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## INTERPRETING 4 EZRA AND 2 BARUCH

International Studies

Edited by

Gabriele Boccaccini

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### **ABBREVIATIONS**

٨D	Angle on Dible
AB AOTC	Anchor Bible
ADIC	Abington Old Testament Commentary Die Apokryphen und pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments.
ΑΓΑΙ	Edited by E. Kautzsch. New ed. 2 vols. Tübingen, 1900
APOT	The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament.
AFUI	Edited by R. H. Charles. 2 vols. Oxford, 1913
Bib	Biblica
BR	Biblical Research
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CBR	Currents in Biblical Research
CC	Continental Commentaries
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium. Edited by I. B.
ebeo	Chabot et al. Paris, 1903–
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen
	Testaments
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
ICC	International Critical Commentary Series
IOS	Israel Oriental Society
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JCTC	Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic,
	and Roman Periods
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and
	Roman Periods: Supplement Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSP	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series

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LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon.
	9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NAB	New American Bible
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTA NTOA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTS	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus New Testament Studies
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by J. H. Charlesworth.
011	2 vols. New York, 1983
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
RBib	Revue Biblique
RevQ	Revue de Qumran
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLSymS	Society for Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SC	Sources chrétiennes. Paris: Cerf, 1943-
SR	Studies in Religion
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
Str-B	Strack, H. L., and P. Billerbeck. Kommentar zum Neuen
	Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch. 6 vols. Munich,
OVTD	1922–1961 Statistics V. (1977)
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica Themes in Biblical Narrative
TBN <i>TDNT</i>	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by G.
I DIVI	Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols.
	Grand Rapids, 1964–1976
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary Series
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen
	Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

#### INTRODUCTION: PERSPECTIVES ON *4 EZRA* AND *2 BARUCH* FROM THE SIXTH ENOCH SEMINAR

Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski

4 Ezra and 2 Baruch are classic, perhaps even defining examples of both Jewish apocalyptic and pseudepigraphy. These texts-the first preserved in the larger Latin work of 2 Esdras, the other surviving, as a whole, only in the Syriac Bible found in the Ambrosianus Library in Milan-are set in the aftermath of the destruction of the first temple in 586 B.C.E. Two great scribes—one the bringer of the Torah post-return, the other the secretary of the prophet Jeremiah-lament the fate of their city and their exiled people. Both haggle and argue with God or God's messenger as to why this terrible thing should have happened to God's own people. And both are given symbolic visions, which, when explained, depict, on the one hand, the universal history of a people disobedient and oppressed, and, on the other, the eschatological redemption of the people, the destruction of its enemies, and the glorious world to come, the destiny of the righteous, those who have remained faithful to the Torah despite the difficulties in doing so. In reality, both texts were written not in the sixth century B.C.E., but instead at the end of the first century C.E., the authors responding to the destruction of the second temple, not the first, the Babylonian exile used merely as a tool to describe an incident which may still be too fresh.

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Contemporary scholars have come to recognize the importance of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* to the understanding of first-century Israel and the development of Judaism and early Christianity. The strides in the past century in the scholarship of the Second Temple period have been immense, especially in the recognition of the great diversity of the period, and in these Jewish apocalypses we can begin to see marked shifts in ideologies or theologies which had to cope with the loss of the temple and the difficulty of now remaining faithful to one's ancestral traditions.

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The growing interest in the history and literature of Second Temple Judaism in the past 60 years has not only brought to light the importance of texts like 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, but it has also made possible the success of an organization like the Enoch Seminar, which is focused specifically on this period so neglected in earlier scholarship. The Enoch Seminar was founded in 2001 by an international team of specialists in Second Temple Judaism, who were seeking recognition and autonomy for the study of this period so crucial for both Christian and Rabbinic origins by fostering a better, more thorough understanding of its literature and thought. The goal was to tear down the misleading walls of separation that still divide this field of research, recovering the unity and integrity of the period. Enoch was chosen as the symbol of this intercanonical and inter-disciplinary effort, as he is present in each and all of the canons that anachronistically divide the sources from the period: Old Testament, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, Jewish-Hellenistic literature, New Testament, Apostolic Fathers, etc.

The first five Seminars were more specifically devoted to the study of Enoch and the literature related to that mysterious patriarch. The First Enoch Seminar (Florence, 2001) was on "The Origins of Enochic Judaism"; the Second (Venice, 2003), "Enoch and Qumran Origins"; the Third (Camaldoli, 2005), "Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man"; the Fourth (Camaldoli, 2007), "Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of *Jubilees*"; and the Fifth (Naples, 2009), "Enoch, Adam, Melchisedek: Mediatorial Figures in *2 Enoch* and Second Temple Judaism." The Sixth Seminar, "*Second Baruch* and *Fourth Ezra*: Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel," was chaired by Matthias Henze and focused on two of the most important Jewish documents written shortly after the destruction of the second temple.

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The Sixth Seminar, which took place just outside of Milan, June 26–30, 2011, was dedicated to the memory of the great archaeologist and scholar Hanan Eshel 5". Hanan was one of the founding members of the Enoch Seminar, and he played an integral role in the growth of the organization. His absence was deeply felt.

As usual, participation in the Sixth Enoch Seminar was by invitation only and was restricted to university professors and specialists in the field. Professors Henze and Boccaccini assembled in the small village of Gazzada, Italy a group of experts from around the world. Over 80 scholars from the United States, Canada, South America, Europe, Israel, and Ethiopia took over the Villa Cagnola for five days of intensive study and discussion on these extremely important Jewish apocalyptic texts. After Professor Henze opened the Seminar with his talk on the *status quaestionis* of the texts, the focus turned to the twelve major papers,

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ranging in topic from the texts' relationship to Jewish and Christian materials to their reception history. Papers are never read at the Enoch Seminar, but instead are all circulated in advance, allowing the majority of time to be dedicated to discussion. At the Sixth Seminar, each major paper was discussed in both plenary sessions and smaller sessions led by two respondents.

The conference generated a lively debate among the participants, which went far beyond the assigned papers, now collected in the proceedings volume, published by Brill.<sup>1</sup> Participants were encouraged to submit additional short papers on various aspects related to the study of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. These short papers also were circulated in advance so that most of the time in Gazzada could be devoted to more in-depth discussion. After the conference the authors were invite to revise their work in light of the new elements and challenges given by five days of hard work and intellectual camaraderie. The fruit of these discussions is found in this volume, here subdivided into four parts.

In Part I, "4 Ezra in the Apocalyptic Tradition," the authors situate this example of Jewish apocalyptic within the wider tradition found in texts such as 1 Enoch, Daniel, and various Dead Sea Scrolls. Veronika Bachmann compares the depiction of history and the meaning given to it in the book of 4 Ezra with that found in the Enochic Book of the Watchers. According to Bachmann, the author of 4 Ezra's confrontation with the destruction of the second temple led to his borrowing of the Enochic author's historical "apocalyptic technique," transposing the frame of reference from the present to a more universal cosmic history, even if the very different circumstances of the authors allowed for unique sketches and applications of this history. Based in traditional sapiential and prophetic discourses, the Book of the Watchers, Bachmann shows, initiated this new form of re-reading history. Bilhah Nitzan, instead, compares the apocalyptic concepts found in 4 Ezra with those in the Dead Sea Scrolls in order to better understand how the destruction of the second temple influenced Jewish apocalyptic ideas. Like Bachmann, Laura Bizzarro is also interested in the author of 4 Ezra's reading of history, particularly the depiction of the destruction of the second temple in the fifth episode, and its relationship to Dan 7 and the Dead Sea Scrolls *pesharim*, in an attempt to better comprehend the meaning of history in Jewish apocalyptic texts and whether or not there was a particular apocalyptic reading of history.

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<sup>1.</sup> *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall* (ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with the collaboration of Jason M. Zurawski; JSJSup 164; Leiden: Brill, 2013)

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Part II, "4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and Early Christian Literature," offers further proof that we must read the earliest Christian materials as part of the wider phenomenon of Second Temple Judaism. Andreas Bedenbender gives an innovative reading of Mark 14's anointing of Jesus in Bethany in light of 4 Ezra's transformative fourth episode. Both texts, Bedenbender argues, depict an allegorical representation of Zion. Bedenbender's reading shows us how fruitful and necessary it is to read texts like the gospels within their Second Temple Jewish framework. Calum Carmichael also reads 4 Ezra together with a gospel, this time looking at the depictions of the days of creation in 4 Ezra 6:38-59 and John 1–5, arguing that the gospel author, through allegory, is retelling the Genesis creation narrative through the incidents of Jesus' life. Carmichael shows that, despite the very different directions each author takes, both 4 Ezra and John share a common pool of traditions concerning the Genesis creation story. Eric Mason compares how 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Epistle to the Hebrews interpret and utilize Ps 104:4. While there was a dominant exegetical tradition in Second Temple Judaism of reading the Psalm as a description of the origins of angels from fire and wind, the interpretation of the passage in both 4 Ezra and Hebrews, Mason argues, proves that not all ancient authors read the Psalm in that vein. Rivka Nir argues that the final section of the book of 2 Baruch, the Epistle, should be read, against the current scholarly consensus, as an early Christian document, a gospel imbued with specifically Christian symbols, destined for a Christian audience.

For Part III, "Close Readings of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch," the authors each focus on particular problems or issues within the texts in an attempt to offer more nuanced readings. Jason Zurawski looks closely at 4 Ezra 7:10–14, a particularly difficult and ambiguous passage concerning the nature of Adam's sin and its effect on future generations. Long taken as a prooftext that the author of 4 Ezra imagined a sort of original sin that affected the rest of humanity, this text appears to be at odds with the idea espoused throughout the rest of the text that God had foreordained the world to come and all the eschatological materials. Zurawski, therefore, offers a new reading of the text which better makes sense of the grammatical ambiguities in light of the rest of the document. Daniel Gurtner examines the views of the eschaton and the world to come found in the book of 2 Baruch, particularly the blessings acquired in the next age by the righteous who maintain their adherence to the Law in the present despite the difficulties of this world. In his paper, Jared Ludlow explores 2 Baruch's views on death, the final judgment, and the state of souls in the afterlife, revealing a text which exhorts one to good works, a general, Jewish ethical lifestyle. Following the work of Jan Van Goudoever and

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Pierre Bogaert, Basil Lourié seeks to reconstruct the implied calendars used by the authors of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. The calendaric details show, among other things, that the Epistle of *2 Baruch* was part of the original recension of the text. Carla Sulzbach compares the differing narrative perspectives in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in order to see how they affect the portrayal of Jerusalem, specifically looking at how the texts present the changing face of Jerusalem's urban space, reconstructing the city from the collective memory.

Finally, Part IV, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch in their Social and Historical Settings," attempts to situate these documents within their appropriate Sitz im Leben, whether archaeologically, paleographically, or psychologically. James Charlesworth looks closely at some recent archaeological discoveries in and around Jerusalem in order to show that the longstanding scholarly assumption that neither 4 Ezra nor 2 Baruch could have been written in Jerusalem between 70 and 132 C.E. is not necessarily true. The archaeological data from Shu<sup>c</sup>afat and other sites show clear evidence of Jewish life and literary activity near Jerusalem. Next, Charlesworth contends that 2 Baruch must be a response either to ideas similar to those found in 4 Ezra or to 4 Ezra itself, seeking to resolve the pessimistic, unsatisfactory position and response to the crisis of the destruction in 70 found in that text. In his paper, Stephen Pfann looks behind 4 Ezra 14:42 and the idea that Ezra's scribes wrote in "characters which they did not know," by exploring the history and use of Jewish cryptographic and esoteric scripts in the Second Temple period, looking primarily at examples from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Harold Ellens takes a psychological look at the phenomenon of apocalyptic thought in texts like the Parables of Enoch, 11QMelchizedek, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and early Christian literature, as well as the general apocalyptic air during the late Second Temple period. According to Ellens, the apocalyptic worldview exhibits all of the traits of psychological delusion according to modern psychiatric standards. This delusion often led to catastrophic consequences, from the messianic fervor of the first century C.E. to contemporary phenomena of collective psychotic delusions.

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These papers, along with those found in the companion volume of the Proceedings, reflect well the Enoch Seminar's goal of fostering a greater understanding of Second Temple Judaism *en toto*—a goal that is pursued through a variety of activities, from the biennial meetings of the Enoch Seminar and the Enoch Graduate Seminar, to the newly created Nangeroni Meetings, the *Online Encyclopedia of Second Temple Judaism* (www.4enoch.org), and the online journal (www.enochseminar.org).

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