fitting the same stone into another place in the same house” (Lausberg, *Handbook*, 219).

external elements that did not originally belong to it. In distinction to the two prior techniques, substitution typically involves both the omission of certain elements while adding other ones in their place.⁶¹ These additional components can come from elsewhere in the original, outside texts, or be invented by the paraphrast.⁶²

The paraphrast can use each of these techniques at either the micro or macro levels.⁶³ Paraphrasts can work with components as small as individual morphemes, words, or phrases, or they can alter whole clauses, sentences, paragraphs, speeches, or episodes. Paraphrastic theory also identified certain grammatical changes that may be achieved as a result of employing the

⁶¹ For an analysis of substitution, see Lausberg, *Handbook*, 220.

⁶² This may mean replacing the original word for another one, the proper word for a metaphor, a metaphor for the proper word, several words for one word, or one word for several (Theon, *Prog.* 15 [140; Patillon 108]).

⁶³ For a discussion of some of these levels, see Konstantinos Spanoudakis, *Nonnus of Panopolis: Paraphrasis of the Gospel of John XI*, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 69. See also Nathan A. Greenberg, "Metathesis as an Instrument in the Criticism of Poetry," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 89 (1958); George A. Kennedy, "The Evolution of a Theory of Artistic Prose," in *Classical Criticism*, ed. George A. Kennedy, Cambridge History of Literary Criticism 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 196–197. Although he does not refer to it as paraphrase, he would be employing many of the same basic techniques.

four techniques, including κλίσις/*declinatio*;⁶⁴ changing the class or mood of sentences;⁶⁵ switching between first-, second-, and third-person narration; alternating between direct and indirect speech;⁶⁶ and altering the meter. Moreover, it is important to note that a paraphrast does not simply employ one paraphrastic technique at a time. Typically, multiple ones are in use in any given passage.

By employing these four techniques, paraphrasts also navigate tensions of style with respect to the original. While Aristotle is among the first literary critics to identify what constitutes the key elements of good style,⁶⁷ later theorists give more systematic presentations.

⁶⁴ The practice of κλίσις/*declinatio* involves changing the grammatical aspect of a verb (i.e., the person, number, tense, voice, or mood), noun (i.e., gender, number, or case), particle (this includes prepositions and conjunctions), or articles. In the rhetorical exercise of κλίσις or *declinatio*, one changes these individual morphological aspects of individual words or several parts of a sentence simultaneously (see Plato, *Cra.* 431b; Aristotle, 1.7.27; 2.32.2; 3.9.9; *Rhet.* 3 [1407b6; 1407b12; 1457a6]; *Poet.* 1457a; *Rhet. Her.* 4.22.30–31; Theon, *Prog.* 3 [101–103; Patillon 24–26]; *Prog.* 4 [74.3–9, 24–35; Patillon 32–33]; *Prog.* 4 [101.10–103.2]; *Prog.* 5 [85.29–31; Patillon 48]; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.1.34, 37; 9.3; Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O’Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*, ed. Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O’Neil, *Writings from the Greco-Roman World* 2 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002], 53; Mikeal C. Parsons, "Luke and the *Progymnasmata*: A Preliminary Investigation into the Preliminary Exercises," in *Contextualizing Acts: Lukan Narrative and Greco-Roman Discourse*, ed. Todd Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003], 56–58).

⁶⁵ For a discussion of how the paraphrast can change the kind of sentence, see Theon, *Prog.* 5 (87–90; Patillon 50–53), 15 (141; Patillon 109); Isidore of Seville, *Etym.* 2.21.15–25. Theon states that one can change between simple statement, inquiry, doubt, command, wish, oath, dialogue. See also Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 139–140; Kennedy, "Language and Meaning in Archaic and Classical Greece," 84–85. While Michael Roberts refers to this as “modal variation,” George Kennedy refers to them as “classes of sentences.”

⁶⁶ Theon does not explicitly identify this alteration as a paraphrastic technique. However, in the examples that he gives while introducing paraphrase, there are several that contain such a change. See Theon *Prog.* 1 (63.15–22; Patillon 6). This has been pointed out by Roberts (see Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 143 n.196). Therefore, it seems probable that Theon did, in fact, consider this a valid paraphrastic adjustment made to the exemplar.

⁶⁷ See Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2–7 (1404b–1408b). For an analysis of the reception of Aristotle on style, see Kennedy, "Evolution," 192–195; George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 6, 85.

For example, Diogenes Laertius argues that authors should strive to achieve five virtues in their use of language, namely Hellenism (or purity/correctness),⁶⁸ clarity,⁶⁹ brevity,⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Aristotle calls correctness “the beginning of style” (ἀρχὴ τῆς λέξεως τὸ ἐλληνίζειν) (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.5.1–2 [1407a]). He gives five rules that determine correctness: correct use of particles; use of special, not generic terms; avoidance of ambiguous terms; correct use of grammatical gender; proper use of grammatical number. In sum, what one writes should be easy to read or speak. In addition, he notes that the vices against correctness are solecism (σολοικίζειν) and obscurity (ἄσαφῆ) (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.5–7 [1407a–1407b]). On this point, see also *Rhet. Her.* 4.11.12; Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.1.2.

⁶⁹ As Aristotle discusses the other virtues, he almost always connects them back to whether or not they help to achieve clarity (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.1; 3.2.7 [1404b]). It is clear from his presentation, however, that propriety and brevity are also closely connected to clarity (see also Kennedy, *New History*, 85; Kennedy, “Evolution,” 85). In this way, we begin seeing how the various virtues of style are interrelated. He also closely aligns propriety to clarity. According to Aristotle, it is the most appropriate use of language that leads to clarity. If language is not appropriate and does not contribute to clarity, then it is a function of ornateness (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.1–2 [1404b]). He argues that metaphor, in particular, allows one to effect clarity, pleasure, and a sense of foreignness—but not too much—for one’s work. However, one must use metaphors that are appropriate (ἁρμοττούσας) (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.8–9 [1405a]). On this point, see also Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.2.

⁷⁰ See also Cicero, *Inv.* 1.28; Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.40–43; *Rhet. Her.* 1.14.

appropriateness,⁷¹ and ornateness⁷²:

The virtues of language⁷³ are five: Hellenism (Ἑλληνισμός), clarity (σαφήνεια), brevity (συντομία), appropriateness (πρέπον), and ornateness (κατασκευή). Hellenism is expression that is faultless in regard to grammar and does not use the language at random. Clarity is style producing the thought intelligibly. Brevity is style comprising only the things that are necessary to make clear the subject matter. Appropriateness is style suitable for the subject matter. Ornamentation is style avoiding vulgar language. Of the vices of style, barbarism is style contrary to the usage of Greeks of good repute. Solecism is a statement arranged in an ungrammatical way.⁷⁴

⁷¹ According to Aristotle, one should not venture too far from what is considered appropriate language. Appropriate language is both what is most fitting for the subject matter and what is typically used in everyday conversation (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.6 [1404b]; see also Kennedy, "Evolution," 192–193). Examples of words that differ from the appropriate are strange words, compound ones, coined words (3.2.5 [1404b]). Aristotle does suggest, however, that one should give a little bit of ornate, foreign language, but not enough that it sacrifices propriety and ultimately clarity. Sometimes, these words actually lend themselves to clarity. See Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.5–7 (1404b–1405a). As noted above, Aristotle argues that metaphors, when appropriate, lend themselves to clarity. In order to be appropriate, they must have some kind of natural kinship to the subject matter so that as soon as one reads or hears them, the kinship (συγγενές) is clearly noted. According to Aristotle, "one word is more fitting than another, having more similarity, and more suited for putting the subject matter before the eyes" (ἄλλο ἄλλου κυριώτερον καὶ ὁμοιωμένον μᾶλλον καὶ οἰκειότερον τῷ ποιεῖν τὸ πρᾶγμα πρὸ ὁμμάτων) (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.12–13 [1405a–1405b]). In *Rhet.* 3.7.1 (1408a), he states that language has appropriateness "when it conforms to the underlying subject matter in regard to emotion or character" (ἐὰν ἢ παθητικὴ τε καὶ ἠθικὴ καὶ τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις πράγμασιν ἀνάλογον). By this, Aristotle means that the style of speech fits the current emotional feelings of the speaker. In regard to character, the style of speech should fit the age, sex, and country of the speaker. By doing this, it creates a more plausible narrative (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.7.3–6 [1408a]).

⁷² According to Aristotle, in order to ornament one's subject matter, one must obtain metaphors that are suitable (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.10 [1405a]). Moreover, Aristotle seems to suggest that the best metaphors are the most beautiful in sound, meaning, sight, or other sense (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.2.13 [1405b]; see also Kennedy, *New History*, 85–86). Aristotle does not seem to have a particular term for tropes and figures. Later centuries would greatly develop and enumerate these (see Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.3; see also Kennedy, "Evolution," 193).

⁷³ For this translation of λόγος as language, see LSJ, s.v. "λόγος" IX.3.c: "language."

⁷⁴ Diogenes Laertius, 7.59: Ἀρεταὶ δὲ λόγου εἰσὶ πέντε, Ἑλληνισμός, σαφήνεια, συντομία, πρέπον, κατασκευή. Ἑλληνισμός μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φράσις ἀδιάπτωτος ἐν τῇ τεχνικῇ καὶ μὴ εἰκαῖα συνηθεία: σαφήνεια δὲ ἐστὶ λέξις γνωρίμως παριστῶσα τὸ νοούμενον: συντομία δὲ ἐστὶ λέξις αὐτὰ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα περιέχουσα πρὸς δήλωσιν τοῦ πράγματος: πρέπον δὲ ἐστὶ λέξις οἰκεία τῷ πράγματι: κατασκευή δὲ ἐστὶ λέξις ἐκπεφευγυῖα τὸν ἰδιωτισμόν. ὁ δὲ βαρβαρισμός ἐκ τῶν κακιῶν λέξις ἐστὶ παρὰ τὸ ἔθος τῶν εὐδοκιομένων Ἑλλήνων, σολοικισμός δὲ ἐστὶ λόγος ἀκαταλλήλως συντεταγμένος.

While an author must take account of these five virtues in every act of composition, paraphrase presents a unique case. In the act of paraphrase, one must remain cognizant of how one stands in relation to the original through similarity and difference. These tensions between original and paraphrase stand in sharper contrast than in other literary acts in which artists must navigate conventionality and originality in their literary culture.

Several modern investigations have made significant contributions to our knowledge of ancient paraphrase in different ways. Such scholars include Michael Roberts, John Jarick, Teresa Morgan, and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson. In her book on ancient school texts, Morgan analyzes ancient educational texts among the papyri in an effort to understand how students practiced paraphrastic techniques in a school setting.⁷⁵ Michael Roberts examines ancient literary theory and rhetorical handbooks in order to arrive at a definition of paraphrase, as well as a taxonomy of different kinds of paraphrase.⁷⁶ By analyzing what he classifies as rhetorical paraphrase (i.e.,

⁷⁵ Morgan, *Literate Education*, 202–226.

⁷⁶ Roberts, following other literary critics, distinguishes two different types of paraphrase: grammatical and rhetorical. For a discussion on the distinctions between these, see Karl Lehrs, *Die Pindarscholien: Eine kritische Untersuchung zur philologischen Quellenkunde* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1873), 49–53. While the grammatical kind paraphrases the original word-by-word, the rhetorical variety paraphrases the original in a more complex manner that includes an interpretation of the passage in some way. He further divides rhetorical paraphrase into two main types: school exercises and literary paraphrases (for a chart illustrating his typology, see Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 39). Although he presents this typology as clear, the boundaries between these divisions are, in actuality, quite fuzzy. In particular, under rhetorical paraphrases, the distinction between school exercises and literary paraphrases is not nearly as clear as Roberts suggests (for more on his conception of paraphrase, see Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 54, 38–39). Although there is a clearer distinction between school exercises (with earlier levels of education perhaps making a clear distinction between grammatical and rhetorical exercises for the purpose of easily grasping the different skills) and non-school exercises, the difference begins to break down among examples of paraphrase outside a classroom setting. Moreover, the division of literary paraphrases between exegetical vs. artistic compositions is troublesome. Roberts seems to envision literary paraphrases of an exegetical nature to be read closely with the

literary, non-educational works) in the form of biblical epic, he demonstrates the various rhetorical effects paraphrase can achieve. Much of this analysis focuses on the style and rhetoric of the procedure.⁷⁷ Both Jarick and Johnson demonstrate the exegetical potential of the practice whereby an older text can be updated for contemporary circumstances. In his translation and commentary on Gregory Thaumaturgus's *Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes*, Jarick analyzes how Gregory explains the text of Ecclesiastes for his readers by combining interpretive Christian tradition with the biblical text via paraphrase. This has the effect of "Christianizing" an otherwise alien and cryptic text. In his monograph on the *Acts of Thekla*, Johnson draws on modern critical theory and argues that paraphrase functions to consolidate an authoritative past while at the same time "reinterpreting it for contemporary cultural and literary concerns."⁷⁸ All of these studies have provided significant contributions to the modern understanding of ancient paraphrase, upon which I seek to build in the present study.

Because the paraphrase becomes a new literary composition, it has its own rhetorical aim (σκοπός), which is distinct from the original. As paraphrasts apply their techniques and navigate tensions with the original, they must consider how to do so with the aim of the new composition in mind. Paraphrase thus affords the opportunity not only to recast the original in order to get it to address aims more directly than the original but also to harness the authority of

exemplar whereas literary paraphrases that are more artistic to be read apart from the exemplar. Given the various ways readers experienced and engaged with texts, the difference proves problematic. However, the typology above provides a useful starting place to make sense of the various examples of paraphrase from the ancient Greco-Roman world. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that non-school exercises should not be expected to fit neatly into this typology and may, in fact, display aspects of several categories. (This could also often be true of school exercises too.)

⁷⁷ For Roberts agreeing with the basic ancient definition of paraphrase, see Roberts, *Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 219.

⁷⁸ Johnson, *Thekla*, 15.

the original while doing so. Paraphrase thus provides a method of selectively retelling a prior text.

Finally, we must consider why one would choose paraphrase as an exegetical medium instead of another such as commentary. What function does paraphrase serve that another medium would not? Paraphrase allows one to efface the distinction between the text and interpretation by combining the two. By doing so, the exegete can harness the text and authority of the original as a vehicle to carry the intended interpretation, which is not necessarily in the scriptural text. In this way, the exegete provides the reader with interpretations under the guise of giving a simple literal retelling of scripture lacking significant interpretive embellishment.

The paraphrase thus seeks to create a controlling influence on how the reader encounters the original. Returning to the biblical text after reading the paraphrase, the reader will ideally read the paraphrases's interpretation into scripture. In this way, the readings of the paraphrase become the normative readings of the biblical text in the mind of the reader. The paraphrast may do this in order recontextualize the biblical text and update it for new circumstances and contexts. According to Morgan, the paraphrast "places himself in a cultural tradition, while rearticulating the tradition for his own time and place."⁷⁹ The more successful the paraphrast is at effacing distinctions between original and paraphrase in the mind of the reader, the more effective that rearticulation of the past will be.

In his *Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes*, Gregory Thaumaturgus provides a self-reflective statement about how he uses paraphrase to recontextualize scripture: "Some people will transmit (δώσουσι) those wise teachings, which they received (λαβόντες) from (παρ') one good shepherd

⁷⁹ Morgan, *Literate Education*, 224.

and teacher, just as everyone in unison with one mouth narrated (διηγούμενοι) the things entrusted to them more fully.”⁸⁰ By drawing on language similar to that used in the receiving (παραλαμβάνω) and handing over (ἀποδίδωμι) of tradition, Gregory describes a good teacher as one who must first receive (λαμβάνω) correct teaching, then pass it on (δίδωμι). For Thaumaturgus, he receives teachings in scripture and tradition. He then weaves these together in his paraphrase to pass them down as a single woven tapestry. Unlike the normal passing on of tradition, by using paraphrase he harnesses the voice and authority of the biblical text:

He speaks of the ordinary people needing someone to teach them how to understand words of wisdom, and of the responsibility of the ones who do the teaching [. . .] in paraphrasing Ecclesiastes, Gregory himself is passing on in a more understandable form the wise lessons which he has read in its pages and in which he has been instructed by his teachers; moreover, he is setting these lessons out in greater detail than they were in the form in which they had been entrusted to him, and he has presented the voice of this particular biblical book as being in unison with the general Christian tradition.⁸¹

For Thaumaturgus, paraphrase serves as an ideal didactic method for interpreting the biblical text since it allows him to resolve questions by combining text and interpretation as he passes on the teachings of the church.

While Gregory Thaumaturgus’s paraphrase is significant in its own right, the work has added value for the present study because of the relationship between Thaumaturgus and Gregory of Nyssa’s family. Thaumaturgus lived his life in Neocaesarea in the Roman province of Pontus. Because this was the ancestral home of the family of brothers Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, Thaumaturgus became a kind of saint for their family. Not only would

⁸⁰ Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Eccl.* 12.11: δώσουσι δέ τινες τὰ σοφὰ ἐκεῖνα διδάγματα, παρ’ ἑνὸς ἀγαθοῦ λαβόντες ποιμένος καὶ διδασκάλου, ὥσπερ ἐξ ἑνὸς στόματος ἅπαντες αὐτοῖς συμφώνως δαυιλέστερον τὰ πιστευθέντα διηγούμενοι.

⁸¹ John Jarick, *Gregory Thaumaturgos' Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes*, Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 29 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 315.

Gregory of Nyssa have been exposed to the procedure of paraphrase from his education, but he would have been acquainted with the concept of paraphrasing scripture for exegetical effect through the work of Thaumaturgus.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have briefly examined two different practices that were in the repertoire of ancient biblical exegetes, namely problems and solutions (προβλήματα και λύσεις) and paraphrase. By engaging with *προβλήματα*, biblical exegetes sought to argue for solutions to complex questions. One such strategy to respond to these questions was through the procedure of paraphrase. Both Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa are familiar with the procedure of paraphrase. In the following chapters, we shall explore the question of how their respective *Lives of Moses* use paraphrase as a strategy to respond to various perceived questions, in or about the biblical text.

Chapter 3

Philo's *Life of Moses*:

From Scripture to Paraphrase

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will perform a comparative analysis between the LXX and Philo's *Life* in order to investigate how Philo uses paraphrase to shape the LXX account of Moses's life. We shall focus our analysis on the Red Sea (*Mos.* 1.165–180) and golden calf (*Mos.* 2.159–173) episodes as examples of Philo's method. By studying what kind of questions (προβλήματα/ζητήματα) Philo seeks to address and how he uses paraphrastic techniques to alter the depiction of events in order to answer these questions, we will gain a better understanding of the exegetical relationship between the LXX and Philo's *Life*. Through this investigation, we will see how Philo's new narrative of events is pregnant with latent allegorical readings for the reader. In the following analysis, we shall begin by identifying the questions Philo likely seeks to answer in the episodes. We shall then see how Philo crafts his paraphrase in such a way that it responds to them in the narrative itself.

3.2 Crossing the Red Sea (*Mos.* 1.163–180)

Philo's entire first volume of the *Life of Moses* is devoted to highlighting how Moses serves as the ideal leader of the Israelites.¹ The deeds of individual episodes of Moses's life serve as a tapestry upon which Philo demonstrates how Moses possesses certain qualities of leadership. This is no less true in the case of the crossing of the Red Sea. Immediately prior to his narration

¹ See, for example, Philo, *Mos.* 1.334.

of the events, Philo states that Moses had “received the sovereignty” (ἔλαβε τὴν ἀρχήν) over the nation, with the consent of the people, and with “God directing and approving” (βραβεύοντος καὶ ἐπινεύοντος θεοῦ) it.²

As he begins his account of the events leading of the to the crossing of the sea, Philo starts with a notice about the miraculous cloud in the desert. Here, Philo responds to the biblical account in Exod 13 and 14, which contains descriptions of the miraculous cloud in the desert. According to scripture, as the Israelites wander through the desert, God sent a cloud to guide them. However, this was no ordinary cloud. Exod 13 describes it as possessing an appearance of a cloud by day yet becoming like a fire by night. The cloud remained constantly with the Israelite encampment, never dissipating (Exod 13:21–22). According to Exod 14, the cloud acted in ways atypical for natural clouds. When the Egyptian army approached, it separated the Egyptians and the Israelites and brought darkness upon the land (Exod 14:19–20). We see many Second Temple texts inquire about various questions regarding the nature of the cloud, including the Wisdom of Solomon (first century BCE or CE), Ezekiel the Tragedian (second century BCE),³ and Josephus (first century CE).

Philo himself begins his account by setting up a πρόβλημα by an appeal to an exegetical tradition (i.e., “they say” [φασί]) regarding the cloud. This is a common method that Philo uses to set up a πρόβλημα. According to him:

They say that a wonder happened at that time, a mighty work of nature, which no one remembers ever happening before. For a cloud, fashioned into a large pillar, went before the crowd. During the day, it shined with a light like the sun and,

² Philo, *Mos.* 1.163.

³ Ezekiel the Tragedian, *Exag.* 220–242. For the date of Ezekiel the Tragedian, see Howard Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 10–13.

during the night, it become like a flame, so that they might not wander on the road, but might follow the leader along the road without wavering.⁴

Here, Philo engages with the scriptural account by recasting it via paraphrase:

Exod 13:21–22	Philo, <i>Mos.</i> 1.166
<p>ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἠγεῖτο αὐτῶν, ἡμέρας μὲν ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης δεῖξαι αὐτοῖς τὴν ὁδόν, τὴν δὲ νύκτα ἐν στύλῳ πυρός· οὐκ ἐξέλιπεν ὁ στῦλος τῆς νεφέλης ἡμέρας καὶ ὁ στῦλος τοῦ πυρὸς νυκτὸς ἐναντίον παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ.</p> <p>Now God was leading them. During the day in a pillar of cloud to show them the way, but during the night in a pillar of fire. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not leave from before all the people.</p>	<p>νεφέλη γὰρ εἰς εὐμεγέθη κίονα σχηματισθεῖσα προῆει τῆς πληθύος, ἡμέρας μὲν ἡλιοειδὲς ἐκλάμπουσα φέγγος, νύκτωρ δὲ φλογοειδὲς, ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ πλάζεσθαι κατὰ τὴν πορείαν, ἀλλ’ ἀπλανεστάτῳ ἔπεσθαι ἠγεμόνι ὁδοῦ.</p> <p>For a cloud, fashioned into a large pillar, went before the crowd. During the day, it shined with a light like the sun and, during the night, it become like a flame, so that they might not wander on the road, but might follow the leader along the road without wavering.⁵</p>

According to scripture, God leads the people. Based on the grammar of the Greek, God seems to lead the people in two forms, as a pillar of cloud by day and as a pillar of fire by night. The purpose of the pillar of cloud, at any rate, appears to be to guide the people on their path.

However, it is unclear whether the pillar of fire has the same purpose or not.

In Philo’s account, he draws on the text of the LXX. While the scriptural account depicts an object that changes substance in night and day, changing from cloud to fire, Philo describes a cloud that takes on differing characteristics depending on whether it is day or night. During the day, the cloud becomes a luminous cloud while during the night it becomes like a flame. Philo

⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 1.165 (CW 4.160.1–6): τεράστιον δὲ φασι συμβῆναι κατ’ ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον μεγαλόρρημα τῆς φύσεως, ὃ μηδεὶς πω μέμνηται πάλαι γεγονός. νεφέλη γὰρ εἰς εὐμεγέθη κίονα σχηματισθεῖσα προῆει τῆς πληθύος, ἡμέρας μὲν ἡλιοειδὲς ἐκλάμπουσα φέγγος, νύκτωρ δὲ φλογοειδὲς, ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ πλάζεσθαι κατὰ τὴν πορείαν, ἀλλ’ ἀπλανεστάτῳ ἔπεσθαι ἠγεμόνι ὁδοῦ.

⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 1.166 (CW 4.160.3–6).

retains the biblical idea that the cloud functions to guide the people along their path lest they wander.

Because he follows the LXX account instead of the Hebrew, Philo's text of Exod 13:21 says, "God was leading them," rather than "the Lord went before them."⁶ As a result, he reads the cloud itself as divine. This leads him to provide a theological solution for the cloud: "Perhaps, indeed, it was one of the lieutenants of the great king, an invisible angel, a guide wrapped in the cloud, whom it was not lawful for the eyes of the body to see."⁷ While influenced by Exod 13:21 LXX, he is also likely inspired by Exod 14:19. According to Exod 14:19, "The angel of God, who was going before the camp of the sons of Israel, rose up (ἐξῆρεν) and went behind (ἐκ τῶν ὀπισθεν). The pillar of cloud also (καί) rose up (ἐξῆρεν) from before them and stood behind them (ἐκ τῶν ὀπίσω αὐτῶν)."⁸ Here, scripture seems to equate the angel of God with the pillar of cloud since they both perform the same action simultaneously.⁹

According to the biblical story of the Exodus, after Pharaoh allows the Israelites to leave Egypt, he regrets the decision and decides to give pursuit. As the Egyptians overtake them, the Israelites grow terrified at the sight of the approaching army (Exod 14:6–10). In their desperation, the Israelites cry out (ἀνεβόησαν) to God (Exod 14:10) while complaining to Moses

⁶ Exod 13:21: ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἡγεῖτο αὐτῶν.

⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 1.166 (CW 4.160.6–8): τάχα μέντοι καὶ τῶν ὑπάρχων τις ἦν τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως, ἀφανῆς ἄγγελος, ἐγκατελιμμένος τῇ νεφέλῃ προηγητήρ, ὃν οὐ θέμις σώματος ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρᾶσθαι.

⁸ Exod 14:19: ἐξῆρεν δὲ ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ προπορευόμενος τῆς παρεμβολῆς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἐκ τῶν ὀπισθεν· ἐξῆρεν δὲ καὶ ὁ στῦλος τῆς νεφέλης ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτῶν καὶ ἔστη ἐκ τῶν ὀπίσω αὐτῶν.

⁹ As Hilbrands asserts, "Der Gedanke, dass Gott sich mehrfach, in einer Naturerscheinung und als ein himmlisches Wesen, manifestiert, ist der Exoduserzählung also nicht fremd" (Walter Hilbrands, "Das Verhältnis der Engel zu Jahwe im Alten Testament, insbesondere im Buch Exodus," in *The Interpretation of Exodus*, ed. Riemer Roukema, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 44 [Leuven: Peeters, 2006], 96).

(14:11–12). After Moses encourages the people (14:13–14), God asks him, “Why do you cry out (βοᾶς) to me?” (Exod 14:15).¹⁰ This divine question has troubled countless biblical exegetes since it comes seemingly out of nowhere. Although God’s question is directed at Moses alone—as indicated by the second person, singular form of the verb (βοᾶς)—the biblical text gives no description of Moses himself petitioning God. While Exod 14:10 records the people crying out to God (ἀνεβόησαν), the preceding verses lack any mention of Moses himself doing so.¹¹ The biblical text thus presents a potential contradiction for the attentive reader of scripture. But did ancient interpreters notice this apparent contradiction and seek to resolve it?

Several biblical exegetes of the Second Temple era, including Philo of Alexandria, Josephus, and the author of *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, seem to have found the contradiction between Exod 14:15 and the prior verses to be problematic and sought to resolve it with a number of interpretive strategies. Philo himself acknowledges the πρόβλημα in *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?* and the *Life of Moses*. Because these works represent two different genres, he employs different strategies to solve the problem in each treatise. While *Who Is the Heir?* solves the problem in the form of a philosophical commentary on scripture, the *Life of Moses* resolves it by paraphrasing scripture.

In *Who Is the Heir?*, Philo’s stated aim is “to examine” (ζητεῖν) the question of “who” (τίς) the true heir of the Abrahamic promise in Gen 15 is.¹² Over the course of the treatise, Philo

¹⁰ Exod 14:15: τί βοᾶς πρὸς με;

¹¹ Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus*, 4 vols., Historical Commentary on the Old Testament (Kampen: Kok Publishing House, 1993–2002), 266; William Henry Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, Anchor Bible 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 479; Helmut Utzschneider and Wolfgang Oswald, *Exodus 1–15*, trans. Philip Sumpter, International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 2015), 307; Christoph Dohmen, *Exodus 1–18*, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2015), 325–326.

¹² Philo, *Her.* 1: τίς ὁ τῶν θεῶν πραγμάτων κληρονόμος ἐστίν.

argues that those focused on sense perception will not inherit the promise.¹³ In the opening of the treatise, he explores the seeming contradiction between Exod 4:10 and both Exod 14:15 and 19:19. Moses states that he is incapable of speaking well in Exod 4:10, but Exod 14:15 and 19:19 seem to indicate just the opposite. While Philo never explicitly points out this contradiction—since his intent is to demonstrate that there is no actual problem when the verses are understood properly—his investigation indicates his inquiry in this section is about such a contradiction.

Philo inquires about who (τίς) would have doubted that Moses would become mute and speechless (ἄφωνος καὶ ἀχανής) after receiving so great an oracle from God as that concerning Abraham. According to him, excessive joy or fear accompany any divine revelation, especially one so amazing as the Abrahamic promise. For this reason (διό), Exod 4:10 records Moses confessing himself to be weak-voiced (ἰσχνόφωνος) and slow of tongue (βραδύγλωσσος) from the very moment God began speaking (διαλέγεσθαι) to him.¹⁴ Not because of his inability to speak but because of the weight of the divine revelation he received. While other exegetes found a contradiction between Moses's statement of self-avowed inability to speak in Exod 4:10 and his later effusive speech to both God and Israel in passages such as Exod 14 and 19:19, Philo makes a point that he sees no contradiction. Philo states that Moses speaks truthfully in Exod 4:10, thus precluding the idea that Moses misspoke in comparison to his later actions.

While Moses states truthfully that he is weak in rhetorical ability, this is not a problem for Philo because he distinguishes between the organ of speech (τὸ φωνητήριον ὄργανον), which may be restrained in silence, and the language of the mind (ὁ κατὰ διάνοιαν λόγος), which may

¹³ Philo, *Her.* 65. See Kenneth Schenck, *A Brief Guide to Philo* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 113.

¹⁴ Philo, *Her.* 4.

continue to flow freely.¹⁵ While one might grow silent in the face of such amazing revelations as what God said to Abraham, appropriate boldness of speech (παρρησία) before one's superiors is also a quality to be desired. This leads Philo to explore when (πότε) it is fitting for one to use boldness of speech before God.¹⁶ Although boldness of speech is an enviable characteristic, those who are ignorant should maintain silence (ἡσυχία), thus following the injunction of Deut 27:9 ("be silent and listen").¹⁷ According to Philo, it is for this reason that we read two different things in Exod 14 in regard to the people and Moses. On the one hand, Moses instructs the people to be silent (Exod 14:4). On the other hand, God asks Moses why he cries out to him (Exod 14:15). For Philo, these two statements mean that those with nothing important to say should remain silent while the wise should not only speak quietly (μὴ μόνον λέγειν σὺν ἡρεμίᾳ) but should even cry out with a greater cry (ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ κραυγῆς μείζονος ἐκβοᾶν).¹⁸ Drawing on the biblical phrasing, Philo here distinguishes between two forms of speech (i.e., speaking [λέγειν] and crying out [ἐκβοᾶν]).

Philo goes on to distinguish these two kinds of speech by appealing to the philosophical distinction between what is sense perceptible (αἰσθητός) and what is perceptible to the intellect (νοητός). He does so by contrasting sense-perceptible speech, which is uttered by the mouth and tongue (στόματι καὶ γλώττη), from intellectual speech, which is expressed by the organ of the mind (διανοίας ὄργανου).¹⁹ According to Philo, Exod 14 reflects Moses communicating in both of these forms. When he talks to the Israelites in Exod 14:4, he speaks with a physical, sense-

¹⁵ Philo, *Her.* 4.

¹⁶ Philo, *Her.* 5–7.

¹⁷ Philo, *Her.* 10.

¹⁸ Philo, *Her.* 14.

¹⁹ Philo, *Her.* 14–15.

perceptible voice, uttered with his mouth. When he talks to God in Exod 14:15, he speaks with an intellectual voice, uttered with his mind, which God alone can hear. God’s question in Exod 14:15 gives testimony to this.²⁰

Continuing on, Philo finally hints at the contradiction that he has been subtly solving all along between Exod 4:10 and Exod 14:15 and 19:19. While doing so, he uses technical language of the procedure, which he finds present in the very biblical text of Exod 19:19:²¹

The man who seemed (εἶναι δοκῶν) to be weak-voiced, slow of tongue, and without speech, is found (ἀνευρίσκεται) to be so talkative that in one place, he is introduced as not only speaking but even crying out, and in another place, as employing an unceasing and continuous flow of words. For it says, “Moses was speaking (ἐλάλει), and God was answering (ἀπεκρίνετο) him with a voice (φωνῆ)” (Exod 19:19). When he communicated, he did not talk as a single complete utterance, but he was speaking in a continuous way. God also did not teach as a single complete action, but he was constantly answering (ἀπεκρίνετο) him without interruption.²²

Philo initially indicates an apparent contradiction by stating that Moses seemed to be (εἶναι δοκῶν) weak-voiced, slow of tongue, and without speech (Exod 4:10). However, he was actually found (ἀνευρίσκεται) to be so talkative that in one place he did not just speak (Exod 14:4) but even cried out (Exod 14:15) and in another place he had an unceasing flow of words (Exod 19:19).

²⁰ Philo, *Her.* 14–15.

²¹ This language includes ἐρώτησις, ἐρωτάω, ἀποκρίνομαι, ἀπόκρισις. In addition, while the words ἀνευρίσκω, ζητέω, and πυνθάνομαι are not among the core vocabulary of the procedure, Philo uses them with a technical sense here.

²² Philo, *Her.* 16–17: λάλος δὲ οὕτως ὁ ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ βραδύγλωσσος καὶ ἄλογος εἶναι δοκῶν ἀνευρίσκεται, ὥστε πῆ μὲν οὐ μόνον λέγων ἀλλὰ καὶ βοῶν εἰσάγεται, ἐτέρωθι δὲ ἀπαύστῳ καὶ ἀδιαστάτῳ χρώμενος λόγων ῥύμη. “Μωυσῆς” γάρ φησιν “ἐλάλει, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἀπεκρίνετο αὐτῷ φωνῆ,” οὐ κατὰ συντέλειαν ἐλάλησεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μηκνομένην παράτασιν ἐλάλει, καὶ ὁ θεὸς οὐ κατὰ συντέλειαν ἐδίδαξεν, ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ καὶ συνεχῶς ἀπεκρίνετο.

After thus introducing Exod 19:19 as another passage that seemingly contradicts Exod 4:10, Philo demonstrates how that passage also does not present a true problem. According to the scriptural account, as the Israelites gathered at the base of Mt Sinai, Moses spoke and God answered (ἀποκρίνομαι) in a voice (φωνή). For Philo, drawing on the language of question and answer in the passage, God and Moses here serve as models for how biblical exegetes, who also seek answers from God in scripture, should employ ἐρωταποκρίσεις to find such answers.

Wherever there is an answer (ἀπόκρισις), there certainly is a question (ἐρώτησις). Everyone asks (ἐρωτᾷ) about what they do not know, seeking to know, knowing that the most beneficial task for obtaining knowledge is to inquire (ζητεῖν), to ask (ἐρωτᾶν), to investigate (πυνθάνεσθαι), to seem to know nothing and not to suppose that one comprehends anything firmly.²³

Viewing Exod 19:19 through the lens of the question and answer procedure, Philo now sees Moses as inquiring of God like a biblical exegete does in order to find a sought for answer. He asks of God, who responds with an answer. Having established the connection to προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις, Philo connects Exod 19:19 back to Exod 14 with the thematic parallels of boldness of speech and crying out before God.

Although Moses had previously confessed himself to be deficient in speech, this does not constitute a contradiction for Philo when the relevant passages are understood properly. Moses may not have the ability to speak well in a physical sense, but this does not preclude him from having the ability to speak well in an intellectual sense. This is evidenced in two passages, namely Exod 14 and 19:19. On the one hand, in Exod 14, while the Israelites remain physically silent (Exod 14:4), Moses intellectually speaks boldly before God.²⁴ On the other hand, in Exod

²³ Philo, *Her.* 18 (CW 3.5.12–15): ὅπου δὲ ἀπόκρισις, ἐκεῖ πάντως ἐρώτησις. ἐρωτᾷ δὲ ἕκαστος ὃ μὴ ἐπίσταται, μαθεῖν ἀξιῶν γνούς τε τῶν εἰς ἐπιστήμην ὠφελιμώτατον ἔργον εἶναι ζητεῖν, ἐρωτᾶν, πυνθάνεσθαι, μηδὲν δοκεῖν εἰδέναι μηδέ τι οἶεσθαι παγίως κατελιφέναι.

²⁴ Philo, *Her.* 14–15.

19:19 scripture states that God and Moses carry on a back and forth conversation. Therefore, when we understand Moses as speaking with both a physical, sense-perceptible voice and an intellectual voice, the apparent contradiction in scripture no longer appears to be so.

We see Philo also respond to the apparent contradiction posed by Exod 14:15 and the prior verses in his *Life of Moses*, but this time in the form of paraphrase.²⁵ As he does so, he again appeals to the philosophical distinction between what is perceptible to the senses and what is perceptible to the intellect in order to resolve the πρόβλημα. Similar to what we have already seen in his *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?*, Philo makes the case that Moses speaks with two kinds of voices, namely a sense-perceptible voice and an intellectual voice. While the biblical account only describes Moses's sense-perceptible speech to the Israelites, God's question to Moses (Exod 14:15) gives evidence of the intellectual voice.

Philo begins his paraphrase of Moses's actions by referencing the divine oracles. According to him, as the Egyptian army approaches, the Israelites grow terrified. However, Moses remembers the divine oracles (οἱ χρησμοί) and begins speaking to encourage the

²⁵ Philo is by no means alone in responding to this πρόβλημα by recasting the biblical text of Exod 14. As scholarship has demonstrated, other Second Temple Jewish texts, including Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, also paraphrase the biblical account of Exod 14 in order to resolve the apparent contradiction. See Josephus, *A.J.* 2.334–337; LAB 10.4; Philo, *Her.* 14–18. For the date of these works, see Daniel R. Schwartz, "Many Sources but a Single Author: Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*," in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. Honora Howell Chapman and Zuleika Rodgers (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 36; George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 265–268; Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, 2 vols., *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 199–210. For example, Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* seek to resolve the problem by omitting the Israelite petition and simultaneously inserting a supplication by Moses to God in order to leave no doubt who it is who cried out to God.

Israelites. By referencing God’s prophetic oracles, Philo introduces Moses’s words as prophetic in nature. While this is hinted at in the biblical account, Philo makes it much more explicit.

According to him, Moses performed two acts of speech simultaneously (κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον) whereas the biblical account describes only a single spoken action. According to Exod 14:13–15, Moses spoke to the people, and then God asked him why he was crying out:

And Moses said to the people, “Take courage! Stand firm and see the salvation from God, which he will do for us today. For the way that you have seen the Egyptians today, you will no longer ever continue to see them. The Lord will fight for you, and you will be silent.” And the Lord said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to me?”²⁶

Philo substitutes this part of the biblical account with the description that Moses simultaneously divided his mind and speech (διανείμας τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὸν λόγον).²⁷ In this way, he begins to provide an implicit solution via paraphrase to the apparent contradiction posed by biblical account itself. While scripture does not describe Moses speaking to God, it does state that he spoke to the Israelites (Exod 14:13–14). However, God’s question in Exod 14:15 suggests the possibility that Moses spoke to God somehow. By substituting the biblical text of Exod 14:13–15 with the brief statement that Moses divided his mind and his word, Philo indicates that Moses speaks to both God and the Israelites simultaneously but in different forms.

In order to distinguish between the two forms of speech that Moses employs, Philo appeals to the philosophical distinction between speech that perceptible to the senses and speech

²⁶ Exod 14:13–15: εἶπεν δὲ Μωυσεῖς πρὸς τὸν λαόν· Ἐθαρσεῖτε· στήτε καὶ ὁράτε τὴν σωτηρίαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον· ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐώρακατε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους σήμερον, οὐ προσθήσεσθε ἔτι ἰδεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον· κύριος πολεμήσει περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ ὑμεῖς σιγήσετε. Εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωυσεῖν· Τί βοᾷς πρὸς με;

²⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 1.173: καὶ διανείμας τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὸν λόγον κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον.

that is perceptible to the intellect.²⁸ While Moses speaks to the Israelites with his physical λόγος, he speaks to God with his intellectual νοῦς:

With the former (i.e., νοῦς), he interceded invisibly with God in order that God might deliver them from impossible circumstances, and, with the latter (i.e., λόγος), he encouraged and comforted those crying out (τοὺς καταβοῶντας).²⁹

Philo here makes a clear grammatical distinction between the two forms of speech with a μέν/δέ construction. On the one hand (μέν), Moses invisibly supplicated God with his mind (ὁ νοῦς). He here employs the additional technical language of the invisible in reference to the intellectual to define further this kind of speech. On the other hand (δέ), he physically encouraged and addressed the Israelites by word (ὁ λόγος).

With Philo's substitution of the biblical text, the two halves of the μέν/δέ construction correspond to the parts of Exod 14:13–15 that he seeks to replace. The μέν part of the construction, where Moses speaks physically to the Israelites, corresponds to explicitly narrated speech in Exod 14:13–14. The δέ part of the construction, where Moses speaks intellectually to God, corresponds to implied speech in Exod 14:15.

As this comparison of *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?* and *Life of Moses* demonstrates, Philo sees an apparent contradiction posed by Exod 14:15 that he seeks to resolve. However, while the contradiction is set up in different ways in both texts, he resolves it with a similar philosophical appeal. In *Who is the Heir?*, Philo perceives a contradiction between Exod 4:10

²⁸ While Philo appeals to philosophy in order to distinguish between a voice that is perceptible to the senses and one that is perceptible to the intellect, he also relies heavily on language of speech throughout both treatments, including the words ἄλογος, λάλος, λέγω, βοάω, λόγος, φωνή in *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?* and λόγος, ἐντυγγάνω, θαρσύνω, παρηγορέω, καταβοάω in *Life of Moses*.

²⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 1.173 (CW 4.161.21–23): τῷ μὲν ἐνετύγχανεν ἀφανῶς τῷ θεῷ, ἵν' ἐξ ἀμηγάνων ῥύσῃται συμφορῶν, δι' οὗ δ' ἐθάρσυνε καὶ παρηγόρει τοὺς καταβοῶντας.

and Exod 14:15 and 19:19. At the heart of this contradiction is the fact that Moses previously confessed himself to be weak in speech (Exod 4:10), yet he later demonstrates himself to be quite loquacious (Exod 14:15 and 19:19). In *Life of Moses*, Philo sets up the contradiction as between Exod 14:15 and its immediately prior context. For both texts, Philo understands God’s question in Exod 14:15 to imply that Moses spoke in an unnarrated way to God. In both, Philo resolves this πρόβλημα by appealing to the philosophical distinction between speech that is perceptible to the senses and speech that is perceptible to the intellect. While Moses speaks with a physical voice to the Israelites, he speaks with an intellectual voice to God. He thus formulates similar solutions in both works, yet he does so in different forms.

After exhorting the people to look for divine help, Philo states that Moses becomes inspired. With a comparison to the LXX text, we can see how Philo inserts material via paraphrase:

Exod 14:13	<i>Mos.</i> 1.175
εἶπεν δὲ Μωϋσῆς πρὸς τὸν λαόν Moses said to the people,	μικρὸν δ’ ἐπισχῶν ἔνθους γίνεται καταπνευσθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ εἰωθότου ἐπιφοιτᾶν αὐτῷ πνεύματος καὶ θεσπίζει προφητεῶν τάδε. But waiting a short time, he became possessed and inspired by the spirit that was accustomed to enter him, and he prophesied, foretelling these things: ³⁰
Θαρσεῖτε· στήτε καὶ ὁρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον· “Take courage! Stand firm and see the salvation from God, which he will do for us today.	
ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐωράκατε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους σήμερον, οὐ	ἦν ὁρᾶτε στρατιὰν εὐοπλοῦσαν, οὐκέτ’ ἀντιτεταγμένην ὄψεσθε· πεσεῖται γὰρ προτροπάδην πᾶσα καὶ βύθιος

³⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 1.175 (CW 4.162.2–4).

προσθήσεσθε ἔτι ἰδεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον·	ἀφανισθήσεται ὡς μηδὲ λείψανον αὐτῆς ὑπὲρ γῆς ἔτι φανῆναι, καὶ οὐ μήκει χρόνου, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἐπιούσῃ νυκτί.
For you will no longer ever continue to see (ἰδεῖν) the Egyptians in the way you have seen (ἐωράκατε) them today hereafter.”	“You will no longer see (οὐκέτ’ ὄψεσθε) the well-armed army arrayed against you, which you are now seeing (ὄρατε); for all of it shall fall headlong, and it will be concealed in the deep, with the result that no longer will a remnant of it be seen on the earth. This will not take long to happen, but will occur on this coming night (τῇ ἐπιούσῃ νυκτί).” ³¹

At this point, we finally come to the actual crossing of the Red Sea itself. According to the biblical account, inconsistent reasons are given for how the parting of the sea occurred. While in Exod 14:16 God commands Moses to strike the sea with his rod in order to part it, Exod 14:21 states that the parting occurred due to the force of a strong wind. While several exegetes from the Second Temple period sought to resolve the basic inconsistency in the biblical depiction of the event, interpreters also had other concerns that they were responding to as they addressed the crossing of the Red Sea (e.g., apologetic, theological, philosophical, etc.). We see several biblical exegetes appear to find aspects of the crossing of the sea problematic and seek to respond to them in a number of ways. Such exegetes include Artapanus of Alexandria (second century BCE),³² Ezekiel the Tragedian (second century BCE), and Josephus (first century CE).

In the biblical account, when God commands Moses to part the sea in Exod 14:16, God tells him to raise his rod and break (ῥῆξον) the sea with it. However, when Moses carries out this command in Exod 14:21, Moses does not raise his rod, and a divinely sent wind pushes back the sea instead:

Command (Exod 14:16)	Action (Exod 14:21)
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³¹ Philo, *Mos.* 1.175.

³² Artapanus, *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.2.34–37.

καὶ σὺ ἔπαρον τῆ ῥάβδῳ σου [. . .] “And as for you, raise your rod [. . .]	
καὶ ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .] and stretch out your hand over the sea [. . .]	ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .] And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea [. . .]
	καὶ ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐποίησεν τὴν θάλασσαν ξηράν [. . .] and the Lord drove back the sea with a strong south wind for the whole night, and made the sea dry land [. . .]
καὶ ῥῆξον αὐτήν. And break it.”	καὶ ἐσχίσθη τὸ ὕδωρ. and the water was divided.

While the staff seems to serve as the mechanism to part the sea in Exod 14:16, the wind serves the same function in 14:21.³³

When we turn to the restoration of the sea and compare it to the parting, we observe many similarities:

Exod 14:15–16, 21	Exod 14:26, 27
εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωσῆν [. . .] καὶ σὺ ἔπαρον τῆ ῥάβδῳ σου καὶ ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ῥῆξον αὐτήν [. . .]. And the Lord said to Moses, “[. . .] and as for you, raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and break it [. . .].”	εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωσῆν Ἐκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἀποκαταστήτω τὸ ὕδωρ [. . .]. And the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and let the water be restored [. . .].”
ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .]	ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .]

³³ For analyses see Utzschneider and Oswald, *Exodus 1–15*, 308–309, 314–316.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea [. . .]	And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea [. . .]
καὶ ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐποίησεν τὴν θάλασσαν ξηράν [. . .] and the Lord drove back the sea with a strong south wind for the whole night, and made the sea dry land [. . .]	
καὶ ἐσχίσθη τὸ ὕδωρ. and the water was divided.	καὶ ἀπεκατέστη τὸ ὕδωρ πρὸς ἡμέραν ἐπὶ χώρας. and the water was restored to its place toward the day.

Significantly, Moses raises his hand over the sea at the parting and at the restoration. While at the parting, this seems to lead to the bringing on of the wind. At the restoration, no effect happens. The water, however, is restored somehow. While no explanation is given for this, scholars suggest that, the wind simply ceases and the waters then return to their place.³⁴

The biblical text thus presents to the reader a potentially inconsistent sequence of events in both the sea’s parting and its restoration. It is unclear what mechanism serves to part and restore the sea. Does Moses’s rod function to part and restore the sea? Does the wind play this role? Does the rod strike the water to part the sea or does the wind serve this purpose? How do the rod and the wind function in the restoration of the sea? Does Moses’s raise his rod over the sea to restore it? Does the wind cease blowing to achieve this restoration? In his commentary on Exodus, Houtman has asserted that “for the flowing back of the water no natural cause is mentioned, whether lying down of the wind (14:21), or the wind coming from the opposite

³⁴ Instead, God becomes a more primary actor by shaking off the Egyptians in 14:25 (see Utzschneider and Oswald, *Exodus 1–15*, 312–313)

direction (cf. 10:19; see also 15:10).”³⁵ As a result, these aspects of the text present potential questions for biblical exegetes.

We see exegetes such as Artapanus and Josephus perceive inconsistencies in the biblical account and seek to respond to them in various ways.³⁶ Philo himself seeks to resolve the inconsistencies of the parting and restoration of the sea in his *Life of Moses*. Philo seeks to create a more logical sequence of events through the use of the paraphrastic technique of rearrangement. Instead of God commanding Moses to strike the sea then giving the description of the wind blowing, Philo gives the blowing of the wind prior to the striking of the sea with the staff:³⁷

³⁵ Houtman, *Exodus*, 269.

³⁶ See, for example, Artapanus, *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.27.34–37; Josephus, *A.J.* 2.347–348. As Josephus states in detail: “So then, I, for my part, have handed on each of these things just as I have found them in the sacred books. But let no one marvel at the incredulity of the account, if a way of salvation were discovered for people of old not experienced in evil through the sea, whether by the will of God or spontaneously. When, even for Alexander king of Macedon and his men, who lived just a little while ago, the Pamphylian Sea withdrew and provided them another way through itself for those who did not have one, because it was the will of God to destroy the rule of the Persians. And all those who write down the acts of Alexander confess this to be true. So then, let everyone decide for themselves what seems appropriate about these matters” (Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ὡς εὔρον ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς βίβλοις οὕτως ἕκαστον τούτων παραδέδωκα· θαυμάσιον δὲ μηδεὶς τοῦ λόγου τὸ παράδοξον, εἰ ἀρχαίοις ἀνθρώποις καὶ πονηρίας ἀπίστοις εὐρέθη σωτηρίας ὁδὸς καὶ διὰ θαλάσσης εἴτε κατὰ βούλησιν θεοῦ εἴτε κατὰ ταυτόματον, ὅποτε καὶ τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν βασιλέα τῆς Μακεδονίας χθὲς καὶ πρόην γεγονόσιν ὑπεχώρησε τὸ Παμφύλιον πέλσαγος καὶ ὁδὸν ἄλλην οὐκ ἔχουσι παρέσχε τὴν δι’ αὐτοῦ καταλῦσαι τὴν Περσῶν ἡγεμονίαν τοῦ θεοῦ θελήσαντος, καὶ τοῦτο πάντες ὁμολογοῦσιν οἱ τὰς Ἀλεξάνδρου πράξεις συγγραψάμενοι. περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων ὡς ἐκάστω δοκεῖ διαλαμβάνετω).

³⁷ See, for example, some of the observations on this inconsistency in Erkki Koskenniemi, *The Old Testament Miracle-Workers in Early Judaism*, vol. 206, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 75. The main points of inconsistency between 14:16 and 21 lie in the immediate agent who effects the parting (i.e., Moses as God’s intermediary agent or God directly), the means by which that parting occurs (i.e., the staff or the wind), the time involved to complete the sea’s parting (i.e., immediately or all night), and the verb by which the parting is said to happen (i.e., ῥήγνυμι or σχίζω): Moses striking with the staff to break (ῥήγνυμι) it in 14:16 versus God causing the wind to blow to divide (σχίζω) it in 14:21.

Exod 14:16, 21	<i>Mos.</i> 1.176–77
	<p>καταδύντος δ' ἡλίου, νότος εὐθύς ἤρξατο κατασκήπτειν βιαιότατος, ὑφ' οὗ τὸ πέλαγος ἐξανεχώρησεν, εἰωθὸς μὲν ἀμπωτίζειν, τότε δὲ καὶ μᾶλλον ὠθούμενον τὸ πρὸς αἰγιαλοῖς ὑπεσύρη καθάπερ εἰς χαράδραν ἢ χαρύβδιν· [. . .]</p> <p>When the sun had set, immediately an exceedingly strong south wind began to rush down, by which the sea withdrew; it was accustomed to ebb and flow, but then even more being thrust near the shore, it was drawn down as into eddies and whirlpools. [. . .]³⁸</p>
<p>καὶ σὺ ἔπαρον τῆ ῥάβδῳ σου καὶ ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ῥῆξον αὐτήν, καὶ εἰσελθάτωσαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ εἰς μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης κατὰ τὸ ξηρόν. [. . .]</p> <p>“And as for you, raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and break it, and let the sons of Israel enter into the midst of the sea on dry land. [. . .]</p>	<p>προσταχθεὶς δὲ.</p> <p>And having been commanded³⁹</p>
<p>ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωϋσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν.</p> <p>And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea,</p>	<p>Μωϋσῆς τῆ βακτηρία παίει τὴν θάλασσαν.</p> <p>Moses struck the sea with his staff⁴⁰</p>
<p>καὶ ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐποίησεν τὴν θάλασσαν ξηράν,</p> <p>and the Lord drove back the sea with a strong south wind for the whole night, and made the sea dry land,</p>	
<p>καὶ ἐσχίσθη τὸ ὕδωρ.</p> <p>and the water was divided.</p>	<p>ἡ δὲ ῥαγεῖσα δίσταται.</p>

³⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 1.176 (CW 4.162.8–11).

³⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.13).

⁴⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.13–14).

	And it was broken and separated ⁴¹
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According to the biblical account, Moses raised his staff (and struck the sea?), a south wind blew all night, and the sea was parted. In Philo’s depiction, the actions of the wind and staff are transposed. For Philo, the wind blows all night and the part by the shoreline where the Israelites stand is thrust back. Moses then strikes the gathered water with his staff. Immediately, the sea is parted at the blow. In this version of events, it is clear that the wind does not serve as the mechanism to part the sea. Instead, it prepares the waters for the strike of Moses’s staff by gathering them before Moses. This is unlike the biblical text, where the wind must blow all night in order slowly to part the sea over the course of the night.

He also better explains how the sea was restored by inserting a corresponding wind that blows in the opposite direction at the conclusion of the episode:

Exod 14:26, 27	Philo, <i>Mos.</i> 1.179
<p>εἶπεν δὲ κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἀποκαταστήτω τὸ ὕδωρ [. . .].</p> <p>And the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and let the water be restored [. . .].”</p>	
<p>ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .]</p> <p>And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea [. . .]</p>	
	<p>τοὺς δὲ τὰ τμήματα τοῦ πελάγους ἐκατέρωθεν ἐπικυλισθέντα καὶ ἐνωθέντα αὐτοῖς ἄρμασι καὶ ἵπποις καταποντοῖ, βορείοις πνεύμασι [. . .]</p>

⁴¹ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.4).

	But the portions of the sea rolled up and gathered on either side drown the Egyptians with their chariots and horses, when because of the north winds [. . .] ⁴²
καὶ ἀπεκατέστη τὸ ὕδωρ πρὸς ἡμέραν ἐπὶ χώρας. and the water was restored to its place toward the day.	τῆς παλιρροίας ἀναχυθείσης. the reflux was poured out ⁴³

While the former wind functioned to push the water to one side of the sea channel in preparation for Moses striking the sea, a countervailing wind now moves the sea back into its original position. In this way, Philo brings narrative balance to the account by explaining how the entire event begins and ends in a similar fashion.⁴⁴

As he crafts this solution, he appeals to scientific language related to the natural sciences of his day in order to describe the action of the sea.⁴⁵ On the one hand, he draws on vocabulary from contemporary tidal theory to describe the movement of the sea, including ἐξαναχωρέω (“withdraw”), ἀμπωτίζειν (“ebb and flow”), ὑποσύρω (“draw down”), χαράδρα (“eddy”),

⁴² Philo, *Mos.* 1.179 (CW 4.163.9–10).

⁴³ Philo, *Mos.* 1.179 (CW 4.163.10–11).

⁴⁴ The fact that Philo endeavored to bring narrative balance is attested by the many parallels he forges between the parting of the sea and its restoration: the timing of the event, the wind, and the description of the water moving (with the similar sounding verbs ἐξαναχέω and ἀναχύω):

<i>Mos.</i> 1.176	<i>Mos.</i> 1.179
καταδύντος δ’ ἡλίου	περὶ βαθὺν ὄρθρον [. . .]
νότος εὐθὺς ἤρξατο κατασκήπτειν βιαίτατος	βορείοις πνεύμασι
ὕφ’ οὗ τὸ πέλαγος ἐξανεχώρησεν	τῆς παλιρροίας ἀναχυθείσης καὶ μετεώροις τρικυμίαις ἐπιδραμούσης

⁴⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 1.176–77.

χάρυβδις (“whirlpool”), στέλλω (“furl”), ἀναχύω (“pour out”), ἐπιτρέχω (“spread over”), παλίρροια (“reflux”).⁴⁶ On the other hand, he draws on terminology from the meteorological sciences in descriptions of how ice and frost form in the atmosphere by means of solidification to depict the waves becoming walls, including πήγνυμι (“solidify”), in close conjunction with μετέωρος (“suspended”) and ὕψος (“height”).⁴⁷ By depicting the parting of the sea in such scientific language, Philo provides an additional scientific solution to the problem of verisimilitude in the account. While he portrays God as the one who ultimately causes the events, he depicts them as fully in line with scientific understandings of the natural world that were common in his day.

⁴⁶ For similar examples in Philo, see *Deus* 177; *Leg.* 3.213; *Somn.* 2.121; *Opif.* 113; *Spec.* 2.143; 4.85; *Contempl.* 86. For examples of the terms and the theory of tides, see Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.11; Aetius 3.17; Aristotle, *Mete.* 2.7–8; Strabo, *Geogr.* 1.1.7–10; 1.2.16; 1.2.36; 3.2.4–5, 11; 3.5.8–9; Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 2.212–20; Ps.-Iamblichus, *Arithmetic* 60.6–18; Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.6.61; Pomponius Mela 3.1–2; Lucan 1.412–19; Seneca, *Nat.* 3. See also David T. Runia, *On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 1 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 286; D. Lührmann, "The Godlessness of Germans Living by the Sea according to Philo of Alexandria," in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honour of Helmut Koester*, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); Duane W. Roller, *A Historical and Topographical Guide to the Geography of Strabo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 9, 134, 169–170; Posidonius, *Posidonius*, 3 vols., ed. Ludwig Edelstein and I. G. Kidd, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972–1999), 2:767–781; Gareth D. Williams, *The Cosmic Viewpoint: A Study of Seneca's Natural Questions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 93–135; David E. Cartwright, "On the Origins of Knowledge of the Sea Tides from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century," *Earth Sciences History* 20, no. 2 (2001): 105–126; Lawrence Kim, *Homer between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 47–84.

⁴⁷ See Aristotle, *Mete.* 347a13–349a12; *Gen. corr.* 330b27; Epicurus, *Ep. Pyth.* 106.11; Chrysippus, 3.138; Seneca, *Nat.* 4b; Pliny, *Nat.* 2.39. See also Williams, *Cosmic Viewpoint*, 136–170. According to Utschneider and Oswald, the imagery in Exod 15 of the water being heaped up, standing up, solidified, and congealed, “emphasize[s] the metamorphosis of liquid into solid rather than the drying up of the water” (Utschneider and Oswald, *Exodus 1–15*, 319). See also Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, 523.

We have now completed our analysis of Philo's paraphrase of the crossing of the Red Sea. Our analysis has demonstrated how Philo engages with a variety of προβλήματα/ζητήματα in his paraphrase, responding to them in such a way that he addresses his primary aim to demonstrate how Moses serves as Israel's divinely assisted leader. This assistance came in the form of the angel guiding Israel in the cloud, Moses silently petitioning God for aid, and the miraculous parting of the waters. In each of these parts of the narrative, Philo adjusted the account in response to some kind of προβλήματα/ζητήματα, and he did so in a way that benefited his overall aim in this section of the text.

3.3 The Golden Calf (*Mos.* 2.159–173)

According to the biblical account of Exod 32, Moses remains on Mt Sinai for forty days and forty nights in order to receive the tablets of the law from God. Due to the length of his absence, the people grow weary and fall into idolatry by forging a golden calf. While still on the mountain, God tells Moses about the events that transpired below. Moses quickly hurries down only to find the reality of the situation worse than he could have imagined. When he first sees the idol, he flies into a rage and breaks the divine tablets. He then destroys the calf, grinds it to powder, and forces the people to drink it mixed with water. After inquiring of Aaron about the details of the events, he sees that the people had become scattered. Moses then calls for the faithful to rally to his side, and they slaughter three thousand fellow Israelites.

In this depiction of events, Moses performs two actions seemingly out of a rash motivation. In both instances, the biblical text first states that Moses is angry, then it narrates him doing a potentially drastic action. The first time we see a connection between anger and Moses's actions occurs in Exod 32:19. After coming down from the mountain, Moses sees the golden

calf, becomes “filled with anger” (ὀργισθεὶς θυμῷ), and immediately breaks the tablets.⁴⁸ The second time Moses’s actions are connected with an angry motivation comes in Exod 32:22. After entering the camp and speaking with Aaron, he becomes enraged again. Aaron himself attests to this fact by imploring Moses, “cease from your anger” (μὴ ὀργίζου).⁴⁹ Despite this plea, Exod 32:25–29 records Moses calling for the killing of three thousand of his fellow Israelites. The breaking of the tablets and the slaughter of the Israelites in scripture posed potential theological and moral problems for biblical exegetes.⁵⁰ But do later ancient interpreters see these actions as problematic, and how do they respond to them?

As early as the biblical text, we begin to see works that seek to address Moses’s actions by recasting them in a different light. Some texts, like Deuteronomy, omit both the reference to Moses’s anger as a motivating factor in the episode and any mention of the killing of the three thousand Israelites. Yet, the destruction of the tablets remains.⁵¹ Other texts, like Targum Ps.-Jonathan and Ps.-Philo, retain Moses’s anger but attempt to explain it by rewriting the account in some way.⁵² Still others, like Josephus and Targum Neofiti, take the more radical step of

⁴⁸ According to the biblical account: “when he drew near to the camp, he saw the calf and choruses, and becoming filled with anger, Moses threw the two tablets from his hands and he broke them beneath the mountain” (καὶ ἠνίκα ἤγγιζεν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, ὅρᾱ τὸν μόσχον καὶ τοὺς χορούς, καὶ ὀργισθεὶς θυμῷ Μωυσῆς ἔρριπεν ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ τὰς δύο πλάκας καὶ συνέτριπεν αὐτὰς ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος) (Exod 32:19). For possible explanations of what causes Moses’s anger in the text as we have it, see Houtman, *Exodus*, 3:657.

⁴⁹ Exod 32:22: Μὴ ὀργίζου.

⁵⁰ See Christoph Dohmen, *Exodus 19–40*, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004), 307–310.

⁵¹ See Deut 9:15–21. Because Moses is no longer angry, he does not break the tablets in a fit of rage immediately upon seeing the calf before he enters the camp. Instead, he waits to break them until inside the camp when he is before the people (ἐναντίον ὑμῶν), likely so that their destruction serves as an object lesson to the Israelites. See also Ps 105 LXX (106 MT):19–23.

⁵² See Targum Ps.-Jonathan Exod 32; Deut 9:17; and LAB 12.5. See also James L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era*

omitting the episode entirely.⁵³ By the Rabbinic period, it had become fairly standard in the Jewish exegetical tradition to remove large parts of Exod 32,⁵⁴ especially the destruction of the tablets and the killing of the three thousand, from the readings in the synagogue.⁵⁵ These various exegetical responses to the passage demonstrate that the destruction of the tablets and the killing of the three thousand were perceived by biblical exegetes to many problems and needed to be resolved somehow.

In his treatise *On Drunkenness*, Philo explores the actions of the Levites in Exod 32 in some detail. According to him, they serve as an example of those who abandon the influence of custom (συνήθεια) in order to follow right reason (ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος). While custom concerns itself with objects of sense perception and the passions, right reason turns its focus beyond these. Because of their embrace of reason, the Levites received the priesthood as a reward.⁵⁶ However, when one recounts the deeds (αἱ πράξεις) of the Levites, they pose a potential problem. According to him, one might become an object of ridicule (χλεύη) to many (παρὰ πολλοῖς) when recounting them.⁵⁷

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998, 1998), 719–720.
<https://catalog.lib.uchicago.edu/vufind/Record/3562472>.

⁵³ For the later tradition, see also Exodus Rabbah 32, which omits the episode entirely. See also Deuteronomy Rabbah 3.12–17, which seems especially concerned about Moses's anger as a motivating factor for the actions.

⁵⁴ Pekka Lindqvist, *Sin at Sinai: Early Judaism Encounters Exodus 32*, Studies in Rewritten Bible 2 (Turku: Åbo Akademi University, 2008), 117–306.

⁵⁵ For various analyses of the later reception history of the episode, see Leivy Smolar and Moshe Aberbach, "The Golden Calf Episode in Postbiblical Literature," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 39 (1968): 91–116; Lindqvist, *Sin at Sinai*. The Hellenistic world's preoccupation with the deleterious effects of anger—witnessed both within and without the biblical text—also complicates later interpreters' engagements with this biblical passage.

⁵⁶ Philo, *Ebr.* 63–65.

⁵⁷ Philo, *Ebr.* 65.

While their actions pose an apparent problem, this is not the case when they are properly investigated, Philo argues. He appeals to the language of the literal and allegorical in order to make his point. The literal imagery of the passage (ταῖς προχείροις φαντασῖαις) deceives (ἀπατάω) many because they do not comprehend (οὐ κατανοοῦσιν) the invisible and obscure meanings (ἀφανεῖς καὶ συνεσκιασμένας δυνάμεις) contained within.⁵⁸ It is only by examining these invisible and obscure senses that one understands the text's deeper meaning.

Philo proceeds to indicate the exact nature of the problem (πρόβλημα) in the account. According to him, those who were entrusted with the most sacred duties pertaining to the temple should have been the most pure of all. However, this is not the case as they became polluted through bloodshed. Not only did they shed blood, but they killed their own kin:

For those who were entrusted with the prayers, the sacrifices, and all the ritual of the temple, were—a most strange thing—homicides, fratricides, killers of bodies who were kin and friends. Whom it was necessary to appoint, pure from a pure parentage, having never touched an impure body—certainly not voluntarily but not even involuntarily.⁵⁹

He then appeals to the literal sense of scripture by quoting both the biblical injunction to slay one's brother and relative in Exod 32:27–28 and Moses's praise of the actions in Exod 32:29.⁶⁰

The quotation of the very text of scripture poses questions for Philo. “What then ought we to say” (τί οὖν λεκτέον), he inquires, except that while custom (συνήθεια) condemns the actions of the Levites right reason (ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος), their father, praises it.⁶¹ Philo then makes an

⁵⁸ Philo, *Ebr.* 65.

⁵⁹ Philo, *Ebr.* 66: οἱ γὰρ εὐχὰς καὶ θυσίας καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν περὶ τὸ ἱερόν ἀγιστεῖαν ἐγχειρισθέντες εἰσὶ, τὸ παραδοξότατον, ἀνδροφόνοι, ἀδελφοκτόνοι, τῶν οἰκειοτάτων καὶ φιλότατων σωμάτων αὐτόχειρες, οὓς ἐχρῆν καθαρὸς καὶ ἐκ καθαρῶν, μηδενὸς ἄγους προσαψαμένους, ἐκουσίου μὲν ἄπαγε, ἀλλὰ μηδ' ἀκουσίου χειροτονεῖσθαι.

⁶⁰ Philo, *Ebr.* 67.

⁶¹ Philo, *Ebr.* 68.

allegorical move in the text based on an appeal to reason. According to him, the Levites did not kill human beings in the text but rather their own passions: “it is not the case, as some think, that priests kill people, rational animals, composed of soul and body, but they cut off from their mind what is akin (οἰκεῖα) and dear (φίλα) to the flesh.”⁶² Philo thus takes the biblical concepts of kinship and familiarity and allegorizes them. They cut out these passions in the belief that ministers of the divine should alienate (ἀλλοτριώω) themselves from the focus on the objects of sense perception and the passions, which should be treated as enemies. Philo here alludes to the distinctly Stoic concept of alienation (*allogtriosis*) by which one rejects things that are alien and harmful to one’s nature.⁶³

According to Philo, it is for this reason (διὰ τοῦτο) that we kill (ἀποκτενοῦμεν) brother, neighbor, and those near to us. With the phrase διὰ τοῦτο, Philo moves to formulating his solution to a problem he perceives in the biblical text. We should not take the terms “brother,” “neighbor,” and “near one” literally but allegorically. They refer allegorically to objects related to the physical and the sense perceptible. When the text says “brother,” it does not mean that we kill an actual human being. Rather, it means that we slay the body, the brother of the soul. When scripture says that we should kill our “neighbor,” it again does not mean a flesh and blood

⁶² Philo, *Ebr.* 69 (CW 2.182.17–19): καὶ γὰρ οὐδ’, ὥσπερ νομίζουσί τινες, ἀνθρώπους ἀναιροῦσιν οἱ ἱερεῖς, ζῶα λογικὰ ἐκ ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος συνεστῶτα, ἀλλ’ ὅσα οἰκεῖα καὶ φίλα τῆ σαρκὶ ἀποκόπτουσι τῆς διανοίας ἑαυτῶν.

⁶³ For the Stoic idea of *oikeiosis*, see Jacob Klein, "The Stoic Argument from Oikeiosis," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 50 (2016): 143–200; Simon G. Pembroke, "Oikeiosis," in *Problems in Stoicism*, ed. A. A. Long (London: Athlone Press, 1971), 114–149; Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *The Stoic Theory of Oikeiosis: Moral Development and Social Interaction in Early Stoic Philosophy*, Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 2 (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990); Gisela Striker, "The Role of Oikeiosis in Stoic Ethics," in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, ed. Julia Annas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 145–167; Elizabeth Asmis, "Seneca's Originality," in *The Cambridge Companion to Seneca*, ed. Shadi Bartsch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 235.

human. Instead, it refers to the senses, which are close to the soul. We are to slay these senses. When the text says we are to kill our “near one,” it refers to the uttered word, which is near our understanding. Only by taking the text allegorically in such a philosophical manner, does one understand its true meaning.

Philo’s *On Drunkenness* and his *Life of Moses* have much in common with one another. In both, he responds to the same ethical questions by appealing to contemporary ethics.⁶⁴ Such ethical discussions of the virtues became commonplace in Hellenistic philosophy, thanks in no small part to the Stoics. Unlike in the prior treatise, however, he now casts his solution in the form of a paraphrase of scripture that intertwines this ethical language with language from the biblical text itself. By inserting such language into his account, he frames the actions in order to demonstrate how the potentially questionable actions were justified. Such ethical language and

⁶⁴ The discussion of ethical theory was popularized, in no small part, thanks to the efforts of Stoic philosophy. These virtues include (with their opposites) prudence (φρόνησις/σοφία) and folly (ἄφροσύνη), temperance (σωφροσύνη) and intemperance (ἀκολασία/ἄκρασία), justice (δικαιοσύνη) and injustice (ἀδικία), courage (ἀνδρεία) and cowardice (δειλία), piety (εὐσέβεια), and holiness (ὀσιότης) (Philo, *Mos.* 2.159–162, 164–165, 167–171, 173; 2.270, 273–274). Philo also uses the language of virtue throughout his works (see, for example, *All.* 2.18; *Mos.* 2.216; *Vir.*; see also Ronald Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Philo* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 217–219). The cardinal virtues ultimately derive from Plato, who also demonstrates variation in the list (see Plato, *Resp.* 4, summarized in 427b; σοφία 428b–429a; ἀνδρεία 429a–430c; σωφροσύνη 430d–432b; δικαιοσύνη 432b–434c; see also *Euthyphr.* Passim; *Gorg.* 507b–c; *Prot.* 330b, 349b). Such ethical discussions became commonplace in Hellenistic philosophy, thanks in no small part to the Stoics. While a canonical set of four virtues eventually took shape, Stoics were quite flexible with their catalogues of the virtues (see, for example, Stobaeus, 2.59.4–62.6; Diogenes Laertius, 7.92–93; 7.102; Ps–Andronicus, *De pass.* 259.73–261.97; Seneca, *Ep.* 29, 30, 88; see also Edward Vernon Arnold, *Roman Stoicism* [New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971], 293–294). While Thomas Tobin has recently argued that Philo shapes the episode according to Greco-Roman ethical theory, he does not go far enough in acknowledging the unique Stoic influence in the account with elements such as alienation (ἄλλοτριώσις). For an analysis of Philo’s goals in retelling the account in light of the moral implications of the episode, see Thomas H. Tobin, “Philo of Alexandria’s Interpretations of the Episode of the Golden Calf,” in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 80.

concepts suggest Philo draws heavily on Stoic ethics while formulating his solution to the moral dilemma.

In his paraphrase of the episode, Philo casts Moses as a wise Stoic leader who acts as a physician in order to cut away the impiety that threatens to infect the people.⁶⁵ While we see the trope of the philosopher as physician of the soul in authors such as Cicero, Seneca, Diogenes Laertius, and Galen, it seems to be particularly in vogue with Stoic ethical theory.⁶⁶ According to Philo, as Moses descended from the mountain, he immediately realizes that the disease of impiety has quickly spread throughout the people. As a result, swift remedial action is necessitated. Approaching the camp, he realizes that not everyone has been infected. Therefore, Moses devises a procedure to test the disposition of the soul of each individual in order to test who is incurable and who can still be saved. According to Philo's account Moses's words themselves serve as the test while the people's response to them indicates the extent of their infection.

While the biblical text of Exod 32:26 contains only a brief narrative of the reaction of the Levites, Philo expands this more than tenfold. In doing so, he distinguishes three distinct groups based on their reactions to Moses's words: the three-thousand idolators, the remaining Israelites, and the Levites. In the biblical narrative, the reader must infer the reactions of these other two groups. Philo supplies the missing information. This clarifies potential questions such as, did the

⁶⁵ See, for example, Philo, *Mos.* 2.167–168. This is clear due to his use of medical terminology. This is not the only place in his corpus where he compares Moses to a physician (see also *Deus* 67; *Mos.* 1.42; see also Louis H. Feldman, "Moses in Midian, According to Philo," *Shofar* 21, no. 2 [2003]: 3).

⁶⁶ See Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.1–21; Seneca, *De ira* passim; Diogenes Laertius, 7.115; Galen, *PHP* 5.2.23. See also John Sellars, *Stoicism* (London: Routledge, 2014), 31–41.

Levites indiscriminately kill three thousand of their fellow Israelites to serve as an example or did something such as their idolatrous actions set them apart?

Philo distinguishes between these three distinct groups (the impious idolators, the fearful Israelites, and the pious Levites) by creating an elaborate rhetorical *synkrisis* through the insertion of the language of virtue and vice:

Exod 32:26	<i>Mos.</i> 2.169–170
	<p>τῶν μὲν οὖν ἄλλων οἱ μὲν ἕνεκα τοῦ τὸν Αἰγυπτιακὸν ἐζηλωκεῖν τῷ φρον ἀφηνιάζοντες οὐ προσεῖχον τοῖς λεγομένοις, οἱ δὲ φόβῳ κολάσεως ἴσως ἐγγυτέρῳ προσελθεῖν οὐκ ἐθάρρουν ἢ τὴν ἐκ Μωυσέως τίσιν δεδιότες ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ πλήθους ἐπανάστασιν· ἀεὶ γὰρ οἱ πολλοὶ τοῖς μὴ συναπονοοῦμένοις ἐπιτίθενται.</p> <p>So then, of the others, some resisted because they were zealous for Egyptian delusion and they did not pay attention to what was said; others lacked the courage to draw nearer, perhaps due to fear of punishment, because they were afraid either of retribution from Moses or of an insurrection from the multitude. For the masses always turn on those who do not share their folly.⁶⁷</p>
<p>Συνῆλθον οὖν πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Λευι.</p> <p>Then all the sons of Levi gathered to him.</p>	<p>Μία δ' ἐξ ἀπάντων ἡ λεγομένη Λευϊτικὴ φυλὴ τοῦ κηρύγματος ἐπακούσασα καθάπερ ἀφ' ἐνὸς συνθήματος ἔθει μετὰ σπουδῆς, τῇ ποδωκείᾳ τὴν προθυμίαν ἐπιδεικνυμένη καὶ τὴν ὀξύτητα τῆς εἰς εὐσέβειαν ψυχικῆς ὀρμῆς.</p> <p>Of all the tribes, the one tribe called Levi, when they heard the proclamation, as if by a pre-agreed signal, ran with haste, displaying their eagerness by their swiftness and the keenness of the impulse in their soul for piety.⁶⁸</p>

Philo depicts these three groups along a spectrum of virtue. With the insertion of an initial μέν/δέ construction, he distinguishes between two classes of Israelites, the idolators and the rest. Both groups demonstrate a lack of virtue. While the idolators (οἱ μὲν) display a lack of piety, the rest

⁶⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.169 (CW 4.239.13–17).

⁶⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 2.170 (CW 4.239.18–21).

show a lack of courage (οἱ δὲ). After this insertion, Philo substitutes the biblical description of the Levites' actions. According to him, they are the only ones who have true virtue, as shown by their zeal and impulse for piety. With these paraphrases of the scriptural account, Philo demarcates three groups based on their reaction to Moses's words vis-à-vis their virtue. While this *synkrisis* demonstrates how virtuous each group each, it also indicates how far the infection of impiety had spread through the people.

Like the Stoic leader, after determining how far the infection of impiety had spread, Moses urges the Levites to act against those who are incurable, namely the idolators. While Philo portrays the Levites as zealous for piety in both body and mind, the idolators are depicted as having committed acts worthy of death:

Exod 32:27	<i>Mos.</i> 2.171
	εἰ μὴ μόνον τοῖς σώμασιν. “Not only with your bodies,” ⁶⁹
Τάδε λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ. The Lord the God of Israel says,	εἶπεν. He said, ⁷⁰
	ἐπισπεύδετε τὴν πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἄφιξιν ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς διανοίαις, αὐτίκα μαρτυρηθήσεται. “hasten your coming to me, but it will also soon be witnessed with your minds.” ⁷¹
Θέσθε ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ῥομφαίαν ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν	ξίφος ἀναλαβὼν ἕκαστος. Let each one take up a sword ⁷²

⁶⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.22).

⁷⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.22).

⁷¹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.22–23). By stating that their zeal is demonstrated not only in body (σῶμα) but also in mind (διάνοια), Philo suggests not only that their actions reflect their inner virtue but also that the Levites are virtuous in their entire being. For the importance of διάνοια for virtue, see Plutarch, *Mor.* 441c (see also Sellars, *Stoicism*, 123).

⁷² Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.23).

<p>“Each one put his own sword on his thigh</p>	
<p>καὶ διέλθατε καὶ ἀνακάμψατε ἀπὸ πύλης ἐπὶ πύλην διὰ τῆς παρεμβολῆς.</p> <p>and go through and return from gate to gate through the camp,</p>	
	<p>τοὺς μυρίων ἄξια θανάτων εἰργασμένους, οἱ τὸν ἀληθῆ θεὸν καταλιπόντες τοὺς ψευδωνύμους ἐδημιούργησαν φθαρταῖς καὶ γενηταῖς οὐσίαις τὴν τοῦ ἀφθάρτου καὶ ἀγενήτου πρόσρησιν ἐπισημίσαντες.</p> <p>against those who have done things worthy of ten thousand deaths—who have forsaken the true God and made falsely named ones out of corruptible and created substances, calling them a name that belongs to the incorruptible and unbegotten one—⁷³</p>
<p>καὶ ἀποκτείνετε ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἔγγιστα αὐτοῦ</p> <p>and each kill his brother, and each his neighbor, and each the person nearest to him.”</p>	<p>συγγενεῖς καὶ φίλους ἀποκτεινάτω</p> <p>and let each one kill his relatives and friends,⁷⁴</p>
	<p>φιλίαν καὶ συγγένειαν ὑπολαβῶν εἶναι μόνην ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὀσιότητα.</p> <p>considering piety of good men to be the only friendship and kinship.”⁷⁵</p>

While substituting primary parts of the biblical text, Philo inserts other non-biblical material throughout that clarifies that the Levites act piously because the idolators have alienated themselves from their flesh and blood relatives by committing impiety. While Exod 32:27 is

⁷³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.1–3).

⁷⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.3–4).

⁷⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.4–5).

ambiguous as to the identity of those who are killed and why only these individuals are chosen to die, Philo’s insertations explain that these are the idolators lacking virtue.

While this at first may seem to go against the very notions of Stoic ethics not to kill one’s kin, Philo has a response ready at hand: the “piety of good men” should be considered “to be the only friendship and kinship.”⁷⁶ Here, Philo makes a similar argument as in *On Drunkenness*.

While the Levites feel a kinship with piety and those who have it, they feel an alienation from those who lack piety. This clarifies matters from the biblical text, which did not indicate the basis of which the Levites are asked to kill their fellow Israelites or why they are worthy.

Because of their zeal in both body and mind, the Levites had already perceived the alienation (ἀλλοτριώσεις) caused by the impiety of the idolators:

Exod 32:28	Mos. 2.172
καὶ ἐποίησαν οἱ υἱοὶ Λευι καθὰ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς Μωυσεῖς, καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ εἰς τρισχιλίους ἄνδρας.	οἱ δὲ τὴν παραίνεσιν ἐτοιμότητι φθάσαντες, ἐπὶ καὶ τὰς γνώμας ἔτυχον ἡλλοτριωμένοι σχεδὸν ἀφ’ οὗ τὸ παρανόμημα γενόμενον εἶδον, ἀναιροῦσιν ἡβηδὸν εἰς τρισχιλίους τῶν πρὸ μικροῦ φιλτάτων.
And the sons of Levi did as Moses had said to them, and there fell from the people on that day about three thousand men.	Preceding his command due to their eagerness, since they were already alienated (ἡλλοτριωμένοι) even in their minds (ἐπὶ καὶ τὰς γνώμας), almost from the moment they saw the transgression happening, from the youth upward they killed to the number of three thousand, although they were their dearest friends a short time before. ⁷⁷

While all the Israelites had previously been united with common bonds of kinship and friendship just a short time before, their idolatry was such a heinous act that they ruptured these bonds. As a

⁷⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.4–5): φιλίαν καὶ συγγένειαν μόνην ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὀσιότητα. See also Mark 3:31–35.

⁷⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.172 (CW 4.240.5–8).

result, they alienated themselves from their former kin and friends. In this way, the idolators cleave themselves from the family of God and become strangers.⁷⁸

In these passages, we see Philo draw on the Stoic concepts of affinity (οικείωσις) and alienation (ἀλλοτριώσις). Οικείωσις represents a essential principle of Stoic ethics. While at its most basic, οικείωσις represents a primary impulse for self-preservation that every individual possesses that is rooted in an attraction for what benefits one's survival and a rejection of what is

⁷⁸ The actions, rooted in vice, cause this separation. Although the Levites were blood relatives with the impious Israelites, they were no longer united with bonds of kinship. They had become strangers. The Levites perceive the dissolution of this family bond and act upon it. See elsewhere where Philo argues that the Levites alienated family in this act and received cities of refuge as compensation (*Fug.* 88–93; *Sacr.* 130). While the Levites act virtuously in body and mind, the idolators act without virtue in body and mind (*Mos.* 2.171–172).

harmful.⁷⁹ Οικείωσις also contains a social component that compels one to feel concern for one's fellow human beings, especially one's friends and family.⁸⁰

Some Stoics, like Zeno of Citium, argued that bonds of affinity are based not on kinship at all but on virtue. Those lacking virtue dissolve the communal bonds, thus alienating themselves from the rest of humanity and becoming enemies.⁸¹ Philo's account incorporates many of these Stoic concepts and much of the language. For example, the account demonstrates

⁷⁹ Summing up the concept, Sextus Empiricus states that it involves “the choice of things to which there is an affinity and the avoidance of things that are alien” (τῇ αἰρέσει τῶν οἰκείων καὶ φυγῇ τῶν ἀλλοτριῶν; *PH* 1.65). According to Cicero: “Nature has provided for every kind of living animal to protect themselves, both their life and body, and to avoid those things which appear harmful, and to seek and to provide all things which are necessary for living—like food, shelter, and other similar things” (*generi animantium omni est a natura tributum, ut se, vitam corpusque tueatur, declinet ea, quae nocitura videantur, omniaque, quae sint ad vivendum necessaria, anquirat et paret, ut pastum, ut latibula, ut alia generis eiusdem*; Cicero, *De off.* 1.11). See also Diogenes Laertius, 7.85; Seneca, *Ep.* 97.12–16; 121.5–21, especially 121.21; Sextus Empiricus, *PH* 1.65. According to Seneca, “nature has given them this tool as the first thing for their existence: attraction and love for themselves” (*primum hoc instrumentum in illa natura contulit ad permanendum, conciliationem et caritatem sui*; Seneca, *Ep.* 121.24; see also Asmis, “Seneca's Originality,” 234). According to Asmis, “every living creature has an inner cognition (*conscientia, suneidêsis*) of its constitution, together with an affinity (*oikeiosis, conciliatio*) toward itself and an alienation (*allogriôsis, aversatio*) from its destruction. In the case of humans, this is an awareness of our condition as rational beings, resulting in an affinity (“desire,” as Seneca puts it) for the good and alienation from evil” (Asmis, “Seneca's Originality,” 235). For rational humanity, there are two primary stages of *oikeiosis* that correspond to irrational infancy and rational adulthood. At the primary stage, one has a concern only for oneself. At the second stage, one's circle of concern (*oikeiosis*) ought to expand to include immediate family, relatives, friends, one's nation, all of humanity, and even the entire cosmos (see, for example, Cicero, *De off.* 1.12).

⁸⁰ Commenting on the social significance of *oikeiosis*, John Sellars asserts: “Our fundamental desire is for self-preservation, but as we develop as rational beings we do not narrowly associate our self-preservation with our own physical survival. One obvious example is a parent's desire to protect their children, which the Stoics conceive as a natural widening of our circle of concern. A further widening would be concern for one's extended family and friends, and then concern for one's whole community or society. For the Stoics, the natural love of parents for their children forms the starting-point from which we can trace the development of all human society (see Cicero, *Fin.* 3.62)” (Sellars, *Stoicism*, 131).

⁸¹ Diogenes Laertius, 7.32–33. See Malcolm Schofield, *The Stoic Idea of the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 95.

a similar idea that true communal bonds are based on virtue rather than on blood. According to Philo, Moses commands that relatives (συγγενεῖς) and friends (φίλοι) should be killed, with the understanding that the “piety of good men” is “the only friendship and kinship.”⁸²

According to Stoic thought, justice was closely connected to οἰκείωσις. Because οἰκείωσις forges the foundations of society through familial affection, those bonds must be properly maintained through the application of justice.⁸³ When actions contrary to law and reason threaten to dissolve these bonds and cause alienation and discord, justice must be administered to the lawbreakers in order to maintain social order. Otherwise, the bonds that hold together society may be overcome by alienation (ἀλλοτριώσις).

In making these changes, Philo depicts Moses like a Stoic leader who performs a remedial action to halt the spread of moral infection lest the entire nation be lost. As a physician must act swiftly to stem the spread of physical ailment, so must a leader act as a just judge to stop the spread of immorality. Like with physical infection, for the severest infections,

⁸² Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.4–5): φιλίαν καὶ συγγένειαν ὑπολαβὼν εἶναι μόνην ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὁσιότητα.

⁸³ See the definition of justice provided by Cicero in *De fin.* 1.20. Cicero states that justice is the “method by which society of human beings among themselves and the community, as it were, of life is maintained” (*ratio, qua societas hominum inter ipsos et vitae quasi communitas continetur*). According to Porphyry, “the followers of Zeno make *oikeiosis* the beginning of justice” (Porphyry, *De abst.* 3.19.2 [SVF 1.197]). See also *De abst.* 3.22.7. According to Clark, “appropriation is the beginning of justice because we progress from concern for our own preservation to recognition of other beings as appropriate (*oikeios*) to us, not in the basic sense that we recognize them as important to our interests, but in the extended sense that we recognize them as having interests for which we should be concerned” (Gillian Clark, *Porphyry: On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, Ancient Commentators on Aristotle [London: Bloomsbury, 2000], 173–174.; see also Malcolm Schofield, “Two Stoic Approaches to Justice,” in *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy*, ed. André Laks and Malcolm Schofield [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995]).

amputation of entire limbs—or in this case whole sections of the populace—may be necessary.

This parallels Stoic authors such as Seneca, who speaks of the actions of a just judge:

He imposes the punishment that each one deserves. [. . .]. In every act of punishment, he will always maintain the principle that one kind of punishment is used to correct the wicked, another to destroy them. [. . .]. And he will publicly kill those whom he wishes to serve as examples of slow yielding wickedness, not so much that they themselves may perish but that they may deter others from perishing.⁸⁴

For Seneca, the just judge kills not to inflict harm on the evildoers but rather for the corrective effect the action will have on others. Such actions are done to preserve the social order and prevent more wrongdoing. This is the very thing Moses has the Levites do in the account.

In case any of his readers still doubt that the actions depicted in the episode are ethical, Philo ends with a final *synkrisis* between the non-idolatrous Israelites and the Levites. While the Israelites chastize the actions of the Levites as too extreme, Moses gives them praise:

Exod 32:29	<i>Mos. 2.172–73</i>
	<p>κειμένων δ' ἐν ἀγορᾷ μέση τῶν σωμάτων, ἡ πληθὺς θεασαμένη τοὺς μὲν ᾤκτίσατο, τὸ δὲ τῶν κτεινόντων ἔνθερμον ἔτι καὶ μεστὸν ὀργῆς παράστημα καταδείσασα φόβῳ νουθετεῖται.</p> <p>While the bodies were lying in the middle of the place of assembly, the multitude saw them. On the one hand, they pitied them; yet, on the other hand, because they were afraid of the determination of those who had killed them, which was still passionate and full of anger, they were rebuked by their fear.⁸⁵</p>
Ἐπληρώσατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν σήμερον κυρίῳ, ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ υἰῷ ἢ τῷ	<p>Μωσῆς δὲ τὴν ἀριστείαν ἀποδεξάμενος γέρας ἐπενόησε καὶ ἐβεβαίωσε τῇ πράξει τὸ οἰκεῖον· ἔδει γὰρ τοὺς ὑπὲρ θεοῦ τιμῆς ἐκούσιον πόλεμον ἀραμένους καὶ βραχεῖ καιρῷ κατωρθωκότας ἀξιωθῆναι τῆς θεραπείας αὐτοῦ λαχόντας ἱερωσύνην.</p>

⁸⁴ Seneca, *De ira* 1.19.5, 7: *meritam cuique poenam iniungit. [. . .]. Hoc semper in omni animadversione servabit, ut sciat alteram adhiberi, ut emendet malos, alteram, ut tollat [. . .] et quos volet nequitiae male cedentis exempla fieri, palam occidet, non tantum ut pereant ipsi, sed ut alios pereundo deterreant.* See also throughout Seneca, *De ira* (for example, 1.6.1–4; 1.6.2; 1.16.1–4); Diogenes Laertius, 7.115.

⁸⁵ Philo, *Mos. 2.172* (CW 4.240.9–10).

<p>ἀδελφῶ, δοθῆναι ἐφ' ὑμᾶς εὐλογίαν.</p> <p>“You have filled your hands today to the Lord, each one by his son or brother, for a blessing to be granted upon you.”</p>	<p>Moses, approving their valor, thought of and confirmed a fitting prize for their deed; for it was necessary that those who had willingly taken up battle on behalf of God’s honor and who were successful in a short period of time should be deemed worthy of his service by receiving the priesthood.⁸⁶</p>
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Unlike the previous two statements, Philo here changes from direct speech to third-person narration. It is also in this statement that Philo demonstrates the least fidelity to the biblical text. While Exod 32:29 simply states that Moses provides the Levites with the priesthood for their actions, Philo elaborates upon this by giving a description of the non-idolatrous Israelites and providing additional non-biblical information regarding the the Levites. While the Israelites display the vice of fear, the Levites’ actions are said to have been completely virtuous.

Philo indicates that the Levites acted correctly by stating that their deeds were in accordance with virtue. While Exod 32:29 portrays Moses giving praise to the Levites for their actions, the verse itself is rather cryptic. Philo enhances Moses’s words. their actions with Moses approving of their virtue (τὴν ἀριστείαν ἀποδεξάμενος)

virtuousness of their act not only by stating that Moses approved of their virtue but by saying that their actions were completely virtuous (κατωρθωκότας).⁸⁷ Philo here explains the cryptic

⁸⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 2.173 (CW 4.240.11–14).

⁸⁷ See the different understanding of the event in Philo, *Spec.* 3.124–27. According to Stoic thought, as a result of *oikeiosis*, every individual recognizes and performs actions consistent with their nature. These are called “appropriate actions,” καθήκοντα. For a discussion of appropriate actions, see Diogenes Laertius, 7.102–10. Typically, the maintenance of familial relationships is an appropriate action (see 7.108). However, the need for justice trumps these bonds. When an action is done completely perfectly, in accordance with virtue, it is called a “completely correct action,” κατόρθωμα. The opposites are moral mistakes. Κατορθώματα are completely correct

biblical statement in Exod 32:29 with language drawn directly from Stoic ethical theory.⁸⁸

According to Stoic thought, completely virtuous actions are ones done perfectly in accordance with virtue. The Levites thus act fully in accord with virtue in killing the idolators while the other Israelites are in error due to their fear.⁸⁹

As we have seen from our analysis of the golden calf episode, Philo responds to a perceived moral problem (πρόβλημα) in the biblical account, namely the question of how Moses and the Levites are justified for killing three thousand of their fellow Israelites. While this incident occurs after the Israelite act of idolatry, it is far from clear that the ones killed were

because they are entirely virtuous (Sellars, *Stoicism*, 121). According to Sellars, these actions arise from virtue (see Sellars, *Stoicism*, 164.; see also Stobaeus, *Ant.* 2.8a). Because κατορθώματα are acts done in accordance with virtue, actions that are prudent, temperate, just, and courageous are considered to be κατορθώματα. Moral mistakes, on the other hand, consist of acts done contrary to reason, such as being imprudent, intemperate, unjust, or following the impulses of passions, like desire, fear, pain, or pleasure (Stobaeus, *Ant.* 2.8, 11a, e; see also Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-Contradiction* 1056c–d). The term κατόρθωμα occurs an abundant 27 times in Philo’s corpus. In many of these places, it seems to have a sense similar to the Stoic use of the term. So, although he may not use the concept entirely consistently with Stoic ethics, he seems to be relatively aware of it.

⁸⁸ Two statements in the biblical text lack clarity. First, the meaning of the obscure LXX figure of speech “to fill the hands” (ἐπληρώσατε τὰς χεῖρας) in Exod 32:29 which is typically taken as a reference to consecration. Although LSJ gives “to consecrate” as a possible meaning of the verb πληρώω, this is the only textual example given. LSJ does, however, give additional texts in Judges 17:5, 12. These passages have the same idiom of filling the hands in reference to consecration, yet they employ a different verb (ἐμπίπλημι). For the idiom of πληρώω in reference to consecration, see *GELS*, s.v. “πληρώω” 4.a.

Second, the nature of the “blessing” the Levites are said to receive. Both of these are cryptic due to an awkward use of LXX idiom, non-standard use of the Greek language, and rhetorical figures. Philo endeavors to bring greater clarity by employing a more standard use of the Greek language, omitting figures of speech that could cause confusion, and using more direct language.

⁸⁹ For parallels between those who act with piety, virtue, and acting completely virtuous, see Diogenes Laertius, 7.117–119. He also sees the virtuous as the true priests. This reading of the episode is further reinforced by an analysis of Philo’s reading of the Phinehas episode in *Mos.* 1.302–303. See also the similarities between the two episodes in *Spec.* 1.53–57. For an analysis of the connections between the golden calf and Phinehas episodes, see David Lincicum, “Philo on Phinehas and the Levites: Observing an Exegetical Connection,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 21, no. 1 (2011): 44–49.

responsible for forging the idol or participated in its worship. Moreover, Moses seems to have ordered the killing in a fit of anger. In both *On Drunkennes* and *Life of Moses*, Philo provides a solution to this moral dilemma by appealing to contemporary ethical theory. However, in each work, he arrives at a different solution.

In *On Drunkennes*, Philo argues that the killing should not be taken literally. Instead of the Levites killing their flesh and blood “brothers,” “relatives,” and “those close to them,” these terms actually refer to the “body,” “senses,” and the “uttered word,” which they purged. The slaughter is thus justified because it is metaphorical. In the *Life of Moses*, he casts his solution in the form of a paraphrase of scripture. While he again appeals to contemporary ethics, this time he further emphasizes Stoic themes. Instead of allegorizing the killing, he draws on the trope of the wise Stoic ruler who must dispense justice by cutting off wrongdoers lest immorality spread among the populace. In this treatise the killing is still justified, but this time it is justified because that’s how just leaders are required to act. This change in his solution fits the overall purpose of *Life of Moses*, which is to demonstrate how Moses functions as the ideal leader for Israel. In this section, however, the Levites serve as an extension of Moses, demonstrating how they serve as fitting priestly leaders on his behalf.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have analyzed how Philo paraphrases the crossing of the Red Sea (*Mos.* 1.165–180) and golden calf episodes (*Mos.* 2.159–173). In our analysis, we arrived at significant conclusions. When looking at the crossing of the Red Sea episode, we determine that Philo responds to questions about Moses speaking to God, since scripture does not narrate it, as well as questions about the cloud in the desert, which does not function like a normal cloud. We

demonstrated how Gregory retold the biblical events in order to solve any questions the reader may have about these events. In the case of Moses speaking, Philo appealed to the philosophical distinction between a sense-perceptible voice and an intellectual voice. For the cloud, Philo indicates that it was an angel in the cloud. In the case of the events surrounding the golden calf, Philo responded to questions about Moses's actions since they were seemingly motivated by anger. In his version of events, he explains how the Levites act justly by appealing to contemporary ethical theory.

In this way, Philo solves any questions that his reader may have about the events. However, why couldn't Philo simply give some kind of commentary about the passages that explained things? Why did he feel the need to provide a paraphrase? By paraphrasing the LXX account, Philo is able to mediate the scriptural text. As a result, the reader encounters a text that contains a "more accurate" depiction of Moses's life than other authors had provided and even, perhaps to Philo, than scripture itself. This is significant since Philo likely writes the *Life* and the entire *Exposition* either for non-Jews or for Jews who are not particularly devout. While they may not intend to read the actual biblical text, they may read Philo's version of scripture. He ensures that they come away with a positive impression by fixing potential problems.

Chapter 4

Philo's *Life of Moses*:

From Paraphrase to Paraphrase Refined

4.1 Introduction

We will now to turn analyze how Philo moves from his first to his second paraphrase of events in the case of the crossing of the Red Sea and golden calf episodes. The second paraphrases, which I cover in this chapter, all occur in the final prophetic section of the treatise (*Mos.* 2.246–291). There, Philo explains how Moses functions in his role as a prophet. As we have already noted, for Philo prophecy is connected with both the act of composition and the act of interpretation. In his first version of events, we demonstrated how Philo's narrative served as a vehicle to convey certain allegorical readings of events. We will now analyze how he takes that initial narrative and capitalizes upon its prophetic potential. In doing so, we will demonstrate how Philo relies just as much on his first paraphrase of events as on the LXX account when composing this prophetic version. Through this comparison, we hope to demonstrate how the prophetic version deepens and refines the prophetic character of the LXX and his first version.

4.2 Crossing the Red Sea (*Mos.* 2.247–257)

As Philo reexamines the Red Sea episode, he explores the prophetic implications of the narrative. He does so by amplifying the prediction and fulfillment potential of the events. In order to do so, he focuses on Moses's utterance, where he foretells the destruction of the Egyptians, and its immediate fulfillment in the narration of the Egyptians' destruction in the sea.

While scripture contains a version of this utterance in Exod 14:13–14,¹ nowhere does the biblical text explicitly state that Moses was inspired or spoke prophetically. However, because Moses speaks of future events—even if they were imminent and not in the distant future—the passage easily lends itself to prophetic elaboration by Philo. Moreover, while the biblical text also contains an implicit prophecy and fulfillment structure, it is not readily apparent to every reader. As Philo initially paraphrases the episode in *Mos.* 1.175, he picks up on the prophetic potential of the account and states that Moses was inspired and gives a prophecy. While he again states that Moses is inspired in his second account in *Mos.* 2.250, he now also explicitly refers to Moses as a prophet and shapes Moses’s words as an oracular vision of future events.

Because Philo focuses on the predictive significance of the account, he amplifies the parts of the narrative that assist with that reading while diminishing parts that do not. In his first account in *Mos.* 1.167–180, we saw that he paraphrased the entirety of Exod 14. In his second version in *Mos.* 2.247–257, he narrows the focus of the account to Moses’s prophetic utterance and its fulfillment. He thus abbreviates the account by removing elements deemed to be non-essential to the prophetic focus. In this way, in his second telling he foregrounds several events, including Moses’s prediction itself, a brief narration of the parting and restoration of the sea, and the fulfillment of Moses’s prophecy with the destruction of the Egyptians.

As he focuses on the prediction and fulfillment paradigm, Philo relies heavily on his prior paraphrase in *Mos.* 1.167–180. This becomes clear when we make a comparative analysis of

¹ Exod 14:13–14: Moses said to the people, “Take courage! Stand firm and see the salvation from God, which he will do for us today. For the way that you have seen the Egyptians today, you will no longer ever continue to see them. The Lord will fight for you, and you will be silent” (εἶπεν δὲ Μωϋσῆς πρὸς τὸν λαόν· Θαρσεῖτε· στήτε καὶ ὁρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον· ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐωράκατε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους σήμερον, οὐ προσθήσεσθε ἔτι ἰδεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον· κύριος πολεμήσει περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ ὑμεῖς σιγήσετε).

Moses's prophecy in *Mos.* 2.250–252 with both his prior version in *Mos.* 1.175 and the scriptural text in Exod 14:13:

Exod 14:13	<i>Mos.</i> 1.175	<i>Mos.</i> 2.250–52
<p>εἶπεν δὲ Μωϋσῆς πρὸς τὸν λαόν</p> <p>Moses said to the people,</p>	<p>μικρὸν δ' ἐπισχῶν ἔνθους γίνεται καταπνευσθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ εἰωθότου ἐπιφοιτᾶν αὐτῷ πνεύματος καὶ θεσπίζει προφητεύων τάδε.</p> <p>But after waiting a short time, he became possessed and inspired by the spirit that was accustomed to enter him, and he prophesied, foretelling these things:²</p>	<p>ὁ δὲ προφήτης, ὑπ' ἐκπλήξεως ὀρῶν σεσαγηνευμένον ὡσπερ βόλον ἰχθύων τὸ σύμπαν ἔθνος, οὐκέτ' ὢν ἐν ἑαυτῷ θεοφορεῖται καὶ θεσπίζει τάδε.</p> <p>But when the prophet saw that the whole nation was swept up by terror like a catch of fish, he no longer remained in himself, but he was inspired and prophesied these words:³</p>
<p>Θαρσεῖτε· στήτε καὶ ὀρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον·</p> <p>“Take courage! Stand firm and see the salvation from God, which he will do for us today.</p>		<p>τὸ μὲν δέος ἀναγκαῖον, φόβος ἐγγὺς καὶ μέγας ὁ κίνδυνος· ἐξ ἐναντίας ἀχανές ἐστι πέλαγος, ὑπόδρομος εἰς καταφυγὴν οὐδεὶς, ἀπορία πλοίων, κατόπιν ἔφεδροι φάλαγγες ἐχθρῶν, αἱ στείχουσιν ἀπνευστὶ διώκουσαι. ποῖ τις τράπηται, ποῖ τις ἐκνεύσει; πάντα πανταχόθεν ἐξαπιναίως ἐπέθετο, γῆ, θάλαττα, ἄνθρωποι, στοιχεῖα φύσεως. ἀλλὰ θαρρεῖτε, μὴ ἀποκάμητε, στήτε ταῖς διανοίαις μὴ κραδαινόμενοι, προσδοκᾶτε τὴν ἀήττητον ἐκ θεοῦ βοήθειαν· αὐτεπάγγελτος ἤδη παρέσται, μὴ ὀρωμένη προαγωνιεῖται· πεπειρασθε αὐτῆς ἤδη πολλάκις ἀμυνομένης ἀφανῶς.</p> <p>“The fear is necessary, the terror is near, and the danger is great. Before us is an immense sea there is no cove for refuge; we</p>

² Philo, *Mos.* 1.175 (CW 4.162.2–4).

³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.250 (CW 4.259.5–7).

		<p>have a lack of vessels; the phalanxes of the enemy are lying behind, which march breathlessly to pursue us. Whither should anyone escape? Whither should anyone turn? Everything from all sides has suddenly turned against us, the land, the sea, people, the elements of nature. But be courageous, do not lose heart, stand firm; in your minds, unshaken, wait for the invincible help from God; it will soon be present of its own free will; it will fight invisibly on our behalf, because you have often already tested its unseen protection.⁴</p>
<p>ὄν τρόπον γὰρ ἐώρακατε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους σήμερον, οὐ προσθήσεσθε ἔτι ἰδεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον·</p> <p>For the way that you have seen the Egyptians today, you will no longer ever continue to see them. The Lord will fight for you, and you will be silent.”</p>	<p>ἣν ὁρᾶτε στρατιὰν εὐοπλοῦσαν, οὐκέτ’ ἀντιτεταγμένην ὄψεσθε· πεσεῖται γὰρ προτροπάδην πᾶσα καὶ βύθιος ἀφανισθήσεται ὡς μηδὲ λείψανον αὐτῆς ὑπὲρ γῆς ἔτι φανῆναι, καὶ οὐ μήκει χρόνου, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἐπιούσῃ νυκτί.</p> <p>“The well-armed army which you see, you will no longer see arrayed against you; for all of it shall fall headlong, and it will be concealed in the deep, with the result that no longer will a remnant of it be seen on the earth, and not at any length of time, but on this coming night.”⁵</p>	<p>βλέπω μέλλουσαν κονίεσθαι, βρόχους τοῖς ἀνχέσι περιβάλλουσαν τῶν ἀντιπάλων· ἔλκει κατὰ τῆς θαλάττης· μολύβδου τρόπον εἰς βυθὸν χωροῦσιν. ὑμεῖς μὲν ἔτι ζώντων αἰσθάνεσθε, τεθνεώτων δ’ ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω· τήμερον δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς νεκροὺς αὐτοὺς θεάσεσθε.</p> <p>I see [the help from God] preparing for combat, placing snares around the necks of the enemy. It drags them down into the sea. Like lead they go into the deep. You see them still alive, but I have a vision of them dead. And today, you too will see them dead.”⁶</p>

⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.251–52 (CW 4.259.7–15).

⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 1.175.

⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 2.252.

While scripture introduced Moses's utterance with the rather perfunctory "Moses said (εἶπεν)," Philo's initial paraphrase already sets up the prophetic significance of Moses's words: "he became possessed (ἔνθους γίνεται) and inspired (καταπνευσθείς) by the spirit that was accustomed to enter him (ὑπὸ τοῦ εἰωθότος ἐπιφοιτᾶν αὐτῷ πνεύματος), and he prophesied, foretelling these things (θεσπίζει προφητεύων τάδε)."⁷ Philo incorporates more technical language about prophecy in his paraphrase of the biblical account, including ἔνθους, καταπνέω, πνεῦμα, θεσπίζω, προφητεύω.

When we turn to the way that Philo introduces Moses's speech in his second version of events in *Mos.* 2.250, we see how he paraphrases his first version of events more than the biblical text. This is clear due to the same emphasis on the prophetic inspiration of Moses's utterance: "But when the prophet (ὁ προφήτης) saw (ὄρων) that the whole nation was swept up by terror like a catch of fish, he no longer remained in himself (ἐν ἑαυτῷ), but he was inspired (θεοφορεῖται) and he prophesied these words (θεσπίζει τάδε)."⁸ Although he does not use all of the same language, he does use some of the same terms, including θεσπίζω and προφητεύω/προφήτης. Significantly, he maintains the focus on prophecy to introduce Moses's speech. In this version, Moses himself is now referred to explicitly as a prophet (προφήτης) as well.

This focus on prophecy continues into Moses's utterance itself. While Moses's words in scripture are predictive, they are not necessarily prophetic. Moses states that God will fight for them today and that the Israelites will no longer see the Egyptians as they currently do. The biblical text contains enough ambiguity that this can be a prophetic prediction of some kind or

⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 1.175 (CW 4.162.2–4).

⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 2.250 (CW 4.259.5–7).

merely an exhortation to the Israelites to take courage in the face of impending danger. While Philo's initial paraphrase does not contain many changes to make the words more prophetic in nature, things are different when it comes to Philo's second telling. Here, Philo shapes Moses's words by using much more prophetic language with terminology of visions.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF PROPHECY

According to this version of Moses's speech in *Mos.* 2.251–252, Moses receives visions of the ultimate fate of the Egyptians. Moses gives Israel a prophetic statement informing them of the visions that he has received. On the one hand, he sees a vision of God's help coming to fight the Egyptians: "I see (βλέπω) (the help from God) preparing for combat." On the other hand, he has a vision of the Egyptians dead after that battle: "I have a vision (ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω) of them dead." In both of these places, he uses the language of sight and vision in order to express the idea that Moses received a prophetic vision of future events that he now passes along to the Israelites. While this language of sight was present in both the scriptural account and in his initial paraphrase, it did not occur in the form of a vision that Moses received, like this.

As he recasts Moses's words into two visions about God fighting on behalf of Israel and seeing the resulting destruction, he uses additional language of sight to emphasize the visual nature of the prophecy drawing on the visual imagery present in both scripture and his initial paraphrase. According to him, he distinguishes Moses's prophetic vision with the physical vision of the Israelites: "You see (αἰσθάνεσθε) them still alive (ἔτι ζώντων), but I have a vision (ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω) of them dead (τεθνεώτων). And today, you too will see (θεάσεσθε) them dead (νεκροῦς)."⁹ Therefore, not only does he distinguish between modes of sight (i.e., oracular

⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.252 (CW 4.259.17–19): ὑμεῖς μὲν ἔτι ζώντων αἰσθάνεσθε, τεθνεώτων δ' ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω· τήμερον δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς νεκροῦς αὐτοῦς θεάσεσθε.

and physical), but he sets up the Israelites as witnesses to confirm the validity of Moses’s prophecy by seeing first-hand the destruction of the Egyptians. What Moses sees prophetically, the Israelites will see physically.

After Moses finishes speaking, Philo states that Moses’s prediction came to immediate fulfillment. According to him, the Israelites found Moses’s words to be true because they experienced (ἐπειρῶντο) the things that he prophesied (τὰ χρησθέντα) in the deeds (ἔργοις) that followed:

He said these things, which were greater than any hope, yet they experienced (ἐπειρῶντο) the truth of the oracle (τῆς περὶ τὸ λόγιον ἀληθείας) in the deeds (ἔργοις). For the things prophesied (τὰ χρησθέντα) by divine powers were coming to pass (ἀπέβαινε) in a way more unbelievable than can be told.¹⁰

Philo continues to use language associated with oracles and their fulfillment, including λόγιον, χράω, ἀποβαίνω.¹¹ In this way, he indicates for his reader that the subsequent events were fulfillments of Moses’s prophesy. After stating that the events did, in fact, come to pass, Philo proceeds to give the actual narration of how those events occurred.

By comparing the prophetic prediction from *Mos.* 2.252 with its later fulfillment in *Mos.* 2.255, we see the close parallels Philo forges to emphasize the prediction/fulfillment model in this version of events:

<i>Mos.</i> 2.252 (Prediction)	<i>Mos.</i> 2.255 (Fulfillment)
βλέπω μέλλουσαν κονίεσθαι, βρόχους τοῖς αὐχέσι περιβάλλουσαν τῶν ἀντιπάλων· ἔλκει κατὰ τῆς θαλάττης· μολύβδου τρόπον εἰς	ἐπίδειξις τῆς φθορᾶς διὰ τῶν ἐπαναπλευσάντων σωμάτων, ἃ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ πελάγους κατεστόρεσε, καὶ

¹⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.259.19–260.1): καὶ ὁ μὲν ταῦτ’ ἀπεφθέγγετο μείζονα ὄντα πάσης ἐλπίδος, οἱ δ’ ἐπειρῶντο ἔργοις τῆς περὶ τὸ λόγιον ἀληθείας. ἀπέβαινε γὰρ τὰ χρησθέντα θείας δυνάμεσι μύθων ἀπιστότερα.

¹¹ See LSJ, s.v. “λόγιον” A: “oracle”; LSJ, s.v. “χράω” A.1: “proclaim” in an oracle; *LG*, s.v. “ἀποβαίνω” 2.c: “die künftigen, weiteren Ereignisse, Zukunft.”

<p>βυθὸν χωροῦσιν. ὑμεῖς μὲν ἔτι ζώντων αἰσθάνεσθε, τεθνεώτων δ' ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω· τήμερον δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς νεκροὺς αὐτοὺς θεάσεσθε.</p> <p>“[. . .]. I see (βλέπω) it preparing for combat, placing snares around the necks of the enemy. It drags them down into the sea. Like lead they go into the deep. You see (αἰσθάνεσθε) them still alive (ἔτι ζώντων), but I have a vision (ἐγὼ φαντασίαν λαμβάνω) of them dead (τεθνεώτων). And today (τήμερον), you too (καὶ ὑμεῖς) will see (θεάσεσθε) them dead (νεκροὺς).”¹²</p>	<p>σφοδρὰ κυμάτωσις, ὑφ' ἧς ἅπαντες οἱ νεκροὶ σωρηδὸν ἀπεβράσθησαν εἰς τοὺς ἀντιπέραν αἰγιαλοὺς, ἀναγκαῖα θεὰ γενησόμενοι τοῖς διασωθεῖσιν, οἷς ἐξεγένετο μὴ μόνον τοὺς κινδύνους διαφυγεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιδεῖν τοὺς ἐχθροὺς οὐκ ἀνθρωπίναις ἀλλὰ θεαῖσι δύναμεσι παντὸς λόγου μεῖζον κολασθέντας.</p> <p>There was proof (ἐπίδειξις) of the destruction due to the floating bodies (σωμάτων), which covered the visible surface (ἐπιφάνεια) of the sea. There was a great wave, by which all the corpses (οἱ νεκροὶ) were cast up onto the opposite shore in order to become a fateful spectacle (ἀναγκαῖα θεά)¹³ to those who had been delivered, and to whom it had been granted (ἐξεγένετο) not only to escape (διαφυγεῖν) the dangers but also to look upon (ἐπιδεῖν) their enemies punished in a manner greater than any description, not by human but by divine powers.¹⁴</p>
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We saw the importance of Moses's two oracular visions in his prophetic utterance in *Mos.* 2.252. Philo uses these visions to tie together the prediction with its later fulfillment. While Moses had received a vision that God would fight for the Israelites and that they would receive proof that the divine had fought on their behalf by seeing the Egyptian corpses, so these events now come to pass. The Israelites now see the bodies (σώματα) and corpses (νεκροὶ) of the Egyptians floating in the water. Moses previously implied that this would serve as proof of the validity of his prophecy. Philo now states that these bodies serve as proof of the destruction (ἐπίδειξις τῆς φθορᾶς) rendered by the divine. The vision of the destruction by the Israelites is called a necessary spectacle (ἀναγκαῖα θεά). This phrase implies the fact that Moses had previously

¹² Philo, *Mos.* 2.252 (CW 4.259.15–19).

¹³ See LSJ, s.v. “ἀναγκαῖος” II.6: “foreceful,” “fateful.”

¹⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.255 (CW 4.260.14–261.2).

foretold that the Israelites would look upon this destruction, which they now, in fact, do. While the Israelites look upon the destruction, they escape danger because “it had been granted” (ἐξεγένετο) to them to escape danger and look upon the destruction. Here again, Philo refers back to the fulfillment of the double visions of Moses’s prophecy.

While we see many ways in which Philo pairs Moses’s prediction of the destruction of the Egyptians with the fulfillment of that prophecy, Philo has no interest here in a detailed account of how the sea parted. Unlike in his first version of events, where he devoted much time and energy into a detailed account of the exact mechanism by which the sea parted, this is not his concern here. Instead, these parts of the narrative have been omitted or diminished, relegated to the background. Philo’s primary focus is on the prophetic structure of the account, namely the prediction and fulfillment paradigm. Moreover, since he has already provided an extensive paraphrase of the parting and restoration of the sea, he does not need to do so again. However, since the parting and restoration of the sea do factor into the destruction of the Egyptians, he briefly describes the event without going into much detail.

As he gives a concise description of the parting and restoration of the sea, Philo paraphrases his own prior account in *Mos.* 1.176–180. By comparing the parting of the sea in 2.253 with his first version in 1.176–177, we see the strong lexical parallels between the two accounts:

<i>Mos.</i> 1.176–177	<i>Mos.</i> 2.253
καταδύντος δ’ ἡλίου, νότος εὐθὺς ἤρξατο κατασκήπτειν βιαιότατος, ὑφ’ οὗ τὸ πέλαγος ἐξανεχώρησεν, εἰωθὸς μὲν ἀμπωτίζειν, τότε δὲ καὶ μᾶλλον ὠθούμενον τὸ πρὸς αἰγιαλοῖς ὑπεσύρη καθάπερ εἰς χαράδραν ἢ χαρύβδιν· [. . .] προσταχθεὶς δὲ Μωυσῆς τῇ βακτηρίᾳ παίει τὴν θάλασσαν [. . .]	

<p>When the sun had set, immediately an exceedingly strong south wind began to rush down, by which the sea withdrew; it was accustomed to ebb and flow, but then even more being thrust near the shore, it was drawn down as into eddies and whirlpools [. . .] And having been commanded, Moses struck the sea with his staff [. . .]¹⁵</p>	
<p>ἡ δὲ ῥαγεῖσα δίστανται [. . .]</p>	<p>ῥῆξις θαλάττης [. . .]</p>
<p>And it was broken and separated [. . .]¹⁶</p>	<p>There was a breaking of the sea [. . .]¹⁷</p>
<p>καὶ τῶν τμημάτων [. . .] and some sections [. . .]¹⁸</p>	<p>ἀναχώρησις ἑκατέρου τμήματος [. . .] there was a withdrawal of each of the two sections [. . .]¹⁹</p>
<p>τὰ μὲν πρὸς τῷ ῥαγέντι μέρει μετέωρα πρὸς ὕψος ἐξάιρεται καὶ παγέντα [. . .] at the place where it was broken were raised up aloft, and having hardened fast [. . .]²⁰</p>	<p>πῆξις τῶν κατὰ τὸ ῥαγὲν μέρος διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βάθους κυμάτων [. . .] there was a fixing of the waves along the broken part through the entire deep [. . .]²¹</p>
<p>τρόπον τείχους κραταιῶς ἡρέμει καὶ ἡσύχαζε, τὰ δ' ὀπίσω σταλέντα καὶ χαλινωθέντα τὴν εἰς τὸ πρόσω φορὰν καθάπερ ἡνίαις ἀφανέσιν ἀνεχαίτιζε [. . .] like a wall, they were at rest and quiet; and other parts that were behind were gathered up and bridled, as if someone held back its rushing forward with invisible reins [. . .]²²</p>	<p>ἵν' ἀντὶ τειχῶν ἦ κραταιοτάτων [. . .] in order that they might be like the mightiest walls [. . .]²³</p>
<p>τὸ δὲ μεσαίτατον, καθ' ὃ ἐγένετο ἡ ῥῆξις, ἀναξηρανθὲν ὁδὸς εὐρεῖα καὶ λεωφόρος γίνεται.</p>	<p>εὐθυτενῆς ἀνατομῆ τῆς μεγαλουργηθείσης ὁδοῦ, ἡ τῶν κρυσταλλωθέντων μεθόριος ἦν [. . .]</p>

¹⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 1.176–77 (CW 4.162.8–11, 13).

¹⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.14).

¹⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.260.1–2).

¹⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.14–15).

¹⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.260.2).

²⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.15).

²¹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.260.2–3).

²² Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.16–18).

²³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.260.3–4).

And the space between, where the break had occurred, was dried up and became a wide road and highway. ²⁴	there was a straight cut of a road miraculously made, which lay between the frozen parts [. . .] ²⁵
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Similar parallels occur for the restoration of the sea when we compare *Mos.* 2.254–255 with

1.179–180:

<i>Mos.</i> 1.179–180	<i>Mos.</i> 2.254–255
<p>οἱ μὲν γὰρ Ἑβραῖοι διὰ ξηρᾶς ἀτραποῦ περὶ βαθὺν ὄρθρον μετὰ γυναικῶν καὶ παιδῶν ἔτι κομιδῇ νηπίων περαιοῦνται· τοὺς δὲ τὰ τμήματα τοῦ πελάγους ἐκατέρωθεν ἐπικυλισθέντα καὶ ἐνωθέντα αὐτοῖς ἄρμασι καὶ ἵπποις καταποντοῖ, βορείοις πνεύμασι τῆς παλιρροίας ἀναχθείσης καὶ μετεώροις τρικυμίαις ἐπίδραμούσης, ὡς μηδὲ πυρφόρον ὑπολειφθῆναι τὸν ἀπαγγελοῦντα τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ τὰς αἰφνιδίους συμφοράς.</p> <p>For around early morning the Hebrews crossed over on a dry path with their wives and children, who were still very much infants. But the portions of the sea rolled up and gathered on either side drown the Egyptians with their chariots and horses, when, because of the north winds, the reflux poured back and rushed upon them with crested waves, so that not even a torchbearer was left to bring back news to those in Egypt of the sudden misfortunes²⁶</p>	<p>πελαγῶν ἃ τέως ἀνακοπέντα διειστήκει παλίρροια, τοῦ διακοπέντος καὶ ἀναξηρανθέντος μέρους αἰφνίδιος θαλάττωσις, πολεμίων φθορά, οὓς τά τε κρυσταλλωθέντα τείχη καὶ ἀνατραπέντα κατεύνασε καὶ αἱ πλήμμυραι τοῦ πελάγους ὥσπερ εἰς φάραγγα τὴν ὁδὸν ἐπενεχθεῖσαι κατέκλυσαν.</p> <p>there was a reflux of water, which until then was driven back and separated, and a sudden submergence of the part that had been cut off and dried up, there was a destruction of the enemy, whom the frozen walls that were overturned put to sleep and whose path the torrents of the sea rushed upon and washed down on as into a ditch.²⁷</p>
<p>τὸ μέγα τοῦτο καὶ θαυμαστὸν ἔργον Ἑβραῖοι καταπλαγέντες ἀναιμωτὶ νίκην οὐκ ἐλπισθεῖσαν ἤραντο καὶ κατιδόντες ἐν ἀκαρεῖ φθορὰν ἀθρόαν πολεμίων δύο χοροῦς, τὸν μὲν ἀνδρῶν, τὸν δὲ γυναικῶν, ἐπὶ τῆς ἡϊόνος στήσαντες εὐχαριστικούς ὕμνους εἰς τὸν θεὸν ἦδον, ἐξάρχοντος Μωυσέως μὲν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν, ἀδελφῆς δὲ τούτου ταῖς γυναῖξιν· ἡγεμόνες γὰρ οὗτοι τῶν χορῶν ἐγεγένητο.</p>	<p>ἐπίδειξις τῆς φθορᾶς διὰ τῶν ἐπαναπλευσάντων σωμάτων, ἃ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ πελάγους κατεστόρεσε, καὶ σφοδρὰ κυμάτωσις, ὑφ' ἧς ἅπαντες οἱ νεκροὶ σωρηδὸν ἀπεβράσθησαν εἰς τοὺς ἀντιπέραν αἰγιαλοῦς, ἀναγκαῖα θεὰ γενησόμενοι τοῖς διασωθεῖσιν, οἷς ἐξεγένετο μὴ μόνον τοὺς κινδύνους διαφυγεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιδεῖν τοὺς</p>

²⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 1.177 (CW 4.162.18–19).

²⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 2.253 (CW 4.260.4–5).

²⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 1.179 (CW 4.163.7–13).

²⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.254–55 (CW 4.260.10–14).

<p>The Hebrews, amazed at this great and miraculous deed, won a bloodless victory that they had not hoped for, and, seeing the quick and sudden destruction of the enemy, they formed two choruses, one of men, another of women, on the shore, and they sang hymns of thanksgiving to God. While Moses led the men, his sister led the women. For they were the leaders of the choruses.²⁸</p>	<p>ἐχθροὺς οὐκ ἀνθρωπίναις ἀλλὰ θεαίαις δυνάμεσι παντὸς λόγου μείζον κολασθέντας.</p> <p>There was proof of the destruction (φθορᾶς) due to the bodies, which floated to the surface, which covered the surface of the sea; and a great wave, by which all the dead were cast up onto the opposite shore in heaps, to become a necessary spectacle to those who had been delivered, and to whom it had been granted not only to escape the dangers but also to look upon their enemies punished in a manner greater than any description, not by human but by divine powers.²⁹</p>
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His first version of events had already described the parting and restoration of the sea in great detail. Since it is not Philo's intent to focus on the action of the sea but rather on the outcome of Moses's prophecy, he does not depict these events again in detail. Instead, he uses significant terms from his account in *Mos.* 1.176–180 that refer to specific actions related to the parting and restoration of the sea. In this way, he can concisely describe a whole series of events with single words, including ῥῆξις, τμημα, πῆξις, μέρος, τεῖχος, κραταιός, and ὁδός for the parting of the sea and παλίρροια and φθορά for its restoration. It must be pointed out that none of these words occur in the biblical account. Therefore, Philo here draws as much on his initial paraphrase in *Mos.* 1.176–80 as he does on scripture.

When Philo's two versions of the parting and restoration of the sea are placed side-by-side, we see significant overlap between the two accounts. In his first version of the episode, he used the participle ῥαγεῖσα to indicate how the waters parted by the staff. He now makes use of the same stem with the noun ῥῆξις. With the word ῥῆξις, he narrates an entire sequence of

²⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 1.180 (CW 4.163.14–18).

²⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.255 (CW 4.260.14–261.2).

events, from the blowing of the wind, to the striking of the sea by the staff, to the parting of the waves. Similarly, in his first version of events, he used the noun *παλίρροια* to indicate the restoration of the sea. He now retains this same noun. With the word *παλίρροια*, he now narrates an entire sequence of events of the sea's restoration, from the blowing of the wind to the restoration of the water. In this way, his second account contains the parting and restoration of the sea yet covers it very briefly by relying on his prior version. It is Philo's intent to get past these events quickly in order to demonstrate their destructive consequences rather than describe them in any detail.

In this analysis, we have demonstrated how Philo paraphrases the crossing of the Red Sea again in *Mos.* 2.247–257 with a prophetic aim. As he does so, he elaborates upon elements he deems to be significant to that aim by plying the paraphrastic techniques of insertion, omission, substitution, and rearrangement in various combinations. Because his aim lies with the exploration of the predictive abilities of Moses's prophetic ability, Philo narrows the focus of this version of events to Moses's speech to the Israelites before the crossing of the sea, where he foretells the future destruction of the Egyptians, and its immediate fulfillment as the Egyptians are destroyed in the waters. While scripture implicitly contained such predictive features, Philo greatly amplifies them in his account.

Although he paraphrases the events of the crossing of the Red Sea for a second time, our investigation has demonstrated how Philo does not simply return to the biblical account in order to do this. Instead, he uses the characteristic, non-biblical vocabulary of his paraphrase in *Mos.* 1.167–180 in order to render a crisp, short-hand account of the episode that contributes to his purpose here, namely to emphasize Moses's role as an ecstatic prophet. Because he already paraphrased the events in the prior version, this made the task all the easier for him the second

time around. For instance, instead of renarrating the parting and restoration of the sea again, he paraphrases his earlier version of the event by relying on words such as ῥῆξις, πῆξις, παλίρροια, and φθορά³⁰ that refer to an entire series of events. This allows him to keep the narration of secondary—yet significant—events brief in order to maintain focus on the prediction and its fulfillment.

One significant result of this new aim for the episode is the fact that Philo omits the cloud in the desert entirely from this version of events. He likely does this because he is now emphasizing the mediatorial role of Moses as prophet. Since the cloud represented a mode of divine theophany for Philo—with an angel residing in its midst—it distracted from this individualized, internal prophetic experience that Moses relayed as the Israelite leader.

4.3 The Golden Calf (*Mos.* 2.270–274)

In *Mos.* 2.270–274, Philo reexamines the events surrounding the golden calf incident. His first account had the aim of investigating Moses as high priest. Philo used the events of the golden calf episode to demonstrate how Moses acted as a kind of physician who sought to stem the tide of idolatry from spreading throughout the entire nation. As we turn to his second version of events, we see that Philo’s aim changes. Now, he seeks to explore the prophetic quality of the events. The biblical account already implicitly contains hints that Moses speaks with prophetic inspiration. For instance, Exod 32:27 states that Moses “said to [the Israelites], ‘The Lord God of Israel says.’”³¹ Here, we see an implication that Moses speaks by passing along a command to the Israelites on behalf of God. However, these features are only latent in the text and do not

³⁰ See Philo, *Mos.* 2.253–55.

³¹ Exod 32:27: καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς Τάδε λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ.

appear for all of his statements. Philo embellishes the prophetic potential of the account as he narrows the focus of the account to Moses’s three utterances.³² While amplifying these features in the events, he also paraphrases his initial paraphrase in *Mos.* 2.160–173 in the case of each of Moses’s statements. By doing so, he allows himself to focus on the prophetic elaboration while using the non-biblical vocabulary from his earlier account to render the most essential elements.

Philo makes the prophetic aim of his account clear immediately. According to him, whereas the previous events demonstrated the prediction and fulfillment paradigm of prophecy, now he will look at an event where prophecy “seems to resemble exhortations (παραινέσεις) rather than oracles (χρησμοί).”³³ Philo chooses to examine the golden calf episode for one such oracle (τὸ χρησθέν), because this was when the nation underwent its greatest abandonment of their customs (κατὰ τὴν μεγίστην τῶν πατρίων ἐκδιαίτησιν) with the forging of the calf.³⁴ Philo uses language of inspiration, including χρησμοί and χράω here to introduce the episode.³⁵

Because the episode now has a distinct aim, Philo gives Moses a different motivation than in his prior telling. Whereas Moses was previously compelled to act in order to prevent impiety throughout the nation, he now acts because he receives inspiration from God and is compelled to pass along this message:

<i>Mos.</i> 2.167	<i>Mos.</i> 2.271–272
γενόμενος δ’ ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ στρατοπέδου καὶ τὴν ἐξαπίναιον ἐκδιαίτησιν τοῦ πλήθους θαυμάσας καὶ ὅσον ψεῦδος ἀνθ’ ὅσης ἀληθείας ὑπηλλάξαντο, κατιδὼν οὐκ εἰς	ἐφ’ οἷς Μωυσῆς περιπαθήσας, εἰ πρῶτον μὲν ὁ λαὸς πᾶς ἐξαίφνης γεγένηται τυφλὸς [. . .] ἔπειτα δὲ εἰ πλάσμα μύθου κατεψευσμένον ἴσχυσε τοσαύτην ἀγὴν σβέσαι τῆς ἀληθείας,

³² The abbreviation of the account is readily seen in their respective lengths. Whereas the first telling contains 670 words, the second contains only 295. Philo has omitted vast amounts of the episode, which he already narrated in *Mos.* 2.160–73, in order to focus most efficiently on his rhetorical aim by isolating the part of the account where Moses speaks.

³³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.270.

³⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.270.

³⁵ See LSJ, s.v. “χρησμός”; LSJ, s.v. “χράω” A.I.

<p>ἅπαντας τὴν νόσον ἀφιγμένην, ἀλλὰ τινὰς ὑγιαίνοντας ἔτι καὶ μισοπονήρῳ πάθει χρωμένους, βουλόμενος διαγνῶναι τοὺς τε ἀνιάτως ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις δυσχεραίνοντας καὶ εἰ δὴ τινες ἀμαρτόντες μετανοοῦσι, κήρυγμα κηρύττει — τὸ δ' ἦν ἄρα βάσανος ἀκριβῆς τῆς ἐκάστου διανοίας, ὡς ἔχοι πρὸς τε ὁσιότητα καὶ τοῦναντίον.</p> <p>Coming to the middle of the camp and marveling at the sudden change of customs of the multitude and how great a falsehood they had exchanged for how great a truth, and seeing that the disease had not spread to everyone but that some were still healthy and had an evil-hating passion, and wishing to discern those who were incurable from those who were disgusted at the events that had taken place, and also to know whether any who had sinned repented, he proclaimed a message. It was indeed an accurate test of the intent of each one to see how he was disposed to holiness or the opposite.³⁶</p>	<p>[. . .] δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐκέτι μένων ὁ αὐτὸς ἐξαλλάττεται τὸ τε εἶδος καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ ἐπιθειάσας φησί [. . .]</p> <p>Moses became indignant at these things. First, that all the people suddenly became blind [. . .]. Second, that a counterfeit, false myth was able to quench such a ray of truth [. . .]. For this reason, he no longer remained the same, but his appearance and mind changed, and having become inspired, he said [. . .]³⁷</p>
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In both cases the immediate situation induces his actions in some way. In the prior version, Moses sees the idolatry and is compelled to act to stem its spread. In this version, he sees the same acts, but this time the sight causes him to fall into a prophetic frenzy and give inspired commands.

By comparing how Philo introduces Moses's first utterance and the words themselves to both his prior version in *Mos.* 2.272 and the scriptural account in Exod 32:26, we note the way that he amplifies the prophetic quality of the event:

Exod 32:26	<i>Mos.</i> 2.168	<i>Mos.</i> 2.272
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³⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 2.167 (CW 4.239.3–10).

³⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.271–272 (CW 4.264.6–19).

<p>Μωυσῆς [. . .] εἶπεν [. . .]</p> <p>Moses [. . .] said [. . .]</p>		<p>οὐκέτι μένων ὁ αὐτὸς ἐξαλλάττεται τό τε εἶδος καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ ἐπιθειάσας φησί [. . .]</p> <p>He no longer remained the same, but his appearance and mind changed, and having become inspired and said [. . .]³⁸</p>
<p>Τίς πρὸς κύριον; ἴτω πρὸς με.</p> <p>“Who is for the Lord? Let him come to me.”</p>	<p>“εἴ τις” γάρ φησι “πρὸς κύριον, ἴτω πρὸς μέ.”</p> <p>For “whoever,” he said, “is for the Lord, let him come to me.”³⁹</p>	
	<p>βραχὺ μὲν τὸ λεχθέν, μεγάλη δ’ ἡ ἔμφασις, ἔστι γὰρ τοιόνδε τὸ δηλούμενον· [. . .]</p> <p>That which was said was brief, but the meaning was great. For what is revealed is as follows: [. . .]⁴⁰</p>	
	<p>εἴ τις μηδὲν τῶν χειροποιήτων μηδ’ ὅσα γενητὰ νομίζει θεούς, ἀλλ’ ἓνα τὸν ἡγεμόνα τῶν ὅλων, ἐμοὶ προσίτω.</p> <p>If anyone does not think that things made by hand or things created are gods but that there is one ruler of the universe, let him come to me.⁴¹</p>	<p>“τίς ἐστὶν ὁ μὴ τῷ πλάνῳ συνενεχθεὶς μηδὲ τὸ κῦρος ἐπιφημίσας τοῖς ἀκύροις; πᾶς ὁ τοιοῦτος ἐμοὶ προσίτω.”</p> <p>“Who is there who did not agree with this error, and who has not ascribed authority to things that do not have any? Let everyone who is such a person come to me.”⁴²</p>

³⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 2.272.

³⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.168 (CW 4.239.10).

⁴⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 2.168 (CW 4.239.10–11).

⁴¹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.168 (CW 4.239.12–13).

⁴² Philo, *Mos.* 2.272 (CW 4.264.20–21).

While the biblical text introduces the words with a short “Moses said,” Philo’s first version begins to hint at the prophetic quality by adding that the words are “revealed” (τὸ δηλούμενον). His second account then further amplifies the inspired quality of the speech. According to Philo, Moses “no longer remained the same (οὐκέτι μένων ὁ αὐτὸς) but his appearance and mind changed (ἐξαλλάττεται τὸ τε εἶδος καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν), and he became inspired (ἐπιθειάσας) and said.”⁴³ While retaining the biblical “said,” he inserts many additional elements that make even more clear that Moses does not speak for himself but on God’s behalf.

When we look at Moses’s words themselves, we observe that Philo paraphrases his prior account. While Moses’s first statement remains brief in the biblical text, both of Philo’s versions expand upon it to elaborate its meaning. In both versions, Philo clarifies the ambiguous biblical phrase, those who are “for the Lord” (πρὸς κύριον), to mean those who are pious and have not committed idolatry. Philo thus continues the emphasis on piety from his first account that distinguished the Levites from the other Israelites. It is the pious whom Moses calls to his side.

As the above comparison makes clear, however, Philo also omits the double quotation of Moses that appeared in his prior telling of the event. While his first version of the episode greatly expanded the episode and added further details throughout to clarify the meaning, Philo aims for a crisper, more concise telling of the event this time around. He narrows the focus to Moses’s utterances in order to amplify their inspired potential. Therefore, he does not require such redundant quotations on Moses’s behalf and this time around simply omits the former in favor of the latter, which gives greater detail.

⁴³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.272.

Having thus called the pious to rally to his side, the Levites respond. When he sees the Levites' eagerness for piety, Moses becomes further inspired—even more so than before (ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ πρότερον θεοφορηθείς)⁴⁴—and speaks another prophetic command. Philo has added this element, which is absent in both the biblical text and his first paraphrase. He thus further amplifies the prophetic character of the event. While amplifying the prophetic aspects of Moses's speech, Philo also paraphrases his prior account in order to rely more or less on the version of Moses's words that he already established there:

Exod 32:26–27	Mos. 2.171	Mos. 2.273
<p>συνῆλθον οὖν πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Λευι.</p> <p>Then all the sons of Levi gathered to him. [. . .]</p>		
	<p>“εἰ μὴ μόνον τοῖς σώμασιν” εἶπεν “ἐπισπεύδετε τὴν πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἄφιξιν ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς διανοίαις, αὐτίκα μαρτυρηθήσεται [. . .]</p> <p>He said, “It will soon be witnessed whether not only with your bodies you hasten your coming to me, but also with your minds [. . .]⁴⁵</p>	<p>μῆδὲ φυλῆς προσελθοῦσης οὐχ ἧττον ταῖς διανοίαις ἢ τοῖς σώμασιν [. . .]</p> <p>When one tribe had approached—not less with their minds than with their bodies [. . .]⁴⁶</p>
		<p>οἱ πάλαι μὲν ἐφόνων κατὰ τῶν ἀθέων καὶ ἀνοσιουργῶν, ἡγεμόνα δ' ἐζήτουν καὶ στρατάρχην ἀνευρεῖν, ὃς ἐνδίκως ὑφηγήσεται καιρὸν καὶ τρόπον τῆς ἀμύνης, — οὓς ὀργῶντας εὐρῶν καὶ γέμοντας εὐτολμίας καὶ παραστήματος, [. . .]</p>

⁴⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.265.2–3).

⁴⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.22–23).

⁴⁶ Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.264.21–22).

		who previously were desirous to kill the godless and impious, and were seeking to find a leader and general who would justly instruct them in the time and manner of defense. Finding that they were eager and full of boldness and courage [. . .] ⁴⁷
καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς [. . .] And he said to them [. . .]		ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ πρότερον θεοφορηθεῖς, [. . .] inspired still more than before, [. . .] ⁴⁸
Τάδε λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ Θεέσθε ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ῥομφαίαν ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν καὶ διέλθατε καὶ ἀνακάμψατε ἀπὸ πύλης ἐπὶ πύλην διὰ τῆς παρεμβολῆς καὶ ἀποκτείνετε ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕκαστος τὸν ἔγγιστα αὐτοῦ. [. . .] “The Lord the God of Israel says, ‘Each one put his own sword on his thigh and go through and walk up and down from gate to gate through the camp, and each one kill his brother, and each one his neighbor, and each one the person nearest to him.’”	ξίφος ἀναλαβὼν ἕκαστος τοὺς μυρίων ἄξια θανάτων εἰργασμένους, οἱ τὸν ἀληθῆ θεὸν καταλιπόντες τοὺς ψευδωνύμους ἐδημιούργησαν φθαρταῖς καὶ γενηταῖς οὐσίαις τὴν τοῦ ἀφθάρτου καὶ ἀγενήτου πρόσησιν ἐπιφημίσαντες συγγενεῖς καὶ φίλους ἀποκτείνάτω [. . .] Let each one take up a sword against those who have done things worthy of ten thousand deaths—who have forsaken the true God and made falsely named ones out of corruptible and created substances, calling them a name that belongs to the incorruptible and unbegotten one—and let each one kill his relatives and friends [. . .] ⁴⁹	“ξίφος ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἀναλαβὼν” φησὶν “ἄπτετω διὰ παντὸς τοῦ στρατοπέδου καὶ κτεινέτω μὴ μόνον ἀλλοτρίους ἀλλὰ καὶ φίλων καὶ συγγενῶν τοὺς οἰκειοτάτους ἐπιστροφάδην [. . .] “Let each of you take up his sword,” he says, “and rush through the entire camp, and kill not only strangers but also, turning this way and that, the nearest of your friends and relatives [. . .] ⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.264.22–265.2).

⁴⁸ Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.265.2–3).

⁴⁹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.239.23–240.4).

⁵⁰ Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.265.3–5).

	<p>φιλίαν καὶ συγγένειαν ὑπολαβὼν εἶναι μόνην ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὁσιότητα.”</p> <p>considering piety of good men to be the only friendship and kinship.”⁵¹</p>	<p>εὐαγέστατον κρίνων τὸ ἔργον ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας καὶ θεοῦ τιμῆς, ὧν ὑπερμαχεῖν καὶ προαγωνίζεσθαι κουφότατος πόνος.”</p> <p>Judging that the holiest deed is that which is done for the truth and God’s honor, on behalf of which it is the lightest labor to defend and fight.”⁵²</p>
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The comparison above demonstrates that in the case of Moses’s second utterance Philo creates parallels between *Mos.* 2.273 and both Exod 32:26–27 and *Mos.* 2.171. On the one hand, we see several close correspondences between *Mos.* 2.171 and 2.273 that indicate that Philo paraphrases his prior account while composing his second. First, both contain a reference to the zeal that the Levites have in both body and mind. Second, both have a lexically similar command to take up the sword and kill one’s kin. Third, both contain language of virtue and vice to describe the Levites and Israelites. By integrating the language of virtue, which does not appear in the biblical account, from his prior version of the event, he continues to distinguish the Levites from the rest of the Israelites in terms of exceeding virtuosity.

This leads us to Moses’s third and final utterance, which demonstrates the closest correspondence between Philo’s two versions. In both cases, Philo changes Moses’s words from direct speech to third person narration. While he shapes them to look quite similar to one another, neither has much in common with the biblical text:

Exod 32:28–29	Philo, <i>Mos.</i> 2.173	Philo, <i>Mos.</i> 2.274
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⁵¹ Philo, *Mos.* 2.171 (CW 4.240.4–5).

⁵² Philo, *Mos.* 2.273 (CW 4.265.6–7).

<p>καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Μωσῆς.</p> <p>And Moses said to them,</p>		
<p>Ἐπληρώσατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν⁵³ σήμερον κυρίῳ, ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ υἱῷ ἢ τῷ ἀδελφῷ, δοθῆναι ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς εὐλογίαν.</p> <p>“You have filled your hands today to the Lord, each one by his son or brother, for a blessing to be granted upon you.”</p>	<p>Μωσῆς δὲ τὴν ἀριστείαν ἀποδεξάμενος γέρας ἐπενόησε καὶ ἐβεβαίωσε τῇ πράξει τὸ οἰκεῖον· ἔδει γὰρ τοὺς ὑπὲρ θεοῦ τιμῆς ἐκούσιον πόλεμον ἀραμένους καὶ βραχεῖ καιρῷ κατωρθωκότας ἀξιοθῆναι τῆς θεραπείας αὐτοῦ λαχόντας ιερωσύνην.</p> <p>Moses, approving their valor, conceived of and confirmed a fitting prize for their deed; for it was necessary that those who had willingly taken up battle on behalf of God’s honor and who were successful in a short period of time should be deemed worthy of his service by receiving the priesthood.⁵⁴</p>	<p>καὶ γέρωσ ἡξιώθησαν οἰκειοτάτου ταῖς πράξεσιν, ιερωσύνης· ἔδει γὰρ θεραπευτὰς όσιότητος γενέσθαι τοὺς ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἀνδραγαθισαμένους καὶ προπολεμήσαντας.</p> <p>And they were considered worthy of a prize most fitting for their deeds, the priesthood; for it was necessary that those who had acted bravely and fought on behalf of holiness should become ministers of it.⁵⁵</p>

Here where Philo most radically paraphrases the biblical text, we see the closest correspondences between his two accounts and the least in common with the biblical text. This is evidenced by the fact that a significant number of lexemes appear only in Philo’s accounts but not in the biblical text, including γέρας, πράξις, οἰκεῖος, ἔδει, γάρ, ὑπέρ, πόλεμον/προπολεμέω, ἀξιόω, θεραπεία/θεραπευτής, ιερωσύνη.

⁵³ For the use of this idiom as receiving the priesthood, see John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 30 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 534–535.

⁵⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.173 (CW 4.240.11–14).

⁵⁵ Philo, *Mos.* 2.274 (CW 4.265.10–12).

Unlike in the Red Sea account where Philo used his prior version as a starting point, and diminished longer, unnecessary narrative portions while developing the prophetic aspects of the event, Philo demonstrates a somewhat different approach here. In this case, he still does amplify the prophetic features by inserting prophetic terminology and beginning Moses's two direct statements by stating that they were inspired, yet, he does not employ the same prediction and fulfillment paradigm this time around. This is significant because Philo wishes to demonstrate the myriad of ways that prophetic inspiration could occur, especially in the person of Moses. While oracular inspiration for prediction of the future was one such way prophecy could manifest itself for Philo, he was also concerned about showing how inspiration could also come in the form of inspired commandments. This was vitally important since much of the LXX contained such inspired commands given by Moses on God's behalf. If such commandments were to be thought of as authentic, then Philo needed to argue for their veracity.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have analyzed how Philo moves from his first paraphrase of events to his second and how he expands upon the prophetic features of the episodes. We have conducted our analysis by examining the crossing of the Red Sea and the golden calf episodes. In his first version, he retold events with a concern for the narrative itself. As we saw in the previous chapter, Philo sought to respond to certain questions. As he sought to answer those questions, he crafted his paraphrase to convey allegorical readings of the scriptural events. However, we see different methods when we compare his first paraphrase and his second paraphrase.

Philo is no longer concerned with answering specific questions in the accounts. Instead, he seeks to refine the allegorical readings that have to do with Moses as a prophet. Here, Philo

seeks to demonstrate for the reader how Moses's undertook his prophetic role and what implications it has. According to Philo, all of Moses's roles were intricately connected. Without the gift of prophecy, Moses would not have been able to conduct his other duties because it gave him greater insight than his own reason afforded. As he retells the same events, Philo demonstrates how prophecy provided greater insight for Moses by giving a fuller allegorical meaning for events. In other words, Philo already told his reader how Moses successfully crossed the sea and dealt with the Israelite idolatry. However, Moses was only successful in these endeavors because of the wisdom his prophetic inspiration provided. Since Philo argues that Moses also wrote scripture under such inspiration, this is an important connection he makes.

In terms of mediation, we are able to note important insights based on the fact that Philo draws on both the LXX and his first paraphrase. In the case of his initial paraphrase, the text mediates Philo's reading of scripture directly to the reader. In the case of this second paraphrase, two things occur. On the one hand, the paraphrase mediates the meaning of scripture—this time with a focus on prophecy—directly to the reader. On the other hand, we see how the initial paraphrase comes back into play. While that text served as an intermediary between scripture and the reader, it also functions in a lateral direction and mediates between scripture and the second paraphrase in regard to the prophetic qualities that are further amplified in this version of events.

Chapter 5

Gregory's *Life of Moses*:

From Scripture to Paraphrase

5.1 Introduction

Our study now shifts to begin the analysis of Gregory's *Life of Moses*. In this first chapter on Gregory, we will perform a comparative analysis between the LXX text and Book 1 of his *Life* in order to determine how he shapes the LXX depiction of Moses via paraphrase in response to specific questions. By reworking the literal text of the LXX in this way, Gregory crafts a paraphrase pregnant with allegorical readings. In order to do this analysis, we will first determine what kind of questions (προβλήματα/ζητήματα) Gregory likely has. We will then determine how he sets about crafting the narrative to respond to those questions narratively. We will focus our inquiry on the same two episodes that we studied in the two previous chapters on Philo, namely, the crossing of the Red Sea (*Vit. Moys.* 1.29–32) and the golden calf (*Vit. Moys.* 1.57–60). By using these same episodes as models for our analysis, we will be able to put into sharper relief how Gregory draws from the Philonic model yet adapts it in significant ways.

5.2 Crossing the Red Sea (*Vit. Moys.* 1.29–32)

While numerous studies on Gregory's *Life of Moses* have demonstrated how he interprets the crossing of the Red Sea as an allegory for baptism in Book 2,¹ scholarship has not fully appreciated how he interweaves that interpretation into the narrative of Book 1 via paraphrase. When patristic exegetes confronted the episode, they had a different set of intertexts with which

¹ See, for example, Daniélou, "La typologie biblique de Gregoire de Nysse," 185–191; Daniélou, "Moïse: exemple et figure chez Grégoire de Nysse," 396.

to work in comparison to Jewish interpreters, namely the Pauline epistles. These texts posed new ways of addressing other προβλήματα/ζητήματα for attentive exegetes. Paul himself interprets the Red Sea crossing as symbolic of baptism in 1 Cor 10:1–4:

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud (νεφέλη), and all passed through the sea (θάλασσα), and all were baptized (ἐβαπτίσθησαν) into Moses in the cloud (ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ) and in the sea (ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ), and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.²

The Pauline text sets the stage for later Christian exegesis. However, it also leaves several unanswered questions. As a result, it would pose disputed questions (ζητήματα)³ for patristic interpreters to resolve.⁴

In his *On the Day of Lights*, which dates to 383 CE,⁵ Gregory explores his theology of baptism by investigating several questions often raised about the rite. He begins his investigation

² 1 Cor 10:1–4: Οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν καὶ πάντες διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διήλθον καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν ἐβαπτίσθησαν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν βρῶμα ἔφαγον καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν ἔπιον πόμα· ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς ἀκολουθούσης πέτρας, ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός.

³ For this translation for ζήτημα, see Mitchell, "Problems and Solutions," 40. There, she translates it as "questions up for debate."

⁴ There are several Christian texts that identify and address other problems through the passage. Ps.-Diodore of Tarsus and Theodoret of Cyrus state προβλήματα in their *Quaestiones* while Origen and John Chrysostom use the procedure in homilies (see Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.5 [GCS 29:189–91]; John Chrysostom, *Comm. Pss.* 135.13 [PG 55:402]; Diodore of Tarsus, *Quaestiones in Octateuchum* 90; Theodoret of Cyrus, *Quaestiones in Octateuchum* 2.25; *Comm. Pss.* 135.13). Deconinck lists the Diodore text as one of the fragments of questionable authenticity. Even if the fragment is not authentically from Diodore himself, it nevertheless demonstrates another ancient Christian witness of προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις responses to the passage. Similarly, late antique Jewish texts such as the Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael (Beshallah 5–6) and the Mekilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai (24.4; 26.2) demonstrate similar concerns. For later examples, see Exod. Rab. 21.10, Deut. Rab. 11.10; Ibn Ezra.

⁵ For the general consensus of the sermon's dating in 383, see Daniélou, "Chronologie des sermons de Grégoire de Nysse," 362; Jean Bernardi, *La prédication des Pères Cappadociens: le*

with Jesus’s dialogue with Nicodemus in John 3 about the significance of the Spirit.⁶ Here, Gregory responds to those who question whether physical water has any effect in the rite of baptism:

Let us devote ourselves in even more detail to the inquiry (τῆ ζήτησει) on washing, beginning, as from a fount, with⁷ the scriptural message, “unless one is born,” it says, “of water and spirit,” they are not able to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Why (διὰ τί) are there two, and why is the Spirit alone not regarded as sufficient for the completion of baptism?⁸

In response, Gregory makes a philosophical appeal to the distinction between body and soul.

Because (διὰ τοῦτο) human beings are composed of body and soul, two different kinds of medicine are required. While providing this solution, Gregory continues his appeal to John 3 by quoting Jesus’s words again in reference to the Spirit’s activity:

The human being is compound and not simple, as we clearly know. On account of this (διὰ τοῦτο), similar and equivalent medicines were assigned for healing to the one who is compound and conjoined: for the visible body, sense-perceptible water; for the invisible soul, the unseen Spirit, invoked (καλούμενον) by faith (πίστει), present unspeakably. “For the Spirit blows wherever it wishes, and you

prédicateur et son auditoire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 164; Alden A. Mosshammer, "Gregory of Nyssa as Homilist," *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 229–230; Jill Burnett Comings, *Aspects of the Liturgical Year in Cappadocia (325–430)*, Patristic Studies 7 (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 68; Pierre Maraval, "Chronology of Works," in *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 162; Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 2 n.1.

⁶ For an analysis of the use of the problems and solutions method in this section of the sermon, see Jochen Rexer, *Die Festtheologie Gregors von Nyssa: Ein Beispiel der reichskirchlichen Heortologie*, Patrologia: Beiträge zum Studium der Kirchenväter 8 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 101–102. See also Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 2–3.

⁷ See LSJ, s.v. “ἀρχω” I.2: “beginning with.”

⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Diem lum.* (GNO 39.224.25–225.3): καὶ λεπτότερον προσκαρτερήσωμεν τῆ περὶ τοῦ λουτροῦ ζήτησει οἷον ἐκ πηγῆς τινος ἀρξάμενοι τοῦ γραφικοῦ παραγγέλματος: Ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ, φησὶν, ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. διὰ τί τὰ δύο καὶ οὐχὶ μόνον τὸ πνεῦμα αὐταρκες ἐνομίσθη πρὸς τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος;

hear its voice, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes” (John 3:8). It blesses the body that is baptized and the water that baptizes.⁹

While sense-perceptible water cleanses the body, the invisible Spirit heals the soul. In addition, the Spirit also blesses both the waters themselves, thus allowing them to do their performative action, and the body being baptized. According to Gregory, before this can take place, the Spirit must be invoked in prayer through faith.

After laying out his theology of baptism, Gregory proceeds to give examples from scripture of such baptismal logic. While these come primarily from the gospels, they also come from LXX texts, which prefigure Christian baptism by speaking of it in veiled riddles (αἰνίγματα) through deeds (πρακτικῶς) and words (λογικῶς) contained therein:

For I find not only that the gospels, after the crucifixion, announced the grace of baptism, but even before the incarnation of the Lord the ancient scripture everywhere prefigured (προετύπωσε) the image of our regeneration, not clearly manifesting its form, but foreshowing (προὑποφαίνουσα) the lovingkindness of God in riddles (αἰνίγματα). And as the lamb was foreannounced (προεκηρύττετο) and the cross was prophesied (προεφητεύετο), so also baptism was made known (ἐμηνύετο) in deed (πρακτικῶς) and word (λογικῶς).¹⁰

⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Diem lum.* (GNO 39.225.3–225.11): σύνθετος ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐχ ἀπλοῦς, ὡς ἀκριβῶς ἐπιστάμεθα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῷ διπλῷ καὶ συνεζευγμένῳ τὰ συγγενῆ καὶ ὅμοια φάρμακα πρὸς θεραπείαν ἀπεκληρώθη, σώματι μὲν τῷ φαινομένῳ ὕδωρ τὸ αἰσθητόν, ψυχῇ δὲ τῇ ἀοράτῳ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀφανὲς πίστει καλούμενον, ἀρρήτως παραγινόμενον. Τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ, καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει. εὐλογεῖ τὸ σῶμα τὸ βαπτιζόμενον καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ βαπτίζον.

¹⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Diem lum.* (39.230.9–16): εὐρίσκω γὰρ ὅτι τὴν τοῦ βαπτίσματος χάριν οὐ τὰ μετὰ τὸν σταυρὸν ἐκήρυξεν εὐαγγέλια, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ κυρίου πανταχοῦ ἢ παλαιὰ γραφὴ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας ἡμῶν προετύπωσε τὴν εἰκόνα οὐ τηλαυγῶς τὴν μορφὴν ἐμφανίζουσα, αἰνίγματα δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν προὑποφαίνουσα. καὶ ὡς ὁ ἄμνος προεκηρύττετο καὶ ὁ σταυρὸς προεφητεύετο, οὕτω καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα πρακτικῶς καὶ λογικῶς ἐμηνύετο.

Many of these LXX passages which foreshadow baptism involve water. One such episode is the crossing of the Red Sea, which he names along with the authority of Paul who considered the episode a foreshadowing of baptism:

As it seems to the inspired Paul, even the people themselves, by passing over the Red Sea, proclaimed the good news (εὐηγγελίζετο) of salvation that comes through water. The people passed over, and the Egyptian king with his army was sunk. And the mystery was foretold (προεφητεύετο) through these events. For even now, whenever the people are in the water of regeneration, after fleeing Egypt, i.e., the wretched sin, they are set free and saved, but the devil, with his servants (I mean, of course, the evil spirits), is choked with pain, and perishes, considering the salvation of humans to be his own misfortune.¹¹

For Gregory, the events of the Red Sea serve as a type of baptism by declaring the reality of baptism.

In his later *Catechetical Oration*,¹² which likely dates to 386 or 387,¹³ Gregory demonstrates a similar baptismal logic. The *Catechetical Oration* serves as a kind of “guide for catechists” about various objections and questions regarding the faith that catechumens may have

¹¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Diem lum.* (GNO 39.233.5–14): ὡς δὲ Παύλῳ τῷ θεσπεσίῳ δοκεῖ καὶ ὁ λαὸς αὐτὸς τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν περαιωθεὶς θάλασσαν τὴν ἐξ ὕδατος σωτηρίαν εὐηγγελίζετο· παρῆλθεν ὁ λαὸς καὶ βασιλεὺς ὁ Αἰγύπτιος μετὰ τῆς στρατιᾶς ἐβυθίσθη καὶ τὸ μυστήριον διὰ τῶν ἔργων προεφητεύετο. καὶ νῦν γὰρ ἡνίκα ἂν ὁ λαὸς ἐν τῷ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας ὕδατι γένηται φεύγων τὴν Αἴγυπτον τὴν μοχθηρὰν ἁμαρτίαν, αὐτὸς μὲν ἐλευθεροῦται καὶ σώζεται, ὁ δὲ διάβολος μετὰ τῶν ἰδίων ὑπηρετῶν (λέγω δὴ τῶν πνευμάτων τῆς πονηρίας) ἀποπνίγεται τῇ λύπῃ καὶ φθείρεται συμφορὰν ἰδίαν τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίαν ἡγούμενος.

¹² Particularly in sections 33–40. While Gregory discusses baptism in sections 33–40, section 37 contains a slight digression on the Eucharist (see Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 244).

¹³ See Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 235; Daniélou, *L'être*, 84; Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," 160; Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," 8–9; Joseph Barbel, *Die grosse katechetische Rede: Oratio catechetica magna von Gregor von Nyssa*, Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 1 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1971), 218; May, "Die Chronologie des Lebens und der Werke des Gregor von Nyssa," 61. In Daniélou's later writings, he argues for a progressively later date for *Or. cat.*, going from early to late 380s. Winling maintains an earlier date of before 381 when Gregory began *Eun.*, in opposition to the standard opinion (Raymond Winling, *Grégoire de Nysse: Discours catéchétique*, Sources chrétiennes 453 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000], 130).

encountered.¹⁴ Many opponents seem to have a kind a disregard for the physical, to which Gregory must respond. According to Gregory, “the mystery of regeneration is fulfilled” through several things, namely the invocation of heavenly grace, water, and faith:

When they hear these and similar things, and they learn in what way that prayer to God (εὐχή πρὸς θεόν), the invocation of heavenly grace (χάριτος οὐρανίας ἐπίκλησις), water (ὔδωρ), and faith (πίστις) are the things through which the mystery of regeneration is fulfilled, they find it hard to believe since they look at outward appearances (τὸ φαινόμενον), on the supposition that the bodily activity (τὸ σωματικῶς ἐνεργούμενον) does not correspond to the promise.¹⁵ For how (πῶς), they say (φασίν), do prayer (εὐχή) and invocation (ἐπίκλησις) of divine power (θεία δύναμις) over the water become a source of life (ζωή) to those initiated (μυηθεῖσι)?¹⁶

¹⁴ According to Radde-Gallwitz, Gregory writes a “guide for catechists,” as they deal with objections to the faith, which catechumens, who come from Pagan, Jewish, heretical, and Gnostic backgrounds, may be familiar with (Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 235). Radde-Gallwitz follows Winling on this point. According to Winling, *Or. cat.* is not written to catechumens but rather to the priests initiating them: “The *Catechetical Discourse* is not directly addressed to the catechumens preparing for baptism or to recently baptized faithful for supplementary formation. It constitutes a manual for those who are responsible for the initiation into the Christian faith and must confront Judaism or various tendencies of Hellenism or Gnosticism” (Raymond Wingling, “*Oratio catechetica*,” in *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* 99 [Leiden: Brill, 2010], 546.). See also the excellent introduction in Winling, *Grégoire de Nysse: Discours catéchétique*, 17–133. Regarding the προβλήματα καὶ λύσεις procedure he employs see Wingling, “*Oratio catechetica*,” 548; Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 234.

¹⁵ Because baptism is a mystery, it does not have visible proof of its effects. As a result, some doubt its efficacy. According to Gregory, they base their opinions on purely on outward appearances while ignoring the spiritual aspects of baptism. As we will see, for Gregory, belief and proof are essential in both the mystery of baptism and the crossing of the Red Sea. This is witnessed in the way that he paraphrases the event in *Vit. Moys.*, in which he provides proof that the event is, in fact, a divine miracle.

¹⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33 (GNO 16.82.14–21): ἐπειδὴν οὖν τούτων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἀκούσωσι καὶ προδιδαχθῶσι τὸν τρόπον, ὅτι εὐχή πρὸς θεόν καὶ χάριτος οὐρανίας ἐπίκλησις καὶ ὔδωρ καὶ πίστις ἐστὶ δι’ ὧν τὸ τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως πληροῦται μυστήριον, δυσπειθῶς ἔχουσι πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον βλέποντες, ὡς οὐ συμβαῖνον τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ τὸ σωματικῶς ἐνεργούμενον. πῶς γάρ, φασίν, εὐχή καὶ δυνάμεως θείας ἐπίκλησις ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος γινομένη ζωῆς ἀρχηγὸς τοῖς μυηθεῖσι γίνεται;

This corresponds to his comments in *On the Day of Lights* that baptism requires water and Spirit, but the Spirit needed to be invoked through faith. While baptism requires these elements, his opponents doubt the ability of physical water to effect the rite because they only look at the outward appearance (τὸ φαινόμενον) when observing the act of baptism while failing to notice the correspondence between the physical act (τὸ σωματικῶς ἐνεργούμενον) in water and the spiritual promise.

In order to respond to these problems regarding baptism, Gregory asks a series of his own questions. He believes they will still require further proof (ζητοῦσιν ἀπόδειξιν) that God operates in the act of baptism.¹⁷ He then appeals to Matt 18:20 as evidence: “He has promised always to be present with those who invoke him and to be in the midst of the faithful and to remain among all of them and to have dealings with each of them.”¹⁸ Since, according to Gregory, truth is characteristic of the divine nature, one requires no additional proof beyond the divine promise in the Matthean text that God will be with believers when invoked. Since believers invoke God at baptism, then the divine must be present in the baptismal act.

Concluding his argument, Gregory asks “what trouble” (τίς πόνοϛ) it is to believe that God is everywhere, including when invoked.

For what is the difficulty (τίς πόνοϛ) in fact to believe that God is everywhere, and, because he exists in all things, he is present also to those who invoke (τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις) his life-giving power,¹⁹ and, when he is present, he acts appropriately? The salvation of those who ask (ἢ τῶν δεομένων σωτηρία) is

¹⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33 (GNO 16.84.6–7).

¹⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33 (GNO 16.84.16–19): ἀεὶ παρέσεσθαι τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις ἐπήγγελται καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν πιστευόντων εἶναι καὶ ἐν πᾶσι μένειν καὶ ἐκάστῳ συνεῖναι.

¹⁹ For an analysis of the ambiguity of life-giving power in Gregory’s writings, see Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 43–53.

characteristic of divine activity (θεία ἐνέργεια). This becomes actual (ἐνεργὸς γίνεται) through the purification in the water.²⁰

According to Gregory, it is appropriate for God to act by providing salvation for those in need through baptism. While the divine activity has the characteristic of acting toward the salvation of those in need, this becomes actual (ἐνεργὸς γίνεται) through the baptism itself (διὰ τῆς ἐν ὕδατι καθάρσεως).

In both of these works, Gregory lays out his baptismal theology most thoroughly.

According to him, while both water and Spirit are essential for the act of baptism, the Spirit must first be invoked in faith through prayer. Only then can the Spirit operate in the water to effect baptism. While Gregory describes the Spirit as such, especially in *On the Day of Lights*, he also calls it heavenly grace, as well as refers to divine power, especially in *Catechetical Oration*. It is also a characteristic of the divine to save through baptism those who are in need. As we now turn to Gregory's paraphrase of the Red Sea episode in his *Life of Moses*, we will analyze how he weaves his baptismal theology into the very narrative fabric of the account. In particular, we will focus on three aspects of the account, Moses's cry in Exod 14:15 as the invocation of the Holy Spirit over the baptismal waters, the cloud in the desert as the Holy Spirit, and the crossing of the sea as the mystical waters of baptism.

The prior chapter demonstrated how Exod 14:15 and the prior verses posed a potential contradiction for attentive exegetes. While Exod 14:10 records the Israelites crying out to God, God asks Moses why he alone cries out in Exod 14:15.²¹ For interpreters who notice the shift to

²⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 36 (GNO 16.92.13–18): τίς γὰρ πάρεστι πόνος τῷ πράγματι πιστεῦσαι πανταχοῦ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι, ἐν πᾶσι δὲ ὄντα παρεῖναι καὶ τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὴν ζωτικὴν αὐτοῦ δύναμιν, παρόντα δὲ τὸ οἰκεῖον ποιεῖν; ἴδιον δὲ τῆς θείας ἐνεργείας ἢ τῶν δεομένων ἐστὶ σωτηρία· αὕτη δὲ διὰ τῆς ἐν ὕδατι καθάρσεως ἐνεργὸς γίνεται.

²¹ Exod 14:15: τί βοᾷς πρός με;

the singular in the question to Moses, this poses a potential question. When did Moses cry out to God? Scripture never records him crying out, yet God now asks him why he cries out. Patristic exegetes offered a number of solutions to resolve this potential contradiction, including the idea that Moses did, in fact, cry out to God but did so silently.²² Interpreters who offered this solution likely followed an exegetical solution dating back at least to Philo.

As they craft solutions to this perceived contradiction, Christian interpreters appealed to intertexts unavailable to Jewish exegetes, namely the Pauline epistles. For example, Origen of Alexandria and Basil the Great make scriptural appeals to Rom 8:26–27, where Paul describes how the Spirit intercedes before God with unspoken groans perceptible only to God.²³ After inquiring about the contradiction, both Origen and Basil formulate a philosophical solution (λύσις) that relies on an appeal to this Pauline intertext.

According to Rom 8:26–27, when the spirit intercedes on humanity’s behalf, it does so with “unspoken groans” (στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι).²⁴ With an appeal to this passage, an exegete has a

²² See, for example, Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.4 (GCS 29:189); Basil the Great, *Hom. Ps.* 114.2 (PG 29:485); Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 16.4 (PG 35:937); John Chrysostom, *Hom. Col.* 9.3 (PG 62:364); *Hom. Matt.* 19.4 (PG 57:277).

²³ Origen, for instance, asks: “how (*quomodo*) does he cry out? No sound from his voice is heard and yet God says to him, ‘Why do you cry out to me?’” (*Quomodo clamat? Nulla eius vox clamoris auditur et tamen dicit ad eum Deus: ‘quid clamas ad me?’* [Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.4 (GCS 29:189.12–13)]). For an example of this πρόβλημα in the Latin patristic tradition, see Augustine, *Quaest. Hept.* 2.52. Likewise, in late antique and medieval Jewish interpretive traditions, we see exegetes grappling with the same literary contradiction in the verse. This may be seen, for instance, in the Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael (Beshallah 4), the Mekilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai (Beshallah 23.1), and Exodus Rabbah (Beshallah 21).

²⁴ Rom 8:26–27: “Similarly, the spirit assists in our weakness. For we do not know how to pray as we should, but the spirit itself intercedes with unspoken groans. And the one who searches hearts knows the mind of the spirit, because he intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God’s will” (ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν· τὸ γὰρ τί προσευξώμεθα καθὼ δεῖ οὐκ οἶδαμεν, ἀλλὰ αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα ὑπερεντυγχάνει στεναγμοῖς ἀλάλητοις· ὁ δὲ ἐρανῶν τὰς καρδίας οἶδεν τί τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος, ὅτι κατὰ θεὸν

scripturally approved philosophical solution for the Exodus passage. They are groans, yet they are not groans perceptible to the senses, but they are imperceptible, “unspoken” ones. Origen explains his understanding of how this process works:

I would like to know how (quomodo) the saints cry out to God without a voice. The apostle teaches that God gave the spirit of his son in our hearts crying, “Abba, Father!” (Gal 4:4). And he added, “The spirit itself intercedes on our behalf with unspoken groans (gemitibus inenarrabilibus).” [. . .]. So then, while the Holy Spirit intercedes before God, a noise is heard through the silence of the saints.²⁵

If Moses uses such imperceptible groans, then he can “cry out to God without a voice,” as he seems to be depicted in Exod 14, yet at the same time “a noise is heard” by God “through the silence of the saints when the Holy Spirit speaks before God.”²⁶ Here, Origen contrasts the physical silence of the voice with the spiritual speech through the Holy Spirit. Basil follows Origen’s solution here. Moses cries out silently with unspoken groans, perceptible to God alone. Although these patristic exegetes make a philosophical distinction between the physical and the spiritual—similar to Philo’s own distinction—the Pauline intertexts serve as a major points of departure. By appeal to the Pauline text, they are able to make a similar distinction.

ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἁγίων). According to Paul, God alone perceives these groans because God “knows the mind of the spirit.” For the use of the appeal to Rom 8:26–27, see Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.4 (GCS 29:189.14–20); Basil the Great, *Hom. Ps.* 114.2 (PG 29:485). For an analysis of the phrase’s meaning in the original Pauline context, see Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia 59 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 521–525.

²⁵ Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.4 (GCS 29:189.13–17, 18–20): *Velim scire, quomodo sancti sine voce clamant ad Deum. Apostolus docet quia: “dedit Deus spiritum filii sui in cordibus nostris clamantem: Abba, pater!” Et addit: “ipse spiritus interpellat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus.” [. . .]. Sic ergo interpellante Spiritu sancto apud Deum per silentium sanctorum clamor auditor.*

²⁶ Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.4 (GCS 29:189.14, 18–20): *sina voce clamant ad Deum [. . .] interpellante Spiritu sancto apud Deum per silentium sanctorum clamor auditor.*

Gregory engages with these prior patristic solutions to the ζήτημα in the second book of his *Against Eunomius*, which he likely penned sometime in the two years after Basil's death in 379.²⁷ Gregory there inquires about the apparent literary problem while offering a solution that appeals to the Pauline intertext in Rom 8:26–27.²⁸ Gregory first points out the πρόβλημα by stating that “A voice came from God calling the prophet by name,²⁹ [. . .]. And yet, before these things were said, the account mentions no voice of Moses.”³⁰ Seeking to solve the problem, he appeals to Rom 8:26–27:

But the prophet's thought toward God is called a certain voice (φωνή τις) when it cries out (βοωμένη) silently (κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον) in the secret thinking of the heart. Now if Moses cries out (βοᾷ), although not uttering a sound (μὴ φθεγγόμενος), by the witness of the one who gives ear to unspoken groans (ὑπὸ μάρτυρι τῷ τῶν ἀλαλήτων στεναγμῶν ἐπαῖοντι), why is it strange if the prophet also, knowing the divine will, as much as it was possible for him to speak and for us to listen, made it plain to us through known and ordinary words, outlining a conversation (διάλογον) with God in a rather bodily manner, although it did not happen in words (οὐ ῥήμασι γινόμενον), but it was cried out (ἐκφωνούμενον) through the deeds themselves (διὰ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν)?³¹

²⁷ Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 131 n.137; Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," 163.

²⁸ See Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* 2.266–268.

²⁹ The Greek word (ὄνομαστί), rendered into English “by name,” is not at first clear. Even in Gregory's short summary of the event, God does not literally call Moses by name. What Gregory likely refers to here, however, is the fact that the Greek verb βοᾷς is second person singular form. Therefore, God is speaking to Moses only and not to the Israelites as a whole. This thus cannot be a response to the Israelite petition in Exod 14:10.

³⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* 2.268 (GNO 1.304.23–26): γίνεται θεόθεν φωνή ὄνομαστί τὸν προφήτην προσκαλουμένη· τί βοᾷς πρὸς με; καίτοι γε πρὸ τῶν εἰρημένων οὐδεμιᾶς ὁ λόγος ἐπιμένεται Μωϋσέως φωνῆς.

³¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* 2.268 (GNO 1.304.26–305.4): ἀλλ' ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τοῦ προφήτου διάνοια φωνή τις ὀνομάσθη κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ τῆς καρδίας νοήματι βοωμένη. εἰ δὴ Μωϋσῆς βοᾷ μὴ φθεγγόμενος ὑπὸ μάρτυρι τῷ τῶν ἀλαλήτων στεναγμῶν ἐπαῖοντι, τί καινὸν εἰ καὶ τὸ θεῖον βούλημα γνοὺς ὁ προφήτης, ὡς δυνατὸν ἦν αὐτῷ τε εἰπεῖν καὶ ἡμῖν ἀκοῦσαι, διὰ τῶν γνωρίμων ἡμῖν καὶ συνήθων ἐφανερώσε λόγων, διάλογον θεοῦ σωματικώτερον διαγράφων οὐ ῥήμασι γινόμενον, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν ἐκφωνούμενον;

With the Pauline text in view, Gregory plays on the tension between unspoken and spoken speech inherent in the phrase (i.e., “unspoken groans” [στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι]). According to him, what at first seems to be a contradiction is not one in reality. “Why (τί) is it strange (καινόν)?” Gregory asks. He responds that it is, in fact, not strange. What seems to be a contradiction is actually the biblical account providing the reader a textual clue that reveals something deeper, namely, that God serves as a witness (μάρτυς) that Moses spoke with God but with an unspoken voice (φωνή).

Turning to his *Life of Moses*, we see how Gregory seeks to resolve the same ζήτημα with a similar appeal to the Pauline intertext, yet he now does so in a different format, that of paraphrase. In *Life of Moses*, when the Egyptian army traps the Israelites at the sea, Gregory does not faithfully follow scripture but freely paraphrases the event. While the biblical account states that the Israelites cry out to God (Exod 14:10) and God poses his question to Moses (Exod 14:15), Gregory omits both of these features from his paraphrase. In this way, Gregory removes the offending contradiction from his account. Instead, he substitutes a third-person narrative that states that Moses performed an incredible feat: “The *historia* also says (ἡ ἱστορία λέγει) the most incredible thing (τὸ παραδοξότατον) about Moses; he was divided in two in reference to his activities.”³² Gregory thus indicates the contradiction in a subtle way that prevents the flow of the narrative from being interrupted.

Stating that Moses does something most incredible (παραδοξότατον) by dividing his actions (ἐνεργεῖαι) in two, Gregory begins to formulate a solution paraphrastically to problem that is only hinted at in the underlying biblical text. While scripture poses a potential

³² Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.13.20–22): καὶ τὸ παραδοξότατον περὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἡ ἱστορία λέγει, διχῆ ταῖς ἐνεργεῖαις τεμνόμενον.

contradiction between Exod 14:15 and the prior verses, since Moses is said to speak yet is not recorded as speaking, no contradiction exists according to Gregory's paraphrase. Moses does two actions (ἐνέργειαι) simultaneously. Gregory here appeals to philosophical language of Aristotelian activity (ἐνέργεια).

The term ἐνέργεια has several meanings. While Gregory often uses it in a Trinitarian sense in order to explain how the unity of action (ἐνέργεια) between the three members of the Trinity, it can also refer to human activity.³³ In this second sense, it can signify both physical and intellectual actions. By stating that Moses had dual actions, Gregory begins to lay the groundwork for a philosophical solution that Moses had two kinds of actions (ἐνέργεια), namely sense-perceptible and intellectual.

Continuing with this philosophical solution (λύσις), Gregory argues that Moses's speech was divided between his mind and his mouth. While Moses inwardly supplicated God, he outwardly addressed the Israelites:

In voice and word (τῇ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ), he was encouraging (παραθαρρύνειν) the Israelites and exhorting (παρακελεύεσθαι) them to maintain their good hope. Inwardly in his mind (ἔνδοθεν δὲ τῇ διανοίᾳ), he was supplicating (προσάγειν τὴν ἱκετηρίαν) God (τῷ θεῷ) on behalf of those who had cowered in fear (ὑπὲρ τῶν κατεπτηνόντων).³⁴

In responding to the biblical contradiction, he indicates that Moses performs two actions simultaneously. By setting up a μὲν...δέ construction, Gregory contrasts the way that Moses speaks "in voice and word" (τῇ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ) to the Israelites with the way he speaks

³³ See *LG*, s.v. "ἐνέργεια" II.D.3: "Tun, Handeln d. Menschen."

³⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.13.22–25): τῇ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ παραθαρρύνειν τε τοὺς Ἰσραηλίτας καὶ τὰς ἀγαθὰς ἔχειν ἐλπίδας παρακελεύεσθαι, ἔνδοθεν δὲ τῇ διανοίᾳ τῷ θεῷ προσάγειν τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν κατεπτηνόντων ἱκετηρίαν.

“inwardly in his mind” (ἐνδοθεν δὲ τῆ διανοίᾳ) to God. This explanation has much in common with the one we previously saw him give in *Against Eunomius*.

While the μὲν clause roughly paraphrases Exod 14:13–14,³⁵ the δέ clause provides an extra-biblical addition that supplies the information God’s question in Exod 14:15 prompts. In this way, he answers the literary problem in the biblical account with a philosophical solution. According to him, at the same time as Moses was crying out to God internally in his mind, he was also exhorting the people outwardly with his voice.

As in *Against Eunomius*, because the intercession occurs silently, this solution explains why the biblical text seemingly fails to narrate it. It is not so much that the biblical account does not contain the Moses’s prayer, but that it is a hidden detail due to its silent nature in Moses’s mind. Yet, it is a detail to which God’s words attest, awaiting the eyes of a keen exegete to discover.

In order to indicate that God testifies to Moses’s silent speech, Gregory states that “God himself, as the *historia* says, gave ear to the unspoken voice (τῆς ἀλαλήτου φωνῆς ἐπαΐοντος).”³⁶

Gregory made a similar argument in *Against Eunomius*, where he made a philosophical appeal.

³⁵ Exod 14:13–14: “Moses said to the people, ‘Take courage! Stand firm and see the deliverance from God, which he will do for us today. For the way that you have seen the Egyptians today, you will no longer continue to see them. The Lord will fight for you, and you will be silent’” (εἶπεν δὲ Μωυσεῖς πρὸς τὸν λαόν· Θαρσεῖτε· στήτε καὶ ὁρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον· ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐώρακατε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους σήμερον, οὐ προσθήσεσθε ἔτι ἰδεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον· κύριος πολεμήσει περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ ὑμεῖς σιγήσετε).

³⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.14.1–2): αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς φησιν ἡ ἱστορία, τῆς ἀλαλήτου φωνῆς ἐπαΐοντος. This response comes in the form of Moses being “directed through counsel from above about how to escape the danger” (Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 [GNO 25.13.25–26]: καὶ ὅπως ἂν διαφύγοι τὸν κίνδυνον διὰ τῆς ἄνωθεν συμβουλῆς ὁδηγεῖσθαι). Gregory here makes clear that Exod 14:15b–18 serves as the response to Moses in a couple of ways. First, by stating that “God [. . .] gave ear to the unspoken voice,” he connects it with Moses’s silent petition. Second, in Exod 14:15b–18, counsel essentially comes from above, directing them how to escape the danger. Gregory mirrors that here.

According to *Against Eunomius*, Moses has an unspoken “voice” (φωνή), which only God, who “gives ear” (ἐπαῖω) to “unspoken groans” (στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι),³⁷ perceives. While scripture provides evidence of Moses having a “conversation with God” (διάλογον θεοῦ) with a “voice” (φωνή), it takes place silently. According to him, the deeds (τὰ ἔργα) rather than the words (τὰ ρήματα) testify to this. In this way, God serves as a textual witness (μάρτυς) in both texts that Moses spoke with God with a silent voice (φωνή).

In both *Against Eunomius* and *Life of Moses*, Gregory characterizes Moses’s silent speech similar appeals to Rom 8:26–27. According to *Against Eunomius*, scripture does not record Moses speaking because he does not use a physical voice. Instead, he speaks with “unspoken groans” (στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι) perceptible to God alone, who gives ear (ἐπαῖω) to them. Gregory here appeals to the Pauline intertext of Rom 8:26–27. In *Life of Moses*, Gregory is described as speaking with an “unspoken voice” (ἀλάλητος φωνή), to God who alone gives ear (ἐπαῖω). In both texts, Gregory solves the problem by a scriptural appeal to Rom 8:26–27 in order to indicate that Moses’s silent speech is unspoken in nature, thus God alone can hear it. For this reason, it is unnarrated in scripture.

While paraphrasing his interpretation of Moses’s silent cry, Gregory twice appeals to what the *historia* itself says. This poses the interpretive question of how Gregory strategically uses this appeal to the *historia* of scripture. Although we are arguing that Gregory’s paraphrase of the biblical account seeks to blend together text and interpretation, at these two moments he steps away slightly and acknowledges a distance between his paraphrase and the biblical

³⁷ Compare this also with Basil’s *Hom. Ps.* 114.2 (PG 29:485), where Basil also makes an allusion to Rom 8:26 via the phrase ἀλάλητος στεναγμός in reference to Moses’s silent cry in Exod 14:15.

account. But why would he do so? It is also at these two moments that he makes appeals to other passages in scripture as part of his exegetical solution.

In the first instance of the appeal to the *historia*, Gregory uses the phrase ἡ ἱστορία λέγει. According to him, “the *historia* also says (ἡ ἱστορία λέγει) the most incredible thing about Moses, he was divided in two in reference to his activities.”³⁸ In the second example of the appeal to the *historia*, Gregory uses the phrase φησιν ἡ ἱστορία. According to him, “God himself, as the *historia* says (καθὼς φησιν ἡ ἱστορία), gave ear to the unspoken voice.”³⁹ While he is ostensibly stating the very facts of the *historia* itself, he uses the appeal to the *historia* as a pretense to slip in material that did not occur in the actual biblical event. He does this, for example, by weaving in his philosophical appeal to Moses’s double activities (ἐνέργειαι) and his intertextual appeal to an “unspoken voice” (ἀλάλητος φωνή) from Rom 8:26–27. While these elements do not appear in the scriptural account, they exist in his text. Thus, as Gregory appeals to the *historia* while justifying his interpretation, the biblical *historia* and the *historia* of the *Life of Moses* begin to merge together within the text.

Gregory responds to the apparent contradiction in Exod 14:15 in both his *Against Eunomius* and *Life of Moses* with a similar philosophical appeal to the distinction between the sense-perceptible and the intellectual. While both texts seek to resolve this πρόβλημα, they do so in different formats. By paraphrasing the crossing of the Red Sea in his *Life*, Gregory resolves the problem while also shaping the events in accordance with his theology of baptism. Following Paul, Gregory already views the event as a type of baptism. According to Gregory, at baptism

³⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.13.20–22): καὶ τὸ παραδοξότατον περὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἡ ἱστορία λέγει, διχῆ ταῖς ἐνεργείαις τεμνόμενον.

³⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.14.1–2): αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς φησιν ἡ ἱστορία, τῆς ἀλάλητου φωνῆς ἐπαῖοντος.

one invokes in prayer the Holy Spirit, who is then present in the water. It is this same idea that we see in the paraphrase of Exod 14:15. As Moses prays silently to God, he invokes (ἐπίκλησις) the Holy Spirit's presence in divine power (θεία δύναμις).⁴⁰ Gregory's philosophical solution thus presents an opportunity for him to depict the event more explicitly as a type of baptism.

As he continues paraphrasing the Exod 14 passage, Gregory portrays the cloud in language reminiscent of the actions of the Holy Spirit at baptism. Scripture first introduces the cloud in Exod 13 when the Israelites initially leave Egypt. According to Gregory, the cloud appears only after Moses cries out for divine assistance, at which point the people are led by its divine power (θεία δύναμις).⁴¹ Gregory's sequence of events suggests that the cloud's appearance occurs as God's response to Moses's request for divine aid.

While describing the cloud, Gregory asserts that the cloud differed in nature from other clouds (οὐ κατὰ κοινήν φύσιν) due to its divine nature. By using language drawn from contemporary natural sciences, he highlights how the cloud's composition (θεία δύναμις) differs from the composition of normal clouds:⁴²

⁴⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33 (GNO 16.82.14–21).

⁴¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.14.2–3): νεφέλης δὲ τοῦ λαοῦ θεία δυνάμει καθηγουμένης.

⁴² Ancient scholars who studied weather phenomena included Hesiod, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Vegetius, Aratus, Virgil, Seneca, and Pliny. While these scholars covered a wide chronological span of time, this meteorological knowledge remained remarkably consistent from the classical period until late antiquity. For discussions, see, for example, Liba Taub, "Greco-Roman Meteorology and Navigation," in *Maritime Technology in the Ancient Economy: Ship-Design and Navigation*, ed. W.V. Harris and K. Iara (Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2011), 133–145; Liba Taub, "Cosmology and Meteorology," in *Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism*, ed. James Warren (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Liba Taub, *Ancient Meteorology* (London: Routledge, 2003); Andrea Falcon, *Aristotle and the Science of Nature: Unity without Uniformity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); I. G. Kidd, "Theophrastus's *Meteorology*, Aristotle and Posidonius," in *Theophrastus: His Psychological, Doxographical, and Scientific Writings*, ed. William W. Fortenbaugh and Dimitri Gutas, Rutgers

The people were guided by the divine power (θεία δυνάμει) of a cloud of a different nature than usual (οὐ κατὰ κοινήν φύσιν). For it did not have the composition (ἡ σύστασις) of some vapors (ἀτμοί) and exhalations (ἀναθυμιάσεις); nor was the air (τοῦ ἀέρος) deeply compressed by vapors (τοῖς ἀτμοῖς) and winds (τοῖς πνεύμασιν) through a misty composition (διὰ τῆς ὀμιχλώδους συστάσεως) into itself.⁴³

Gregory's description here of the composition of typical clouds, from which the divine cloud differs, draws on scientific language. In Gregory's day, Aristotle's *Meteorologica* still served as a significant text in the study of meteorological phenomena. According to Aristotle, clouds were composed of air (ἀήρ) and water (ὔδωρ) which combined into precipitated vapor (ἀτμίς) and mist (ὀμιχλώδης).⁴⁴ Clouds formed in a process described as exhalation (ἀναθυμιάσις).⁴⁵ By using the same scientific language, Gregory's narrative shows how "that cloud was something better and loftier than human comprehension."⁴⁶

University Studies in Classical Humanities 5 (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1992). We also know that in late antiquity Aristotle's *Meteorologica* was still a part of the curriculum for natural philosophy. See Andrea Falcon, "Introduction," in *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aristotle in Antiquity*, ed. Andrea Falcon (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 5; Andrea Falcon, "The Reception of Aristotle in Antiquity," in *Oxford Handbooks Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 8.

<http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935314.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935314-e-54?print=pdf>.

⁴³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.14.2–6): νεφέλης δὲ τοῦ λαοῦ θεία δυνάμει καθηγουμένης οὐ κατὰ τὴν κοινήν φύσιν οὐδὲ· γὰρ ἐξ ἀτμῶν τινῶν ἢ ἀναθυμιάσεων ἢ σύστασις αὐτῆς ἦν βαθυνομένου τοῖς ἀτμοῖς τοῦ ἀέρος διὰ τῆς ὀμιχλώδους συστάσεως καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν συμπιλουμένου τοῖς πνεύμασιν, ἀλλὰ κρεῖττον τι καὶ ὑψηλότερον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καταλήψεως.

⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Mete.* 1.9 (346b31–34).

⁴⁵ See, for example, Aristotle, *Mete.* 1.3 (339a33–341a38, especially 340b24, 31) and 1.9–12 (346b16–349a12), as well as throughout the work. See also Liba Taub, "Meteorology," in *A Companion to Science, Technology, and Medicine in Ancient Greece and Rome*, ed. Georgia L. Irby (Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 236; Taub, *Ancient Meteorology*, 88–91; Patrick Cronin, *Greek Popular Meteorology from Antiquity to the Present: The Folk-Interpretation of Celestial Signs* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2010), 63.

⁴⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.14.6–7): κρεῖττον τι καὶ ὑψηλότερον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καταλήψεως.

After asserting how the cloud's divine nature distinguishes it from natural clouds, Gregory then demonstrates how its unique nature causes it to function differently. According to him, scripture itself gives witness to its unique operation:

Scripture testifies about that cloud (ἐκείνης τῆς νεφέλης τῆς γραφῆς μαρτυρούσης) that it was such a great miracle (τοιούτον τὸ θαῦμα) that, even when the ray of the sun warmly shone (καὶ τῆς ἡλιακῆς ἀκτῖνος θερμῶς ἐπιλαμπύσης), the cloud was a fortification (διατείχισμα) for the people, casting shadows on (σκιάζουσάν) what was below and moistening (ὑπονοτίζουσαν) with light dew (δρόσω) the fiery heat (φλογῶδες) of the air (τοῦ ἀέρος), and during the night it became a fire (πῦρ γενέσθαι), carrying a torch (δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος) for the Israelites from evening until morning with its own light (τῷ ἰδίῳ φωτί).⁴⁷

Unlike a regular cloud, the divine cloud does not dissipate in sun's light, and it even provides shelter from that heat for the Israelites by moistening the dry desert air. During the night, it even lit up the night sky by becoming fire. This contrasts with typical clouds, which were thought to form in cool air and dissipate in the heat.⁴⁸ According to Aristotle, clouds could not form close to

⁴⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.14.7–13): ἐκείνης τῆς νεφέλης τῆς γραφῆς μαρτυρούσης τοιοῦτον τὸ θαῦμα ἦν ὡς καὶ τῆς ἡλιακῆς ἀκτῖνος θερμῶς ἐπιλαμπύσης διατείχισμα εἶναι πρὸς τὸν λαόν, σκιάζουσάν τε τὸ ὑποκείμενον καὶ λεπτῇ δρόσω τὸ φλογῶδες τοῦ ἀέρος ὑπονοτίζουσαν, καὶ διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς πῦρ γενέσθαι ἀφ' ἑσπέρας εἰς ὄρθρον τῷ ἰδίῳ φωτί τοῖς Ἰσραηλίταις δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος.

⁴⁸ Even as Gregory provides a theological explanation for the existence of the cloud, he continues to make use of the language of elements (στοιχεῖα) from nature. Alluding to Exod 13:21–22, however, Gregory adds the element of fire (πῦρ) to the miraculous cloud. Exod 13:21–22: “And God was leading them, during the day in a pillar of cloud (ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης) to show them the way, but all night long in a pillar of fire (ἐν στύλῳ πυρός). The pillar of cloud during the day and the pillar of fire during the night did not depart from before all the people” (ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἠγεῖτο αὐτῶν, ἡμέρας μὲν ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης δεῖξαι αὐτοῖς τὴν ὁδόν, τὴν δὲ νύκτα ἐν στύλῳ πυρός· οὐκ ἐξέλιπεν ὁ στῦλος τῆς νεφέλης ἡμέρας καὶ ὁ στῦλος τοῦ πυρός νυκτὸς ἐναντίον παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ). This element makes the cloud in the desert stand apart from natural clouds. Gregory likely alludes to Ps 77:14 LXX: “and he guided them in a cloud by day and for the entire night in an illumination of fire (καὶ ὠδήγησεν αὐτοὺς ἐν νεφέλῃ ἡμέρας καὶ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα ἐν φωτισμῷ πυρός). Gregory also potentially brings in Isaiah 4:5–6 as an intertext, which speaks of the cloud on Mt Sinai, which provides “shade from the heat” (εἰς σκιὰν ἀπὸ καύματος) during the day, and becomes like a “light of fire burning during the night” (ὡς φωτὸς πυρὸς καιομένου νυκτός). Isa 4:5–6: καὶ ἤξει, καὶ ἔσται πᾶς τόπος τοῦ ὄρους Σιων καὶ πάντα τὰ

the ground due to the heat (τῆ θερμότητι) of the sun's rays (ἄκτινες) on the land. Moreover, they could not from high in the atmosphere because a kind of fire (οἶον πῦρ) in the air prevented it.⁴⁹

In the above passage of the cloud's supernatural actions, Gregory provides a theological layer to the description through intertextual allusions to other passages associated with the Holy Spirit in patristic exegesis, including, the imagery of light (φῶς) and illumination (ἐπιφαίνω) (Num 6:25 LXX; Deut 33:2; Ps 103:2 LXX, 117:27 LXX; Eph 1:18; Heb 6:4, 10:32; Rev 21:23, 22:5; etc.), (ἐπι)σκιάζω and δύναμις (Luke 1:35),⁵⁰ δρόσος (Dan 3:50 LXX; Zech 8:12; Hos 14:6; and Sir 18:16),⁵¹ and (καθ)όδηγέω/καθηγέομαι (Ps 77:14 LXX and Deut 1:33). As he does

περικύκλω αὐτῆς σκιάσει νεφέλη ἡμέρας καὶ ὡς καπνοῦ καὶ ὡς φωτὸς πυρὸς καιομένου νυκτός· πάση τῇ δόξῃ σκεπασθήσεται· καὶ ἔσται εἰς σκιὰν ἀπὸ καύματος καὶ ἐν σκέπῃ καὶ ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ ἀπὸ σκληρότητος καὶ ὑετοῦ. See also Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Hom. Ps. 77:14 LXX*; Theodoret of Cyrus, *Comm. Ps. 77:14*. Both exegetes have very similar interpretations of the cloud as Gregory because they both see the cloud as providing protective shade from the hot desert air with its cool moisture.

⁴⁹ See Aristotle, *Mete.* 1.3 (340a30; 340b33). See also H. Howard Frisinger, "Aristotle and his *Meteorologica*," *American Meteorological Society* 53, no. 7 (1972): 636; Cronin, *Greek Popular Meteorology from Antiquity to the Present: The Folk-Interpretation of Celestial Signs*, 63. See also Aristotle, *Mete.* 1.9 (346b16–36).

⁵⁰ In Luke 1:35 the Holy Spirit overshadows the Virgin at the incarnation. Luke 1:35: "The holy spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High (δύναμις ὑψίστου) will overshadow (ἐπισκιάσει) you" (πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι). While the language is not exact, it is likely Gregory has the Lucan passage in mind. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz provides a list of everywhere that Gregory cites the Lukan description of the Holy Spirit overshadowing the Virgin Mary, thus indicating its importance for him (Radde-Gallwitz, *Doctrinal Works*, 50 n.67). The imagery of shade was a biblical image connected with the Spirit. See Exod 25:20; 38:8; 40:35; Deut 33:12; 1 Chr 28:18. See also Theodoret of Cyrus, *Hom. Ps. 77:14*, where Theodoret offers a similar interpretation regarding the cloud using the verb ἐπισκιάζω.

⁵¹ Patristic exegetes associated cool dew or mist with the grace of the Holy Spirit (see, for example, Clement of Alexandria, *Quis div.* 34.1; Apollinarius of Laodicea, *Fr.* 102; *Life of Pachomius* 5; Gregory of Nyssa, *Diem nat.* [GNO 58.245.9]; *Inscr.* [GNO 21.54.22]; *Theod.* [GNO 50.71.10]; *Cant.* 2 [24.53.2], 13 [GNO 24.392.17]; *Infant.* [13.73.17]). In the Daniel text, when the three youths are thrown into the fiery furnace, a dew-bearing breeze (πνεῦμα δρόσου), protects them from the heat. Exegetes interpret this πνεῦμα as the grace of God's Spirit.

this, he composes a paraphrase which suggests that the cloud's divine nature is due to its association with the Holy Spirit.

The *Life of Moses* is by no means the only work in Gregory's corpus where we find him use this same lexical constellation in reference to the cloud in the desert. In the other passages in which we find the same language, Gregory makes more explicit connections between the Holy Spirit and the cloud. For example, we see Gregory do this in the thirteenth homily of his *On the Song of Songs*, likely dating to sometime in the late 380s.⁵²

The bridal chamber was the power of the Most High (ἡ τοῦ ὑψίστου δύναμις) overshadowing (ἐπισκιάζουσα) the virgin like some cloud (τις νεφέλη) the wedding torch (πυρσός) was the illumination of the Holy Spirit (τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος).⁵³

We see similar vocabulary in reference to the cloud, namely, the noun cloud (νεφέλη), the verb overshadow (ἐπισκιάζω), the carrying of a torch (πυρσός versus δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος), and the power (δύναμις) of God.⁵⁴ But perhaps the strongest link to the *Life of Moses* passages occurs

⁵² Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," 168; Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," 8. Daniélou dates the homilies to about 389. While he preached them as a series of homilies in Constantinople in 390–394, Daniélou argues that Gregory likely delivered them to Olympias and the community of women in the capital before her death around 390 since they were dedicated to her (Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," 168).

⁵³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant.* 13 (GNO 24.388.9–12): οὗ θάλαμος ἡ τοῦ ὑψίστου δύναμις οἷόν τις νεφέλη τὴν παρθενίαν ἐπισκιάζουσα, πυρσὸς δὲ γαμήλιος ἡ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἔλλαμνις. See also *Cant.* 11 (GNO 24.322.17–18; 324.5–9). For the section numbering for Gregory's *Cant.*, I have used the edition in the Writings from the Greco-Roman world series in Norris, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs*.

⁵⁴ For the importance of δύναμις in early Christianity, see Barnes, *Power of God*, 94–124. While the immediate context of *On the Song of Songs* suggests that these are primarily references to the incarnation via the Holy Spirit, Everett Ferguson has recently argued for a baptismal context for the homilies, due to the extent of the baptismal imagery within them. According to him, "that baptism seems to provide a subtext for much of Gregory's spiritual interpretation of *Canticles* testifies to its importance for Gregory and suggests the freshness of the experience to the minds of his hearers" (Everett Ferguson, "Theology of Baptism in the *In Canticum Canticorum* of

in the second homily of his *On the Song of Songs*, as he interprets Song 1:5–6. By appealing to Matt 13:3–23; Luke 8:5–15; Isa 49:22, 60:4, 66:20; and Ps 120:5–6, Gregory again links the Holy Spirit with the cloud:

If the opposing onslaught of temptation is called “sun,” let no one listening consider it strange since they are taught such a thing by the God-breathed scripture in many places. [. . .]. Our life becomes shady (σκιερός) and moist (δρυσώδης) when the heat (καύσων) is quenched by the sunshades (σκιάδεια) of virtue. Therefore, this is the sun which causes damage, namely, whenever the flame from it (i.e., the sun) is not walled off by the cloud of the Spirit (ἡ νεφέλη τοῦ πνεύματος), which the Lord spread out for such (souls) as a shade (σκέπη) for them. For this is the sun that that burns (ἐπικαίω) the bright appearance (λαμπρὰ ἐπιφάνεια) of the body with the onslaught of temptations and darkens its form with ugliness.⁵⁵

We see almost the exact same vocabulary as in the *Life of Moses*. The sun represents temptation, thus being negative in both texts. However, God protects faithful souls with shade and moisture. These two passages in his *On the Song of Songs* heavily suggest that Gregory’s use of the same vocabulary in his *Life of Moses* in connection with the cloud carries the implication that the cloud should be read as the Holy Spirit.

Gregory of Nyssa," in *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Canticorum: Commentary and Supporting Studies*, ed. Giulio Maspero, Miguel Brugarolas, and Ilaria Vigorelli [Leiden: Brill, 2018], 263). See also *Antirrh.* 2 (GNO 10.134.10–11), where Gregory refers to the activity of divine power (θεία δύναμις) and the Holy Spirit operative at the incarnation. See also his reference elsewhere in the work to 1 Cor 1:24, which refers to Christ not as a power of God but as the power of God, indicating that for Gregory all the attributes of God rest in Christ. Therefore, any attributes that the Father has, the Son has too. This includes the Father’s power, which is present in the Son as the power of God (*Antirrh.* 4 [GNO 10.137]). Therefore, this constellation of elements in both works could have a connection to baptism.

⁵⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant.* 2 (GNO 24.51.19–52.2, 53.2–9): εἰ δὲ ἥλιος ἡ ἀντικειμένη τοῦ πειρασμοῦ προσβολῆ ὀνομάζεται, μηδεὶς ξενιζέσθω τῶν ἀκουόντων ἐν πολλοῖς τὸ τοιοῦτον παρὰ τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς διδασκόμενος. [. . .]. σκιερὸς δὲ γίνεται ἡμῖν καὶ δρυσώδης ὁ βίος διὰ τῶν τῆς ἀρετῆς σκιαδεῖων κατασβεννυμένου τοῦ καύσωνος. οὗτος οὖν ἐστὶν ὁ παραβλάπτων ἥλιος, ὅταν μὴ διατειχίζεται ὁ παρ’ αὐτοῦ φλογμὸς τῆ νεφέλη τοῦ πνεύματος, ἣν διεπέτασε τοῖς τοιοῦτοις ὁ κύριος εἰς σκέπην αὐτοῖς· οὗτος γάρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἥλιος ὁ τὴν λαμπρὰν τοῦ σώματος ἐπιφάνειαν τῆ προσβολῆ τῶν πειρασμῶν ἐπικαίων καὶ μελαίνων ἐν δυσμορφία τὸ εἶδος.

In addition, with vocabulary of guidance ([καθ]όδηγέω/καθηγέομαι) Gregory alludes to passages (e.g., Ps 77:14 LXX and Deut 1:33) in which the Exodus cloud serves as a kind of representative for God's presence. Both of these texts describe the cloud in the desert as one who guides the people with a light of fire. According to Ps 77:14 LXX, "he led (ώδήγησεν) them in a cloud (έν νεφέλη) by day and all night in an illumination of fire (έν φωτισμῶ πυρός)." ⁵⁶ Deut 1:33 similarly states that God went before the Israelites "guiding [them] in fire by night, showing [them] the way, on which [they] should go, and in a cloud by day." ⁵⁷ According to Gregory's account, the cloud served to guide the people. He makes this clear in *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 and 31, with the language of guidance (καθ)όδηγέω. In addition, the Ps 77:14 LXX and Deut 1:33 passages link the guiding aspect of the cloud to the use of a fire used as a light to lead the people.

Gregory merges these images together with the baptismal imagery often associated with the illumination given through the Holy Spirit. In his paraphrase, he draws on the language of initiation into the mysteries with the verb δαδουχέω. ⁵⁸ This verb refers to the one who, during the initiation ceremony, leads the procession of initiates at night with a torch. By describing the cloud with this non-biblical term, Gregory recasts the cloud as an initiatory hierophant as it conducts initiates by torchlight (δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος). Rather than the light of a torch, it guides the way with its own light (τῷ ἰδίῳ φωτί). Instead of a limited number of initiates, Gregory casts the entire nation as undergoing ritual initiation. For Gregory, the nation

⁵⁶ Ps 77:14 LXX: καὶ ὠδήγησεν αὐτοὺς ἐν νεφέλῃ ἡμέρας καὶ ὄλην τὴν νύκτα ἐν φωτισμῶ πυρός.

⁵⁷ Deut 1:33: ὀδηγῶν ὑμᾶς ἐν πυρὶ νυκτὸς δεικνύων ὑμῖν τὴν ὁδόν, καθ' ἣν πορεύεσθε ἐπ' αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐν νεφέλῃ ἡμέρας

⁵⁸ For instances of the word in Greek literature, see LSJ, s.v. "δαδουχέω" A: Euripides, *Tro.* 343; Lucan, *Catapl.* 22; Themistius, *Or.* 5.71a; Socrates of Rhodes, 1.

presumably prefigures the church/Christian initiates. Moreover, the crossing of the sea is likened to the moment of mystical revelation toward which the cloud leads.

Gregory uses the term *δαδουχέω* in several other places in his corpus.⁵⁹ In all of these passages, it has the significance of initiation. For instance, in the fifteenth homily of *On the Song of Songs*, he refers to Philip enlightening Nathanael to become a follower of the word and initiating him into the mystery of true religion.⁶⁰ In addition, in the opening of his homily *In sanctum et salutare Pascha*, Gregory uses the motif of enlightenment through light (*φῶς*) to connect the initiation of those who had just been baptized in the paschal feast with the Israelites in the desert: “for the light (*φῶς*) our eyes saw in the cloud of fire (*πῦρ*) was illuminated (*δαδουχούμενον*) by torches (*διὰ τῶν λαμπάδων*) in the night.”⁶¹ In both of these passages, the trope of illumination is associated with initiation, especially with the verb *δαδουχέω*. Recalling his thirteenth homily in *On the Song of Songs*, Gregory associated the light of illumination of the Holy Spirit with torchlight. Gregory thus uses the verb *δαδουχέω* in *Life of Moses* to prefigure the illumination of the Holy Spirit as it initiates catechumens in the light of baptism.⁶²

Gregory thus uses the text of his paraphrase of scripture in Book 1 to imply to the reader that the cloud and the Holy Spirit are one and the same. He does this by using scientific language

⁵⁹ The *LG* lists only three instances. These occur in *Or. Dom.* 1 (GNO 26.10.16), *Cant.* 15 (GNO 24.432.12), and *Salut. Pasch.* (GNO 42.309.11).

⁶⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant.* 15 (GNO 24.432.11–12): περιλάμπει τὸν Ναθαναὴλ δαδουχήσας αὐτῷ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον.

⁶¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Salut. Pasch.* (GNO 42.309.9–11): τὸ μὲν γὰρ ὁρώμενον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς φῶς ἦν τῆ τοῦ πυρὸς νεφέλη διὰ τῶν λαμπάδων ἡμῖν ἐν τῆ νυκτὶ δαδουχούμενον. See also his comments in *Or. Dom.* 1 (GNO 26.10.16–17) and *Salut. Pasch.* (42.309.21–24).

⁶² Enlightenment and illumination were a major part of Gregory’s theology regarding the Holy Spirit, especially its role in baptism. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 32 (GNO 16.82.3); *Diem lum.* (GNO 39.235.18–19; 236.3–7); *Cant.* 2 (GNO 24.49.2–4). See also Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 613.

to demonstrate how the cloud's composition is not like natural clouds while also appealing to scripture in order to show how the cloud is divine. Since the cloud possesses divine power, Gregory has already indicated that the cloud is divine in some way. By using language associated with the Holy Spirit in orthodox Trinitarian theology, Gregory specifies that the cloud should be equated with the Holy Spirit. In this way, Gregory's narrative of the cloud in the desert lays the groundwork for his later interpretation in Book 2 that the cloud is in fact the Holy Spirit.

Much as we saw in his reworking of Exod 14:15, Gregory appeals to the scriptural text of Exod 14 itself to give testimony that his paraphrase is an accurate accounting of the facts (i.e., γραφῆς μαρτυρούσης).⁶³ At the same time, immediately after appealing to scripture, he makes intertextual allusions to other biblical passages, thereby altering his account from what the biblical text literally says. This creates a tension between what Gregory claims he does and what he actually does. It is no coincidence that these intertextual allusions appear in the same location as his appeals to the text of scripture. By appealing to the text of scripture as witness, Gregory can draw the reader's attention away from the fact that he paraphrases the text through the insertion of these intertextual allusions. Moreover, through the appeal to scripture, he is able to justify his intertextual reading of the passage that conflates multiple passages of scripture that all are associated with the Holy Spirit in the patristic tradition.

After Gregory has interwoven his baptismal understanding of the invocation of the cloud into the narrative fabric of the paraphrase, he must move on to the physical water itself in order to complete his baptismal theology. As we already observed in the case of Philo, the Exodus account presents an inconsistency regarding the mechanism by which the parting of the waters

⁶³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.14.7–13).

occurs. According to Exod 14:16, God commands Moses to raise his hand and strike the waters with his rod in order to part the sea. However, what actually occurs in the narrative differs from this. According to Exod 14:21, while Moses raises his hand, a wind arrives that drives back the sea and causes the waters to divide. Like many previous biblical exegetes, Gregory perceives this apparent inconsistency and seeks to reconcile it in some way.

Unlike Philo, who aims to resolve the inconsistency by embellishing the events as he rearranges them, Gregory seeks a more muted response. As he paraphrases the crossing of the sea in his *Life of Moses*, he omits the wind from the episode and focuses on the actions of Moses’s staff alone. In this way, he resolves the inconsistency regarding the mechanism that parted the sea. This becomes clear through an examination of *Vit. Moys.* 1.31, where Gregory gives his version of the actual parting of the sea, in comparison with the biblical depiction in Exod 14:16, where God commands Moses, and 14:21, where Moses carries out that command:

Exod 14:16, 21	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Vit. Moys.</i> 1.31
καὶ σὺ ἔπαρον τῆ ῥάβδῳ σου καὶ ἔκτεινον τὴν χειρὰ σου ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ῥῆξον αὐτήν [. . .]. “And as for you, raise your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and break it. [. . .].”	θεία δυνάμει παρορμηθεὶς ὁ Μωυσῆς [. . .]. Urged on by divine power, Moses ⁶⁴
ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea,	[. . .] πλήσσει τῆ ῥάβδῳ τὸ πέλαγος. struck the sea with his rod ⁶⁵
καὶ ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐποίησεν τὴν θάλασσαν ξηράν.	

⁶⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.20–21).

⁶⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.22).

and the Lord drove back the sea with a strong south wind for the whole night, and made the sea dry land,	
καὶ ἐσχίσθη τὸ ὕδωρ. and the water was divided.	τὸ δὲ περὶ τὴν πληγὴν ὑπεσχίζετο. and the sea was split at the blow. ⁶⁶

Gregory here attributes the parting of the sea entirely to it being struck by Moses's staff, while the wind is entirely omitted.⁶⁷ This clears up any ambiguity regarding the manner in which the sea was split by focusing on one (i.e, the staff) and ignoring the other (i.e, the wind).

As he does this, Gregory creates continuity with the prior events by stating that the “divine power” (θεία δύναμις) of the wind urged on Moses's actions. Previously, when Moses prayed to God at the Israelites' moment of need, God sent the divine power (θεία δύναμις), residing in the cloud, to render aid. This cloud led the people to the sea. From the very moment the cloud was introduced in the narrative in *Vit. Moys.* 1.30, Gregory refers to it as a θεία δύναμις that guides the people. This function was so significant that Gregory states that Moses taught the people to follow this cloud as a leader.⁶⁸ Once they arrive at the sea, this same divine power (θεία δύναμις) continues to guide the people, this time by directing Moses's actions in parting the sea.

Gregory's narrative reading of the crossing of the sea follows closely in the exegetical tradition of Origen, who emphasizes the baptismal symbolism of the event. He does so by interpreting the cloud as the Holy Spirit, who guides the people, while omitting the wind and

⁶⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.22–23).

⁶⁷ Compare this to Gregory of Nyssa, *Thaum.* 52 (GNO 49.30.11–16).

⁶⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.15, 17). See the use of the verbs κατηγέομαι, καθοδηγέω, and ἀκολουθέω.

attributing the parting of the sea to the staff alone. In one passage, Origen provides a narrative description of this event:

Moses is ordered to strike the sea with his staff, so that it might part and withdraw for the people of God as they enter, and the obedience of the elements might serve the divine will. And when the waters, which they feared, became a “wall on the right and the left” for the servants of God, not only were they [i.e., the waters] incapable of destruction, but they also produced a defence. The water, then, is driven into a heap and the restrained wave is curved on itself.⁶⁹

As in Gregory’s account, Moses’s staff serves as the instrument that parts the waters, while the wind has no function. But does something cause Origen to make the exegetical moves that he does?

At the start of his homily, which begins as the Israelites set out from Egypt according to Exod 12:37, he states that he will follow the “rule of interpretation the Apostle Paul handed down to us about these matters,”⁷⁰ of the exodus in 1 Cor 10:1–4. There, as we have discussed, Paul links the Red Sea crossing and the Christian rite of baptism.⁷¹ Origen goes on to state that, based on this Pauline *regula intelligentiae*, that the cloud is the Holy Spirit and the crossing of

⁶⁹ Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.5 (GCS 29:189.21–26): *iubetur Moyses virga percutere mare, ut ingredienti populo Dei dehiscat et cedat ac voluntati divinae elementorum famulentur obsequia et aquae, quae timebantur, “dextra laevaue” famulis Dei “murus” effectae non solum perniciem nescient, sed et munimen exhibeant. cogitur ergo fluctus in cumulum et unda in semet ipsam repressa curvatur.*

⁷⁰ Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.1 (GCS 29:184.2–4): *nobis autem qualem tradiderit de his Paulus Apostolus intelligentiae regulam, videamus.*

⁷¹ 1 Cor 10:1–4: I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud (νεφέλη), and all passed through the sea (θαλάσσα), and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud (ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ) and in the sea (ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ), and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. (Οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν καὶ πάντες διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διήλθον καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν ἐβαπτίσθησαν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν βρῶμα ἔφαγον καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν ἔπιον πόμα· ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς ἀκολουθοῦσης πέτρας, ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός).

the sea is baptism.⁷² He then proposes to apply this rule in other similar passages, namely, in Exod 14 and beyond, the very passages that Paul alludes to in 1 Cor, and see what results he gets.⁷³ According to Origen, the crossing of the sea symbolizes baptism. He then proceeds to explain how the events depict this Christian process of initiation. As he does so, he gives symbolic meaning to Moses's staff, but never to the wind.

Perhaps Gregory, too, leaves out the wind from his own account for the same reason. While the most readily available symbol for the wind (πνεῦμα) would be the Holy Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον), the cloud already represents that for both exegetes, due their reliance on 1 Cor 10:2–4. Both Origen and Gregory omit the wind from their accounts in order to remove any inconsistency regarding the mechanism by which the sea was parted without sacrificing the Christian baptismal symbolism of the episode.

In our analysis of his paraphrase of the crossing of the Red Sea, we have examined how Gregory recasts the crossing of the Red Sea by interweaving the events with his theology of baptism. In his *On the Day of Lights* and *Catechetical Oratio*, Gregory provides his baptismal theology. In addition to the physical water, one requires the Holy Spirit to be invoked in prayer. Faith is another necessary component. Gregory inscribes these elements lexically into his paraphrase of the crossing of the Red Sea in *Vit. Moys.* 1.29–32.

As the Egyptians approach the Israelites, they become frightened. Moses cries out to God at their moment of need. As Gregory paraphrases God's question to Moses in Exod 14:15, he fashions the biblical question into Moses silently praying to God. This silent prayer results in the summoning of the Holy Spirit to give aid to the Israelites. However, this is no ordinary cloud.

⁷² Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.1 (GCS 29:184.9–11).

⁷³ Origen, *Hom. Exod.* 5.1 (GCS 29:184.20–185.2).

According to Gregory, the cloud contains divine power, which guides the people to the sea. At the sea, this same divine power urges Moses to strike the sea with his staff, thus parting the waters and creating a channel through which the people may escape. It is thus thanks to the cloud sent by God due to Moses's prayer that the Israelites are saved through the water at the moment of their need.

5.3 The Destruction and Restoration of the Tablets (*Vit. Moys.* 1.57–60)

In his paraphrase of the golden calf episode in Book 1, Gregory interweaves his incarnational theology with his account of the destruction and restoration of the tablets. We see this especially in regard to his understanding of the restoration of humanity with Christ's incarnation. Gregory's theology of incarnation underwent significant development during the 380s as a result of the controversy with Apollinarius. According to Gregory, Apollinarius held a belief that the flesh for Christ's incarnation had a heavenly origin. Gregory, on the other hand, argued that it had an earthly origin since Christ took flesh from the Virgin Mary at the incarnation. While Christ took flesh from the Virgin Mary as material (ὕλη) for the incarnation, he did this by means of the Holy Spirit. For Gregory, only by assuming flesh from the Virgin could Christ redeem fallen human nature.

The destruction and restoration of the tablets of the law serve as one image that Gregory uses to symbolize the fall and restoration of humanity. Gregory demonstrates much dependence on Pauline passages such as 2 Cor 3:3 and 1 Cor 15:42–49. According to 2 Cor 3:3, human

hearts are likened to the Mosaic tablets.⁷⁴ Moreover, in 1 Cor 15:42–49, Paul explores how Christ, as the second Adam, restores the fallen nature of Adam, the first Adam.⁷⁵ Under the influence of these Pauline passage, later Christian exegetes interpret Moses as a figure for Christ who restores the broken tablets of human nature.⁷⁶ Gregory himself shapes the events in his *Life of Moses* in such a way that the narrative of the episode resonates with such an interpretation.

As we turn to the Exod 32 text, we are confronted with several potential προβλήματα. Patristic interpreters, including Origen, Basil, and John Chrysostom, seem to regard Moses's destruction of the divine tablets as particularly problematic.⁷⁷ Gregory follows in this interpretive tradition. Gregory demonstrates a desire to address the tablets' destruction in his *Life of Moses*, where he seeks "to learn how (πῶς) Moses restored again the divinely made tablets, on which the

⁷⁴ 2 Cor 3:3: ἐστὲ ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ διακονηθεῖσα ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ἐγγεγραμμένη οὐ μέλανι ἀλλὰ πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος, οὐκ ἐν πλαξίν λιθίναις ἀλλ' ἐν πλαξίν καρδίαις σαρκίνοις. For other similar LXX passages, see also Jer 38:31–34 LXX (31:31–34 MT), Ezek 11:19 and 36:26–27a, Exod 31–34, Deut 9:10–11.

⁷⁵ For discussions of the Adam-Christ typology see, for example, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, Anchor Bible 32 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 591–600; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1281–1290; James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 199–212.

⁷⁶ For the complex history of interpretation on the Pauline passage and Paul's use of his source material, see, for example, Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 265; Hermut Löhr, "Steintafeln: Tora-Traditionen in 2Kor 3," in *Der zweite Korintherbrief: Literarische Gestalt, historische Situation, theologische Argumentation*, ed. Dieter Sänger, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 250 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 175–187; Peter Arzt-Grabner, *2. Korinther*, Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 278–279; Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, Anchor Bible 32A (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 182–183. See also William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, 2 vols., International Critical Commentary 21 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986–96), 817–827; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy: I–II*, Anchor Bible 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 408–409.

⁷⁷ See Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 2.14.12 (PG 14:917); Basil the Great, *Iei.* 1.5 (PG 31:169); John Chrysostom, *Hom. Col.* 4.3 (PG 62:328–30); Theodoret of Cyrus, *Quaestiones in Exodum* 2.68; and Photius of Constantinople, *Quaestiones ad Amphilochium* 269 (PG 101:1096).

divine law was inscribed.”⁷⁸ Gregory starts to answer this question in Book 1, where he shapes the biblical narrative to explain how Moses restored the tablets. In Book 1, he lays the groundwork that the tablets prefigure the restoration of humanity at the incarnation.

As Gregory seeks to explain the tablets’ destruction, he contrasts the actions of Moses and the people in terms of virtue and vice in order to place the blame for the destruction with the Israelites rather than with Moses. Gregory begins by signaling to the reader the significance that the tablets will hold for his interpretation of the episode by framing the events with paired descriptions of the tablets in *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 and 60. This creates a narrative *inclusio* around the episode. He opens the account with a description of the first set of tablets:

[Moses] carried the divine tablets, which were a divine creation and gift that did not require any human activity to be brought into existence, in his hand. Rather, both the material (ὕλη) and what was inscribed (χαράγματα) on it were equally God’s work (ἔργον θεοῦ ἐπίσης). What was inscribed was the law (νόμος δὲ ἦν τὰ χαράγματα).⁷⁹

He concludes the episode with a description of the second set of tablets:

Their writing (ἡ γραφή) was from divine power (ἐκ θείας δυνάμεως), but the material (ἡ ὕλη) was fashioned by Moses’s hand (διὰ τῆς Μωϋσέως χειρός).⁸⁰

By beginning and ending the episode with these two descriptions of the tablets, Gregory indicates their centrality to his version of events. Everything else in the narrative contributes to the theme of the tablets in some way.

⁷⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.214 (GNO 25.107.22–108.2): μαθεῖν πῶς τὰς θεοτεύκτους πλάκας, αἷς ὁ θεῖος νόμος ἐνεκεχάρακτο, [. . .] πάλιν ὁ Μωϋσῆς ἀνακομίζεται.

⁷⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 (GNO 25.26.6–10): ἔφερε δὲ καὶ τὰς ἱεράς πλάκας διὰ χειρός, αἱ θεῖον εὔρεμα καὶ δῶρον ἦσαν οὐδεμίαν ἀνθρωπίνης ἐνεργείας εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι προσδεηθεῖσαι· ἀλλ’ ἔργον θεοῦ ἐπίσης ἐκάτερα ἦν, ἢ τε ὕλη καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ χαράγματα· νόμος δὲ ἦν τὰ χαράγματα.

⁸⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60 (GNO 25.27.7–8): ὧν ἡ γραφή μὲν ἐκ θείας δυνάμεως ἦν, ἡ δὲ ὕλη διὰ τῆς Μωϋσέως ἐξησκήθη χειρός.

Immediately after introducing the tablets as the central theme of the account, Gregory provides a proleptic solution to the problem of their destruction even before its narration: “but the people prevented grace (ἐκόλυσε τὴν χάριν ὁ λαός) before the giving of the law by rebelling into idolatry (εἰς εἰδωλολατρείαν ἀφηνιάσας).”⁸¹ For Gregory, the law on the tablets represents grace. When the tablets are destroyed, the people fail to receive the grace therein. According to this summary statement, the people, rather than Moses, bear the responsibility for the loss of grace/tablets, due to their actions. By signaling this essential information in the opening paragraph before he has narrated the actual events, Gregory prepares the reader by already shaping their perception of the coming incident. In this way, in his opening paragraph of the episode, Gregory does the important task of indicating both the centrality of the tablets for his reading and that the people, not Moses, bear the guilt for the destruction.

Within the *inclusio* between *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 and 60, Gregory constructs his argument for the culpability of the Israelites by composing a *synkrisis*, introduced with an ἐπειδή...τότε construction, that contrasts the activities of Moses atop the mountain (ἐπειδή [. . .] τῷ Μωϋσεῖ) with those of the people below (τότε [. . .] ὁ λαός) by drawing on contemporary ethical theory.⁸² In this comparison, while Moses has characteristics of self-control and piety, the Israelites demonstrate a complete lack of restraint that ultimately leads to the impiety of idolatry.⁸³

⁸¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 (GNO 25.26.10–12): ἀλλ’ ἐκόλυσε τὴν χάριν ὁ λαός πρὶν ἐπιστῆναι τὸν νομοθέτην εἰς εἰδωλολατρείαν ἀφηνιάσας.

⁸² We know that Gregory made use of ethical language in his *Vit. Moys.* This may be seen, for instance, in *Vit. Moys.* 2.14. Interpreting Moses’s fight with an Egyptian before his exile (Exod 2), Gregory distinguishes Moses and the Egyptian. While Moses displays “piety” (θεοσεβεία), “temperance” (σωφροσύνη), “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη), and “moderation” (μετριότης), the Egyptian demonstrates “idolatry” (εἰδωλολατρεία), “intemperance” (ἀκολασία), “injustice” (ἀδικία), and “vanity” (τῦφος) (Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.14 [GNO 25.37.21–22]).

⁸³ For Gregory, impiety and idolatry are synonymous (see Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.14 [GNO 25.37.21–22]).

According to Gregory, Moses was “spending his time in conversation with God in that divine initiation” (τῆ πρὸς θεὸν ὀμιλία διὰ τῆς θείας ἐκείνης μυσταγωγίας ἀποσχολάζοντι) where he was “sharing in that everlasting life for forty days and nights” (ἦν ἐν τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέραις καὶ τοσαύταις νυξὶ τῆς αἰδίου ἐκείνης ζωῆς [. . .] μετέχων). These are marks of pious devotion to the divine.⁸⁴ During these forty days, Moses has complete mastery over his own nature and his natural impulses, demonstrating his self-control. According to Gregory, Moses existed “almost beyond nature itself (for at that time he did not have need of food for his body).”⁸⁵ Similarly, when Moses goes atop the mountain a second time, to receive the tablets again, he also demonstrates the same exceptional self-control. According to *Vit. Moys.* 1.60, “he was living in another manner, not like we are accustomed to live, nor did he take into his body any sustenance through food which is necessary for our nature.”⁸⁶ In all of these portrayals of Moses during his time on the mountain (ἐπειδή), Gregory casts him as one who has the virtues of piety and self-control.⁸⁷

While Moses lives such a heavenly life, the people demonstrate a complete lack of restraint. “At that time (τότε),” he describes, “the people, like a child (οἷόν τι μαιράκιον) away from the eyes of his tutor (τῶν τοῦ παιδαγωγοῦντος ὄψεων ἔξω), were carried away (ἐκφέρεται)

⁸⁴ See, for example, Maximus of Turin, *Serm.* 35.3. See also Augustine, *Ep.* 55.

⁸⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.58 (GNO 25.26.17–18): αὐτῆς σχεδὸν τῆς φύσεως ἔξω γενόμενος (οὐ γὰρ ἐπεδειήθη κατὰ τὸν χρόνον ἐκείνον εἰς τὸ σῶμα τροφῆς).

⁸⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60 (GNO 25.27.10–12): ἄλλον τινὰ τρόπον καὶ οὐ κατὰ τὸν νενομισμένον ἡμῖν βιοτεύων, οὐδὲν τῶν ὑποστηριζόντων διὰ τροφῆς τὸ τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν ἐνδεὲς τῷ ἰδίῳ σώματι προσδεξάμενος.

⁸⁷ Compare this with *De Beneficentia*, where Gregory again connects the virtues of piety and self-control in the context of fasting (*Benef.* [GNO 35.93–97]). According to Gregory, fasting is a “foundation of virtue” (νηστεία θεμέλιος ἀρετῆς) (*Benef.* [GNO 35.95.17–18]).

by foolish impulses (ἀνοήτοις ὀρμαῖς) into disorder (εἰς ἀταξίαν).”⁸⁸ Gregory depicts them as the complete opposite of Moses. Whereas Moses is introduced in 1.57 in control and carrying (φέρω) the divine tablets (ἱεραὶ πλάκες), the people come into the account here in 1.58 carried away (ἐκφέρω) by their foolish impulses (ἀνόητοι ὀρμαί). While he brings tablets crafted from above, they are encumbered by passions born from below. Whereas Moses controls his material impulses (ὀρμαί) to such a degree that he lives beyond the needs of his body, almost beyond his very nature, the people are completely controlled by theirs. Whereas Moses acts as a kind of disciplinarian (παιδαγωγός) who brings order to the people, the people themselves are portrayed as immature (μειράκιον) and easily falling into disorder (ἀταξία). Whereas Moses receives the tablets due to his self-control and piety (i.e., after spending forty days living beyond nature), the people have no self-control and force (ἀνάγκην ἐπάγει) Aaron to craft the calf.

While Gregory finds many of these antitheses already latent in the biblical text, he amplifies them into a full-blown rhetorical *synkrisis*. As he does so, he demonstrates the tension that the paraphrast has with the original. Since these features are implicit in scripture, he is to some degree faithful to his source material. Yet, at the same time, by amplifying the text in new ways, he shows great flexibility and freedom with respect to the source material. As he weaves the original text of scripture in new ways, he is able to direct the reader’s eye to focus on the tablets of the law, since he now makes them the primary focus of his version of events.

After the construction of the idol, the *synkrisis* is brought to a climax with a μέν...δέ clause that contrasts the complete disconnect between Moses and the Israelites. The Israelites (οἱ

⁸⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.58 (GNO 25.26.18–20): τότε οἷόν τι μειράκιον ὁ λαὸς τῶν τοῦ παιδαγωγοῦντος ὄψεων ἔξω γενόμενος ἀνοήτοις ὀρμαῖς εἰς ἀταξίαν ἐκφέρεται.

μὲν) “exulted in their impiety”⁸⁹ while Moses (ὁ δὲ Μωϋσῆς) “broke the tablets.”⁹⁰ Gregory paraphrases the account to make the destruction of the tablets into a calculated act by Moses rather than an impetuous deed done in a fit of anger. Moses waits to break the tablets until he is in the Israelites’ presence.⁹¹ Moreover, according to Gregory, Moses broke the tablets for a specific purpose. This is made clear due to his use of a purpose clause: “so that (ὡς ἄν) they might suffer (ὑπόσχοιεν) a worthy punishment (ἀξίαν τὴν τιμωρίαν) for their transgression by not having a share in the God-given grace (χάριτος).”⁹² Not only does Gregory indicate that this punishment is one fitting (ἀξίαν) for their deed, but he also links it back to his initial statement in 1.57 about who ultimately bears responsibility. Gregory had previously said there that “the people prevented grace (χάρις) [. . .] by rebelling in idolatry.”⁹³ Moses now becomes the agent who carries out the just punishment that the Israelites brought upon themselves by their own actions. Therefore, according to Gregory, while the people bear the responsibility for the loss of grace (χάρις), Moses carries out the punishment.

After the destruction of the tablets, Gregory immediately moves to the narration of their restoration. In Gregory’s paraphrase, Moses’s actions are portrayed as undoing Israelite transgression and restoring grace. This is seen, among other things, in the parallels between *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 and 60. While the destruction of the idol parallels the act of idolatry, the reception of

⁸⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.59 (GNO 25.26.23–24): οἱ μὲν ἐπηγάλλοντο τῷ ἀσεβήματι.

⁹⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.59 (GNO 25.26.24–27.1): ὁ δὲ Μωϋσῆς κατ’ αὐτοὺς ἤδη γενόμενος συντρίβει τὰς πλάκας.

⁹¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.59 (GNO 25.26.24–27.1): “after he had come to them” (κατ’ αὐτοὺς ἤδη γενόμενος). However, in Exod 32:19 Moses shatters them in a fit of anger immediately upon seeing the idol while still at a distance from the camp.

⁹² Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.59 (GNO 25.27.1–3): ὡς ἄν τοῦ πλημμελήματος ἀξίαν τὴν τιμωρίαν ὑπόσχοιεν τῆς θεοσδότου χάριτος ἀμοιρήσαντες.

⁹³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.57 (GNO 25.26.10–12): ἀλλ’ ἐκώλυσε τὴν χάριν ὁ λαὸς πρὶν ἐπιστῆναι τὸν νομοθέτην εἰς εἰδωλολατρειαν ἀφηνιάσας.

the tablets corresponds to the loss of grace. In *Vit. Moys.* 1.57, the people rebel in idolatry (εις ειδωλολατρείαν ἀφηνιάσας), resulting in the loss of grace (ἐκώλυσε τὴν χάριν). In *Vit. Moys.* 1.60, Moses ameliorates the situation. He “purifies the guilt” (καθαρίσας τὸ ἄγος), “propitiates the divine” (τὸ θεῖον ἰλεωσάμενος), and “destroys the idol” (τὸ τε εἶδωλον ἐξαφανίσας), which results in him receiving the tablets again (τὰς πλάκας κομίζεται).⁹⁴ In both sequences, the participles build to the final, resulting action of the main, finite verb.

As the people’s action (i.e., rebellion) leads to the loss of grace through the destruction of the tablets, so Moses’s three actions (i.e., purification, atonement, and destruction) result in the restoration of grace through the reception of new tablets. As the construction of the idol prevented grace, so its destruction is a necessary step before grace can be restored. In the various ways argued above, Gregory responds narratively to what could be seen as an ethical lapse in Moses’s destroying the tablets in a fit of rage. According to Gregory’s account, Moses broke them in order both to punish the people in a fitting way for their own actions and to aid in the restoration of grace. He does this by finding antitheses in the narrative logic of scripture and greatly amplifying them in his rhetorical *synkrisis* in order to contrast Moses and the people in terms of contemporary ethics, especially self-control, piety, and justice.

While Gregory uses his paraphrase of the destruction of the tablets as a means to respond to questions related to the literal tablets’ destruction, he also uses this as an opportunity to respond to other kinds of questions, namely, theological questions regarding how the restoration of humanity in the incarnation happened. In his *Life of Moses*, Gregory amplifies what he deems to be most essential from the biblical account. According to him, God made and wrote upon the

⁹⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60 (GNO 25.27.4–7).

first tablets.⁹⁵ However, while Moses made the second tablets, it is still God who wrote upon them.⁹⁶ So, while the material is new, the divine writing upon them stays constant. While scripture contains these same basic elements, Gregory highlights these aspects of the narrative.⁹⁷ In so doing, he emphasizes the tablets themselves, their destruction and restoration, their material (ὕλη), and the divine inscription/writing (χαράγματα/γραφή).

As Gregory describes the restoration of the tablets, he uses language that has significance in his debate with Apollinarius regarding the incarnation, namely regarding the material (ὕλη) and divine power (θεία δυνάμις). During that controversy, Gregory refined his ideas about the incarnation, especially how the union of divine and human occurred in reference to the combination of soul and body. In particular, Gregory responded to Apollinarius's belief that the union of divine and human was achieved because Christ was an "enfleshed mind" (νοῦς ἔνσαρκος) in which the divine λόγος took the place of the human mind (νοῦς), that is, the rational, upper part of the soul (ψυχή). In response, Gregory argued that without Christ having a

⁹⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.57.

⁹⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60.

⁹⁷ The first tablets are described in Exod 31:18; 32:15–16, while the second ones are narrated in Exod 34:1, 4, 27–28. While Exod 34:1 suggests that God will write on the second tablets, 34:27–28 implies that Moses himself writes on them. According to Exod 34:1: "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Carve for yourself two stone tablets just like the first ones, and come up to me on the mountain, and I will write on the tablets the words, which were on the first tablets, which you broke'" (Καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν Λάξευσον σεαυτῷ δύο πλάκας λιθίνας καθὼς καὶ αἱ πρῶται καὶ ἀνάβηθι πρὸς με εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ γράψω ἐπὶ τῶν πλακῶν τὰ ῥήματα, ἃ ἦν ἐν ταῖς πλαξίν ταῖς πρώταις, αἷς συνέτριψας). As it states in Exod 34:27–28: "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Write for yourself these words, for on the basis of these words I have made a covenant with you and Israel.' And Moses was there before God for forty days and forty nights. He did not eat bread and he did not drink water. And he wrote these words on the tablets of the covenant, the ten words" (Καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν Γράψον σεαυτῷ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα· ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν λόγων τούτων τέθειμαί σοι διαθήκην καὶ τῷ Ἰσραηλ. καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ Μωυσῆς ἐναντίον κυρίου τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας καὶ τεσσαράκοντα νύκτας· ἄρτον οὐκ ἔφαγεν καὶ ὕδωρ οὐκ ἔπιεν· καὶ ἔγραψεν τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ἐπὶ τῶν πλακῶν τῆς διαθήκης, τοὺς δέκα λόγους).

complete human soul and body, salvation would be ineffective. According to him, Christ’s incarnation consisted of the Son forming his own body—composed of body and soul—at the incarnation by taking flesh from the Virgin Mary through the cooperation of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁸

From this examination of Gregory’s account of Exod 32 in *Vit. Moys.* 1.57–60, we have sought to conclude several things. First, while Gregory demonstrates a similar concern as other patristic exegetes for the question of Moses’s motivation for the tablets’ destruction (i.e., “why”), his primary interest lies with the question of “how” Moses restored the tablets. However, Gregory’s answer to the first question builds up to the answer to the second. Second, Gregory provides a solution to these problems by shaping the events in his paraphrase. As he does so, he uses paraphrase to focus the account primarily on the tablets. While they have a key role in the LXX text too, they now become the center of attention. As he responds to the first question regarding Moses’s motivation, Gregory seeks to remove any blame from Moses for his actions in the account. In regard to the second question about how the tablets were restored, Gregory’s paraphrase indicates that Moses refashioned the tablets with material (ὕλη) available to him while divine power (θεία δυνάμις) inscribed the same law that was on the first tablets upon them. As we will see when we turn to Book 2, by shifting the blame for the destruction to the Israelites

⁹⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Antirrh.* 8 (GNO 10.144.5–10): “Rather he prepared an entrance for his power through the Holy Spirit, although he needed no material principle for the construction of an appropriate dwelling, according to the statement about wisdom, ‘He built a house for himself (Prov 9:1) by fashioning a human from the dust of the Virgin, through which he was mixed with humanity’ (ἀλλὰ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι προοδοποίησας τὴν τῆς ἰδίας δυνάμεως εἴσοδον καὶ μηδὲν τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀφορμῆς πρὸς τὴν κατασκευὴν τοῦ οἰκείου σκηνούς προσδεηθεὶς κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον περὶ τῆς σοφίας Ἐαυτῷ ἠκοδόμησεν οἶκον τὸν ἐκ τῆς παρθένου χοῦν ἀνθρωποποίησας, δι’ οὗ συνεκράθη πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρώπινον). Note that Gregory adjusts the LXX from a feminine σοφία in his quotation of Prov 9:1 to a masculine, with the masculine Jesus as subject. I have taken the section numbering from Robin Orton, *St. Gregory of Nyssa: Anti-Apollinarian Writings*, Fathers of the Church 131 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2015).

and thus composing the account of their restoration with these lexical elements, Gregory shapes the account to be in line with his understanding of the fall of humanity and its restoration at the incarnation.

5.4 Conclusion

In the present chapter, we have analyzed how in Book 1 Gregory paraphrases the events surrounding the crossing of the Red Sea (*Vit. Moys.* 1.29–32) and the forging of the golden calf (*Vit. Moys.* 1.57–60) by silently engaging with problems (προβλήματα). As he does so, we see Gregory craft an intricate theological narrative that is in line with his orthodox Christian theology. As our analysis indicated, because Gregory cannot provide an explicit commentary on events due to the paraphrastic form, he sprinkles in allusions to vocabulary that is significant in early Christian exegesis. For example, for early Christian exegetes the cloud in the desert was symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Also, the tablets of the law were considered to represent human nature, which was broken at the fall and restored as the incarnation. While Gregory's audience was likely familiar with these readings of scripture, his paraphrase of those events now reverberates with lexical allusions to contemporary orthodox theology. Gregory's readers could not help but come away from a reading of Book 1 nodding their heads in agreement at the allegorical interpretations present under the form of a paraphrase of the literal text of the LXX. As we turn to Chapter Six, we will observe how in Book 2 Gregory distills these allegorical readings present in his paraphrase of scripture in Book 1.

Chapter 6

Gregory's *Life of Moses*:

From Paraphrase to Allegory Articulated

6.1 Introduction

While Chapter Five investigated how Gregory shaped the LXX account in Book 1 of his *Life of Moses* via paraphrase so that the narrative conveyed allegorical readings under the guise of the literal text, we now begin to examine in Chapter Six how Gregory distills those readings into a fully articulated allegorical presentation in Book 2. In order to do this, we will undertake a comparative analysis of the paraphrase in Book 1 with the more explicit explanation of events in Book 2. As examples to illustrate how the readings in Book 1 prepare for the interpretations in Book 2, we will continue to look at the same two biblical episodes, namely, the crossing of the Red Sea and the golden calf. As the analysis in this chapter will demonstrate, Gregory's paraphrase in Book 1 prepares the reader for the fully articulated exegesis in Book 2, because Book 1 contains the same readings but in narrative form.

As we will demonstrate in this chapter, Book 1 mediates the meaning of the biblical text. However, it only marginally does so directly to the reader—as was the case in Philo's *Life*. Gregory's Book 1 functions as a mediator between LXX and Book 2. Our analysis will show how Book 2 has much exegetically in common with Book 1 that is absent from scripture. In this way, Book 1 serves to guide the reader from LXX, to the narrative interpretation of scripture, to the fully articulated interpretation in Book 2.

6.2 Crossing the Red Sea (*Vit. Moys.* 2.117–129)

In both his *On the Day of Lights* and *Catechetical Oration*, Gregory responds to criticisms regarding the Christian rite of baptism. In response to the criticism of how material water can lead to salvific results, Gregory responds that baptism requires both material water and immaterial Spirit. His opponents do not believe that physical actions (τὸ σωματικῶς ἐνεργούμενον) correspond to the spiritual reality (συμβαῖνον τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ). That is, they hold a “gnostic” denial of the sacramentality of physical reality. In response, Gregory asserts that both water and Spirit are essential components for the rite of baptism. While the one being baptized undergoes mystical baptism in the physical water, the Spirit is present invisibly:

For what is the trouble to believe in this matter that God is everywhere, and that he is present in all things and to those who invoke (τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις) his life-giving power (ζωτική δύναμις), and when he is present he acts appropriately? The salvation of those in need (ἡ τῶν δεομένων σωτηρία) is characteristic of divine activity (θεία ἐνέργεια). This becomes actual (ἐνεργὸς γίνεται) through the purification in the water.¹

While Gregory acknowledges two essential components of the act of baptism (i.e., water and Spirit), the Spirit is present and active in the waters of baptism due to its prior invocation in prayer. It is for this reason that Gregory asserts elsewhere in his *Catechetical Oration*, that in addition to water and Spirit, the invocation of the Spirit over the water in faith completes the sacramental action.² We see Gregory reflect similar baptismal logic in the text of his *Life of Moses* in the events of the Red Sea.

¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 36 (GNO 16.92.13–18): τίς γὰρ πάρεστι πόνος τῷ πράγματι πιστεῦσαι πανταχοῦ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι, ἐν πᾶσι δὲ ὄντα παρεῖναι καὶ τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὴν ζωτικὴν αὐτοῦ δύναμιν, παρόντα δὲ τὸ οἰκεῖον ποιεῖν; ἴδιον δὲ τῆς θείας ἐνεργείας ἡ τῶν δεομένων ἐστὶ σωτηρία· αὕτη δὲ διὰ τῆς ἐν ὕδατι καθάρσεως ἐνεργὸς γίνεται.

² Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33.

As we turn to his interpretation of the episode in Book 2 of his *Life of Moses*, we see Gregory explicitly interpret the cloud as the grace of the Holy Spirit and the sea as the waters of baptism. According to Gregory, the people receive baptism when they passed through the sea. While the Israelites cross safely, the Egyptians, who represent the passions, are destroyed. The cloud, representing the grace of the Holy Spirit, guides the people to this salvation. However, it only does so after its invocation by Moses. We will now turn to each of these individual aspects of the account, namely the invocation in prayer, the grace of the Holy Spirit as the cloud, and the sea as the waters of baptism in order to see how Gregory's interpretation of the events of the Red Sea episode reflect the baptismal theology in *On the Day of Lights* and *Catechetical Oration*.

As we recall from our analysis of Book 1, Gregory provides an exegetical paraphrase of Moses's cry that attempts to solve the question of how Moses is said to cry out to God in Exod 14:15 when scripture does not contain a description of him crying out in any of the prior verses. While scripture poses a possible contradiction, Gregory's account seeks to demonstrate that, when interpreted correctly, no such contradiction exists. According to his paraphrase of the passage, Moses performs two speech-acts simultaneously. While speaking to the Israelites audibly in voice and word, Moses speaks to God silently in his mind:

In voice and word (τῆ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ), he was encouraging (παραθαρρύνειν) the Israelites and exhorting (παρακελεύεσθαι) them to hold fast to their good hope. Inwardly in his mind (ἔνδοθεν δὲ τῆ διανοίᾳ), he was supplicating (προσάγειν τὴν ἱκετηρίαν) God (τῷ θεῷ) on behalf of those who had cowered in fear (ὑπὲρ τῶν κατεπτηνόντων).³

³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.13.22–25): τῆ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ παραθαρρύνειν τε τοὺς Ἰσραηλίτας καὶ τὰς ἀγαθὰς ἔχειν ἐλπίδας παρακελεύεσθαι, ἔνδοθεν δὲ τῆ διανοίᾳ τῷ θεῷ προσάγειν τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν κατεπτηνόντων ἱκετηρίαν.

With an additional allusion to the Pauline intertext of Rom 8:26–27, Gregory formulates a philosophical solution to the contradiction, namely that Moses spoke with an “unspoken voice” (ἀλάλητος φωνή). Gregory draws on the Platonic distinction between the sense-perceptible and the intellectually perceptible in order to distinguish between the two modes of Moses’s speech. While Moses’s sense-perceptible voice is narrated in scripture, his intellectual voice goes unnarrated, yet God’s question in Exod 14:15 (“Why do you cry out to me?”) gives testimony to it.

Returning to the same events in Book 2 (*Vit. Moys.* 2.117–118), Gregory now distills the allegory, which was present in the paraphrase in Book 1. The reading contained in the paraphrastic *historia* (i.e., that Moses externally encouraged the Israelites in word while internally supplicating God in mind on behalf of those cowering in fear) exegetically prepares the reader for the interpretation in the *theoria*. This is apparent due to the many close lexical correspondences between *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 and 2.117, which do not appear in scripture, including φόβος, συμβουλή, ἐλπίς, καταπτήσσω, διάνοια, παραθαρρύνω:⁴

Whenever those who already look to virtue and follow the lawgiver in life abandon the borders of the dominion of the Egyptians, the assaults of the temptations somehow pursue them and bring on distress, fear (φόβος), and risks of death. When frightened by these things, the mind (διάνοια) of those newly established in the faith, loses all hope (ἀνελπιστίαν) for the good. But if Moses or some leader of the people like him happens to come, he will give counsel (συμβουλή) against fear (φόβος) and will encourage (παραθαρρύνων) their

⁴ There, in order to provide a solution to the contradiction in Exod 14:15, Gregory paraphrases the biblical account to narrate Moses simultaneously speaking audibly to the Israelites and praying inaudibly to God. In voice and word (τῆ φωνῆ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ), Moses encouraged (παραθαρρύνειν) the people to maintain their hope (ἐλπίς) in the face of great fear (φόβος). At the same time, in his mind (τῆ διανοίᾳ), he supplicated God on behalf of the cowering people (ὑπὲρ τῶν κατεπτηγόντων). God then provided counsel (συμβουλή) on how to escape the Egyptians.

covering minds (τὸ κατεπτηχὸς τῆς διανοίας) with the hope (ἐλπίς) of divine help.⁵

According to his Gregory, Moses represents the leader who must guide new initiates (i.e., the Israelites) as they embrace the faith and become catechumens. As they begin this journey, catechumens undergo many temptations. Good leaders must respond like Moses.⁶

Catechumens had a long and arduous path toward baptism. Gregory argues that their journey of faith would be successful only if divine help were given. This divine aid comes when the leader speaks with God in prayer. Gregory asserts that Moses differs from typical leaders. While most leaders are concerned only about outward appearances (τὸ φαινόμενον), Moses is concerned about the spiritual. This is attested by Moses's noetic voice, an inaudible communication (μηδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον φωνήν) with the higher realm:

[Divine help] which might not occur if the leader's heart does not speak (λαλούσης) with God. For many of those who are positioned in such a place of leadership are concerned only with outward appearances, with how they might be arranged well. But for the hidden things, which are seen by God alone, there is hardly a thought. But this was not so in the case of Moses. While he was exhorting the Israelites to have courage, he cried out (βοᾶν), although he uttered no perceptible voice (μηδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον φωνήν) to God, as is testified (μαρτυρεῖται) by God himself.⁷

⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.117 (GNO 25.69.4–14): ὅτι τοῖς πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἤδη βλέπουσι καὶ τῷ νομοθέτῃ κατὰ τὴν ζωὴν ἐπομένοις, ὅταν καταλίπωσι τῆς τῶν Αἰγυπτίων δυναστείας τοὺς ὄρους, ἐπακολουθοῦσιν ὡς αἱ τῶν πειρασμῶν προσβολαὶ στενοχωρίας καὶ φόβους καὶ τοὺς περὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων κινδύνους ἐπάγουσαι, δι' ὧν καταπτοηθεῖσα τῶν κατὰ τὴν πίστιν νεοπαγῶν ἡ διάνοια εἰς παντελεῖ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνελπιστίαν ἐκπίπτει. ἀλλ' εἰ Μωϋσῆς ἢ εἴ τις τῶν κατ' αὐτὸν ἐπιστατῶν τοῦ λαοῦ τύχοι, ἀντιστήσει τῷ φόβῳ τὴν συμβουλὴν τῆ τῆς θείας συμμαχίας ἐλπίδι τὸ κατεπτηχὸς τῆς διανοίας παραθαρύνων.

⁶ We see Gregory employ the language of leadership throughout this short passage, indicating its importance (*Vit. Moys.* 2.117–118 [GNO 25.69.11, 14–17]).

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.118 (GNO 25.69.14–23): ὅπερ οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο μὴ τῆς καρδίας τοῦ προεστηκότος τῷ θεῷ λαλούσης. τοῖς γὰρ πολλοῖς τῶν ἐν προστασίᾳ τοιαύτῃ προτεταγμένων τὸ φαινόμενον μόνον ὅπως ἂν εὖ διατεθεῖ σπουδάζεται, τῶν δὲ κεκρυμμένων ἂ μόνῳ τῷ θεῷ καθορᾶται, ὀλίγος γίνεται λόγος. ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως οὐχ οὕτως ἦν, ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ θαρρεῖν τοῖς Ἰσραηλίταις διακελεύεται, μηδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ποιησάμενος, βοᾶν παρ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ μαρτυρεῖται.

By exploiting the distinction between the sense-perceptible and non sense-perceptible speech of Moses, Gregory distinguishes Moses from other leaders. While most care about physical, sense-perceptible matters, Moses alone cares about spiritual affairs.

By describing Moses's voice as one that is "no perceptible voice" (μηδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον φωνήν), Gregory uses language reminiscent of his depiction in the paraphrastic *historia*. There, Moses is portrayed as crying out with an unspoken voice (ἀλάλητος φωνή). In both cases, Moses speaks with a voice, yet it is a voice that utters no physical sound. In this way, Gregory appeals to the platonic distinction between the sense-perceptible and the intellectual. While Moses cries out (βοᾶν), that cry does not consist of physical sound. Instead, it is an intellectual cry. As a result, although the Israelites do not perceive it, God does. Gregory asserts that God attests to the fact that Moses did, in fact, utter an intellectual voice in his exegesis of Exod 14:15. We here see Gregory's paraphrastic *historia* laying the exegetical groundwork for his later explicit interpretation.

This distinction between the sense-perceptible and the intellectual voice that Moses utters leads Gregory to a lesson that he wants his reader to take away. According to him, the voice that is audible to God is not the sense-perceptible one, spoken by the mouth, but the intellectual one, spoken by the heart, arising from a pure conscience:

The word teaches, I think, that that voice (φωνή) that is melodious⁸ and ascends to the divine ear is not the cry (κραυγή) made with some kind of extension [of the voice] but rather the thought sent up from a pure conscience.⁹

⁸ Following Daniélou's edition of the *Vit. Moys.*, I have used the alternate reading εὔηχος.

⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.118 (GNO 25.69.23–70.3): διδάσκοντος, οἶμαι, τοῦ λόγου ὅτι εὔηχος τέ ἐστιν ἐκείνη ἢ φωνή καὶ μέχρι τῆς θείας ἀναβαίνουσα ἀκοῆς, οὐχ ἢ μετὰ τινος διατάσεως γινομένη κραυγή, ἀλλ' ἢ ἐκ καθαρᾶς συνειδήσεως ἀναπεμπομένη ἐνθύμησις.

Here, he brings to fullest fruition Moses's two speech-acts distinguished as a spoken voice and an unspoken voice (ἀλάλητος φωνή), which began all the way back at his paraphrastic *historia* in response to the problem of contradiction in Exod 14:15.¹⁰ By making use of such language of speech and voice, Gregory builds lexically upon his paraphrastic *historia* to establish his explicit interpretation of the episode that stretches from Books 1 to 2.

This is by no means the only place where Gregory arrives at such an interpretive solution concerning the problem of contradiction in Exod 14:15. For example, in the prior chapter on Gregory, we already analyzed *Eun.* 2.268, where he similarly resolved the problem by arguing that God's question in Exod 14:15 indicated that Moses spoke in an intellectual, unspoken voice heard by God alone:

“Why do you cry out (βοᾶς) to me (πρός με)?” And yet, before these things were said, the account mentions no voice (οὐδεμιᾶς φωνῆς) of Moses, but the thought (ἡ διάνοια) of the prophet directed toward God (πρός τὸν θεὸν) is called a voice (φωνή τις) when it is cried out (βοωμένη) silently (κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον) in the secret thinking of the heart (ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ τῆς καρδίας νοήματι). Now if Moses cries out (βοᾶ), although not uttering a sound (μὴ φθεγγόμενος), by the witness of the one who gives ear to unspoken groans (ὑπὸ μάρτυρι τῷ τῶν ἀλαλήτων στεναγμῶν ἐπαῖοντι), why is it strange if the prophet also, knowing the divine will, as much it was possible for him to speak and for us to listen, made it plain to us through known and ordinary words, outlining a conversation with God in a rather bodily manner, although it did not happen in words (οὐ ῥήμασι γινόμενον), but it was cried out through the deeds themselves (διὰ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν ἐκφωνούμενον)?¹¹

¹⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.29 (GNO 25.14.1–2): αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς φησιν ἡ ἱστορία, τῆς ἀλαλήτου φωνῆς ἐπαῖοντος.

¹¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Eun.* 2.268 (GNO 1.304.24–305.4): Τί βοᾶς πρὸς με; καίτοι γε πρὸ τῶν εἰρημένων οὐδεμιᾶς ὁ λόγος ἐπιμέμνηται Μωϋσέως φωνῆς, ἀλλ' ἡ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τοῦ προφήτου διάνοια φωνή τις ὠνομάσθη κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ τῆς καρδίας νοήματι βοωμένη. εἰ δὴ Μωϋσῆς βοᾶ μὴ φθεγγόμενος ὑπὸ μάρτυρι τῷ τῶν ἀλαλήτων στεναγμῶν ἐπαῖοντι, τί καινὸν εἰ καὶ τὸ θεῖον βούλημα γνοὺς ὁ προφήτης, ὡς δυνατὸν ἦν αὐτῷ τε εἰπεῖν καὶ ἡμῖν ἀκοῦσαι, διὰ τῶν γνωρίμων ἡμῖν καὶ συνήθων ἐφάνερωσε λόγων, διάλογον θεοῦ σωματικώτερον διαγράφων οὐ ῥήμασι γινόμενον, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν ἐκφωνούμενον;

There are a substantial number of lexical and thematic parallels between *Eun.* 2.268 and *Vit. Moys.* 2.117–18.

A close comparison of the two texts reveals the close correspondences in the way that Gregory resolves the contradiction in the biblical account:

<i>Eun.</i> 2.268	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.117–18
Moses cries out (βοάω)	Moses cries out (βοάω)
the cry is directed toward God (πρὸς τὸν θεόν)	the cry is directed toward God (πρὸς τὸν θεόν)
the cry is silent (κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον/μὴ φθεγγόμενος)	the cry is silent (μηδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον φωνήν)
the cry is called a voice (φωνή)	the cry is called a voice (φωνή)
the voice is a thought (νοήμα)	the voice is a thought (ἐνθύμησις/διάνοια)
this thought proceeds from the heart (καρδία)	this thought proceeds from the heart (καρδία)
God serves as witness (ὕπὸ μάρτυρι τῶ τῶν ἀλαλήτων στεναγμῶν ἐπαΐοντι)	God serves as witness (αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ μαρτυρεῖται)

We are able to conclude several things from the comparison between the two texts. First, Gregory sought to solve the literary problem (πρόβλημα) of contradiction in the Exod 14:15 text in both works. Second, in both texts, he arrives at virtually the same theological solution (λύσις) of the event, namely, that Moses spoke in both a sense-perceptible and intellectual voice. Third, due to genre-specific conventions, he goes about stating and solving the problem differently in each text. Even though he arrives at the same exegesis for the passage, he gets there in different ways. Whereas he jumps straight from Exod 14:15 to his explicit reading in *Eun.* 2.268, Book 1 provides the reader with an intermediate step in which the biblical account has been shaped according to his interpretation. This is especially the case since both texts demonstrate a similar use of allusion to Rom 8:26–27.

Having established that Moses supplicates God at a moment of distress, Gregory states that the result of that petition is divine guidance. According to him, Moses received guidance (ὁδηγεῖσθαι) by counsel from above on how to escape the danger when God heeded his cry. As

this happened, God sent a cloud to assist. Gregory’s initial paraphrase makes clear that this was a divine cloud and not a natural one. The divine power (θεία δυνάμει) of the cloud acts to guide (καθηγουμένης) the Israelites on their journey. Realizing this, Moses instructs the people to follow (ἀκολουθέω) it wherever it leads. It eventually guides (καθοδηγέω) them to the sea.¹² Even after crossing the Israelites have crossed the sea, the cloud continues its role as guide, leading the way to Mt Sinai.¹³ In these passages, Gregory employs the language of “guide” (ὁδηγός) or “guiding” (ὁδηγέω) in reference to the cloud while using the vocabulary of “following” (ἀκολουθέω) or “being led” (καθοδηγέω) in connection to the people.

In addition to focusing on the guiding function of the cloud, Gregory amplifies other characteristics of the cloud in his paraphrase, which do not appear in scripture, including that it overshadows the ground, moistens the hot desert air with dew, and possesses a fire, which serves as a torch to guide those being initiated:

Scripture testifies about that cloud that it was such great a miracle that, even when the ray of the sun warmly shone, the cloud was a fortification for the people, shadowing (σκιάζουσάν) what was below and moistening (ὑπονοτίζουσας) with fine dew (λεπτῆ δρόσῳ) the fiery heat of the air, and during the night it became a fire (πῦρ), carrying a torch (δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος) for the Israelites from evening until morning with its own light (τῷ ἰδίῳ φωτί).¹⁴

With these three significant descriptions of the cloud, Gregory makes intertextual appeals to several passages traditionally associated with the Holy Spirit in patristic exegesis of the fourth

¹² Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.15–17).

¹³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.34–35.

¹⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.13.25–14.3, 7–13): ὅπως ἂν διαφύγοι τὸν κίνδυνον διὰ τῆς ἄνωθεν συμβουλῆς ὁδηγεῖσθαι αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς φησιν ἡ ἱστορία, τῆς ἀλαλήτου φωνῆς ἐπαῖοντος. νεφέλης δὲ τοῦ λαοῦ θεία δυνάμει καθηγουμένης οὐ κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν φύσιν οὐδὲ [. . .] ἐκείνης τῆς νεφέλης τῆς γραφῆς μαρτυρούσης τοιοῦτον τὸ θαῦμα ἦν ὡς καὶ τῆς ἡλιακῆς ἀκτίνος θερμῶς ἐπιλαμπούσης διατείχισμα εἶναι πρὸς τὸν λαόν, σκιάζουσάν τε τὸ ὑποκείμενον καὶ λεπτῆ δρόσῳ τὸ φλογῶδες τοῦ ἀέρος ὑπονοτίζουσας, καὶ διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς πῦρ γενέσθαι ἀφ’ ἐσπέρας εἰς ὄρθρον τῷ ἰδίῳ φωτί τοῖς Ἰσραηλίταις δαδουχοῦσαν τὸ φέγγος.

century—especially in the context of baptism—including to Luke 1:35 ([ἐπι]σκιάζω and δύναμις), Dan 3:50 LXX (δρόσος), and Ps 77:14 LXX and Deut 1:33 (ὁδηγέω/καθηγέομαι and φωτισμός).¹⁵ As we argued in the prior chapter, Gregory interweaves such lexical elements into the narrative fabric of the text as a way to suggest that the cloud is the Holy Spirit without stating so explicitly. We will now analyze how Gregory makes these suggestions explicit in Book 2.

Turning to Book 2, we observe how Gregory moves from his exegetical paraphrase of the cloud, where he lexically hints at its identity as the Holy Spirit, to his interpretation in Book 2, where he explicitly states the correspondence between the Holy Spirit and the cloud. He begins by indicating that the events speak about the appearance of the divine nature with the cloud: “But at that time the epiphany of the transcendent nature occurred.”¹⁶ We should note Gregory’s language here of nature (φύσις) in reference to the cloud. While he had previously stated in Book 1 that the cloud did not have a nature common to clouds (ἡ κοινὴ φύσις) like most clouds, here he says that it manifested the transcendent nature (ἡ ὑπερκειμένη φύσις). Gregory thus begins to make more explicit the fact that he sees the cloud as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Gregory is making a shorthand allusion to the earlier paraphrase and its claim, bolstered by ancient meteorological science, that this is no ordinary cloud. Once he has made that argument in Book 1, he can make a compressed allusion to it here in Book 2, and then draw out further inferences from it.

¹⁵ For prior exegetes who draw on Ps 77:14 in relation to the Holy Spirit or Christ, see Eusebius of Caesarea, *Comm. in Pss.* (PG 23.913); Basil the Great, *Hom. in Pss.* 44.6 (PG 29.401A–B);

¹⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.120 (GNO 25.70.8): Ἀλλὰ τότε γίνεται τῆς ὑπερκειμένης φύσεως ἐμφάνεια.

According to him, we arrive at such an understanding of the passage because correspondences exist between the contemplation (*theoria*) of the events and what we hear in the *historia*:

That which we hear (ἀκούομεν) from the *historia* (ἱστορία) happened at that time (τότε), we learn (μανθάνομεν) from contemplation (θεωρία) of the word always (εἰσαεὶ) happens (γίνεσθαι).¹⁷

As Gregory moves from *historia* to *theoria*, he universalizes the event. What began as a singular event at that time (τότε) now becomes something with universal application that always happens (εἰσαεὶ γίνεσθαι). Continuing on, Gregory begins to connect the Red Sea events with his baptismal theology:

Whenever (ὅταν) someone (τις), fleeing the Egyptian and arriving outside the bounds, is afraid of the assaults of temptations, then from on high the guide (ὁ ὀδηγός) shows the unexpected salvation;¹⁸ whenever (ὅταν) the enemy is surrounding the one being pursued with his own force, then for him [the one fleeing] he [the guide] makes passable by force the sea, into which the guide leads as a cloud.¹⁹

As he continues to universalize the story, Gregory now applies what happened to the Israelites at the Red Sea to anyone (τις), whenever (ὅταν) they follow in the pattern of the Israelites.

Whenever (ὅταν) anyone (τις) flees metaphoric Egypt, Gregory assumes they will be assaulted by temptations. Once this happens, the divine guide from heaven renders unexpected aid by

¹⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.120 (GNO 25.70.9–11): ὁ δὲ καὶ τότε γεγενῆσθαι παρὰ τῆς ἱστορίας ἀκούομεν καὶ εἰσαεὶ γίνεσθαι παρὰ τῆς τοῦ λόγου θεωρίας μανθάνομεν.

¹⁸ The reference to the regeneration or birth from above by the Spirit is one of Gregory's favorite ways to refer to baptism according to Everett Ferguson (Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 608.). Therefore, the reference here to salvation "from above" in connection to baptism is a likely allusion to John 3:3–7.

¹⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.120 (GNO 25.70.11–17): ὅταν φεύγων τις τὸν Αἰγύπτιον καὶ ἔξω τῶν ὄρων γενόμενος πρὸς τὰς προσβολὰς τῶν πειρασμῶν δειλιάσῃ, ἄνωθεν τὴν ἐκ παραλόγου σωτηρίαν ὁ ὀδηγὸς ὑποδείκνυσιν, ὅταν περιεστοιχισμένος ὁ ἐχθρὸς τῇ ἑαυτοῦ δυνάμει τὸν διωκόμενον βατὴν ὑπ' ἀνάγκης αὐτῷ κατασκευάσῃ τὴν θάλασσαν, εἰς ἣν καθοδηγεῖται ὀδηγὸς ἢ νεφέλη.

making a path through the water. Just as the cloud led the Israelites to safety through the sea, so the guide leads to salvation through the baptismal waters.

After referring to the cloud as a guide, Gregory acknowledges that by relies on prior Christian exegetical tradition for taking the cloud to be symbolic of the Holy Spirit, the divine guide. For Gregory, the connection between the two is obvious in the events of the episode:

To the guide (τῷ ὀδηγοῦντι) belongs this name (i.e., cloud), which was interpreted well by those before us as the grace of the Holy Spirit (ἡ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος χάρις), by whom the worthy have guidance (ἡ ὀδηγία) toward the good. The one who follows (ἐπόμενος) him (i.e., the guide), passes through the water while the leader walks the path with him. By him (the leader) one comes safely to freedom, since the one pursuing to enslave disappears in the water.

Just as the cloud rescued those fleeing Egypt by passing through the water, so the Holy Spirit saves the believer, who follows, through the waters of baptism. Gregory argues that the word “guide” connects the cloud and the Holy Spirit.²⁰ Based on the symbolism of the episode, Gregory believes anyone should be able to see the crossing of the Red Sea as a symbol of baptism:

Let whoever hears this not be ignorant of the mystery in the water (τὸ κατὰ τὸ ὕδωρ μυστήριον), in which the one who goes down with the army of the enemy rises alone while the enemy army is drowned in the water.²¹

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²¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.121 (GNO 25.70.17–71.3): τοῦτο γὰρ ὄνομα τῷ ὀδηγοῦντι ὅπερ καλῶς τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετελήφθη χάριν, παρ’ οὗ γίνεται τοῖς ἀξίοις ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὀδηγία, ᾧ τις ἐπόμενος τὸ ὕδωρ διέξεισιν ὁδοιποροῦντος αὐτῷ τὴν πορείαν τοῦ ἡγεμόνος, δι’ οὗ γίνεται τὸ ἀσφαλὲς τῆ ἐλευθερίᾳ τοῦ ἐπὶ δουλείᾳ καταδιώκοντος ἐναφανιζομένου τῷ ὕδατι. τοῦτο δὲ ὅστις ἀκούων οὐκ ἂν ἀγνοήσειε τὸ κατὰ τὸ ὕδωρ μυστήριον, ἐν ᾧ τις μετὰ τῆς πανστρατιᾶς τοῦ ἐχθροῦ καταβάς μόνος ἀναδύεται τοῦ πολεμίου στρατοῦ καταπνιγομένου τῷ ὕδατι.

While his paraphrase in Book 1 contained this same interpretation, Gregory only now makes the link between the Red Sea and baptism explicitly.²²

In the context of his *Life of Moses*, this interpretation of the cloud as the Holy Spirit does not come out of nowhere. Gregory already made this connection narratively in his paraphrase in Book 1. Although the crossing of the Red Sea does not refer to the cloud as a guide, this idea is implied throughout. In fact, Deut 1:33 and Ps 77:14 LXX state that the cloud guided (ὁδηγέω) the people. Moreover, John 16:13 speaks of the Holy Spirit as one who guides the believer.

While the exegetical tradition on which Gregory relies already understands the cloud as a symbol for the Holy Spirit, by describing the cloud as a guide already in Book 1, Gregory narratively makes the argument for the connection. There, he stated that the people were led by the cloud's divine power.²³ This connection is now fully brought to light here in Book 2.

In addition to capitalizing upon his description of the cloud as a guide from Book 1, Gregory also makes productive use of the language of light and illumination. In Book 1, Gregory employed the language of illumination and initiation with terminology often related to those joining the mystery cults. While such language hinted at an initiatory role of the cloud, this

²² For example, he refers to the “mystery in the water” (τὸ κατὰ τὸ ὕδωρ μυστήριον; 2.121 [GNO 25.71.1]), the water as “live-giving” (ζωοποιός; 2.124 [GNO 25.71.23]), the cloud as “illuminating” (φωτιζούσης; 2.124 [GNO 25.71.23]), he speaks of “all those who pass through the mystical water in baptism” (πάντας τοὺς διερχομένους τὸ μυστικὸν ὕδωρ ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι; 2.125 [GNO 25.72.9–10]), “saving baptism” (τῷ σωτηρίῳ βαπτίσματι; 2.126 [GNO 25.73.7–8]), “mystical baptism” (τὸ μυστικὸν βάπτισμα; 2.127 [GNO 25.73.13]), “the gift of baptism” (τοῦ βαπτίσματος δωρεᾶς; 2.128 [GNO 25.73.20–21]), “washing” (λουτρόν; 2.128 [GNO 25.73.22]), and “mystical water” (τοῦ μυστικοῦ ὕδατος; 2.129 [GNO 25.74.9]). Finally, he makes reference to the feast of Pascha (πάσχα; 2.126 [GNO 25.73.1]). While he refers to it in order to make a statement about unleavened bread, the period between the feasts of Theophany/Epiphany and Pascha was the time at which catechumens in the early church prepared for baptism. Therefore, this is but one more baptismal reference for Gregory.

²³ *Vit. Moys.* 1.30 (GNO 25.14.2–3).

becomes overt in Book 2. According to his paraphrase, the cloud provided illumination for the Israelites by providing a fire in the night. In Book 1, Gregory uses the term *δαδουχέω*, which refers to the one who carries the torch in procession in the ritual of initiation to provide illumination. For the Holy Spirit, this illumination has a double effect. Not only does it provide physical light, but it also gives metaphorical illumination of knowledge.

According to the paraphrase in Book 1, “urged on by divine power”²⁴ of the cloud, Moses “struck the sea with his rod, and the sea split at the blow.”²⁵ According to Gregory, Moses’s rod functions as the mechanism that parts the sea, while he omits the wind from his account. This version of events becomes important when Gregory interprets the event in *Vit. Moys.* 2.124. As the Israelites charge into the salvific waters of the sea, the enlightening cloud and Moses’s staff of faith guide the way:

So, all these (i.e., the Egyptian army) and similar things rush in after the Israelite who begins the toilsome approach to the water, at which time, while the staff of faith leads the way and the cloud provides illumination, the nature of the water becomes life-giving for those fleeing into it for refuge, but destructive for those pursuing.²⁶

While drawing on his reading of the cloud as “guide” and the sea as the life-giving waters of baptism, he also speaks of Moses’s rod as symbolic of faith. Both the cloud, as the Holy Spirit, and the rod, as faith, have an important role in leading the people to the salvific waters.

²⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.20–21): θεία δυνάμει παρορμηθείς.

²⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.31 (GNO 25.14.22–23): πλήσσει τῇ ράβδῳ τὸ πέλαγος· τὸ δὲ περὶ τὴν πληγὴν ὑπεσχίζετο.

²⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.124 (GNO 25.71.20–72.2): Ταῦτα οὖν πάντα καὶ ὅσα τούτοις ὁμόφυλα τῷ καθηγουμένῳ τῆς πονηρᾶς ἐφόδου συνεισπίπτει τῷ Ἰσραηλίτῃ ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, ἐφ’ ὧν ἢ τοῦ ὕδατος φύσις ἡγουμένης τῆς κατὰ τὴν βακτηρίαν πίστεως καὶ τῆς φωτιζούσης νεφέλης ζῶοποιὸς μὲν γίνεται τῶν εἰς αὐτὴν καταφευγόντων, ἀναιρετικὴ δὲ τῶν διωκόντων.

Significantly, the wind does not have an allegorical interpretation. It is also the element from the event that Gregory previously omitted from his paraphrastic *historia*. While the wind plays a significant role in the biblical account (e.g., Exod 14:21), it has no role in either the *historia* (*Vit. Moys.* 1.31) or the *theoria* (*Vit. Moys.* 2.124).²⁷ It thus seems that the way Gregory paraphrases events in his *historia* prefigures the way he interprets them in the *theoria*.

Gregory demonstrates this same baptismal logic in his *Catechetical Oration*. While he asserts that the rite of baptism has two essential components (i.e., Spirit and water), faith (πίστις) and the invocation (ἐπίκλησις) of divine power (θεία δύναμις) in prayer (εὐχή) are also vital.²⁸ By taking into account the entire scope of the Red Sea episode, we see Gregory interpret the events with the same general contours. First, Moses prays to God and invokes the divine power

²⁷ In *Vit. Moys.* 1.31, we observed how Gregory paraphrased the biblical account to provide solutions in the narrative for exegetical προβλήματα regarding who performed the miraculous parting of the sea, Moses or God. By putting greater weight on Exod 14:16, Gregory highlights the active role of Moses as the agent who parts the sea by striking it with his staff. At the same time, he omits Exod 14:21 and God's direct involvement in parting the sea by means of the wind. While these literary changes provide λύσεις to the προβλήματα in the text, they also prepare the way for Gregory's explicit exegesis in Book 2. For Gregory, the staff has an important role in *Vit. Moys.* 2.124. According to him, the staff represents the faith that leads one to baptism. However, in this allegory for baptism, the wind has no role at all. This is somewhat perplexing considering Gregory easily could have allegorized the wind as the Holy Spirit. However, Gregory himself states that he draws on an interpretive tradition in which the cloud is considered to be the Holy Spirit. As a result, the wind likely cannot also then be the Holy Spirit, too. As a result, the wind does not have a fitting allegorical referent. Therefore, the allegorical interpretation of the event in *Vit. Moys.* 2.120–24 is reflected in the changes made in the paraphrase in *Vit. Moys.* 1.31–33. That is, the paraphrased narrative anticipates Gregory's allegory. In the biblical account, there is a tension between the staff (Exod 14:16) and the wind (Exod 14:21) as active mechanisms for parting the sea. In his *historia*, Gregory omits the wind entirely. This makes logical sense based on the scientific solution he seeks for the miracles. Yet, the wind remains absent here in the *theoria*. It seems that the wind continues to have no interpretive function. Therefore, the omission in the *historia* implicitly foreshadowed the fact that Gregory had no allegorical referent for the wind. As a result, he simply found a way to remove it from his *historia*.

²⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. cat.* 33 (GNO 16.82.14–21).

in the form of the Spirit. Second, the cloud arrives and guides the people to the sea. Third, Moses' rod parts the sea. Fourth, the people pass safely through the sea.²⁹ Not only do these four elements of the account line up with his baptismal theology in his *Catechetical Oration*, but he also weaves them lexically into the very narrative fabric of his paraphrastic *historia* in Book 1, thus preparing the reader for this interpretation.

We have now completed our analysis of the way that Gregory adjusted the description of the cloud in the desert in the crossing of the Red Sea. As we have demonstrated, Gregory seeks to respond to questions related to the cloud in the desert in the Exodus narrative. Following the Pauline symbolism in 1 Cor 10, patristic exegetes had long held that the Israelite crossing of the Red Sea was symbolic of baptism and that the cloud represented the Holy Spirit, who took an active role in the rite. Gregory himself gives such a reading of the event in his *On the Day of Lights* and *Catechetical Oration*. He also gives this interpretation in the *Life of Moses*. What is noteworthy about his exegesis of the cloud as the Holy Spirit in the *Life*, however, is the way in which he goes about doing this.

In the *Life of Moses*, Gregory crafts a new narrative of the events that lead up to the crossing of the sea in Book 1 with the techniques of paraphrase. As he does this, he provides the reader with a new description of the cloud that differs from the one in scripture due to his

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<i>Or. cat.</i> 33	<i>historia</i> (<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 1.31)	<i>theoria</i> (<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.124)
Prayer	Silent cry	Silent cry
Holy Spirit	Cloud	Enlightening cloud guides the way
Water	Water (ὕδωρ)	Water (ὕδωρ) is life-giving (ζωοποιῶς)
Faith	Rod (ῥάβδος)	Faith (πίστις) like a staff (βακτηρία)

theological aim. In Book 1, he interprets the cloud in the narrative as the Holy Spirit by using specific language that patristic exegesis uses for the Spirit. When he turns to the explanation of those events in Book 2, he has already provided the reader with this exegetical paraphrase in which the cloud is likened to the Spirit. In Book 2, he sets as his task the further distillation of that interpretation. He now tells the reader in no uncertain terms that the crossing of the sea is a symbol for baptism and that the cloud represents the Holy Spirit. As he makes his interpretation fully transparent, he relies on the account in Book 1 as much as he does on the LXX text. In particular, he exploits the language of guidance and illumination, both terms heavily associated with the Spirit in patristic exegesis.

6.3 The Destruction and Restoration of the Tablets (*Vit. Moys.* 2.202–218)

We now turn to Gregory's explanation of the tablets in Book 2 of the *Life of Moses*. As we demonstrated in Book 1, Gregory crafted a paraphrase of the LXX that differed in certain key ways. In particular, Gregory used his paraphrase as a focusing mechanism to concentrate on the role of the tablets in the narrative. According to his paraphrase in Book 1, two sets of tablets were fashioned. God was responsible for both the material (ἡ ὕλη) and the writing (τὰ χαράγματα) on the first set of tablets.³⁰ These tablets were destroyed, and a new set was fashioned. This time, Moses fashioned the material (ἡ ὕλη) for the tablets, but God's divine power (θεία δύναμις) inscribed the writing (ἡ γραφή) upon them.³¹

While these same basic elements may be found in the biblical version of events, Gregory amplifies them and put them front and center in the story. For him, the episode with the golden

³⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.57.

³¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60.

calf is more about how the tablets were destroyed and restored than it is about the Israelite idolatry. The way that Gregory depicts the tablets in Book 1, corresponds to the way he explains their significance in Book 2. In the following pages, we shall perform a comparative analysis of Gregory's presentation of the tablets in Books 1 and 2 in order to demonstrate how Gregory's exegesis in Book 1 corresponds to Book 2.

Following Paul in 2 Corinthians, early biblical exegetes often considered the tablets to be symbolic of humanity. The original divinely crafted tablets represented human nature before the fall. God fashioned the bodies and wrote the divine law upon human hearts. The second set of tablets, fashioned by Moses, represented Christ's restoration of fallen humanity at the incarnation when he took flesh of the Virgin as the Holy Spirit came upon her. While Gregory is in agreement with standard patristic exegesis in this interpretation of the tablets, he differs from other exegetes in that he first provides this reading in the form of a paraphrastic narrative mode in Book 1 before giving the reader a more transparent explanation later in Book 2.

Gregory's interpretation of the golden calf episode in Book 2 comes in *Vit. Moys.* 2.202–218. While most of his exegesis revolves around the importance of the tablets in one way or another,³² he turns his attention to the significance of the restoration of the tablets in the final paragraphs in 2.214–218. There, Gregory states his intention to call to mind those who sinned in order to learn (ὥστε μαθεῖν) how (πῶς) Moses restored the divine tablets:

It now seems to be the appropriate time to call to mind those who engaged in sin to learn how (ὥστε μαθεῖν πῶς) Moses restored again (πάλιν ὁ Μωϋσῆς ἀνακομίζεται) the divinely made tablets (τὰς θεοτεύκτους πλάκας), on which the

³² He begins the account with a focus on the tablets. This focus remains throughout the entire episode (see the prominent role of the tablets throughout *Vit. Moys.* 2.202–218; see also the way he begins and ends the episode with the tablets).

divine law had been inscribed (αἷς ὁ θεῖος νόμος ἐνεκεχάρακτο), after they fell to earth from Moses's hands and broke on the surface of the ground.³³

After describing how the first tablets were destroyed, Gregory recounts how Moses fashioned a second set:

They were no longer wholly the same, but only the writing (τὸ γράμμα) on them was. For, having taken the tablets from matter below (ἐκ τῆς κάτω ὕλης), he submitted them to the power (ἡ δύναμις) of the one who would inscribe (ἐγχαράσσοντος) the law (ὁ νόμος) on them. And so, carrying the law in true tablets, he summoned back grace (ἀνακαλεῖται τὴν χάριν) since God himself impressed the words (τὰς φωνάς) on the stone.³⁴

Gregory here recalls the basic contours of the account as paraphrased in the *historia*. He focuses on two sets of tablets. While the first ones are divinely made (τὰς θεοτεύκτους πλάκας) and have the divine law written upon them, the second ones are composed of earthly material (ἐκ τῆς κάτω ὕλης) and are inscribed with the law (ὁ νόμος) by divine power (ἡ δύναμις).

As he continues, he states that the sequence of events in scripture reveals God's foresight for humanity. This becomes clear for Gregory when one looks at the proper interpretation of the tablets. Paul reveals this interpretation in 2 Cor 3:3, where he refers to human hearts as tablets.

For perhaps³⁵ it is possible to come to a comprehension of the divine foresight for us, if we are guided by these events. For if the divine apostle speaks the truth when he calls the tablets "hearts" (2 Cor 3:3), that is, the leading part of the soul (and certainly he who by the Spirit searches the depths of God (1 Cor 2:10) speaks the truth), then it is possible to learn from this through the sequence of events (ἔστιν ἐκ τούτου δι' ἀκολουθου μαθεῖν) that human nature (ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις) in the beginning was unbroken (ἀσύντριπτος) and immortal (ἀθάνατος)

³³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.214 (GNO 25.107.21–108.2): Δοκεῖ δὲ κατὰ καιρὸν καὶ ἡ μνήμη τῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν παραδεξαμένων ἐπεισεληλυθέναι τῷ λόγῳ ὥστε μαθεῖν πῶς τὰς θεοτεύκτους πλάκας, αἷς ὁ θεῖος νόμος ἐνεκεχάρακτο, εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ Μωϋσέως πεσούσας καὶ τῇ ἀντιτυπία τοῦ ὑποκειμένου συντριβείσας, πάλιν ὁ Μωϋσῆς ἀνακομίζεται.

³⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.214 (GNO 25.108.2–108.7): οὐκέτι διόλου τὰς αὐτὰς, ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῶν γράμμα. ἐκ γὰρ τῆς κάτω ὕλης λαβὼν τὰς πλάκας, ὑποτίθησι τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ τὸν νόμον αὐταῖς ἐγχαράσσοντος. καὶ οὕτως ἀνακαλεῖται τὴν χάριν φέρων ἐν ταῖς ἀληθιναῖς δέλτοις τὸν νόμον αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ λίθῳ τὰς φωνὰς ἐντυπώσαντος.

³⁵ I have employed the textual variant noted in the GNO of *τάχα* instead of the *τάγα* in the text.

since it was fashioned (κατεσκευασμένη) by divine hands (ταῖς θεαίαις χερσὶ) and adorned (κεκαλλωπισμένη) with unwritten characters (τοῖς ἀγράφοις χαράγμασι) of the law (τοῦ νόμου).³⁶

Keeping the focus on the double set of tablets, Gregory now understands them as representative of human nature (ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις). Human nature before the fall resembles the first set of tablets before their destruction. It was unbroken (ἄσύντριπτος) and immortal (ἄθάνατος) since it was fashioned by divine hands (ταῖς θεαίαις χερσὶ) and inscribed with the unwritten characters (τοῖς ἀγράφοις χαράγμασι) of the law (ὁ νόμος).

With these words, Gregory has made the transition from the tablets to the tablets as symbolic of human nature. As he continues in Book 2, he exploits the language from Book 1 that he used to describe the tablets, namely the material (ὕλη) from which they are fashioned, the significance of the writing (χαράγματα/γραφὴ) upon them and who inscribes it (i.e., divine power [θεία δύναμις]), the law (νόμος), and grace (χάρις).

In order to explain how human nature became broken and mortal, Gregory makes a scriptural appeal to the fall of humanity in Gen 3 by way of the trope of sound and the lemma φωνή. According to Gregory, “when the sound (ὁ ἤχος) of sin occurred, which the first book of scripture calls the voice (φωνή) of the serpent (Gen 3:1–4),³⁷ and the *historia* concerning the tablets calls ‘the voice (φωνή) of those leading from wine’ (Exod 32:18 LXX), then they fell to

³⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.215 (GNO 25.108.7–15): τάχα γὰρ ἔστι διὰ τούτων ὀδηγηθέντας τῆς θείας ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προμηθείας ἐν περινοίᾳ γενέσθαι. εἰ γὰρ ἀληθεύει ὁ θεῖος ἀπόστολος καρδίας ὀνομάζων τὰς πλάκας, τουτέστι τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς (ἀληθεύει δὲ πάντως ὁ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ διερευνώμενος), ἔστιν ἐκ τούτου δι’ ἀκολούθου μαθεῖν ὅτι ἄσύντριπτος ἦν τὸ κατ’ ἀρχὰς καὶ ἀθάνατος ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις ταῖς θεαίαις χερσὶ κατεσκευασμένη καὶ τοῖς ἀγράφοις τοῦ νόμου κεκαλλωπισμένη χαράγμασι.

³⁷ While the serpent is not said to have a φωνή, it does speak (λέγω) to Eve.

earth and were broken.”³⁸ For Gregory, these two passages symbolically depict the same event, namely the fall of humanity.

While Gregory quotes the biblical text of Exod 32:18 LXX, he does this as a way to distract the reader’s eye from one part of the text and focus it on another:

Exod 32:18–19	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.216
	Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσέπεσε τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ ἦχος, ὃν ἡ πρώτη γραφή φωνὴν ὄφεως ὀνομάζει, ἡ δὲ κατὰ τὰς πλάκας ἱστορία. When the sound (ὁ ἦχος) of sin occurred, which the first book of scripture calls the voice (φωνή) of the serpent, and the <i>historia</i> concerning the tablets calls ³⁹
καὶ λέγει Οὐκ ἔστιν φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων κατ’ ἰσχὺν οὐδὲ φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων τροπῆς, ἀλλὰ φωνὴν ἐξαρχόντων οἴνου ἐγὼ ἀκούω. And he says, “It is not the sound (φωνή) of those taking the lead by force or the sound (φωνή) of those taking the lead in a rout, but the sound (φωνή) of those taking the lead in wine I hear (ἀκούω).” ⁴⁰	φωνὴν ἐξ οἴνου ἀρχόντων. “the voice (φωνή) of those leading from wine” ⁴¹
καὶ ἡνίκα ἤγγιζεν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, ὄρᾳ τὸν μόσχον καὶ τοὺς χορούς, καὶ ὀργισθεὶς θυμῷ Μωυσῆς. And when he drew near to the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing, and Moses, filled with anger, ⁴²	

³⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.18–20): Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσέπεσε τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ ἦχος, ὃν ἡ πρώτη γραφή φωνὴν ὄφεως ὀνομάζει, ἡ δὲ κατὰ τὰς πλάκας ἱστορία φωνὴν ἐξ οἴνου ἀρχόντων, τότε εἰς γῆν πεσοῦσαι συντρίβονται.

³⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.18–19): Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσέπεσε τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ ἦχος, ὃν ἡ πρώτη γραφή φωνὴν ὄφεως ὀνομάζει, ἡ δὲ κατὰ τὰς πλάκας ἱστορία.

⁴⁰ Exod 32:18: καὶ λέγει Οὐκ ἔστιν φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων κατ’ ἰσχὺν οὐδὲ φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων τροπῆς, ἀλλὰ φωνὴν ἐξαρχόντων οἴνου ἐγὼ ἀκούω.

⁴¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.20): φωνὴν ἐξ οἴνου ἀρχόντων.

⁴² Exod 32:19: καὶ ἡνίκα ἤγγιζεν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, ὄρᾳ τὸν μόσχον καὶ τοὺς χορούς, καὶ ὀργισθεὶς θυμῷ Μωυσῆς.

ἔρριπεν ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ τὰς δύο πλάκας καὶ συνέτριπεν αὐτὰς ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος. threw the two tablets from his hands and broke (συνέτριπεν) them under the mountain. ⁴³	τότε εἰς γῆν πεσοῦσαι συντρίβονται. then they fell to earth (εἰς γῆν πεσοῦσαι) and were broken (συντρίβονται). ⁴⁴
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Although Gregory directly quotes the LXX text of Exod 32:18, he adapts the following verse. While using the vocabulary drawn from Exod 32:19 LXX, he alters it according to his aim in the passage. According to scripture, Moses grew angry and broke the tablets. In contrast, Gregory states that at the sound of sin, the tablets fell to earth and were broken. Here, Gregory adapts the narrative of Exod 32 to the ideas of the fall in Gen 3. Humanity sinned in the garden, which led to human nature (i.e., the tablets) falling to earth and breaking. By drawing the eye to the direct quote in Exod 32:18, his reader is less likely to notice his change in the role of Moses as breaker of the tablets. But why would Gregory feel the need to change Moses’s role in the account? This becomes clear as we proceed further.

While the Genesis creation account ends with humanity’s fall, the tablets are restored after their destruction in Exod 32. Since Gregory views the tablets as symbolic of human nature, the restoration of the tablets represents the restitution of humanity to its original state. Because Moses fashions a new set of tablets, Gregory regards Moses as a type of Christ, the “true lawgiver” (ὁ ἀληθινὸς νομοθέτης):⁴⁵

For it was not marriage that crafted his God-receiving flesh for him, but he became the stone-cutter of his own flesh (αὐτὸς τῆς ἰδίας σαρκὸς γίνεται λατόμος) which was written on by the divine finger (τῆς τῷ θεῷ δακτύλῳ γραφείσης). For the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin and the power of the Most High overshadowed (ἐπεσκίασε) (Luke 1:35). When this happened, our nature (ἡ

⁴³ Exod 32:19: ἔρριπεν ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ τὰς δύο πλάκας καὶ συνέτριπεν αὐτὰς ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος.

⁴⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.20): τότε εἰς γῆν πεσοῦσαι συντρίβονται.

⁴⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.21).

φύσις) again became unbroken (ἀσύντριπτον), becoming immortal (ἀθάνατος) by characters [written] by the finger (τοῖς τοῦ δακτύλου χαράγμασι). Now the Holy Spirit is called finger in many places in scripture.⁴⁶

Gregory here brings his allegorical interpretation of the tablets to fullest explication. After the fall, Christ fashioned tablets of human flesh for himself from the Virgin Mary, upon which the divine finger of the Holy Spirit wrote. In this way, human nature (ἡ φύσις) was restored and again became unbroken (ἀσύντριπτον) and immortal (ἀθάνατος). Here, Gregory uses the same two adjectives that he previously used in reference to the first set of tablets before their destruction, but he now applies them to human nature after its restoration.

He further emphasizes the correspondence between the refashioning of the tablets and the restoration of fallen human nature. It happened in the case of Moses that no human eye could look upon him due to his glory. For Gregory, there is a clear correspondence in the events between the Books 1 and 2:

Certainly, the one educated in the divine mystery of our faith is not ignorant about how the contemplation according to the higher sense corresponds with the *historia*. For the corrector of our broken nature (now you certainly perceive in the things said the one who healed our broken [nature]), when he restored the broken tablet of our nature to its former beauty by means of the divine finger, as it is written, it became radiant. He no longer became comprehensible to the eyes of the unworthy, becoming unapproachable to those looking upon him due to his abounding glory.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.22–109.7): οὐ γὰρ γάμος αὐτῷ τὴν θεοδόχον ἐδημιούργησε σάρκα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τῆς ἰδίας σαρκὸς γίνεται λατόμος τῆς τῷ θεῷ δακτύλῳ γραφείσης · Πνεῦμα γὰρ ἅγιον ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν παρθένον καὶ ἡ τοῦ ὑψίστου ἐπεσκίασε δύναμις. ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦτο ἐγένετο, πάλιν τὸ ἀσύντριπτον ἔσχεν ἡ φύσις, ἀθάνατος γενομένη τοῖς τοῦ δακτύλου χαράγμασι. δάκτυλος δὲ πολλαχῆ παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς ὀνομάζεται τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.

⁴⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.217 (GNO 25.109.10–19): πάντως δὲ ὁ πεπαιδευμένος τὸ θεῖον τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν μυστήριον οὐκ ἀγνοεῖ, πῶς συμβαίνει τῇ ἱστορίᾳ ἢ κατ' ἀναγωγὴν θεωρία. ὁ γὰρ διορθωτὴς τῆς συντετριμμένης ἡμῶν πλακός (νοεῖς δὲ πάντως διὰ τῶν λεγομένων ἐκεῖνον τὸν τὰ συντρίμματα ἡμῶν θεραπεύσαντα) ἐπειδὴ πάλιν εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἐπανήγαγε κάλλος τὴν συντετριμμένην τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν πλάκα, τῷ θεῷ δακτύλῳ, καθὼς εἴρηται, καλλωπισθεῖσαν, οὐκέτι χωρητὸς ταῖς ὄψεσι τῶν ἀναξίων γίνεται, τῷ ὑπερβάλλοντι τῆς δόξης ἀπροσπέλαστος τοῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν ὀρῶσι γινόμενος.

When Christ restores human nature, he restores it by means of the finger of God. While Gregory overtly makes this argument here in Book 2, he already reshaped the LXX account in such a way that Book 1 contained this allegorical reading.

According to his paraphrase in Book 1, after the destruction of the first set of tablets, Moses fashioned a new set. While Moses fashioned the material (ὕλη) for the tablets, the divine finger inscribed them. Two things were thus required to restore the tablets, namely the physical fashioning of tablets and the inscribing upon them by the finger of God. After this, grace was restored. This prefigures the way human nature is restored in Book 2. According to Gregory there, both Christ and the Holy Spirit work together in the incarnation. While Christ takes flesh from the Virgin Mary and acts as stonecutter for himself, the Holy Spirit inscribes upon that stone the characters of the divine law. This is all remarkably similar to Gregory's incarnational logic in *Against Apollinarius*, which he likely wrote in the winter of 382/3.⁴⁸

In *Against Apollinarius*, Gregory responds to what he perceives as Apollinarius's incorrect beliefs about the incarnation. In particular, he rejects Apollinarius's concept that the λόγος takes the place of the human mind in Christ, thus acting as an enfleshed mind, and that Christ's flesh came from heaven. In *Antirrh.* 28, Gregory argues that Christ takes flesh from the Virgin Mary by means of the Holy Spirit in order to fashion a body for himself at the incarnation. In the following passage, we see Gregory situate his incarnational position in such a way that he responds to both Apollinarian positions at the same time:

Human nature takes its substance from a rational soul mingled with a body. The composite grows out of a certain material (ὕλικῆς) starting point, which was

⁴⁸ Daniélou, "La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse," 164; Daniélou, "From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings," 7; Orton, *St. Gregory of Nyssa: Anti-Apollinarian Writings*, 35–3.).

planted beforehand as a structure. When that material (ἡ ὕλη ἐκείνη) was moulded into life (ζωοπλαστηθεῖσα) by divine power (θεία δυνάμει), it became a human being. [. . .]. As it happens in the case of humanity, a certain life-making power is observed in the material (τῇ ὕλη), from which the human being, which is composed of soul and body, is formed. So, it also happens in the case of the virgin. After the power of the Most High (ἡ τοῦ ὑψίστου δύναμις), through the life-creating spirit (διὰ τοῦ ζωοποιοῦντος πνεύματος), was implanted immaterially (ἀϋλως) in her undefiled body and made the virgin's incorruption into material (ὕλη) for its flesh, it received a contribution from the virginal body for the body being formed. And thus, the truly new human was created.⁴⁹

Gregory here states what comprises human nature (ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις). According to him, it is a combination of a rational soul (νοερά ψυχή) and physical body (σῶμα). To create a human being (ἄνθρωπος), God took some kind of material (ἡ ὕλη) and enlivened it with divine power (θεία δύναμις). Here, we see Gregory appeal to both a Platonic anthropology and the biblical creation narrative in Gen 2:7.

Both the language and the logic that Gregory uses in the passage are remarkably similar to both books of the *Life of Moses*. As he describes his understanding of the incarnation, he relies heavily on an appeal to Luke 1:35, which refers to the power of the most high and the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary. In the context of *Against Apollinarius*, Gregory understands this as a reference to the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son takes flesh from the Virgin as (ὕλη) for the incarnational body by means of the life-giving Spirit. This results in the restoration of human nature with Christ as second Adam (i.e., a truly new human being [ὁ καινὸς ἄνθρωπος]).

⁴⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Antirr.* 28 (GNO 10.223.15–19, 23–30): ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις ἐκ νοεράς ψυχῆς σώματι συνδραμούσης τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχει· φύεται δὲ τὸ συναμφοτέρων ἀφορμῆς τινος ὕλικῆς προκαταβαλλομένης αὐτοῦ τῆς συστάσεως. ἡ δὲ ὕλη ἐκείνη θεία δυνάμει ζωοπλαστηθεῖσα ἄνθρωπος γίνεται. [. . .]. ὥσπερ οὖν ἐφ' ἡμῶν ζωοποιός τις δύναμις ἐνθεωρεῖται τῇ ὕλη, ἀφ' ἧς ὁ ἐκ ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος συνεστὼς ἄνθρωπος διαπλάσσεται, οὕτως ἐπὶ τῆς παρθενίας ἡ τοῦ ὑψίστου δύναμις, διὰ τοῦ ζωοποιοῦντος πνεύματος ἀϋλως τῷ ἀμιάντῳ σώματι ἐμφυεῖσα καὶ ὕλην τῆς σαρκὸς τὴν ἀφθορίαν τῆς παρθένου ποιησαμένη, τὴν ἐκ τοῦ παρθενικοῦ σώματος πρὸς τὸ πλασσόμενον συνεισφορὰν παρεδέξατο καὶ οὕτως ἐκτίσθη ὁ καινὸς ὡς ἀληθῶς ἄνθρωπος.

Just as in *Against Apollinarius*, we have seen how the concepts of matter (ὕλη) and the finger of God prove important for Gregory’s theology in the *Life of Moses*. In fact, we can track these concepts throughout the treatise in regard to the tablets. In his paraphrase of events in Book 1, after the destruction of the first set of tablets, Moses fashions a new set of tablets out of “matter” (ἡ ὕλη).⁵⁰ Gregory then initially expands this in Book 2 by stating that Moses fashions the tablets “from matter below” (ἐκ τῆς κάτω ὕλης).⁵¹ He then further refines this by stating that Moses fashions the tablets “from our earth” (ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἡμῶν).⁵² In these depictions, we can see Gregory shift from the biblical depiction, where the tablets are not described as “matter” at all to being called matter, matter from below, then finally from our earth. In a final shift, Gregory moves to his full allegorical exegesis and now states that Christ, after the fall of humanity, becomes stone-cutter of tablets made from his own flesh (τῆς ἰδίας σαρκὸς γίνεται λατόμος).⁵³

We may see this development in the chart below:

<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 1.60	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.214	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.216	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.216
Matter (ἡ δὲ ὕλη)— Moses	From matter below (ἐκ τῆς κάτω ὕλης)— Moses	From our earth (ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἡμῶν)—Moses	Of flesh (σαρκός)— Christ

Gregory similarly speaks about the finger of God throughout the treatise. In Book 1, he describes the writing on the tablets as being done by divine power (θεία δύναμις). In Book 2, he first states that Moses submits them to the power (δύναμις) of the one who can inscribe them. He then finally refers to it as the “divine finger” (θεία δάκτυλος):

<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 1.60	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.214	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.216	<i>Vit. Moys.</i> 2.217
Divine power (θεία δύναμις)	The power of the one who would inscribe	Divine finger (ὁ θεῖος δάκτυλος)	Divine finger (ὁ θεῖος δάκτυλος)

⁵⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.60 (GNO 25.27.8).

⁵¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.214 (GNO 25.108.3).

⁵² Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.22).

⁵³ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 2.216 (GNO 25.108.1–2).

	the law on them (τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ τὸν νόμον αὐταῖς ἐγγράσσοντος)		
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As we have seen in the incident with the golden calf, Gregory provides an incarnational interpretation of the tablets of the law. For him, the tablets represent human nature. Their destruction represents the fall of humanity while their restoration symbolizes the reconstitution of human nature in the incarnation. Since his exegetical focus is on the tablets, he diminishes other aspects of the narrative. For example, Exod 32:1–24 provides a long lead up to the slaughter of the three thousand, but this is condensed to a tiny fraction in Gregory’s Book 2. Similarly, Gregory does not speak about God telling Moses to descend as he does in scripture. The incarnational interpretation that he presents in the *Life of Moses* has much in common with what he puts forth to counter Apollinarius in *Against Apollinarius*.

In particular, he argues that Christ takes flesh from the Virgin Mary as matter (ὕλη) for the incarnation by means of the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:35 gives inspiration for this interpretation. While there are numerous linguistic parallels between the two texts, we also see correspondences between Books 1 and 2 of the *Life of Moses*. In particular, we see such significant correspondences in the concept of Moses fashioning the new tablets from matter (ὕλη) with the assistance of divine power (θεία δύναμις) that inscribes upon them. In fact, while Gregory composes a “literal” paraphrase of scripture that actually contains allegorical elements in it, he develops that allegory throughout the treatise. We have demonstrated in this section how Gregory develops this allegory from Book 1 to its fully articulated form in Book 2.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined how Gregory moves from his paraphrastic exegesis in Book 1 to his fully articulated exegesis in Book 2. As he does so, he leads the reader from the literal LXX text, to allegorical readings conveyed in the narrative, to fully laid out allegorical readings. As our analysis has demonstrated, the same readings that we encountered in the narrative in Book 1 reappear in Book 2, but with full explanations. As he does this, Gregory relies heavily on his prior telling in Book 1, as demonstrated in the number of parallels Book 2 has with Book 1 that do not appear in scripture.

In the case of the Red Sea episode, we have seen how Gregory now makes fully explicit his reading that of the crossing of the sea as a symbol for baptism. We have demonstrated how Gregory depicts the cloud in the desert as the Holy Spirit in Book 1, and how he develops that reading further in Book 2. In the case of the golden calf, we have seen how Gregory focuses on the tablets in Book 1 while alluding to theological language associated with the restoration of human nature at the incarnation. In Book 2, he draws on this focus and language from his prior book. He now explains that the destruction and restoration of the tablets should be read allegorically for the destruction and restoration of human nature. In both of these passages, we see how Gregory's prior paraphrase lays important groundwork for his later exegesis of events.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: New Perspectives and New Directions

In the preceding chapters, I have examined how Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa paraphrase the LXX depiction of Moses in their respective *Lives of Moses*. I have done so in order to answer the question of how they seek to mediate the LXX text for their readers as they shape the story of Moses's life. I have undertaken this analysis by performing a comparative analysis of several kinds of exegetical relationships, including 1) external ones between both *Lives* and the LXX, 2) internal ones between episodes within each *Life*, and 3) external ones between the two *Lives*. This analysis has yielded significant results about how both authors use paraphrase as an interpretive mode that serves a mediatorial role between the reader and the biblical text, as well as the ways in which Gregory learns and adapts such methods from Philo. We have also revealed insights about the use of paraphrase that contribute to the current scholarship on biblical hermeneutics.

The bulk of my study consisted of two parts. While the first portion examined Philo's *Life*, the second investigated Gregory's. In Chapters Three and Five, we studied the relationships between the two *Lives* and the text of the LXX in order to determine how both authors shaped the biblical account via paraphrase. Then, in Chapters Four and Six, we investigated how they further unfolded the meaning of scripture by revisiting the same episodes. Through this analysis, we determine how both authors mediate the meaning of scripture through the use of paraphrase. We will now detail the fruit of this study.

Because Philo and Gregory both use the art of paraphrase to adapt the biblical text, they have several common characteristics to their paraphrastic method. Eight characteristics common to both have emerged from our investigation of the two *Lives*:

- 1) Relying primarily on the LXX as source material as they recast the story of Moses's life.
- 2) Composing a two-volume work.
- 3) Shaping the paraphrastic narrative of Moses's life so that it resolves certain questions (προβλήματα/ζητήματα) that they seek to address.
- 4) Navigating constantly between the tensions of faithfulness to and freedom from the LXX text as they deploy the four paraphrastic techniques of addition, omission, rearrangement and substitution.
- 5) Moving between exegetical modes such as paraphrase and fully articulated explanations of events.
- 6) Returning to the same episodes twice in order to interpret events again in the final section of the treatise.
- 7) Demonstrating intentional coordination between the first and second versions of such repeated episodes.
- 8) Mediating between the reader and the LXX text via the intermediary paraphrase.

These eight features demonstrate how both Philo and Gregory use paraphrase in similar ways to shape the LXX text.

My analysis has also demonstrated the ways in which Philo and Gregory differ in their paraphrase of scripture. Six principal characteristics have come to light as a result of this study:

- 1) While both *Lives* rely predominately on the LXX as their source material, Philo and Gregory also demonstrate an internal reliance on their own work in the case of episodes that appear twice.
- 2) While both *Lives* contain two volumes, the exegetical mode of these volumes differs. While both books of Philo's life mainly contain paraphrase, each of Gregory's books is

marked by a dominant mode. Book 1 gives a paraphrastic interpretation of events while Book 2 largely gives a fully articulated exegesis.

- 3) While both *Lives* resolve certain questions as Philo and Gregory shape events, the specific questions they have and their answers to them differ due to their unique contexts.
- 4) While both *Lives* demonstrate a mixture of faithfulness to and freedom from scripture in their use of paraphrase, the individual decisions made at any given moment depend on their exegetical goals.
- 5) While both *Lives* contain multiple exegetical modes, Philo and Gregory differ in how they move between them. In some cases, Philo paraphrases an event then immediately gives a more detailed explanation of its meaning. Gregory paraphrases all of the events of Moses's life in Book 1 but waits until Book 2 to provide such detailed explanations.
- 6) While both *Lives* contain episodes that appear twice, the placement within the two-volume structure differs. Philo's *Life* contains only four episodes that appear twice. These are restricted to the final section, dedicated to Moses as a prophet. In contrast, every episode that appears in Book 1 of Gregory's *Life* occurs again in Book 2.
- 7) While both *Lives* demonstrate coordination between the first and second versions of events, this occurs differently in the case of each work. While Philo returns to the same event in order to develop a new focus for those events, Gregory returns in order to provide a fully articulated explanation of them.
- 8) While both *Lives* contain paraphrase that serves to mediate scripture, Philo and Gregory mediate in different ways. For Philo, paraphrase on the whole creates an intermediary text that functions to mediate the meaning of scripture directly to the reader. For Gregory,

paraphrase largely mediates between scripture and his fully articulated interpretation in Book 2.

These characteristics indicate the ways that both Philo and Gregory use paraphrase distinctly.

In the introduction, we stated our intention to provide a more complete picture of how Philo and Gregory coordinated their *Lives* on two levels—namely, between the two volumes and between episodes that appear more than once. We began by asking questions such as how the two volumes work together and how episodes that appear more than once function in relation to one another. Through our analysis, we have demonstrated that both authors provide different answers to these questions.

In our analysis of Philo, certain patterns began to emerge that indicated how parts of his treatise worked together. According to the preface of his second volume, he intends to tell the story of Moses by focusing on four roles, namely, Moses as leader, legislator, priest, and prophet. While Book 1 described how Moses acted as the ideal leader, it would be left to Book 2 to flesh out the remaining three. Because Philo had these roles in mind, he arranged the events of Moses's life across the two volumes to fit this scheme. In Book 1, Philo selects episodes from Moses's life that highlight his abilities as leader. These mostly have to do with how he led the people out of Egypt and through the desert. This consisted of events from Exodus and Numbers. However, he skipped over entirely what transpired at Mt Sinai, instead leaving these events for Book 2. As he picks up in the second volume with the narration of Moses as legislator, priest, and prophet, Philo returns to the events at Mt Sinai. It seems clear, therefore, that Philo coordinates between the two volumes by arranging episodes according to his overall scheme of Moses's four roles.

In the introduction, we stated our intention to provide a more complete picture of how two things in the two *Lives* function, namely how the two volumes work together and how episodes that appear twice are exegetically connected. We are now in a better position to offer answers to each of these questions. On both questions, the two works offer different answers. Let us respond to them by first turning to Philo's *Life*, then Gregory's. Philo coordinates the two volumes by way of the four functions that Moses undertakes. While one of these roles appears in Book 1, the other three appear in Book 2. Philo arranged the events that he told for Moses's life in order that episodes that highlighted how Moses operated as legislator, priest, and prophet would fall into his second volume. While the preface to Book 2 states that these four functions are closely related to one another, especially that of prophecy to the rest, he is silent about how Book 2 builds upon the foundation laid in Book 1 in any kind of exegetical way. Perhaps the greatest place in which Philo's treatise demonstrates a high level of internal correspondence occurs in the four episodes that appear twice and their relationship to their first tellings.

Four episodes occur twice in Philo's *Life*, namely the crossing of the Red Sea from Exod 14–15 (*Mos.* 1.167–180 and 2.247–257), the descent of the manna from Exod 16 (*Mos.* 1.191–209 and 2.258–269), the incident with the golden calf from Exod 32 (*Mos.* 2.159–173 and 2.270–274), and the rebellion against Moses in the desert from Num 16 (*Mos.* 2.174–177 and 2.275–287). My analysis has demonstrated how Philo paraphrases his former account when he repeats an episode. As he paraphrases an event again, he now has two exemplars at his disposal from which to draw, namely the LXX and his first paraphrase. When Philo repeats an episode, the second version contains many elements of the first because it paraphrases the former account. While his second paraphrase recasts elements from the first, the initial paraphrase does not seem to be written with the second already in mind. In other words, Philo's method displays a general

lack of an overall plan between the two accounts. Therefore, I call the relationship that exists between episodes that appear twice “opportunistic.” In other words, as he composes the second paraphrase, he takes advantage of the fact that his treatise already contains a complete paraphrase of these episodes as an opportunity to make use of it.

When we turn to Gregory’s *Life*, we see a much different picture. Gregory composes a work in which he coordinates the two volumes differently. While Gregory paraphrases Moses’s entire life in Book 1—from his birth to his death, roughly following the chronological order of the LXX—he returns to the same events in the same order to explore their deeper significance in Book 2. How Gregory shapes the events of Moses’s life proves significant as he interprets them in Book 2. Unlike the case for Philo’s treatise, where only four episodes appeared twice, in Gregory’s *Life* every episode occurs twice. Moreover, the two occurrences of a single episode correspond to the two-volume structure. In other words, an episode appears in Book 1 then again in Book 2. On this account, for Gregory’s *Life* the coordination between volumes and events goes hand-in-hand.

In Gregory’s *Life*, we see what I am calling a “teleological” relationship between his paraphrase of events in Book 1 and his explicit exegesis of them in Book 2. Between the two volumes, Gregory demonstrates a great degree of forethought and planning for how his paraphrase of scripture in Book 1 sets up for his allegorical exegesis in Book 2. In fact, when he sat down to compose the treatise, he certainly already had an interpretation for events in mind. This aim is contained in Book 2. As he paraphrases the events of Moses’s life in Book 1, he shapes them in such a way that he begins guiding the reader from the text of the LXX to that ultimate *telos* in Book 2. This is not to say that Gregory wrote Book 2 before he wrote Book 1,

just that he already knew the ultimate aims in Book 2 before he even began work on Book 1. For this reason, the term “teleological” seems to fit the relationship between the two volumes.

We have been referring to the episodes that appear a second time in the final section or book of both *Lives*. In the two works, these episodes receive different designations. In the one, they are “prophetic” (προφητεία) interpretations. In the other, they are “allegorical” (διάνοια/θεωρία). But how is Philo’s “prophetic” interpretation different from Gregory’s “allegorical” one? While Philo maintains an exegetical form of paraphrase in his final prophetic section, Gregory shifts to an explicit mode of exposition in Book 2. For Philo, prophecy has to do with the inspiration of the composition and interpretation of scripture. Mosaic prophecy is characterized by inspiration by the divine spirit who causes one to speak.¹ For Gregory, allegory has to do with finding the inner meanings of events that are beneficial to the interpreter of scripture.²

In addition to using different modes of exegesis, they each make use of their earlier paraphrases of events from Moses’s life, but they do so in different ways. Since Philo crafts another paraphrase, he requires source material to recast. This material comes from both the LXX and his prior paraphrase. These become two textual sources from which he recasts in the act of paraphrase. Gregory, on the other hand, uses an explicit mode of exegesis in which he fully articulates the meaning. For this, he requires a narrative of Moses’s life to interpret. Instead of allegorizing scripture directly Gregory primarily exegetes his earlier paraphrastic narrative of Moses’s life in Book 1. However, he still interprets the text of the LXX itself in addition. In this way, Gregory ultimately provides the reader with an allegorical interpretation of the LXX, but he

¹ See Philo, *Mos.* 1.188–191; *Spec.* 4.49.

² See Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant.* Pref. (GNO 24.3–5).

does so *through* the paraphrased narrative in Book 1. These differences between Philo's prophetic interpretation and Gregory's allegorical interpretation lead our discussion to the concept of mediation and the ways in which paraphrase serves to mediate the meaning of scripture for the biblical exegete who reads the respective *Lives*.

Both authors use paraphrase as an exegetical format that serves to mediate the text of the LXX in some way. However, how each does this differs. For Philo, paraphrase stands partway between the LXX and its interpreter. In the episodes that we analyzed, this is true both in the case of first paraphrases and his prophetic paraphrases. For Gregory, paraphrase also serves as a mediator, yet it does so indirectly between scripture and the interpreter. It serves as a bridge that connects the LXX and its interpretation. Between the LXX and its interpretation stands a kind of interpretive chasm that the exegete must bridge through a variety of strategies by explaining how to get from scripture to established interpretive meanings. Instead of bridging this chasm in one jump, Philo and Gregory construct their paraphrases to serve as a kind of bridge to aid the interpreter as they move from LXX to interpretation. Gregory, however, establishes a double spanned bridge to cross the chasm. We can imagine if there is a small rock column partway across the chasm. Gregory first spans the chasm to the rock column, then he crosses the second part of the chasm from the column to the other side. In this way, aided by the rock pillar he enables to reader to cross the chasm in two movements but both conveying the reader in the same direction. Thus, the paraphrastic narrative functions in different mediatory ways in the two works.

In the case of both texts, the directionality of paraphrase can go both ways. For Philo and Gregory, the paraphrase is their own interpretive retelling of the biblical narrative. However, they in turn want their readers to both go back to and find in the LXX what they themselves see.

Afterward, they want the reader to move forward from that paraphrase into their own applications of them for their own contemporary contexts.

We started this investigation with the words of Philo and Gregory themselves in their respective prefaces. By grounding ourselves in the ways in which both presented their projects to their readers, we were able to understand how they each rhetorically presented their intent to their readers, the structure, and method of their respective *Lives*. After this analysis, we must ask ourselves, however, whether Philo and Gregory actually do what they say they will do in their prefaces or deviate from it. If they do deviate from it, why do they do so? Let us first turn to Philo in order to answer these questions. In his preface to Book 1, Philo states that he will combine scripture with the traditions of the elders in order to provide the reader with the most accurate depiction of Moses's life possible. While individual readers will likely disagree about the "accuracy" of this depiction,³ Philo does, in fact, do what he says will in the following two books by combining various interpretations with the literal text of the LXX.

At the same time, however, he differs from what he states he will do in the preface by going beyond it. Nowhere in the preface to either Books 1 or 2 does he indicate that he will discuss certain episodes more than once. He states in the preface to Book 2 that Moses's four functions (i.e., philosopher-king, legislator, priest, and prophet) are connected and rely upon one another. However, he does not say anything about giving the same events a second time or what that implies. Therefore, when the reader arrives at the final prophetic section of the treatise, what are they supposed to make of the fact that four episodes are repeated and even seem to borrow

³ For example, not everyone is likely to find Philo's interpretation of the cloud containing an angel persuasive (*Mos.* 1.166) or agree that Moses spoke in his spirit to God since it is not literally narrated as such in scripture (*Mos.* 1.173).

elements from the earlier version of events? Why only these four episodes? Philo nowhere accounts for the reason why he gives these events—and only these four events—a second time. Philo likely has in mind the inspirational character of the events. Philo begins the section by stating that in the four events Moses speaks with inspiration about future events.⁴ In each of these events, Moses gives speech-acts under inspiration about the future in some way. They thus provide the perfect fodder for Philo to explicate further about Moses's inspiration.

As we turn to Gregory's *Life*, we see him do more or less exactly what he stated he would do in the preface. There, he states that he will perform a two-step exegetical procedure consisting of a retelling of the biblical account of Moses's life followed by its interpretation. This is what he does in the two books of his *Life*. While Gregory does what he sets out to do, scholarship has not always fully appreciated this or what it means.

Scholarship has often assumed that Book 1 is a "literal reading" of scripture while Book 2 is an "allegorical reading." This is due to what Gregory states in his preface. There, he says that Book 1 will give a ἱστορία of events while Book 2 will look for their inner meaning (διάνοια). His words in the preface are reflected in the names that the two volumes receive in the manuscript tradition. Book 1 receives the title of ἱστορία, Book 2 is the θεωρία. When we look closer at the treatise, however, we see that the two books contain a method far more complex than a simple literal versus allegorical dichotomy. Book 1 contains a narrative based on the literal text of scripture. As such it contains literal readings, but it also displays more allegorical interpretations. When we turn to Book 2, both literal and allegorical exegesis appear there too, but they are now fully articulated and developed. As we indicated in the introduction, the

⁴ Philo, *Mos.* 2.190.

language of the preface (i.e., ἐν δρομῇ διέλθοντες)⁵ suggests that he will provide a narrative of Moses's life that is highly selective and exegetical. Much like Philo, he does what he says he will do, yet there is more than initially meets the eye in his exegetical complexity.

Both Books 1 and 2 demonstrate a much more complex nature than the simple literal/allegorical scheme suggested at face value by the terms *ιστορία* and *θεωρία/διάνοια*. Gregory uses in Book 1 the form of paraphrase in order to compose a narrative of the LXX account which carries the allegorical meanings he wishes. He does this most frequently by inserting language that resonates with Christian theology as well as removing offending elements that might disrupt that. We can see this, for example, in the case of the cloud in the desert. By introducing theological language that is typically associated with the Holy Spirit, his narrative suggests that the cloud is the Holy Spirit. When he arrives at the explanation of the event in Book 2, he provides a fully articulated allegorical reading of the cloud as the Holy Spirit who conducts one to baptism.⁶ In addition to such allegorical readings, however, Book 2 also contains more literal interpretations. For example, Gregory also gives a less allegorical reading for the Red Sea events in *Vit. Moys.* 1.117–118 by stating that it is the melodious voice that rises to God rather than the sense-perceptible one. While this is not a strictly literal reading, it is also not as theologically allegorical as the cloud.

While we have been examining Philo and Gregory side-by-side for most of this study, the reader may be asking themselves what is gained by studying their *Lives* together? Why could we not simply examine each of the two in isolation? By performing a comparative analysis of the exegetical use of paraphrase in the two *Lives* as I have done, we are in a better position to

⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.15.

⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.120–129.

determine how Gregory learned from Philo's example yet deviated from this source in significant ways. For example, Gregory adopts the use of paraphrase, a two-volume structure, and episodes appearing more than once from Philo, yet he sees a new potential in them, distinct from how Philo employs them. Gregory recombines them into new arrangements that fuse both the exegetical form and the repeated episodes with the two-volume structure of the treatise itself. As a result, one volume serves to hold one version of an episode (i.e., allegorical exegesis in the form of narrative) while the other volume contains a second version of the same episode (i.e., a fully articulated allegorical interpretation). Without such a direct comparison, the way Gregory borrowed yet adapted these three elements from Philo into new configurations would not have been fully appreciated. For example, we see this in the case of Moses speaking silently to God or in the case of the cloud in the desert. While both of these things appear in Philo and Gregory, Gregory is the only one who gives a fully articulated explanation in the second book.

Finally, my analysis has much to add to scholarship on biblical hermeneutics by demonstrating how paraphrase functions as an interpretive mode that blends the literal and allegorical into a single composition. As such, it is neither literal or allegorical, but stands somewhere between the literal and the allegorical. In the current study, we consider notions of the so-called "literal" in order to begin to complexify it. While paraphrase in the two *Lives* has been overlooked often as something "literal" and not so much a vehicle of interpretation, my analysis has demonstrated that this is simply not the case. Neither, however, is paraphrase something non-literal. Instead, paraphrase stands somewhere between the literal and the allegorical. Where exactly it stands on that spectrum depends on the individual paraphrastic decisions made as the paraphrast negotiates the tensions between faithfulness to and freedom from the original.

My study further contributes to research on biblical hermeneutics by providing a better picture of how Philo and Gregory employ exegetical concepts and vocabulary, including *ιστορία*, *θεωρία*, and *προφητεία*. In regard to Moses, Philo typically uses *προφητεία* to refer to the inspiration received either by Moses in the act of composition of scripture or by the interpreter in the act of exegesis. In his *Life*, *προφητεία* contains both of these senses simultaneously. On the one hand, Philo depicts Moses as the prophet who passes along a divine oracle and himself in the guise of Moses as he prophetically records those oracular words. On the other hand, Philo's text serves to mediate Moses's oracles in scripture to the reader. In this way, his text is prophetic in both the compositional and interpretive senses.

When we turn to Gregory's allegorical reading, we gain insights into how he uses the terms *ιστορία* and *θεωρία*. The standard understanding of the treatise takes Book 1 to be the literal reading of scripture (*ιστορία*) and Book 2 to be the allegorical one (*θεωρία*). However, the picture is far more complex than this. On the one hand, Book 1 presents a paraphrastic narrative partway between the literal and the allegorical. On the other hand, Book 2 actually contains both extended allegorical expositions as well as short paraphrases that serve to recap the episode and remind the reader of the basic facts of an episode before beginning the allegory. Thus, the standard literal/allegorical dichotomy is too simplistic to reflect the reality of the treatise.

As we conclude this chapter, let us end with a final observation about our study of the ways in which Philo and Gregory employ paraphrase as a means to mediate scripture for its interpreter. The interpretation of scripture is an affair fraught with difficulty and ambiguity. Both Philo and Gregory understood how problematic the task of biblical interpretation could be. Lest the exegete be confused about the meaning of scripture, they composed treatises to guide them in the task, yet went about doing so in different ways. Philo mediates the meaning of scripture by

presenting a new narrative with its own interpretation of the events of Moses's life. Gregory first provides a new narrative that crafts the events of Moses's life, yet he uses this narrative as a suitable launching off point for explicit allegories based as much on that narrative as on scripture itself. In their own ways, both authors interpret scripture in some way for their readers through the format of paraphrase.

Modern exegetes, theologians, and readers of scripture might learn much from this study. The paraphrase of the biblical text by no means ended in the ancient world. The Bible is reworked and re-presented in countless media every day. This study has provided a basic heuristic for how to approach such adaptations of the biblical text. How does the paraphrase of scripture—in whatever media—serve to mediate scripture? How does the paraphrast employ paraphrastic techniques? How does the paraphrast negotiate tensions between faithfulness and freedom? Because the paraphrase is a fluid thing, how one even determines what is a faithful reading to scripture and what is a free reading becomes complicated.

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