

SVERRE BØE

# Gog and Magog

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

135

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Mohr Siebeck

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament · 2. Reihe

Herausgegeben von  
Martin Hengel und Otfried Hofius

135





Sverre Bøe

# Gog and Magog

Ezekiel 38 – 39 as Pre-text  
for Revelation 19,17 – 21 and 20,7 – 10

Mohr Siebeck

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## Preface

This book is a revised version of my 1999 dissertation with the same title presented to the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology, Oslo, in 1999.

It was prof. Ernst Baasland who introduced me to a scholarly study of the inter-textual relationship between Revelation and Ezekiel. He was my supervisor up to 1997, when he was elected bishop of Stavanger, Norway. Prof. Hans Kvalbein was my supervisor up to the public defense September 24. and 25. 1999. My opponents were prof. David E. Aune, Notre Dame University, USA, prof. Jarl H. Ulrichsen, University of Trondheim, Norway, and ass. prof. Reidar Hvalvik, the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology, Oslo. The many valuable comments from these and other scholars have enabled me to revise my dissertation at many points. I cordially thank them all.

I am also privileged to present my study to the public *forum* of biblical scholars through the WUNT II-series of J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck). Hopefully this can contribute to a further study of the issue. Particularly I want to thank prof. Martin Hengel and Mr. Matthias Spitzner for this opportunity.

This book has grown out of almost ten years of part-time studies. I have had the privilege of teaching at Fjellhaug Mission Seminary since 1986, and my teaching duties have been reduced over several periods. I thank my seminary and the principals Egil Sjaastad (1986-99) and Ola Tulluan (from 1999) for this opportunity. I also wish to thank cand. philol. Hanne Tulluan, and Mr. Geir Magne Karlsen for various assistance in the project.

I want to dedicate this book to my wife Heidi, who constantly has supported my work without a single negative comment, and to our five children Nils Kåre, Kari Anne, Per Sigmund, Bård Kristian and Osmund Olav. The happy life in the family balances and gives perspectives to the scholarly work at the seminary.

Most of all I wish to thank my God for the texts he has given us, the message therein, and the ability to read and meditate upon them. The aim of all my work is to learn and teach according to his word, and I hope that my shortcomings and mistakes will not mislead anyone who sincerely wants to understand the Bible.

November 2000

Sverre Bøe, Fjellhaug Mission Seminary, Oslo.



# Table of Contents

Preface .....	V
Table of Contents .....	VII
Abbreviations.....	XV
I: Introduction .....	1
1.1    The task .....	1
1.2    History of research.....	5
1.2.1    Revelation's use of the Old Testament.....	6
Studies at the beginning of the twentieth century .....	7
Studies after 1950 .....	8
Critical objections .....	12
1.2.2    The exegesis of Revelation 20,8 .....	14
The identity of Gog and Magog in Revelation 20,8 .....	14
The use of traditional material in Revelation 20,8 .....	16
The double use of Ezekiel 38–39 in Revelation 19,17–20,10.....	16
1.2.3    The Gog and Magog traditions .....	19
1.3    Methodological considerations .....	21
1.3.1    Author- and reader-oriented exegesis .....	21
1.3.2    Synchronic and diachronic exegesis .....	22
1.3.3    Apocalyptic literature as a methodological challenge .....	23
1.3.4    Tracing allusions in Revelation .....	24
Definition of terms .....	25
Seeking parallels .....	29
1.3.5    Criteria for the choice of relevant texts .....	31
1.4    Introductory comments on the book of Revelation .....	35
1.4.1    The author .....	35
1.4.2    Addressee .....	36
1.4.3    Time .....	37
1.4.4    Historical situation .....	37
1.4.5    The question of genre .....	39
1.4.6    Outline of Revelation .....	42
II: Gog and Magog in the OT outside of Ezekiel.....	45
2.1    Gog and Magog in the Masoretic text of the Old Testament .....	45
2.1.1    Magog in Genesis 10,2 and 1 Chronicles 1,5 .....	45
2.1.2    Gog in 1 Chronicles 5,4.....	49
2.2    Gog and Magog in the Septuagint and other versions .....	50
2.2.1    Gog for Agag in the versions to Numbers 24,7 .....	50
The Samaritan Pentateuch .....	52
Other versions and texts .....	52

The Balaam text from Deir 'Alla .....	53
The translation of Numbers into Greek .....	54
Possible explanations of the Gog-reading .....	54
Possible interpretations of the Gog-reading in Numbers 24,7 .....	57
Conclusions .....	58
2.2.2 Gog for Og in Cod. Vat. in Deuteronomy 3,1.13; 4,47 .....	58
King Og from Bashan .....	60
2.2.3 Gog in the Septuagint of Amos 7,1 .....	61
A. The terms for locusts .....	63
B. εἰς – ‘one’ .....	64
C. The name Γωγ .....	64
The translation of Amos into Greek .....	65
The relationship to Joel .....	65
The title of king .....	66
The nature of the enemy .....	66
The locusts as a metaphor for a military army .....	67
Interpretations of Gog as a mythological figure .....	68
To what time do the locusts refer? .....	69
The locusts as punishment .....	70
Conclusions .....	70
2.2.4 “Haman, the Gogite” in ms. 93 to Esther 3,1 and 9,24 .....	71
2.2.5 Gog in Cod. Vat. to Sirach 48,17 .....	73
Conclusions to Chapter Two .....	75
<b>III: Gog from Magog in Ezekiel 38–39 .....</b>	<b>76</b>
3.1 The context of Ezekiel 38–39 .....	76
3.1.1 The book of Ezekiel .....	76
3.1.2 Ezekiel 38–39 within its context: Ezekiel 33–48 .....	77
Ezekiel 36,16–38 .....	78
Ezekiel 37,1–14 .....	78
Ezekiel 37,15–28 .....	79
Ezekiel 40–48 .....	80
The appropriateness of Ezekiel 38–39 in the context .....	81
3.2 Analysis of Ezekiel 38–39 .....	83
Integrity and unity of Ezekiel 38–39 .....	85
The genre of Ezekiel 38–39 .....	86
The relation of Ezekiel 38–39 to apocalyptic .....	87
3.3 The identity of Gog from Magog in Ezekiel 38–39 .....	88
3.3.1 Preliminary remarks on the names “Gog” and “Magog” .....	89
Gog and Magog as rhyme-words .....	90
3.3.2 Proposed identifications of Gog .....	91
1. Gog as king Gyges of Lydia .....	91

2. Gog as a prince called Gâgi living north of Assyria .....	93
3. Various identifications with other historical persons .....	94
4. Gog taken from Numbers 24,7 .....	94
5. Gog as a district called Gaga .....	95
6. Gog derived from a Babylonian deity called “Gaga” .....	95
3.3.3 Proposed identifications of Magog .....	95
1. Magog as the Scythians .....	95
2. Magog as the Babylonians .....	96
3. Magog as the Lydians or the Parthians .....	97
3.3.4 Symbolic explanations of “Gog” .....	97
1. Gog derived from a Sumerian word Gug .....	97
2. Gog and the Cuthean legend of Naram-Sin .....	97
3.3.5 The relationship between the two names .....	98
1. “Gog” formed from “Magog” .....	98
2. “Magog” formed from “Gog” .....	98
Conclusions .....	99
3.4 The other names of Ezekiel 38–39 .....	99
Rosh .....	100
Meshech and Tubal .....	101
Persia, Cush and Put .....	102
Gomer .....	103
Beth-togarmah .....	104
Sheba, Dedan and Tarshish .....	104
“Those who live in the coastlands” .....	105
The possibility of a mythological character of Gog’s army .....	105
Conclusions .....	106
3.5 Main themes in Ezekiel 38–39 .....	107
3.5.1 The combatants .....	107
Israel .....	107
Gog’s army .....	111
The relationship to previous prophecy .....	113
The enemy from the north .....	114
The motivation for Gog’s attack .....	116
3.5.2 The warfare .....	118
The battlefield .....	118
Did Gog really capture Jerusalem? .....	118
God’s intervention .....	119
The Day of Yahweh .....	121
The eschatological assault of the nations .....	122
Similar war-accounts in Daniel and Zechariah 7–14 .....	122
3.5.3 The outcome .....	125
Gog’s weapons as fuel for Israel .....	125
The burial of Gog’s army and the purification of the land .....	126

The significance of the number seven .....	127
Gog's army presented as Yahweh's sacrifice .....	128
The recognition of Yahweh .....	131
The pouring out of God's spirit .....	131
3.6 Ezekiel 38–39 in the Septuagint .....	132
3.6.1 The general character of the Septuagint to Ezekiel .....	132
3.6.2 Ezekiel 38–39 in the Septuagint .....	133
The names Gog and Magog .....	133
The other names .....	134
The shorter version in 38,4 .....	134
The insertion of the name "Gog" in 38,17 .....	134
The pouring out of "anger" instead of "spirit" in 39, 29 .....	135
3.6.3 Text-historical matters .....	135
Conclusions to Chapter Three .....	138
IV: Gog and Magog in other literature .....	140
4.1 Gog and Magog in the <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> .....	140
The third book of the <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> .....	140
Gog and Magog in the <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> 3,319–22 .....	142
Gog and Magog in the <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> 3,512–13 .....	145
Allusions to Ezekiel 38–39 in <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> 3,635–731 .....	147
Conclusions .....	149
4.2 Gog and Magog in the book of <i>Jubilees</i> .....	150
The Book of <i>Jubilees</i> .....	150
The geographical orientation in <i>Jubilees</i> .....	152
Gog and Magog in <i>Jubilees</i> .....	153
The relationship between the regions of Gog and Magog .....	155
Jubilees' possible use of Ezekiel .....	158
Conclusions .....	158
4.3 Gog and Magog in Qumran .....	159
The use of Ezekiel in Qumran .....	160
Gog in 1QM XI,16 .....	161
The general picture of the enemies in the <i>War Scroll</i> .....	163
The enemies in 1QM XI .....	164
Ezekielian traditions in 1QM .....	167
Is there a role for Messiah in the Gog-battle in 1QM XI? .....	169
Magog in the Pesher on Isaiah 11,1–5 (4Q16I) .....	170
4Q16I 8–10 col III 18–25: .....	170
Magog in the <i>Genesis Apocryphon</i> (1QapGen) .....	174
1QapGen XII,12 .....	174
1QapGen XVII,16 .....	175
1QapGen XVII, 10 .....	176

Gog and Magog in 4Q523 .....	177
Conclusions .....	178
4.4 Allusions to Ezekiel 38–39 in <i>1 Enoch</i> 56,5–8 .....	178
The relations to Ezekiel 38–39 .....	182
Conclusions .....	184
4.5 Josephus on Magog .....	184
Conclusions .....	186
4.6 Magog in <i>Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum</i> .....	186
Conclusions .....	189
4.7 Gog and Magog in the Targumim .....	189
4.7.1 Introductory comments .....	189
The names Gog and Magog .....	191
4.7.2 Gog and Magog in the Targumim .....	191
<i>Targum Jonathan</i> to Ezekiel 38–39 .....	192
The Targumim to Genesis 10,2 .....	193
The Targumim to Numbers 11,26 .....	193
Gog and Magog and the Messiah(s) in the Targumim .....	196
Additional references to Gog and Magog in the Targumim .....	197
Conclusions .....	198
Excursus 1: Gog and Magog in rabbinic writings .....	199
The age of the rabbinic references to Gog and Magog .....	199
The time of Gog and Magog’s attack .....	201
Gog and the Messiah ben Joseph .....	202
The identity of Gog and Magog .....	204
Other passages related to Gog and Magog .....	205
Conclusions .....	206
Excursus 2: Gog and Magog in <i>3 Enoch</i> 45,5 .....	207
4.8 The Armenian province of Gogarenê and the port of Gogana .....	208
Gogarenê .....	209
Gogana .....	209
Excursus 3: The Church Fathers on Gog and Magog .....	210
From Justin to Augustin .....	211
Identifications with contemporary enemies .....	216
Conclusions .....	218
Excursus 4: Alexander’s Wall and the enclosed nations .....	219
Alexander’s Iron Gates according to Josephus .....	221
Alexander’s Gate and Gog and Magog in Medieval literature .....	222
Gog and Magog in the Koran .....	228
Other suggestions .....	228
Theories about the growth of these traditions .....	229
Conclusions to Chapter Four .....	230

V: John's use of the Gog and Magog traditions .....	235
5.1    Literary analysis of Revelation 19,11–21,8 .....	235
5.1.1    Objections to the integrity of Revelation 19,11–22,21 .....	236
5.1.2    Revelation 19,11–21,8 and the rest of the book .....	238
5.1.3    The number of visions in Revelation 19,11–21,8 .....	239
5.1.4    Text-critical matters .....	244
5.2    Main theological lines in Revelation 19,11–21,8.....	245
Introductory comment .....	245
5.2.1    Revelation 19,11–16: The rider on the white horse .....	246
5.2.2    Revelation 19,17–18: The invitation of the birds .....	252
5.2.3    Revelation 19,19–21: The battle against the beasts .....	252
5.2.4    Revelation 20,1–3: Satan's imprisonment .....	254
5.2.5    Revelation 20,4–6: The millennial kingdom .....	257
5.2.6    Revelation 20,7–10: The battle against Gog and Magog .....	264
5.2.7    Revelation 20,11–15: The final judgement.....	267
5.2.8    Revelation 21,1–8: The New Jerusalem .....	271
5.2.9    Conclusions .....	273
5.3    The Gog and Magog traditions in Revelation .....	274
Echoes of Ezekiel 38 in Revelation 16,17–21 .....	274
5.3.1    The Gog and Magog traditions in Revelation 19,17–21 .....	276
Then I saw an angel standing in the sun .....	277
He called to all the birds that fly in midheaven .....	278
Come, gather .....	279
... for the great supper of God .....	281
To eat .....	283
... the flesh of .....	283
Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth .....	289
With their armies .....	290
Gathered .....	291
To make war .....	292
And the beast was captured .....	294
The lake of fire .....	294
And the rest were killed .....	295
And all the birds were gorged with their flesh .....	296
The imagery of the birds's supper .....	296
Conclusions .....	298
5.3.2    The Gog and Magog traditions in Revelation 20,7–10.....	300
When the thousand years are ended .....	300
Satan will be released .....	301
From his prison .....	303
And will come out .....	304
To deceive .....	304

The nations .....	305
At the four corners of the earth .....	308
Gog and Magog .....	311
The use of the article with “Gog” .....	311
Are “Gog” and “Magog” names of persons or nations? .....	312
Gog and Magog as demons or spirits of the dead .....	315
Batto’s interpretation of a double elimination of evil .....	318
Malina’s astronomical interpretation .....	319
Mealy’s interpretation of “the nations” as resurrected peoples .....	320
In order to gather them for battle .....	322
They are as numerous as the sands of the sea .....	323
They marched up .....	324
Over the breadth of the earth .....	325
And surrounded .....	327
The camp .....	327
The saints .....	329
And the beloved city .....	330
And fire came down from heaven .....	333
Fire .....	335
Came down .....	335
From heaven .....	336
And consumed them .....	338
The devil thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur .....	339
Was thrown .....	340
Where the beast and the false prophet were .....	341
And they will be tormented .....	341
Day and night .....	341
Forever and ever .....	342
Conclusions .....	342
Other Gog and Magog traditions compared to Rev. 20,7–10 .....	343
Conclusions concerning Gog’s identity .....	344
Other conclusions .....	345
5.4 In dialogue with other scholars .....	345
5.4.1 John’s possible consciousness about the text of Ezekiel .....	347
Objections against such theories .....	347
Evidence of John’s use of Ezekiel .....	349
Some theories about John’s knowledge and use of Ezekiel .....	352
5.4.2 John and some different eschatological Schemata .....	353
Various Jewish traditions about the eschatological events .....	354
Deviations from the Ezekielian Schema .....	357
John’s use of eschatological Schemata .....	360
John’s selfconsciousness as a prophet .....	362
5.4.3 ‘Fulfillment’ in Rev. 19,17–21 and 20,7–10? .....	364

5.4.4 Did John direct his readers/listeners to Ezekiel 38–39? .....	367
5.4.5 The double use of Ezekiel 38–39 in Rev. 19,17–20,10 .....	371
Aalder's theory .....	372
Alexander's claim of a double fulfilment .....	373
Caird's double elimination of evil .....	375
Batto's two-stage destruction of evil .....	375
White's argument for recapitulation .....	376
R.L. Thomas' explanation .....	376
Mealy sees Ezekiel 38–39 as two distinct prophecies .....	377
O. Andersen's suggestion .....	377
Evaluation .....	378
5.4.6 A role for Israel in Revelation 19,17–20,10? .....	379
Conclusions .....	380
VI: Summary .....	383
Appendix: Tables .....	389
Table 1 .....	389
Table 2 a .....	390
Table 2 b .....	391
Bibliography .....	392
A. Sources .....	392
B. Lexica and tools .....	397
C 1: Commentaries to Ezekiel .....	398
C 2: Commentaries to Revelation .....	399
D: Other works .....	401
Index of Sources .....	422
Old Testament .....	422
New Testament .....	429
Jewish Texts .....	435
Christian Texts .....	438
Other Texts .....	439
Index of Names .....	440
Index of Subjects .....	446

## Abbreviations

AB	The Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (edited by D.N. Freedman)
ANF	The Ante-Nicene Fathers
APOT	<i>Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament</i> (edited by R.H. Charles)
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BETL	<i>Bibliotheeca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</i>
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar; Altes Testament
BZNT	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
Frg. Tg.	Fragment Targum
FS	Festschrift
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSS	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSS	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSPSS	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Ms.	Manuscript
NovTest	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NA 26	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> (edited by K. Aland et al.) 26. ed.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
OTL	The Old Testament Library
OTP	<i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> (edited by J.H. Charlesworth)
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SEÅ	<i>Svensk Exegetisk Årbok</i>
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich)

<i>Tg. Neb.</i>	Targum to the Prophets
<i>Tg. Neof.</i>	Targum Neofiti
<i>Tg. Onq.</i>	Targum Onqelos
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
<i>UBSGNT</i>	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> (edited by K. Aland et al.) 3. ed.
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WBC</i>	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZBK</i>	Zürcher Bibelkommentare

# I: Introduction

## 1.1 The task

President Ronald Reagan once said in a famous speech:

Ezekiel tells us that Gog, the nation that will lead all of the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the north. Biblical scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia. What other powerful nation is to the north of Israel? None. But it didn't seem to make sense before the Russian revolution, when Russia was a Christian country. Now it does, now that Russia has become communistic and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly.<sup>1</sup>

Most biblical scholars probably feel embarrassed by provocative quotations like this, even though it places our texts right at the center of the public agenda. It challenges us continuously to study the Bible historically and with a critical mind towards anachronistic combinations such as this. Who, or what, is really the biblical 'Gog'?

The names Gog and Magog occur both in Jewish, Christian and even a few times in Samaritan and Muslim writings. Still the tendency has been to leave such passages to those who have a special preoccupation with apocalyptic writings; throughout church history it has mainly been 'the sects' that offered 'expositions' of Gog and Magog. Biblical scholars are aware of the Gog from Magog oracles in Ezekiel 38–39 as well as their reappearance in Rev 20,8, but no scholar known to me has up to the present made any major survey of the broader material attached to the two names Gog and Magog. Possibly it has been considered an isolated theme at the fringes of the biblical canon. A list of the main references to both or one of the two names apart from Rev 20,8 can broaden this perspective:

- Magog is mentioned in Gen 10,2 and 1 Chron 1,5 as the second son of Noah's son Japhet
- Gog takes the place of Agag in both the Septuagint and the Samaritan version of Balaam's oracle in Num 24,7 as the counterpart of the future, glorious king
- a descendant of Reuben is called Gog or Goug in 1 Chr 5,4

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald Reagan in 1971, then California governor, in a dinner speech to state legislators; here cited from Lind 1996: 320.

- according to Ezekiel 38–39 Gog from Magog will gather a world-wide army, which after an extended period of peace will attack Israel, only to be defeated by God's own interference from heaven. This defeat is described in great detail and gross colors, and several of these features reappear in a number of later texts. This is by far the oldest and the longest text (52 verses) combining the names Gog and Magog
- Gog is called the king of the locusts in the Septuagint version of Amos 7,1; these locusts attack the land of Israel
- Gog and Magog appear twice in woe-oracles in the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles* (3,319.512); their location is associated with Ethiopia
- Magog appears twice and Gog once in the book of *Jubilees* (7,19; 8,25; 9,7–8), all places in a context of the division of the earth after the deluge, and located far to the north
- Gog appears in 1QM XI,16 as God's and Israel's opponent in the eschatological war
- Magog is described as a subject of king Messiah's rule in 4Q161 a in a pesher to Isa 11,5
- Magog is mentioned three times in the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen XII,12 and XVII,10.16) concerning the distribution of land after the deluge
- Gog and Magog are mentioned in the very fragmentary 4Q523
- Josephus says in *Antiquities* 1,222–23 that “Magog founded the Magogians”, which he associates with the Scythians
- *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (‘Pseudo-Philo’) refers four times to Magog in a genealogy of Noah's descendants
- The Targumim and the (other) rabbinic writings<sup>2</sup> refer frequently to Gog and Magog, but the dates of these references are unsure, and the meaning of the references differ widely
- The Koran refers to *Yadjudj wa Madjudj* in Sure XVIII,93 and XXI,96 as two remote eschatological adversaries, confined behind a peculiar wall, like in a number of Christian and Jewish Medieval writings

Even a brief list like this suffices to show that there is a fairly broad material, or a set of traditions, that challenges biblical scholarship. It has been a lasting surprise for me to find that only isolated pieces of these traditions have been investigated critically, not to say in combination with the other texts.<sup>3</sup> My original intention was to relate these traditions, especially as they are found in Ezekiel 38–39, to John's<sup>4</sup> reference to Gog and

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<sup>2</sup> The expression “the Targumim and the (other) rabbinic writings” will be explained in ch. 4.7 and *Excursus 1* of this study.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ch. 1.2 of this study. Vivian 1977 is until now the most extensive presentation.

<sup>4</sup> We shall return to the question of Revelation's authorship in ch. 1.4. The matter is not so much whether his name was ‘John’ as which ‘John’ this was.

Magog in Rev 20,8. This interest was aroused by the many resemblances between Rev 19,11 – 22,5 and Ezek 36,25 – 48,35, to which we shall return in a moment. But since no scholar had yet explored the Gog and Magog traditions consequutively, this left me with two separate tasks:

The first task of the present study is to investigate the history of the Gog and Magog traditions as such (Chapters Two, Three and Four). The other part explores in detail the Gog and Magog reference in Rev 20,8 in the broader context of John's use of the Gog and Magog traditions (Chapter Five). Hopefully this can shed light on the overarching and intertwined question of the use of the OT in Revelation.

Obviously a comprehensive investigation of all texts referring to either Gog or Magog or both would fill more than one monograph by itself. My investigation has thus been restricted in two ways: My presentation of the Gog oracles in Ezekiel 38–39 builds on a number of earlier studies, and my discussion of this key text will basically be a survey and evaluation of other scholars' works, along with some observations of my own.<sup>5</sup> Further my interest in this text differs from the previous studies by focusing on this text as it came to be, not on the diachronic growth of the text. This also means that investigations into contemporary exilic and post-exilic history and geography, as well as theories about a possible pre-history of Gog and Magog material, will only be referred to. The *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Ezekiel 38–39, however, is of the utmost interest to our study of Rev 20,8; a thorough investigation of all accessible references to Gog and Magog from the period between Ezekiel and Revelation is needed, both to appreciate the development of the traditions and to compare John's use of this material.

A starting point for my study of Rev 20,8 was the idea that this Gog and Magog reference is not an isolated or accidental reference of little concern to John, which he included as an accomodation to stock apocalyptic imagery, as some have suggested,<sup>6</sup> but rather a visible sign of John's consequent engagement with the prophecies in the last chapters of Ezekiel.

Rev 20,7–10 includes the reference to Gog and Magog simply as an apposition, without any further explanations:

When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, in order to gather them for battle; they are as numerous as the sands of the sea. They

<sup>5</sup> A presentation of these studies will be given briefly in ch. 1.2.

<sup>6</sup> Rowland 1982: 417: "This sequence of events is best explained by what John's biblical sources dictated". Similarly Kraft 1974: 258 claims: "Unser Verfasser hat an diesem Teil der Erwartungen nur geringes Interesse (...) Er wollte nicht frei erfinden, hatte aber die hergehörigen Traditionen bis auf eine bereits verbraucht."

marched up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from heaven and consumed them. And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.<sup>7</sup>

From one perspective we could ask the crucial question of this monograph this way: What would have been lost to John, to his original readers and to us if this apposition had not been included? At the least we could say that John would have made it more difficult for the reader to see his intertextual relationship with traditional material, in this case particularly with Ezekiel. The present study wants to explore the positive indications of John's interaction with tradition, and particularly with Ezekiel, in his visions of the last events.

In addition to this explicit reference to Gog and Magog there is also a passage in Rev 19,17–21 with allusions to Ezekiel 38–39; the invitation to the birds to eat the flesh of dead soldiers picks up a peculiar theme almost verbatim from Ezek 39,4.17–20. This double use of Ezekiel 38–39 in Rev 19,17–20,10 calls for a number of observations and discussions which will be taken up primarily in ch. 5.4.

It is a well known fact that Revelation 20 contains one of the greatest *cruces* of biblical exegesis and a matter of much controversy in church debates. And though I by no means suggest that the reference to Gog and Magog can bring these discussions to an end, it is always helpful if one *chiffre* is somehow brought into the light. The debates about the millennium is not a matter of independent interest in this study. But since Gog-related material is found immediately before and after the passage about the millennium (20,1–6), we shall briefly clarify the implications of our study to this debate.

Revelation gives a number of accounts of the final victory of Christ, some of which are very short and obviously anticipatory, others more extended and directly related to the defeat of Satan and his allies. The two major accounts of the defeat of evil in Revelation happen to be the two passages using Gog-related material, that is Rev 19,11–21 and 20,7–10. To some scholars this is a major argument for recapitulation in the millennial debate.<sup>8</sup> Others find the double use to be supplementary, indicating Christ's victory over evil in two separate realms or spheres.<sup>9</sup> This again

<sup>7</sup> All biblical texts are cited from the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV).

<sup>8</sup> White 1989: 328 finds this to be an argument “with telling force against the postmillennial and premillennial interpretations of 19,11–20.10.” Giblin 1994: 82 follows White closely on this point.

<sup>9</sup> Some of the many suggestions in this direction will be presented in the following ch. 1.2.2 of this study.

shows how intertwined our investigation of this material is with classical questions of the interpretation of Revelation. Our contribution to this will be restricted to the implications of John's use of Ezekiel 38–39.

Concerning the comparison of the Gog and Magog references with Ezekiel 37–48 a broader parallelism can be found. J. Lust has pointed to a certain parallelism between the two texts:<sup>10</sup>

*Revelation:*

1. The first resurrection: 20,4 and the Messianic millennial kingdom: 20,4–6.
2. The final battle against Gog and Magog: 20,1–10.
- 2.a The second resurrection: 20,11–15.
3. The descent of the heavenly Jerusalem: 21–22.

*Ezekiel:*

1. The revival of the dry bones: 37,1–14 and the reunited kingdom governed by the messianic king David: 37,15–28.
2. The final battle against Gog of Magog: 38–39.
- 2.a -----
3. The vision of the New Temple and New Jerusalem: 40–48.

A first look at this chart discloses both similarities and differences. It is the task of the present study to explore these carefully, to test the thesis of a possible Ezekielian ‘context’ or ‘pre-text’ for Rev 19,17–21,8, as our subtitle suggests. Though our study concentrates on Rev 19,17–21 and 20,7–10, we shall also look at the further context, which can be set to 19,11–21,8 or even up to 22,5.

Allusions to Ezekiel in Rev 19,11–22,5 are not confined to the Gog and Magog oracles in Ezekiel 38–39.<sup>11</sup> Further considerations about these other allusions along with an overall discussion of John's use of Ezekiel in the final chapters of Revelation will be taken up in ch. 5.4.

## 1.2 History of research

We have already had the opportunity to regret the lack of studies on the Gog and Magog traditions. There is still no single study which has collected the various texts about Gog and Magog, let alone examined them critically or given a presentation of earlier scholarship. Our presentation of the research that has been done on individual aspects or the intertwined questions will start with the broader question of the overall uses of the OT in Revelation; then it will proceed to the exegesis of Rev 20,8 and finally present the attempts to study the Gog and Magog traditions.

<sup>10</sup> Lust 1980: 179.

<sup>11</sup> We shall also at the beginning of ch. 5.3 consider the possible allusions to Ezekiel 38–39 in Rev 16,17–21; cf. Ruiz 1989: 261–65, and Fekkes 1994: 121–125.

### *1.2.1 Revelation's use of the Old Testament<sup>12</sup>*

A number of aspects of Revelation's use of the OT can be analyzed:

- the text-form of the OT used by John
- the comparative uses of the OT in Revelation and in various contemporary Jewish communities
- the use in Revelation of the individual books of the OT
- the thematic correspondences between Revelation and various features from the OT
- the methodology of tracing allusions to the OT
- the theological meaning(-s) of OT-allusions in Revelation
- the knowledge and the use of the OT among the readers of Revelation

We will have these aspects in mind when focusing on the use of Ezekiel in Rev 19,17–21 and 20,7–10, – insights from related areas are often valuable.

The many instances of OT allusions, where concepts, characters and institutions are woven into Revelation's composition, have amazed its interpreters in many respects. Revelation is perhaps the NT-book that “uses the OT most, while citing it the least.”<sup>13</sup> In terms of quantity Revelation probably utilizes the OT more than any other NT book.<sup>14</sup> H.B. Swete counted 278 of a total of 404 verses in Revelation to have some affinity with the OT.<sup>15</sup> Still Revelation does not present any single quotation from the OT with introductory or concluding formulae.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ruiz 1989: 11–180 presents this material. The present writer has also surveyed some of the recent studies in a Norwegian article, Bøe 1992: 253–65.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Ruiz 1989: 63.

<sup>14</sup> Still the *UBSGNT* index of “quotations” lists 634 “quotations” of the OT in Revelation, since every OT-cross-reference in the text is listed as a “quotation”. NA<sup>26</sup> differentiates between “direct quotations” in italics and “allusions” in normal type, but still ends up with 25 “direct quotations” in Revelation. Cf. Fekkes 1994: 61–62. This number is much higher than those reached by the monographs to which we shall now turn.

<sup>15</sup> Swete 1911: cxl.

<sup>16</sup> The most explicit reference to the OT in Revelation is Rev 15,3 about the song of Moses and the Lamb. Yet there follows no verbatim citation from the OT, rather “an amalgamation of various themes of the OT”, as Vos 1965: 19 calls it. If by “citation” we mean any literary resemblance, however, there are several such, as Vanhoye showed throughout his article, Vanhoye 1962. The definition of terms such as quotation/citation, allusion, echo, correspondence, context, pre-text etc. as used in this study will be given in the following ch. 1.3.

### *Studies at the beginning of the twentieth century*

Biblical exegesis at the beginning of the twentieth century was heavily influenced by *religionsgeschichtlich* oriented scholars like H. Gunkel,<sup>17</sup> H. Gressmann<sup>18</sup>, W. Bousset<sup>19</sup> and A. von Gall<sup>20</sup>. They all contributed directly or indirectly to the study of Revelation by seeking points of contact between Revelation and other writings and practices originating in other religious and ideological circles than the Jewish-Christian. Many of their observations have proved to be helpful, though at times onesided. The use of the OT in Revelation was not an area of priority to these scholars.

A. Schlatter represents in many ways a completely different approach through his work *Das alte Testament in der johanneischen Apokalypse*. The title is, however, somewhat misleading, as by “the OT” he includes later rabbinic writings as well.<sup>21</sup> He concluded that no parts or aspects of Revelation were taken from any other sources than those known to any Galilean or Jerusalemitic member of a synagogue; it could all be traced back to the OT prophets.<sup>22</sup> Hence there was no need to search for any other source for Revelation than the OT. This relation is further explored by Strack and Billerbeck, whose work on Revelation covers 70 pages.<sup>23</sup> Both Schlatter’s book and Strack and Billerbeck’s work are useful to our study mainly through their many suggestions of related material to Rev 20,8, not so much from their partly anachronistic and atomistic evaluations.

In Britain a different debate took place between H.B. Swete<sup>24</sup> and R.H. Charles<sup>25</sup>. Their sophisticated skills in the LXX and the intertestamental literature made their commentaries on Revelation a lasting contribution to all later research. Of particular help for the further research was their discussion of the text-form used by John. Swete claimed that this was the Greek of the LXX, but Charles’s even more detailed study showed that John used the Hebrew directly, and in a form very close to what we know as the MT.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Gunkel 1895.

<sup>18</sup> Gressmann 1905 and 1929.

<sup>19</sup> Bousset 1906.

<sup>20</sup> von Gall 1926.

<sup>21</sup> Schlatter 1912.

<sup>22</sup> Schlatter 1912: 104.

<sup>23</sup> Strack & Billerbeck 1969.

<sup>24</sup> Swete 1911.

<sup>25</sup> Charles 1920.

<sup>26</sup> Two monographs have focused on this: Trudinger 1963 a and Ozanne 1964, who held that John was solely dependent on the Hebrew, while Trudinger held that John preferred the Hebrew. Cf. Moyise 1995: 17 for further details and references.

### *Studies after 1950*

Hardly any contributions of lasting value appeared on Revelation's use of the OT until A. Vanhoye<sup>27</sup> in 1962 published his study on the use of Ezekiel in Revelation. He tried to develop a classification of the OT-allusions, and he distinguished between *utilisation certaine*, which he graded either *fidèle* or *libre*, and another group called *contacts littéraires*, which he again graded according to their degree of probability. He also had a column for *autres influences*. This classification represented a great step forward for the study of Revelation's use of the OT; a number of later studies have followed this approach. (Cf. ch. 1.3 of this study on methods.)

Concerning the two Gog-related passages in Rev 19,17–21 and 20,7–10, both are labelled as *utilisation certaine, libre*. Vanhoye also operates with a category for large-scale references or evocations found seven places in Revelation. He calls them *utilisation d'ensemble*, and both 19,17–21 and 20,7–10 are counted as such. These are texts where several verbal correspondences and exact citations of details are involved. It is somewhat disappointing to find that only 12 plus 4 lines are devoted to our texts in his study.

One of the points that Vanhoye does comment upon is the combination of Ezekiel 39 and Isa 25,6 in Revelation's description of the birds' banquet, 19,17–21.<sup>28</sup> Ezekiel 39 presents this as a sacrifice. Vanhoye finds that this aspect of Ezekiel 39 is replaced by the festival character found in Isa 25,6. Since the idea of any other sacrifice than Christ's is contrary to John's theology, he "répugnait sans doute" these aspects. Thus John has transformed the sacrificial feast of Ezekiel 39 into a joyous celebration, by combining the Ezekiel allusion with a similar text from Isaiah.<sup>29</sup> We shall also return to the question of whether the use of Ezekiel 38–39 conveniently should be labelled under the same rubric both in Rev 19,17–21 and 20,7–10.

Revelation's affinities with Danielic material have been explored by G.K. Beale.<sup>30</sup> He claims that the book of Daniel forms the background both for individual passages and for the overall structure of the book of Revelation; key chapters of Revelation should be read as a *midrash* on Daniel 7, and the whole book is "to be conceived of ultimately within the framework of

<sup>27</sup> Vanhoye 1962.

<sup>28</sup> Vanhoye 1962: 469.

<sup>29</sup> A similar observation on John's use of the temple-imagery from the OT is found by McKelvey 1969: 174: "He prints over the image of the compact and clearly demarcated Ezekielian city another image, the comprehensive image of Isaiah, or, more correctly, since the images are not mutually exclusive, he concentrates on the Isaianic features of the city already portrayed until these predominate to the exclusion of anything else."

<sup>30</sup> Among his many studies on the subject, cf. Beale 1984.

Daniel 2".<sup>31</sup> This is done to show the fulfilment of these prophecies in Christ or in the Christian church.

Critics have questioned his terminology and his methodology.<sup>32</sup> His claim of Danielic priority on the structure of the book has been challenged by J.M. Vogelgesang<sup>33</sup> and J.P. Ruiz.<sup>34</sup> Both have written their dissertations on the use of Ezekiel in different parts of Revelation, and though their methodology and overall theological results differ in many respects, their research have shown that extensive portions of Revelation are based on Ezekiel rather than on Daniel.

J.M. Vogelgesang focuses on the Ezekiel-material in Revelation chs. 1; 4; 5; 10; 21 and 22. His thesis is that Revelation is an *anti-apocalypse*: "it is written in the genre of an apocalypse, but (...) John transformed the forms and protocols of this genre to arrive at a message contrary to that of contemporary apocalyptic literature".<sup>35</sup> John universalizes and democratizes the prophecies of Ezekiel in his own, Christian interests. Vogelgesang uses here the term "reinterpretation".<sup>36</sup> One crucial observation in this respect is the absence of a temple in New Jerusalem, Rev 21,22, whilst this is the core of Ezekiel 40–48, which is the primary pre-text to Rev 21,1–22,5.<sup>37</sup> Vogelgesang also confirms Vanhoye's thesis that John used Ezekiel directly, not mediated by apocalyptic or other traditions, and "that John modelled his book and message on that of Ezekiel".<sup>38</sup> Thus Vogelgesang makes similar claims for Ezekiel as Beale did for Daniel concerning the structure and composition of Revelation.

Vogelgesang holds that John used Ezekiel directly, and "despite the skill that he uses to hide this, the fact that he did not enslave himself to the texts that inspired him makes it possible to speak of the interpretation of Ezekiel by John" [underlining original].<sup>39</sup>

J.P. Ruiz questions many of these results. His study focuses on the Ezekiel-material in Rev 16,17–19,10. Methodologically he finds much help in some "hermeneutical imperatives" in the text of Revelation, *i.e.* short passages where either Christ, an angel or John addresses the readers/listeners

<sup>31</sup> From Moyise 1995: 120.

<sup>32</sup> Collins, A.Y. 1986: 734–35.

<sup>33</sup> Vogelgesang 1985.

<sup>34</sup> Ruiz 1989: 122–28.

<sup>35</sup> Vogelgesang 1985: 2.

<sup>36</sup> Vogelgesang 1985: 296.

<sup>37</sup> Vogelgesang 1985: 6.

<sup>38</sup> Vogelgesang 1985: 11.

<sup>39</sup> Vogelgesang 1985: 14. J.A. Fitzmyer describes Revelation's use of the OT as involving "an implicit exegesis", and "due to thorough acquaintance with and reverent meditation upon the Old Testament", Fitzmyer 1971 a: 5.

directly, either by hortatory or other messages. The result of his dissertation is indicated in the subtitle: “The Transformation of Prophetic Language in Revelation 16,17–19,10”; not ‘fulfilment’, nor ‘reinterpretation’, but ‘transformation’.<sup>40</sup> Another characteristic of Ruiz’s study is the direct comparison of Ezekiel and Revelation; both Beale and Vogelgesang invested much effort in the other use of the OT material in intertestamental literature.

Another study, different from all these in its liturgical approach, goes a lot further in its claim of an Ezekielian priority on the structure of Revelation; M.D. Goulder<sup>41</sup> hypothesizes the origin and growth of Revelation along 52 weekly readings of Ezekiel, like in a synagogue. He sets out to show a correspondence between 52 portions of Ezekiel and 52 portions of Revelation. Within this Ezekielian frame he makes room for the festival-readings of other OT-books, quite like the order of these books’ presence in Revelation. Though this bold thesis is highly speculative, and has received little support, it questions severely Beale’s claim for an overall Danielic priority. It is also interesting to note that the works of Vogelgesang, Ruiz and Goulder, differing widely in method and approach, all testify to a strong Ezekielian influence on major parts of Revelation.

Statistically Isaiah is the one OT-book to which Revelation quantitatively alludes the most.<sup>42</sup> J. Fekkes has explored this carefully and without controversial claims of priority for Isaiah on the overall structure or theology of Revelation. “It is not the book or author which dictates his choice of passages, but the topic”, he claims.<sup>43</sup> Methodologically he wishes to refine the categories and criterias used for ‘quotations’ and ‘allusions’. Primary interest is on the *thematic analogues*, i.e. clusters of OT-texts belonging to one tradition or theme.

Fekkes wants interpreters of Revelation not to treat the OT as “an overworked religious thesaurus”.<sup>44</sup> Central to Fekkes is John’s self-understanding as a prophet being “part of a revelatory continuum which stretches from God’s OT messengers to the prophetic circle within which he is probably a leading figure”.<sup>45</sup> Once or twice Fekkes uses the term “fulfilled” about John’s use of OT-prophecies,<sup>46</sup> and this term refers to

<sup>40</sup> A.T. Hanson also speaks of transformation of OT-language in Revelation, cf. Hanson, A.T. 1983: 83.

<sup>41</sup> Goulder 1981. Goodacre 1996 discusses Goulder’s positions extensively.

<sup>42</sup> According to the graphs in Moyise 1995: 16.

<sup>43</sup> Fekkes 1994: 103.

<sup>44</sup> Fekkes 1994: 61. Fekkes directs this objection primarily against E.S. Fiorenza. We shall return to her concern in a moment.

<sup>45</sup> Fekkes 1994: 288.

<sup>46</sup> Fekkes 1994: 283 and 289.

# Index of Sources

## Old Testament

<i>Genesis</i>			
1,1–2,4	128	15,14	295
2	79, 153	15,18	295
2,10–14	153	19,6	263–264
3,13	304	32,32	269
4,20–22	90	40,11	197,199
6,4	112	<i>Leviticus</i>	
9,22	48	3,16–17	130
10	20, 45–48, 89, 106, 143, 152–154, 158– 159, 164, 173, 176, 185–186, 188–189, 206, 219, 231–233, 382, 384–386	11,22	64
10,1–2	193	18,25	126
10,1–7	153	<i>Numbers</i>	
10,2	1, 45–48, 50, 75, 95– 96, 99, 101, 103, 133, 142, 154, 158, 169, 175, 180, 178, 185, 193, 210, 216, 313	2	328
10,2–4	45	5,2	126
10,3	48, 104	11,26	193–196, 198, 206
10,6–7	45	11,27	90
10,7	104	16,31–35	295
10,13–18 a	45	19,16	126
10,22–23	153	21,1–3	218
10,22–29 a	45	21,33–35	59
10,28	104	22–24	50, 53
10,31,32	153	22,5	50
11,31	90	23,7–10	50
17,4–5	127	23,18–24	50
19	120, 295, 334	24,3–9	53–54, 231
22,17	323	24,7	50
25,3	104	24,8	1, 20, 33, 50–59, 61,
49	170	24,8–9	73, 75, 114, 168–169,
<i>Exodus</i>		24,15–24	174, 196, 210, 313,
10,1–20	65, 67	24,17	343, 384
14,19–20	328	24,17–19	
15,1	295	24,20	57, 164, 169
		34	55
		35,33–34	153
			127
		<i>Deuteronomy</i>	
		1,4	59
		3–4	59, 75

3,1	58–61, 73, 75, 218	384,	22,20–23	181
3,3	59		<i>2 Kings</i>	
3,4	59		1,10	266, 333–335, 339, 351
3,10	59		1,12	266, 333, 335, 339,
3,11	59–61			351
3,13	58–61, 73, 75, 218,	384	9,36	284, 297
4,47	58–61, 73, 75, 218,	384	19,35–37	126
			20,20	73
7,1	164		23,15–20	129–130
12,7–18	130		<i>1 Chronicles</i>	
21,1–9	126		1	106, 143, 384
23,14	328		1,1–2,2	47
25,17–19	71		1,5	1, 45–48, 50, 75, 95,
34,3	204			101, 103, 133, 169,
				180, 313
<i>Joshua</i>				
3,10	164		1,5–7	45
6–7	328		1,6	104
9,6	90		1,8–16	45
10,6–9	90		1,9	104
11,4	265		1,17–23	45
11,4–5	326		1,22	104
12 ff	153		4,42–43	72
12,4	60		5	49
13,12	60		5,3	49
24,11	164		5,4	1, 32, 49–50, 65, 75, 133, 142, 169, 384
<i>Judges</i>			5,6	49
6	67		14,2	55
6,5	67		<i>2 Chronicles</i>	
7,22	122		6,28	64
9,37	108		12,3	103
<i>1 Samuel</i>			21,16	144
2,10	196		32,30	73
13,5	323		<i>Nehemiah</i>	
14,20	122		2,11–7,4	110
15	71–72		<i>Esther</i>	
30,9–10	126		1,1–3	102
<i>2 Samuel</i>			1,10–12	73,
7	170		2,5	71–72
7,14	272		2,6	71
8,18	90		3,1	55, 71–75, 384
17,11–13	326		3,10	55, 72
<i>1 Kings</i>			4,3	112
8,37	64		4,16–17	112
18,38	336		5,1	198–199
22,19	250		8,3	72

8,5	72	10,27	171
9,24	71–73, 75, 384	10,32	198–199
<i>Job</i>		11	169, 247
18	334	11,1–5	169–173
40,25–26	116	11,2	208
		11,4	170, 247–248
<i>Psalms</i>		11,12	309
2	124, 205–206, 263	14,13	116
2,1–2	205	14,13–14	115
2,5	205	14,24–27	129
2,7	205	18	143
2,9	247	18,1–7	143
3	205	24–27	355
9,18	315	24,1–13	127
27,2	284, 297	24,21–22	256
46	124–125	24,26	321
46,9	125	25,6	8, 282, 351
48	115, 124	25,8	272
48,1–3	115	31,8	164, 166
48,3	116	33,22	197–199
76	124–125	34	300, 334
76,3	125	34,1–17	129
78,68	331, 333	34,8–17	127
87,1–2	331	37–38	56
87,2	333	37,36–37	126
90,4	256	61,6	264
104,34	64	63	249
118	205	63,1–3	248
132,13–14	131	63,1–6	248–249
141,7	126	63,2–3	248, 250
149,4–9	169	65,17	212
<i>Proverbs</i>		<i>Jeremiah</i>	
9,1	205	1,14–16	114
30,27	67	4,6–7	114
		4,23	268
<i>Song of Solomon (Cant)</i>		6,1–5	114
8,4	198–199	6,22–23	114
<i>Isaiah</i>		10,22	114
2,4	125	23	170
6	29	25,8–14	117
9,5	126	25,26	96
9,12	56	33	170
10–11	171–172	35	328
10,5	171–172	46,9	102
10,5–34	171	49,30–31	110
10,5–19	117	50	114
10,13	171	50,41	114
10,21	171–172	51,7	17
10,22	173	51,12	112

51,27	48, 92	25–32	17, 76, 86–87, 128,
51,41	96		318, 321, 375
<i>Ezekiel</i>		25–48	344
1	201, 259	26,15–16	105
1–3	76	27	158, 368, 370
1,1	246	27,3	105
1,1–2	77	27,6–7	105
1,3	77	27,10	102
1,4	115	27,13	101, 158
2,8–3,3	17, 371	27,14	47, 104
3,7	78	27,15	105
3,15	128	27,35	105
4–24	76	29–32	89
5,5	108	29,1	86
6,2	129	29,1–7	128
7,2	309	29,4	116, 134
7,8	131, 135	29,5	128
8–11	79	30,5	102
9	78, 181	30,15	135
9,1–11	128	32	102, 158
9,4	120	32,1–16	128
9,6	120	32,4–5	128–129
9,8	135	32,17–32	106
11,19	18, 137	32,26	101
11,20	272	32,27	112
16	89, 297	33,1–36,15	77
16,28	119	33–37	107
16,39–40	297	33–48	66, 76–77, 83, 87, 107
16,59–64	84	33,21	83
18	78	34–37	82
18,6	129	34,1–11	77
18,11	129	34,23	79, 174
18,15	129	34,24	81
18,31	78	35–38	137, 160
19,1	81	36–37	82, 84–85, 110, 385
20,8	135	36–40	135–137, 319
20,13	135	36–48	76, 78
20,28	129	36,16–38	78
20,42–44	84	36,18	78, 135
21,22	135	36,22	78
21,30	81	36,23–38	18–19, 135–137
21,31	131	36,23–48,35	23, 28
22,22	131	36,25	359
22	89, 297	36,26	78, 131
23,25	119, 297	36,28–30	78
24,7	158	36,31	77
24,15–27	77	36,35	110

37	18–19, 78, 111–112, 135–137, 262, 269, 301, 320, 348, 350, 356, 358–359, 360	311, 313, 318–324, 331, 333–336, 338– 350, 352–353, 355– 356, 358–359, 362,
37–39	111, 137, 139, 321, 358, 385	364, 366–367, 369– 378, 380–388
37–48	5, 122, 138, 264, 350, 355–356, 357, 368, 380–381	38,1 38,1–3 38,1–4
37,1	136	38,1–5
37,1–14	78–79	38,1–6
37,2	78	38,1–9
37,3	78, 262	38,1–39,8
37,5	262	38,1–39,20
37,5–10	79	38,2
37,9	79	59, 81, 84, 86, 89–90, 98–101, 133, 217, 310, 312–313
37,10	79, 262	112, 134
37,11	79	38,2–3
37,11–14	79	38,2–9
37,12–13	79	38,3
37,14	79	81, 84, 89, 99–101
37,15–28	79, 109	38,3–9
37,24	79	83
37,24–25	174	38,3–18
37,25–28	84	38,4
37,26	79	92, 111–112, 116, 129, 134, 168, 323, 340
37,26–28	79	111, 302
37,27	351, 357, 380	83, 99–100, 102, 112, 144, 310
38	45, 85, 111, 201, 209, 274–275, 315, 320– 321, 342, 374, 377	49, 92, 99, 111, 115, 310 89, 111–112, 168, 291, 323
39–39	1–2, 15–20, 22–23, 28– 29–30, 32–34, 41, 46– 47, 49, 53, 55, 57–58, 61, 65–67, 69–73, 77– 139–140, 142–147, 149–150, 154, 158– 160, 163, 166–169, 171, 173–174, 176, 178–186, 188, 191– 193, 195, 198–199, 201, 204–205, 210, 214–215, 218, 226, 231–233, 235, 239, 245, 248, 252, 256– 259, 266–267, 273– 274–276, 285, 287, 291, 294–296, 298, 300–304, 307, 309–	38,7–9 38,8 38,9 38,10 38,10–12 38,10–13 38,10–16 38,11 38,12 38,13 38,14 38,14–16
		84 109, 116, 122, 291, 323 67, 111, 323–324 66, 84, 89, 121, 124, 304, 324 83, 302 84–85, 116 85 85, 109–110, 135, 324 47, 108–110, 116, 124, 158, 291, 307, 309, 323, 325 67, 83, 89, 99, 104, 110–111, 116, 128, 134, 168, 291, 310, 323 66, 84, 108–109, 121 124 84

38,15	66, 111, 114–115, 168, 311	39,6	84, 89, 99, 105, 109, 118–119, 128, 131, 133, 253, 310, 336
38,16	67, 84, 108–109, 111, 116, 131, 148, 323, 325	39,7	84, 108, 117, 131, 148
38,16–17	85, 122	39,8	66, 84, 113, 121
38,17	84, 87, 113–114, 134, 196, 304	39,9	108, 112, 127–128, 206, 304
38,17 ff	315	39,9–10	84, 125–126, 148
38,17–23	84–85	39,9–15	127
38,18	66, 84, 119, 121, 325	39,9–16	298
38,18–19	108, 124	39,9–20	85
38,18–22	117	39,10	85, 117–118
38,18–23	57, 66, 85, 302, 334	39,10–29	83
38,19	119, 334	39,11	66, 100, 121, 124, 127, 129, 168, 205
38,19–20	148		148
38,20	85, 110, 119–120, 148, 373	39,11–15 39,11–16	83–86, 118, 126–127, 169, 183, 289, 380
38,21–22	83		106
38,21	57, 84, 112, 119, 121– 122, 124, 181, 334,	39,11–20 39,12	87, 127
38,22	111, 119, 148, 162, 295, 320, 334, 336, 338, 340, 343, 373	39,13 39,14 39,14–15	84, 121, 126 87, 127
38,22–23	217	39,15	126
38,23	84, 117, 131, 148, 275	39,16	127, 192, 204
39	85, 124–125, 138, 148– 149, 168, 233, 252– 253, 278–279, 282– 289, 296–299, 300, 319–321, 343–344, 357, 371, 374, 377– 378, 387	39,17 39,17 ff 39,17–20	84, 108, 128–129, 278, 282, 286, 299, 323, 380 376 53, 83–85, 129–130, 143, 148, 150, 253, 276, 278, 280–284, 286–287, 289, 291, 296, 320, 371, 377–378
39,1	81, 84, 99–101, 112		85
39,1–2	320		60, 113, 130, 283, 286, 288, 380
39,1–4	215	39,17–22	128, 130, 286
39,1–5	83, 85, 87, 89,	39,18	296
39,1–6	57, 66		77, 84
39,1–7	85	39,19	70, 84–85, 108, 117
39,1–8	84–85	39,19–20	84, 121, 131
39,2	108, 114–116, 323	39,20	84, 112, 282, 286, 296
39,3	112, 119, 334	39,21	267, 296
39,4	108, 111, 118–119, 148, 253, 278, 380	39,21–24 39,21–29	84, 131
39,4–20	124	39,22	84
39,4.17–20	4, 85, 128–129, 233, 296, 298, 300	39,23 39,25	109
39,5	84, 118, 129	39,25–29	
		39,26	

39,27–28	109, 291	8,13–27	123
39,28	84, 131	8,25	123, 165
39,29	84, 131, 135	9,20–27	123
40	357	10,1–20	123
40–42	81	10,6	248
40–48	17–19, 78–82, 85, 110, 123–124, 136, 149, 205, 212, 267, 273, 345, 348, 350–351, 358, 364, 369, 376, 385	11 11,30 11,32 11,36 12,1 ff	123, 259 165–166 163 123 136
40,1	83	12,1–2	269
40,2	80	12,2	326
40,42	129	12,5–13	123
43,1–12	80		
44,4–14	80	<i>Hosea</i>	
44,11	129	2,8	126
44,15	130	<i>Joel</i>	
44,15–31	80	1–2	65, 71
44,16	130	1,4	63–64, 68
45,9	77	1,15	66, 122
45,13–17	80	2	68
45,17	80	2,1	66, 122
45,18–25	80	2,11	66, 122
46,24	129	2,20	66
47,1–12	80	2,25	63–64, 68
47,13–20	80	3,1	66
48,1–35	80	3,4	122
48,30–35	110	3,19	122
48,35	80	4,9 ff	169
<i>Daniel</i>			
2	9, 268	<i>Amos</i>	
2,35	259, 268	1,5	68
2,44–45	123	7,1	2, 20, 55, 61–71, 75, 122, 169, 210, 276–
6,8	179		277, 313, 343, 384
7	8, 29, 201, 253, 259, 267–268, 295, 300	7,1–3	67, 69–70, 276
7–8	123	7,4	70
7–11	136	7,1–9	69–70
7,8	123	9	170
7,9	258–259		
7,9–14	123, 258–259	<i>Micah</i>	
7,10	269, 295	3,3	284
7,11	254, 258–259, 295	4,3	125
7,11–12	259		
7,12	295	<i>Nahum</i>	
7,13	259	3,9	163
7,13–14	258	3,15–16	64
7,26	254	3,17	63
8,10–11	123	<i>Habakkuk</i>	
		1,6	351

<i>Zephaniah</i>		12,3	181
1,7–13	129	12,10	197, 199, 203
<i>Haggai</i>		12–14	122–125, 205
2,22	122	13,2–6	124
		13,2–9	123
<i>Zechariah</i>		14	124, 165, 184
1–8	88	14,2	123
2,4–5	110	14,5–21	124
9,10	247	14,12	124
12	184	14,13	122
12,2–3	123		

## New Testament

<i>Matthew</i>		19,23–41	37
16,27	251	21,12,15	324
19,28	260	24,11	324
21,1–11	247	25,1,9	324
24,17	21		
24,28	279	<i>Romans</i>	
25,31	251	5,16	260
25,31–46	260, 267	11,25–32	379
26,26	284		
		<i>1 Corinthians</i>	
<i>Mark</i>		4,3	260
14,22	284	6,2–3	260
		11,24	284
<i>Luke</i>		15,25–26	213
2,41–42	324		
9,26	251	<i>2 Corinthians</i>	
10,20	269	5,10	267
17,37	279		
18,34	324	<i>Colossians</i>	
19,28	324	3,11	96
22,19	284		
22,29–30	260	<i>1 Thessalonians</i>	
		4,15–17	214
<i>John</i>			
5,28–29	269	<i>2 Thessalonians</i>	
		1,7	251
		2,6–8	215
<i>Acts</i>			
11,2	324	<i>Hebrews</i>	
15,2	324	12,23	269
18,22	324	13,11–14	328
19,8–9	37		
10,10	37	<i>James</i>	
		5,3	284

<i>1 Peter</i>		4,1–9,21	43
1,1	37	4,1–22,5	237
4,17	260	4,4	258
5,13	315	4,5	24, 243
		4,8	341
<i>2 Peter</i>		4,9	342
3,8	256	4,10	342
		5–6	240
<i>Jude</i>		5,1	17, 42, 240, 371
v. 13	320	5,1–7	249
		5,2	240
<i>Revelation</i>		5,6	240, 243, 247, 249
1	9, 14, 39, 259, 346	5,8	24, 243, 329
1,1	242, 257, 302, 362, 366	5,9 f	307
1,1–2	35–36	5,10	258, 263–264
1,1–8	43	5,11	290
1,3	40, 242	5,13	342
1,4	35	6	302
1,5	249	6,2	246–247
1,5–6	263	6,3	241
1,6	264, 342	6,5–7	241
1,7	305	6,8	252
1,8	272	6,9	240, 268, 270
1,9	35–36, 38	6,9–11	38, 260
1,9–3,22	43	6,12–17	248, 267, 334
1,10	41	6,14–17	298
1,10–11	44	6,15	287–288
1,11	36	6,16	248
1,12–20	259	6,16–17	268
1,14	248	7,1	240, 308
1,16	247	7,1–2	240
1,18	342	7,1–8	14, 120, 243, 247, 379
1,19	40, 242–243	7,3	379
2–3	36–37, 39, 273, 302	7,9	240, 272, 351, 379
2,8	262	7,9–14	238
2,10	303	7,9–16	124, 272, 332
2,12	247	7,12	342
2,13	38, 258, 264	7,13–14	78
2,14	367, 380	7,15	341, 357
2,16	247, 293	8,1	267
2,20	314, 367, 380	8,2	240
2,26–28	263–264	8,2–11,19	43
3,5	269	8,3–4	329
3,9	331, 379	8,7–8	335
3,12	330, 335–337	8,7–12	11, 347
3,14–22	110	8,10	336
3,21	258	8,13	42, 241, 277–279
4–5	9, 14, 29, 259, 346, 349	9	276, 302, 304
4,1	240, 246, 257, 302	9,1–11	15, 65, 69, 254, 275–276, 316
4,1–8,5	43		

9,1–12	309	12,7	292–293
9,1	336	12,9	252, 304
9,4	120	12,10	241, 260, 341
9,5	341	12,12	333, 336
9,7	292	12,17	292–293
9,9	292	13	253, 259, 265, 289–
9,10	316		290, 302, 322
9,12	42	13,1	240, 270
9,13	241	13,2	264
9,13–19	316	13,3	247, 264
9,13–21	276, 309	13,4	293
9,16–19	316	13,5–10	38
9,20	285	13,6	255
9,21	273	13,7	292–293, 302, 306, 329
10	9, 346, 349	13,8	237, 269
10,1	240, 335–337	13,9–11	255
10,1–11	17	13,10	329
10,1–15,4	43	13,11	252
10,2	42	13,12	252
10,4	241, 337	13,13	335, 337
10,6	342	13,14	262
10,7	241, 301	13,16	268
10,7–11	243	13,16–18	38, 269
10,8	241, 337	13,18	145, 247
10,8–11	371	13–18	239
10,11	257	13–19	211
11	259, 338	14,1	29, 240
11,1–2	37, 243, 371, 376, 378	14,1–5	238
11,2	330	14,2	337
11,3	255	14,2–3	241
11,4–13	241	14,6	240, 279
11,5	257, 335, 338	14,8	367
11,7	241, 253, 292–293, 301	14,9–11	269
11,8	29, 127, 271, 314, 329–	14,9–20	249
	330–331, 367	14,10	340–341
11,9–10	296	14,10–19	248
11,10	341	14,11	341–342
11,12	241, 337	14,12	329
11,13	305, 330	14,13	242, 337
11,14	42	14,14	240
11,15	263, 342	14,14–20	246, 248–249, 267
11,17	263	14,15–20	244
11,18	268, 278, 379	14,19	248
11,19	246, 267, 252, 255,	14,20	330
	338, 340	15,1	241, 301
12–13	15	15,1–16,20	43
12,1–15,4	42–43	15,2	335
12,2	341	15,3	6

15,4	305	17,18	330
15,5	240	18	105, 253, 283, 368, 370
15,5–19,10	43	18,1	240, 336
15,8	241, 301	18,1–2	277
16,1	241	18,2	279, 303, 367
16,5	241	18,3	288
16,6	329	18,4	241, 337
16,7	241	18,6	17
16,10	264	18,8–9	335
16,12	274, 277	18,9	241
16,12–16	17, 239, 246, 274	18,10	367
16,12–21	239, 275	18,10–21	330
16,13–14	253	18,15	288
16,13–16	275	18,19	241, 288
16,14	181, 274–275, 279–	18,20	260, 329
	280, 292–293	18,23	288, 307
16,14–16	275, 293	18,24	329
16,14–20	334	19	149, 235, 255, 276,
16,15	242		278, 283, 286–287, 374
16,16	29, 118, 274, 279–280,	19–20	376
	314	19–22	359–360
16,17	272	19,1	241
16,17–21	5, 236, 239, 253, 274–	19,1–10	238, 245, 272, 283
	275, 371, 376	19,5	268
16,17–19,10	9–10, 346, 350–351	19,6	241, 263
16,19	330	19,7–8	238, 373
16,20	268	19,8	329
16,21	275, 336–337	19,9	195, 242, 281–282
17	29, 240, 253, 259	19,10	235
17–18	252, 271, 289–290, 322	19,11	240, 247, 293
17–19	17, 318	19,11 ff	249
17,1	236, 260	19,11–16	239, 244, 246–251, 348
17,1–3	44, 236	19,11–21	4, 16–19, 39, 101, 111,
17,1–19,10	43, 23		162, 195, 243, 260,
17,1–22,5	18, 318		265, 267, 298–299,
17,2	289		305–306, 309, 319,
17,3	289		322, 344, 358, 372, 375
17,4	17	19,11–20,10	167, 201, 270, 290,
17,5	315, 367		338, 377
17,6	38, 329	19,11–20,15	346
17,8	237, 269	19,11–21,8	13–14, 22, 43–44, 76,
17,8–11	289		111, 235–236, 238–
17,9–17	293		240, 242–245, 258,
17,9–18	290		273, 321, 349, 353,
17,10	257		355, 378
17,12	297	19,11–22,5	23, 28, 42, 76, 236,
17,12–14	246		238, 244, 264, 348,
17,14	249, 289, 293		354, 357, 359, 369,
17,16	284, 297		380–381, 388
17,17	241, 301, 348, 352	19,11–22,9	43

- 19,11–22,21      236  
19,12–13      249  
19,13      244, 248–249      20,1  
19,14      290, 341      20,1–3  
19,15      248–249, 263, 307  
19,16      251  
19,17      240, 278–281, 286,  
              291, 297      20,1–6  
19,17–18      239, 244, 252, 280,  
              287, 290, 296, 298,  
              320, 376      20,1–10  
19,17–19      235, 354      20,1–21,8  
19,17–21      3, 8, 12, 26, 28, 43, 58,  
              128, 130, 143, 235,  
              238–239, 244–246,  
              248, 252–254, 264,  
              273–300, 305, 317,  
              319–320, 322, 333,  
              337–339, 344–346,  
              348–352, 357–358,  
              360, 364, 366–367,  
              369–372, 374, 376–  
              378, 380–381, 383,  
              387, 388      20,1–15  
19,17–20,10      14, 76, 190–191, 321,  
              355, 379      20,2  
19,18      254, 268, 284–288,  
              297, 341      20,2–3  
19,18–21      286  
19,19      240, 247, 275, 278,  
              280, 290, 292–293  
19,19–21      239, 244, 250, 252,  
              275, 307, 320, 344      20,2–7  
19,20      252, 256, 266, 269,  
              280, 290, 294, 302,  
              340      20,2–10  
19,20–21      258, 291, 293  
19,20–20,3      259  
19,20–21,8      340  
19,21      235, 243, 247, 278,  
              284–285, 290, 294,  
              296, 302, 339, 387  
20      5, 17, 102, 111, 181,  
              211, 215, 226, 235,  
              243, 255–256, 262,  
              264, 266, 305, 307,  
              310, 317–318, 327,      20,3  
              342, 345, 357, 374–  
              375, 379–380  
              240–241, 278, 294, 336  
              43, 237, 239, 241, 244,  
              254–257, 294, 303–304,  
              359  
              4, 262, 298, 304, 348,  
              350, 354, 357, 359  
              110, 214, 255, 264,  
              303, 330, 333, 388  
              244  
              376  
              350  
              252, 265  
              256  
              242, 255–256, 300  
              236, 255, 265, 301–  
              302–303, 306–307  
              43, 240–241, 259–261,  
              263, 267–269  
              262  
              38, 79, 212, 237, 241,  
              243–244, 251, 257–  
              264, 295, 329, 356  
              239  
              241, 243, 260–261,  
              268, 301, 306  
              242, 244, 260–261,  
              263–264, 267, 360  
              15, 24, 166, 241, 256,  
              265, 300–301, 303,  
              320, 333, 344  
              242  
              309  
              3–4, 8, 12, 15–19, 26,  
              28, 30, 41, 43, 58, 99,  
              116, 119–120, 143,  
              147, 195, 206, 212,  
              214–215, 223, 235,  
              237–239, 241–242,  
              244–245, 248, 253,  
              257, 264–267, 273–  
              275, 289, 292–293,  
              300–346, 348–352,  
              356, 358–360, 364,  
              366–367, 369, 372,  
              374–378, 380–381,  
              383, 387

20,8	2, 3, 14–16, 21–22, 31–32–34, 39, 49, 68, 90, 112, 133, 142, 147, 165, 177, 210, 217–218, 233, 244–245, 254, 256, 275, 280, 287, 292–293, 295, 300, 305–306, 308, 311–312, 314, 323, 339, 343–344, 369, 371, 374, 380–381, 387–388	21,3–4 21,4 21,5 21,5–8 21,6–8 21,7 21,8 21,9 21,9–10 21,9–11	264, 271, 351, 355, 357, 380 241, 243 237 237, 241, 272 237, 241 237 272 261, 266, 273, 278, 340 44 236 237
20,8–9	109, 257, 310, 324, 349, 354, 360–361, 373, 376	21,9–22,2 21,9–22,5 21,10	237 43, 271, 273 330, 336–337
20,9	15, 110, 244, 247, 257, 293, 309, 317, 320, 325–326, 328, 330–331, 334–336, 339, 342, 377, 380	21,10 ff 21,10–27 21,12–13 21,12–21 21,14	355 371, 378 355 110 330
20,9–10	111, 242	21,15–21	376
20,9 ff	195	21,16	214, 325, 330
20,10	253, 256, 266, 302, 335, 339–342	21,18–19 21,21	330 330
20,10–15	342	21,22	9, 81, 350, 356, 368–369, 388
20,11	240, 259, 271, 331		
20,11–13	262	21,23	330
20,11–15	237, 244, 254, 260–261, 267, 306, 320, 338, 344–345, 350, 355–357, 359, 381	21,24 21,24–26 21,24–27 21,26	237 110, 124 237 317
20,11–22,5	348	21,27	31, 110, 237, 269, 273
20,12	43, 237, 240, 244, 261, 270, 302, 322	22 22,1–5	39 355
20,12–15	273	22,2	124, 237
20,13	237, 268, 271	22,3–5	237
20,14	238, 243, 261, 264, 270, 340	22,5 22,6	263, 342 257, 263, 302
20,15	237, 266, 269, 317, 340 357	22,6–7 22,6–21	237 43
21–22	9, 14, 212, 214, 237, 243, 346, 349–351, 364	22,7 22,8	40, 238, 242 35
21,1	240, 268, 270–271	22,8–9	237
21,1–4	237	22,10	40, 159, 237
21,1–8	239, 243–244, 271–273	22,10–21	43
21,1–22,5	18, 244, 318, 348, 350	22,12–13	237
21,1–22,7	110	22,14	242, 330
21,2	29, 240, 271, 330–332, 336–337	22,14–15 22,15	237 273
21,3	241, 243, 244, 262,	22,16	237

22,17	237	22,19	40, 330
22,18	40, 237	22,20	237
22,18–19	35	22,21	237

## Jewish Texts

<i>I Maccabees</i>		3,512	145, 150, 169, 177, 183, 313–314
1,1	165	3,512–513	2, 145–147, 232, 338
8,5	165	3,514–517	146
<i>Sirach</i>		3,517–519	146
1,3	326	3,601–618	147
48,17	73–75, 384	3,619–623	147
48,17–25	73	3,624–634	147
48,22	74	3,627–631	149
<i>4 Ezra</i>		3,635–651	147–148
6,20	269	3,635–731	140, 147–149
7	356	3,643	148
7,26–44	355	3,644–645	149, 233, 276
7,29	255	3,644–649	299
12,31–34	255	3,649–651	148–149
13	246, 291, 310, 322, 337	3,652	149
13,3	337	3,652–656	147, 149
13,5	309	3,652–731	183
13,10	248	3,652–795	141
13,10–11	337	3,657	148–149
13,37–38	337	3,657–668	147
		3,657–731	149, 231
<i>Sibylline Oracles</i>		3,663–666	148
3	41, 141, 145, 150, 183, 232–233, 276, 314, 349, 378, 385	3,665	149
		3,667–668	327
		3,669–701	147, 149
3,1–294	141	3,671	149
3,295–488	141	3,672–673	148, 338
3,303	142	3,673–674	148
3,303–313	142	3,675–679	148
3,314–318	142	3,676	149
3,319	140, 142, 150, 169, 177, 183, 314	3,680	149
		3,680–681	148
3,319–320	313	3,683–685	148
3,319–322	2, 142–145, 232, 337	3,685–686	148
3,323–333	142	3,689–692	148
3,333	142	3,691	295
3,334–349	142	3,692	148
3,350–362	142	3,693	148–149
3,350–488	142	3,695–696	148
3,489–829	142	3,697	148–149, 233, 276, 299

3,702–706	148	45–57	179
3,702–731	147	54,1	294–295
3,710–723	148	55,3–57	179
3,725–731	148	56	180, 183–184, 385
3,732–740	147	56,3–4	183
3,741–761	147	56,5	97
3,762–766	147	56,5–8	33, 140, 178–184, 206, 231, 303, 326
3,767–795	147	56,6	326
3,796–808	147	56,7	122
3,827	140	57–70	180
5,194	144	63,1	180
5,205	144	90	81
5,212	144	90,24–26	341
8,236–237	270	3 <i>Enoch</i>	
11,62	144	45,1	207
11,69	144	45,5	140, 207–208
11,179	144	2 <i>Apoc. Bar.</i>	
11,299	144	24,1	269
<i>Jubilees</i>			
1,1–6	150	29	256
2,24	150	40	256
6,22	150	72	256
7–9	150, 152, 158		
7,19	2, 153–159, 169, 175, 313	<i>Biblical Antiquities (Ps.–Philo)</i>	
7,30	158	3–6	186
8	150	4,1–2	2, 186–189
8–9	152–153	4,4	2, 186–189
8,9–9,15	151	5,4	2, 186–189
8,10–9,15	154	20,5	194
8,12	108, 153, 158, 325		
8,19	108, 153, 158, 325	<i>Qumran:</i>	
8,22	153	<i>The War Scroll (IQM)</i>	
8,25	2, 154–159, 169, 173, 176, 313	I	161
8,30	153	I,1–2	163–164
9,7–8	2, 154–159, 169, 175– 176, 221, 313	I,4	163–164
9,7–13	153, 155	I,6	164
9,8	180	I,10	164
9,10	158	II	164, 167
9,12	158	II,10–14	164
10,13	151	II–XIV	161
10,35	155	III,4	328
30,12	150	III,13–V,3	248
<i>1 Enoch</i>			
26,1–2	108	VII,2	168, 289
37–71	179	X,8–XII,18	161
		XI	165, 167, 169, 303
		XI,1–2	161
		XI,4	161
		XI,5–7	169

XI,6–7	161, 164	<i>4Q174 (4QFlorilegium)</i>
XI,8	160, 166	II,2 172
XI,8–9	163–164	<i>4Q386</i>
XI,11	164	II,3 160
XI,12	166	<i>4Q523</i>
XI,13	167	1–11 2, 159, 177–178, 233, 313
XI,13–17	161–162, 165, 338	
XI,14	169	
XI,15	167, 169	<i>IQS</i>
XI,15–18	162	IX,16–17 159
XI,16	2, 159–170, 173–174, 178, 232, 303, 313	<i>4QNum<sup>b</sup></i>
XI,17	164, 168	XVII,24,ii 53
XII,4	163	<i>4Q385 Second Ezekiel<sup>a</sup></i>
XIV,10	168	2–3 78
XV–XIX	161	<i>Test. Judah</i>
XV,10	168	21,2–5 173
XVII,10–XVIII,6	168	
XVIII,2	168	
XVIII,3	168	
<i>The Damascus Covenant (CD)</i>		
I,4	172	<i>Josephus:</i>
II,11	172	<i>Antiquities</i>
VI,5,19	315	I,122–123 2, 47, 95, 103, 185, 222, 314
VII,15,19	315	I, 122–147 185
VIII,21	315	I,123 155
XVI,2–4	151, 159	I,128 165
<i>Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen)</i>		
X,1–XXI,22	174	X,79–80 77, 184–185
V,25	174	X,98 184
XII,10	174	X,106–107 184
XII,12	2, 159, 174–175, 178, 313	X,141 184
XVII,10	2, 159, 176, 178	XIV,13–14 180
XVII,16	2, 157, 159, 175–176, 178, 313	<i>Jewish War</i>
<i>1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (1Q161<sup>a</sup>)</i>		
8–10 col.III	2, 159, 170–174, 313	I,13 180
<i>1QpHab</i>		
II,11 ff	166	VII, 7,4.245 186, 221
<i>1Q28 b</i>		
V,20–28	173	
<i>4Q169</i>		
3–4 IV,1	163	
<i>Targumim:</i>		
<i>Targum to Isaiah</i>		
Isa 33,22	197–198	
<i>Targum to Ezekiel</i>		
Ezek 39,16	192, 204	
Ezek 39,18	288	
<i>Targum to Joel</i>		
2,25	68	

<i>Targum to Canticles</i>		
Cant 8,4	198	
<i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</i>		
Gen 10,1–2	193	
Ex 40,11	197, 199	
Num 11,26	194–196	
Num 24,17	196, 199	
<i>Targum Onqelos</i>		
Num 24,17	196	
<i>Targum Neofiti I</i>		
Num 11,26	194–196	
Num 24,17	196	
<i>Fragmentary Targum</i>		
Num 11,26	194–196	
Num 24,17	196	
<i>Targum Jonathan</i>		
1 Sam 2,10	196	
<i>Targum Reuchlinianus</i>		
Isa 10,32	198	
Zech 12,10	197	
<i>Targum Sheni</i>		
Esth 5,1	198	
Other Jewish texts:		
<i>Sifre Numeri</i>		
Num 11,26	194	
<i>Sanhedrin</i>		
17 a	194, 196	
<i>Sukka</i>		
52 a b	197	
<i>Mekhilta Amalek</i>		
Chap. 2	200	
<i>Sifre Deut</i>		
357	200	
<i>Midrash to Psalm 118</i>		
§12 (242 b)	205	
<i>Midrash Rabba</i>		
XXXVI,6	205	
<i>Midrash Tanhuma Kedoshim</i>		
§10 p. 78	109	
<i>Pesiqta de Rab Kahana</i>		
28, s. 182 <sup>a</sup>	201	
<i>Pesiqta 78 b</i>	206	
<i>Eduyyot 2,10</i>	204	
<i>Berakot 10 a</i>	205	
<i>Chronik Jerachmeels</i>		
XXXI,1	186	
<i>Asatir XII,11,16</i>	52	

## Christian Texts

<i>Acta Pauli</i>		
8,12	218	
Ambrose		
<i>De Fide</i> 2,16	217	
Athanasius		
<i>Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae</i>		
XXI	218	
Augustine		
<i>De civitate Dei</i>		
XX,vi	261	
XX,xi	216	
<i>Chronikon Paschale</i>		
I,46,12	217	
Commodian		
<i>Carmen apologeticum</i>		
809 ff	217	
Eusebius		
<i>Hist. Eccl.</i>		
3,28,2	212	
3,39	36	
7,25	36	
<i>Chron. Tom.</i>		
i, p. 95	103	

<i>De vitis prophetarum</i>		80	211
22	218	81,4	36, 211
Hippolytus		Lactantius	
<i>Komm. Apok.</i>		<i>Div. Inst.</i>	
20,2–3	213	220–221	215
Ignatius		Socrates Scholasticus	
<i>Rom.</i> 7,3	284	<i>Hist. Eccl.</i>	
Irenaeus		XLIII	217
<i>Adv. Haer.</i>		<i>Pseudo-Callisthenes</i>	
4,30,4	11	III,26	224
5,30	36	<i>Pseudo Herodianus</i>	
Jerome		De Prosodia Catholica	
<i>Ep. Ad Oceanum</i>		3,3,332	209
77,8	217, 222	Origen	
Justin		<i>Hom. Num.</i>	
<i>Dial. Tryph.</i>		XVII,IV,5	213
43	169	Tertullian	
67-68	169	<i>Against Marcion</i>	
71	169	III,XXV	212
77	169		

## Other Texts

<i>Ptol.</i>		Flavius Arrianus	
III,5	101	<i>Indica</i> 38,7	209
Plinius		<i>Strabo</i>	
<i>Hist. nat.</i>		I,3,21	103
IV,12	101	11,8,2 ff	93
VI,15,40	222	11,14,4–5	109
Tacitus		<i>Koran</i>	
<i>Historiae</i>		XVIII,93	2, 228
1,79	101	XXI,96	2, 228
Herodotus			
3,94	102		

## Index of Names

- Aalders, G.C. 48  
Aalders J.G. 16, 98, 315, 325, 373, 372  
Aalen, S. 152  
Abegg, M.G. 169–170  
Abrahamse, D. DeF. 219–221  
Achelis, H. 213  
Ackermann, S. 119  
Adamsen, G.S. 11, 301  
Ahroni, R. 19, 82, 87, 110, 115, 118, 120, 128  
Albright, W.F. 90, 95, 97  
Alderink, L.J. 276  
Alexander, P.J. 203, 207, 219, 225–227, 229  
Alexander, P.S. 150–153, 155, 167, 185, 187, 207  
Alexander, R.H. 17, 77, 373–375  
Allegro, J.M. 171–172  
Allen L.C. 90, 92, 114, 126  
Amousinne (=Amusin) 172  
Andersen, F.I. 62  
Andersen, O. 109, 310, 377–378  
Anderson, A.R. 20, 216–217, 219, 221–222, 225, 227–228  
Angel, G.T.D. 327  
Arietti, J.A. 65  
Astour, M.C. 82, 86, 92, 97, 120  
Aune, D.E. 40–42, 150, 206–207, 243, 302, 322, 368  
Babcock, W.S. 215  
Baker, D.L. 366  
Barr, D.L. 42  
Bardtke, H. 72  
Barthélemy, D. 62, 134  
Bartlett, J.R. 60  
Barton Payne, J. 59  
Batto, B.F. 17, 18, 24, 86, 101, 106, 116, 128, 318, 321, 344, 375–376  
Bauckham, R. 13, 16, 25, 41, 43, 160, 170, 235–236, 241, 243, 259, 270–271, 274, 282, 288, 301, 306–307, 334, 362, 375  
Bauer, W. 327  
Beagley, A.J. 38  
Beal, T.K. 25  
Beale, G.K. 8–13, 16, 26–30, 135, 238, 251, 259, 270, 274, 277, 289, 293, 311, 318, 323, 326, 374  
Bealsey-Murray, G.R. 268, 302, 305, 362  
Becking, B. 48  
Bengel, J.A. 264, 304, 339  
Berger, K. 151, 153–154, 156–157  
Berkhof, H. 255, 262, 364  
Berkowitz, L. 210  
Berry, G. 69, 94, 102  
Berholet, A. 85  
Beyer, K. 174  
Bider, W. 242  
Bietenhard, H. 15, 207, 247, 255, 296, 300, 308, 327, 331, 357  
Billerbeck, P. 7, 190–191, 202, 204–206, 232, 256  
Black, M. 179–180, 183  
Blass, F. 49, 308, 312  
Block, D.I. 84, 85, 87, 113, 131  
Böcher, O. 122, 181, 246, 262, 291  
Bodi, D. 108  
Böe, S. 6, 210, 218  
Böhmer, J. 96, 110, 128, 210  
Boismard, M.E. 236  
Borchardt, P. 152, 154, 156  
Borgen, P. 53–54  
Boring, E. 280–281, 286, 293, 296, 328, 333  
Bosshard, E. 61  
Bousset, W. 7, 20, 149, 179, 203, 217, 219–220, 227, 229, 250, 253, 260, 270–271, 279–280, 288, 290, 306, 309, 312, 325, 328  
Bowker, J. 196, 200, 201  
Bowman, J. 39  
Brown, H. 163, 170, 246, 248, 303–304  
Brekeman, C. 127  
Brewer, R.R. 39  
Brooke, G.J. 77, 160, 165  
Brownlee, W.H. 96, 220  
Brukce, F.F. 55, 61, 64–65, 122, 163–164, 168, 171, 173  
Brunner, R. 251  
Brunt, P.A. 209, 221

- Brütsch, C. 15–16, 163, 247, 250–251, 253, 273, 282, 288, 294, 307  
Budde, K. 62, 64  
Budge, E.A.W. 223–224  
Burrows, M. 156, 167–168, 172–173  
Caird, G.B. 15–16, 250, 260, 278, 309, 331, 339, 364, 375  
Carbone, S.P. 62, 69  
Carley, K.W. 85, 110  
Carmignac, J. 164, 166–168  
Casey, J.S. 11, 13  
Catchcart, K.J. 197, 205  
Chapman, C.T. 250, 309  
Charles, R.H. 7, 36, 39, 151, 157, 159, 179, 236–237, 242, 249, 259, 313, 323, 325, 331  
Charlesworth, J.H. 141  
Childs, B.S. 112, 114–115  
Chilton, B.D. 197–198  
Christensen, A. 228  
Churgin, P. 192  
Clarke, E.G. 194–195  
Cody, A. 105–106, 129  
Cogan, M. 91  
Cohn, L. 187  
Cohn, N. 227  
Collins, A.Y. 9, 30, 38, 42, 236, 239, 241, 250  
Collins, J.J. 23, 53, 141–142, 146–149, 151, 169–170, 174  
Cook, S.L. 70, 84–85, 87–88, 127  
Cooke, G.A. 85, 89, 98, 103, 108–109, 117  
Cosgrove, C.H. 257  
Cothenet, E. 160, 169, 171  
Cowley, R.W. 69, 220  
Cripps, R.S. 68  
Cross, F.M. 63, 163, 246  
Cuffey, K.H. 49  
Darr, K.P. 79, 131  
Davenport, G.L. 152  
Davidson, M.J. 162–163  
Davies, P.R. 161  
Debrunner, A. 49, 308, 312  
de Goeje, M.J. 228  
Delitzsch, F. 91  
del Olmo Lete, G. 60  
de Vries, S.J. 85, 109  
Deutsch, C. 271  
Dexinger, F. 52, 81  
Dhorme R. É. 45–46, 92, 95, 102, 104  
Diakonoff, I.M. 92–93  
Dietzelbinger, C. 183, 188  
Dijkstra, M. 53, 55  
Dillmann, A. 180  
Dimant, D. 78, 152, 160, 172, 184, 199  
Dines, J.M. 59, 61–62, 64–65, 68–69, 74, 145  
Driver, G.R. 113  
Dupont-Sommer, A. 166, 171  
Dürr, L. 52, 85, 93  
Edvardsen, A. 73  
Eichrodt, W. 81, 83–85, 120, 130, 283, 298, 334  
Ellul, J. 307  
Erling, B. 87  
Ernst, J. 68, 82  
Ezell, M.D. 244, 332, 357, 362, 374  
Farrer, A. 239, 249, 278, 281, 295, 314, 341, 359  
Fekkes, J. 5–6, 10–11, 13, 16, 27–28, 123, 247–248, 355  
Fensham, F.C. 328–329  
Filson, F.V. 136  
Finkelstein, L. 96  
Fiorenza, E.S. 10, 12–13, 24, 28, 38–40, 43–44, 120, 241, 243, 246, 251, 255, 263–264, 275, 292, 298, 306, 309, 315, 317, 346, 363, 365–366  
Fishbane, M. 71, 77, 87  
Fitzmyer, J.A. 9, 161, 164, 169, 174–176  
Fletcher, W. 215  
Fohrer, G. 85, 98  
Ford, J.M. 185, 236–237, 239, 251, 296, 323, 327, 338  
Fox, M.V. 78  
Franzmann, M.H. 250  
Freedman, D.N. 62  
Freedman, H. 205  
Friedlander, M. 208  
Gaechter, P. 236–237  
Galiano, M.F. 133  
García Martínez, F. 151, 154, 160, 162–163, 170–171, 173, 175–176  
Garscha, J. 85

- Gaster, M. 52  
 Gaster, T. 165  
 Geffcken, J. 142, 146  
 Gerleman, G. 52, 54, 72–73, 94, 155  
 Giblin, C.H. 4, 17, 238, 241, 251–252,  
     289, 292, 296, 307, 311, 314  
 Giertz, B. 332  
 Giesen, H. 69, 246, 249, 276, 303, 316,  
     325, 340  
 Goldstein, J.A. 78  
 Goodacre, M.S. 10  
 Gordon, R.P. 197, 205  
 Goulder, M.D. 10, 346, 348, 352  
 Gourgues, M. 238, 257, 264  
 Gowen, D.E. 84, 93  
 Graf, A. 219, 229  
 Gray, D.A. 121  
 Gray, G.B. 55  
 Grech, P. 88  
 Green, W.B. 216  
 Greenberg, M. 78, 81, 184  
 Gressmann, H. 7, 60, 62, 64–65, 68, 85–  
     86, 99, 105, 108, 114, 127, 183,  
     288  
 Grill, S. 129  
 Grogan, G.W. 13  
 Grossfeld, B. 72, 198  
 Gundry, R.H. 254  
 Gunkel, H. 7, 23, 65, 69, 114  
 Günther, H.W. 255  
 Guthrie, D. 347  
 Gwynn, J. 213  
 Hadorn, D.W. 96, 247, 251, 260, 309,  
     329  
 Hallbäck, G. 45, 144, 155–156  
 Halperin, D.J. 200  
 Hamilton, V.P. 46, 48, 98  
 Hanhart, R. 71–72  
 Hanson, A.T. 10, 352, 361, 366  
 Hanson P.D. 88, 123, 127  
 Hanson, R.P.C. 213  
 Harder, G. 269, 354–355  
 Harper, W.R. 61–62  
 Harrington, D.J. 187  
 Harrington, W.J. 249, 262, 282, 287  
 Hart, J.H.A. 74  
 Hartman, L. 354–355  
 Haupt, P. 72  
 Haussleiter, J. 214  
 Hayward, C.T.R. 53  
 Hedenskog, C.A. 224  
 Heinisch, P. 97  
 Heller, B. 52, 183, 221, 227–228  
 Hemer, C.J. 36  
 Hengel, M. 258–259  
 Hengstenberg, G.W. 305  
 Herrmann, A. 151–152, 154, 156  
 Herrmann, J. 102, 105, 110, 125–126  
 Hoekma, A.A. 261–262  
 Höffken, P. 73  
 Hoftijzer, J. 53  
 Högemann, P. 93  
 Holladay, W.L. 114  
 Holmes, P. 212  
 Hölscher, G. 96, 98, 108, 117, 120, 144,  
     152–153, 155–156, 158, 186, 334  
 Holtz, T. 246–247, 357  
 Holzinger, H. 51  
 Horgan, M.P. 171, 173  
 Hossfeld, F.L. 85  
 Howard, G. 65  
 Hübner, H. 365  
 Hübscher, A. 226  
 Hübschmann, H. 209  
 Irmischer, J. 225  
 Irwin, B.P. 127, 130  
 Irwin, W.A. 85, 92, 120, 334  
 Isaac, E. 179  
 Israelstam, J. 206  
 Jacobson, H. 187–188  
 Jahn, G. 132  
 Japheth, S. 46  
 Jastram, N. 53  
 Jeffreys E.M. 224  
 Jeter, J.J. 23  
 Job, J.B. 81  
 Johnson, A.F. 332  
 Johnson, J.E. 65  
 Jones, H.L. 209  
 Jörns, K.P. 39  
 Joyce, P.M. 131  
 Kaiser, O. 115  
 Kampers F. 20, 227  
 Kapelrud, A.S. 114  
 Karrer, M. 39  
 Kazhdan, A. 225  
 Keil, C.F. 90  
 Keller, C.A. 98  
 Kempson, W.R. 44, 261–262

- Kiddle, M. 267, 348, 352–353, 355, 369–370  
Kiessling 209  
Klausner J. 57, 80, 93, 97, 124, 142, 145, 171, 180, 191, 195–196, 200, 203–205, 208, 310  
Kline M.G. 46, 109, 127, 275  
Klostergaard Petersen, A. 276  
Koch, K. 231  
König, E. 100–101  
Korner, R.J. 240  
Kraetzschmar, R. 85, 125, 128  
Kraft, H. 3, 16, 25, 248, 260, 265, 276, 287, 297, 306, 324, 326, 328, 358–360, 362–363  
Kramer, H.W. 271, 281  
Krodel, G.A. 249, 281, 294, 296, 316–317, 356, 359  
Kuhn, K.G. 14–15, 55, 147, 158, 207  
Ladd, G.E. 40, 283, 287  
Lanchester, H.C.O. 144–146  
Lang B. 85–86  
LaSor, W.S. 77  
Lassere, F. 209  
Lauha, A. 89, 98, 105, 115–116  
Lee, M.V. 42, 238  
Lemke, W.E. 79–81  
Lennox, R. 132  
Lenormant, F. 95, 209, 219  
Lentz, A. 209  
Levenson, J.D. 80–81  
Levey, S.H. 72, 192–193, 196–198, 204, 288  
Lewis, A.H. 330  
Lietaert Peerbolte, L.J. 147, 180, 311, 355  
Lind, M.C. 1, 14, 101  
Linton, G.L. 30, 236, 347, 368  
Lipinski, É. 45–46, 92, 98  
Littmann, E. 228–229  
Lohmeyer, E. 16, 287, 347, 358, 361  
Lohse, E. 296, 309, 313  
Lona, H. 38  
Lust, J. 5, 19, 51, 53, 55, 59, 66, 74, 85, 96, 132–133, 135–137, 160, 350, 354, 356–357, 360  
Lutz, H.-M. 85, 87, 114, 123–124, 126, 128, 134  
Maarsingh, B. 97  
Macholz, C. 302  
MacKenzie, R.K. 36  
MacLean, H.B. 19  
Madsen, P. 307, 322, 325  
Maher, M. 47, 193  
Maier, G. 36, 214  
Malina, B.J. 143–144, 257, 302, 304, 311, 319–320  
Manselli, R. 219  
Mathews, S.F. 12  
Mazzaferrri, F.D. 40, 83, 349  
Mc Keating, N. 96  
McKracen, F.P.V. 192  
McGregor, L.J. 132–133, 136–137  
McIvor, J.S. 47  
McKelvey, R.J. 361  
McLean, J.A. 39, 42, 301  
McNamara, M. 191, 193–195, 248  
Mealy, J.W. 14, 15, 82, 201–202, 252, 255, 268, 270, 292, 305–306, 308, 310, 316–317, 320–322, 324–326, 328, 344, 355, 368, 377  
Méhat, A. 213  
Merkel, H. 143–144, 232  
Messel, N. 94  
Metzger, B.M. 170, 249, 281, 298, 311  
Metzger, W. 255, 306, 315–316  
Mevedskaya, I.N. 92–93  
Milik, J.T. 151  
Millard, A. 97  
Mills, T.J. 19, 81–82, 84, 86, 114, 121, 124, 128  
Morris, L. 267–268, 283, 327  
Morton, R. 321  
Mosbech, H. 268–269, 279, 284, 290, 294, 308, 323–324, 326, 336  
Mounce, R.H. 255–256, 260, 262, 268, 277, 294–295, 308, 326–328, 334, 336, 340  
Moyise, S. 7, 9–13, 22, 25–27, 30–31, 36, 160, 211, 259, 272, 274, 317, 346, 351–353, 356, 361, 365–366, 368, 371  
Mowinkale, S. 202  
Mueller, J.R. 77, 160  
Müller, U. B. 298, 355

- Munk, A. 55, 57, 61, 68, 94, 105, 110, 113, 120, 125, 131  
 Muraoka, T. 59  
 Murphy, F.J. 36, 41, 187–188  
 Mussies, G. 36, 242, 293, 311  
 Myres, J.L. 95  
 Naveh, J. 63  
 Neusner, J. 200  
 Nickelsburg, G.W.E. 174, 187  
 Niditch, S. 82  
 Nielsen, E. 151  
 Nielsen, K. 98, 104, 128  
 Nikiprowetzky, V. 143–144, 146, 149  
 Noack, B. 141, 144, 156  
 Nobile, M. 82, 86–87  
 Nöldeke, T. 94, 229  
 Noth, M. 56  
 Nur, A. 274  
 Nurmela, R. 124  
 Odeberg, H. 196, 207–209  
 Odell, M.S. 113, 127, 130  
 Oegema, G.S. 212, 214, 216  
 O’Leary, S.D. 70  
 Olofsson, S. 56, 132  
 Otzen, B. 81, 85, 88, 121, 151, 341  
 Ozanne, C.G. 7  
 Palmer, F. 39  
 Paton, L.B. 72–73  
 Paulien, J. 11, 25–26, 28, 347, 353  
 Petersen, D.L. 124  
 Pfeiffer, R.H. 94, 97  
 Pfister 223  
 Pilch, J.J. 41  
 Pippin, T. 294  
 Pmykala, K.E. 173  
 Porter, S.E. 25  
 Poythress, V.S. 41  
 Prévost, J.-P. 242  
 Price, J.D. 100  
 Prigent, P. 213, 316  
 Provan, I. 253, 270, 368, 370  
 Puech, É. 177  
 Rackham, H. 222  
 Ramsay, W.M. 36  
 Ranke, E. 135  
 Reddish, M.G. 93, 98  
 Reinhardt, K. 91  
 Reinmuth, E. 188  
 Rissi, M. 14, 222, 246, 249, 253, 264, 293, 306–307, 309, 316, 321–322, 325, 361  
 Rizzi, G. 62, 69  
 Robinson, J.A.T. 37  
 Röllig, W. 91  
 Roloff, J. 24, 243, 247, 250, 255, 268–270, 279, 297, 325, 355  
 Ron, H. 274  
 Rosenberg, J. 112  
 Rosenthal, J.M. 170–172  
 Rouillard 51  
 Rousseau, F. 346  
 Rowland, C. 16, 199, 249, 281, 287, 298, 358, 360, 362  
 Royalty, R.M. 38  
 Rudolph, W. 62, 67, 70  
 Ruiz, J.P. 5–6, 9–11, 13–14, 19, 25, 27, 29, 31, 239, 243, 274–275, 282, 297, 346, 348–349, 350–352, 370–371  
 Russell, D.S. 15, 115, 145, 147, 180, 354  
 Ryken, L. 42  
 Sackur, E. 225,  
 Saffrey, H.D. 38  
 Sänger, D. 98  
 Sayce, A.H. 93  
 Schaefer, K.R. 124  
 Schaff, P. 217  
 Schiffmann, L.H. 172  
 Schlatter, A. 7, 123, 150, 152, 190–191, 201–202, 249, 305  
 Schmidt, C. 218  
 Schmidt, H. 126  
 Schmidt, K.L. 307  
 Schmidt, N. 94  
 Schmitz, O. 258  
 Schmolinsky, S. 59  
 Schneider, J. 41, 341  
 Schweizer, E. 284  
 Scott, J.M. 45–47, 122, 142, 153, 164, 174–175, 185, 188, 205, 306  
 Sedlacek, I. 213  
 Sellin, E. 54  
 Shea, W.H. 238  
 Shepard, M.H. 39  
 Simkins, R. 63, 66–68  
 Simons, J. 45, 90, 95–96, 100, 133  
 Skarsaune, O. 211–212  
 Skehan, P.W. 73, 251

- Smith, K.F. 91  
 Snaith, J.G. 73  
 Sperber, A. 288  
 Spottorno, M.V. 133, 137  
 Squiter, K.A. 210  
 Staerk, D.V. 105–106, 110, 112  
 Stalker, D.M.G. 89, 104, 117  
 Stegemann, H. 151–152, 170, 173–174  
 Stone, M.E. 141, 179–180, 225, 291,  
     310, 322, 337  
 Strack, H.L. 7, 190–191, 202, 204–206,  
     232, 256  
 Strand, K.A. 238  
 Strange, J. 45, 144, 155–156  
 Strauss, J. D. 295–296  
 Strugnell, J. 78, 160  
 Sukenik, E.L. 161–162  
 Swanepoel, M.G. 121  
 Sweet, J. 15, 272, 277, 281, 287, 361,  
     369  
 Swete, H.B. 6, 7, 12, 242, 248, 256–  
     257, 261, 277, 308, 347  
 Sysling, H. 47–48  
 Tadmor, H. 91  
 Talbert, C.H. 277, 355  
 Talmon, S. 160  
 Thackeray, H.S.J. 65, 185, 221  
 Thomas, R.L. 240, 284, 308, 323, 372,  
     376–377  
 Thompson, L.L. 36–38  
 Tigchelaar, E.J.C. 175–176  
 Torrey, C.C. 94, 220  
 Tov, E. 132, 137  
 Trudinger, L. 346  
 Uhden, R. 143, 152, 158  
 Uhlemann, M. 222, 227  
 Ulfgard, H. 38–39, 263  
 Ulrichsen, J.H. 236, 249–251, 253–254,  
     278, 309, 360  
 Utinem, E. 15, 331  
 van de Kamp, H.R. 379  
 van den Born, A. 94  
 VanderKam, J.C. 150–151  
 van der Kooij, G. 53  
 van der Ploeg, J. 161, 165–169  
 van der Woude, A.S. 164, 168, 171,  
     173, 202–203, 303  
 van Gelderen, C. 62  
 van Hoonacker, A. 86, 97, 143  
 Vanhoye, A. 6, 8–9, 16–17, 25, 27,  
     29239, 282–283, 285, 310, 346,  
     348–349, 351, 360–361, 371  
 van Leuwen, C. 66, 68, 115  
 Vermes, G. 51–52, 159, 171, 174  
 Vielhauer, P. 40, 141  
 Vivian, A. 49, 51, 62, 74, 174  
 Vogelgesang, J.M. 9–11, 13–14, 19, 25,  
     28, 30, 39, 137, 149–150, 262, 272–  
     273, 285, 346, 348–251, 361, 363–  
     364, 369–370  
 Volz, P. 145, 191, 202, 204, 354  
 von Gall, A.F. 7, 52, 147, 182–184  
 von Orelli 66, 94, 96, 210  
 von Rad, G. 117, 119, 122  
 Vos, L.A. 6, 13, 26, 28–29, 279, 315,  
     348, 351  
 Wace, H. 217  
 Wacholder, B.Z. 150, 160, 169  
 Weicker, 91  
 Wellhausen J. 87, 327  
 Wenham, G.J. 46, 48  
 Wensinck, A.J. 228  
 Westermann, C. 47–48  
 Wevers, J.W. 51, 85, 96, 98, 100, 102,  
     105, 126, 130, 136  
 White, R.F. 4, 17, 162, 246, 262, 275,  
     280, 293, 376  
 Wickenhauser, A. 246  
 Wildberger, H. 115  
 Winkler, H. 48, 94, 219  
 Wintermute, O.S. 152, 154, 158  
 Wolff, H.W. 63, 68  
 Würtheim, E. 54  
 Yadin, Y. 137, 160, 162, 168, 174  
 Yamauchi, E. 47, 92–93, 95, 100, 102–  
     103, 114  
 Ziegler, J. 61, 73–74, 104, 132–133  
 Zimmerli, W. 20, 46, 77, 79, 81, 85, 89–  
     90, 93, 96, 100–104, 108–109, 113,  
     116, 129, 131

## Index of Subjects

- Abraham 47, 104, 174, 188, 219–220, 323  
Abyss, the 148, 183, 254–255, 294, 304, 321–324, 326  
Agag 1, 33, 50–58, 71–73, 75, 94, 113, 225, 384  
Alexander the Great, 20, 34, 69, 94, 105, 140, 219–230, 233  
Allusion 4–6, 8, 10–14, 17, 21–31, 33, 36, 58, 67, 71, 76, 109, 126, 140, 145, 147–150, 160, 163–164, 166, 169–170, 172, 178, 183–184, 192, 205, 221, 233, 239, 245, 247–248, 250–253, 259–260, 262, 270, 273, 276, 288, 297, 299–300, 304, 316, 319, 322–323, 331, 333, 340, 343–353, 356–357, 361, 363, 365, 367–372, 374–376, 378–381, 383, 385–388  
Angel 9, 40, 78, 88, 123, 138, 141, 162, 165, 170, 178–182, 184, 206, 211–212, 226, 228, 235–236, 240, 243–246, 250–252, 254, 256, 264–265, 269, 276–279, 289–292, 294, 296, 299, 303–304, 308, 327, 329, 335–337, 340, 379  
Antichrist 109, 145, 166, 209, 211–212, 214–216, 218–219, 224–227, 230, 247, 251, 253, 296, 300  
Apocalyptic 1, 3, 9, 12, 14–15, 18, 20, 23–25, 35, 39–42, 50, 55, 62, 67, 70, 78, 86–88, 105–106, 109, 114, 120, 136, 139, 141, 152, 178, 207, 219–220, 225–226, 231, 236–238, 242–243, 255, 274, 290–292, 302, 311, 313, 315, 318, 334, 341, 345, 348–350, 354–357, 360, 366, 368, 373, 380, 384  
Astronomy 143–144, 302, 304, 319–320  
Babylon 17, 29, 43, 48, 67, 77–78, 84, 92–93, 95–97, 102, 105–106, 108, 110, 113–115, 120, 127, 141–143, 153, 160, 192, 198, 236, 238, 245, 252, 267, 272, 288–290, 303, 315, 318–319, 330, 335, 367  
Balaam 1, 50–56, 94, 114, 343, 367, 380  
Banquet 8, 16, 29, 73, 123, 128, 130, 149, 182, 195, 239, 276, 283, 296–299, 339, 354, 364, 372, 375  
Beast (–s), the (Antichrist) 4, 14, 17, 39, 60, 113, 122–123, 195, 201, 216, 218, 238–239, 243, 247, 252–254, 258–260, 262, 266–267, 269–270, 273, 277–279, 287–299, 303, 305–306, 309, 314, 318, 320, 323–324, 329–330, 335, 338–341, 345, 367, 372, 374, 377–378, 385, 387  
Birds 4, 8, 16, 29, 53, 60, 84–85, 113, 119, 123, 128–130, 138, 143, 148–150, 182, 194–195, 233, 244, 252, 276–291, 296–299, 313, 323, 339, 349, 354–355, 364, 370, 372, 375, 377–378, 380, 385, 387  
Book of life 237, 261, 269, 271  
Burial 60, 83–85, 111, 118, 121, 123, 125–128, 138, 182, 192, 205, 225, 252, 289, 297, 339, 345, 380  
Camp 3, 15, 109–110, 181, 194, 191, 216, 257, 266, 292, 304, 309, 324, 326–330, 333, 338, 380  
Cosmology 40, 141, 152–153, 270, 304, 308–311, 315–320, 324–327  
Daniel 8–12, 29, 122–124, 136, 140, 201, 213, 258–259, 267–268, 273, 295, 300, 322, 353, 357, 367  
Day of Yahweh 19, 66, 111, 120–122, 248  
Deceit 3, 181, 244, 252, 255–256, 265, 277, 303–308, 321, 324, 335, 375, 387  
Demons 14–15, 24, 68, 106–107, 114–115, 138, 141, 158, 178, 181, 232, 265, 270, 276, 296, 305–307, 309, 315–319, 339, 344, 374, 387  
Divine passive 253, 265, 269, 294–295, 302, 340–341  
Double *eschaton* 87, 96, 111, 123, 138, 353–362, 366, 371–379

- Double use of prophecy 4, 16–19, 195, 275, 289, 318–319, 344, 352, 366–367, 371–378, 381, 388
- Earthquake 53, 119, 121, 138, 148, 274, 334
- Eschatological *Schemata* 5, 17–19, 86, 120, 122, 147, 149, 201–204, 206, 273, 302, 344, 353–362, 371–379
- Exodus—typology 11, 43, 57, 328, 295, 340
- Flesh 4, 60, 78, 82, 85, 113, 124, 129–130, 138, 148–149, 225, 252, 277, 280, 283–288, 296–297, 299, 378, 385, 387
- Fire 3–4, 70, 89, 105, 119, 125–126, 138, 148–149, 153, 162, 170, 194, 215, 224, 228, 237, 243, 248, 253–255, 259, 261, 264, 266–271, 273, 277, 280, 294–295, 297, 299, 304, 306, 317, 320, 333–342, 372, 387
- Folkstorm 86, 122, 147, 180, 201, 292, 310, 322, 326–327, 337, 342, 354, 372
- Fulfillment 10–11, 13, 16–17, 28, 43, 87, 228, 238, 242, 249, 257, 262, 264, 278, 289, 301, 320, 363–365, 371–382, 388
- Gyges 55, 73, 91–93, 97–99, 103–104
- Haman 71–74, 384
- Harmagedon 17, 29, 118, 163, 239, 274, 277, 279, 292–293, 305, 309, 315, 320, 329
- Holy war 120–125, 162–164, 181, 248, 252, 289, 292, 294, 297, 385
- Inter-textuality 4, 6–35, 158, 161, 167–169, 182–184, 259, 322, 368
- Israel 15, 34, 78–81, 107–111, 118–119, 181, 198, 226, 251, 257, 264, 266, 269, 276, 291–292, 294, 296, 299, 306–307, 309–311, 327–328, 330–332, 345, 361, 379–381, 388
- Japheth 45–46, 49, 75, 101, 103, 153–157, 164, 168, 175, 185–189, 193, 205, 220, 225, 232, 313
- Jerusalem 5, 7, 9, 29, 31, 37, 43, 73–74, 77, 79–82, 108–110, 118, 123–124, 126–127, 135, 144–145, 166, 171–172, 178, 180–184, 187, 194, 197–198, 203, 211–212, 214, 235–237, 239–240, 244–245, 266, 271, 273, 292, 304, 310, 317, 322, 324, 326–328, 330–332, 335–337, 342, 345, 350–351, 355, 380, 382
- Jesus 35, 37, 203, 213, 254, 279, 284, 328, 333–334, 362
- Josephus 2, 47, 77, 95–96, 103, 152, 155, 165, 184–186, 189, 216, 221–223, 230–232, 314, 317, 386
- Judgement 14, 17, 34, 66–71, 74–78, 84, 86–88, 105, 117, 119–121, 128, 131, 138, 142, 144, 146–148, 152, 162, 164, 170–173, 178, 180–181, 197, 204, 211–212, 215, 237–239, 244–248, 250–252, 254–255, 257–262, 267–274, 278, 282, 292, 294–295, 298, 302, 306–307, 309, 320, 327, 331, 333, 335, 340, 343, 345, 350, 356–357, 359, 362, 372, 384–385
- Kittim, the 161, 163–168, 171–172, 174, 187
- Koran, the 2, 228–230,
- Lake of fire 4, 237, 243, 253–255, 261, 264, 266–267, 269–271, 273, 277, 280, 294–295, 317, 335, 339–341, 343
- Locusts 2, 61–71, 122, 276, 292, 316, 341, 343, 384
- Martyrs 38, 214, 225, 250, 257, 260–262, 267, 309, 329–331, 356, 375, 380
- Meal 280–283, 291, 297, 299, 385, 387
- Messiah (–s) 57–58, 79–81, 110–111, 123, 138, 145, 147, 149, 169–174, 182, 193–208, 213, 227, 230, 248, 251, 266, 337–338, 343–345, 372, 387
- Methodology 6, 8–11, 21–35, 76, 159, 165, 199, 201, 206, 347, 349, 354, 368, 383, 386
- Millennium 4, 14–15, 17, 83, 110, 173–174, 195, 212–218, 239, 244–245, 254–265, 275, 329–330, 348, 353–362, 364, 374, 377, 381
- Myth, mythological 12, 14–15, 17–19, 23–24, 34, 47, 55, 60, 67–69, 82, 86,

- 88, 93, 95–97, 105–107, 112, 114–116, 124, 138, 143, 158, 178, 185, 204, 220, 232, 270, 276, 308–309, 315–318, 364–366, 375, 387
- Naram-Sin, Cuthean legend of 86, 97, 120
- Nations, Table of 45–48, 95, 99–107, 142–145, 151–153, 164, 174–176, 185–189, 193, 232–233, 384
- Nero 37, 92, 97, 222, 251, 253
- Noah 1–2, 45, 140, 150–154, 158, 164, 174, 176, 185–189, 193, 205, 313
- North 1–2, 19, 48–49, 57, 66, 68, 86, 92–93, 95, 98, 100–103, 106, 109, 114–116, 138, 140, 143–144, 153–159, 163, 168, 175–176, 183, 185–186, 209–210, 215, 220, 224–226, 228–230, 311, 313, 386
- Og, King of Bashan 58–61, 75, 218
- Parousia 14, 17, 101, 109, 162, 211, 218, 246, 251, 253, 256, 263, 305, 328
- Paul 37, 96, 159, 306, 365, 375, 379, Persecution 35–39, 383
- Philo 53, 187, 231
- Prophecy 10–13, 16, 28, 39–42, 86–88, 113–116, 134, 138–139, 172, 180, 215, 217, 237–238, 241–242, 289, 362–375
- Purification 85, 123, 125–126, 138, 149, 169, 182, 205, 226, 289, 298, 343, 345, 380, 385
- Qumran 2, 34, 52–53, 77–78, 137, 151, 159–178, 231
- Quotations/citations 6, 8, 10, 12, 24, 26–27, 30, 44, 108, 160, 164, 168, 212, 241, 243, 272, 280, 346, 349, 360, 383
- Recapitulation 4, 41, 83, 211, 215–216, 218, 256, 264, 275, 289, 293, 320, 322, 344, 376, 378
- Recognition of Yahweh 84, 86, 105, 131, 138, 148–149, 169, 275, 296, 302, 307
- Resurrection 5, 40, 79, 136–137, 195, 211, 242, 251, 261–262, 264, 268–269, 306, 320, 326, 329–331, 333, 344, 350, 356
- Revelation of John
- author 2, 22, 34–36, 352–53, 362–364
- genre 23–24, 39–42
- structure, outline 42–44, 235–244,
- Rome/Roman 14, 17, 38, 43, 97, 142–143, 145, 165–167, 172, 174, 178–181, 186, 192–193, 197–198, 204, 206, 212, 214, 216, 218, 225–226, 230, 233, 249, 253, 287, 290, 307, 309, 318
- Russia 1, 15, 99–107
- Sacrifice 8, 113, 123, 125, 128–130, 233, 277–278, 282–283, 288, 299, 323, 385, 387
- Samaria 52, 54–56
- Satan 3–4, 15, 17, 116, 181, 206, 238–239, 244, 247, 252–258, 260, 264–271, 273, 280, 292, 294, 301–309, 311, 315–316, 318, 320–322, 324, 327, 329, 331, 333, 338–343, 358–359, 364, 372–374, 379, 384
- Scythians 2, 47–48, 92–96, 100–101, 114, 155–156, 185–186, 210, 216–217, 221–222, 230, 314, 386
- Septuagint 20, 26, 30, 37, 49–75, 132–137, 141, 169, 210, 213, 218, 276, 280–281, 284–285, 291, 296, 300, 312–313, 315, 323–326, 328, 384–385
- Seven 12, 21–22, 36, 42, 84, 87, 96, 111, 118, 125–128, 148–149, 163–164, 185–186, 189, 194, 205–206, 214–215, 225, 235–236, 239–244, 256, 290, 301, 307, 335
- Targum 2, 30, 33–35, 37, 47, 52–53, 62, 68, 151, 168, 171, 178, 184, 189–202, 204–206, 231–233, 288–289, 301, 314–315, 317, 344, 386–387
- Temple 31, 79–82, 108, 123, 141, 148–149, 203, 205, 243, 267, 324, 345, 350–351, 356, 361, 369, 371, 376–379, 385, 388
- Theophany 115, 120, 124, 246, 267, 274, 334
- Thrones 82, 115, 170, 179, 181–182, 237, 243, 257–260, 264, 267–271, 327
- Typology 11, 28, 78, 366–367, 388
- Universalization 9, 29, 308–311, 343–351, 361, 381

- Vaticanus, Codex of 58–61, 73, 384  
Vorlage 27, 32, 54–56, 58, 62–65, 70,  
74–75, 136, 259, 333  
War 2, 37, 92, 96, 106, 110, 119, 126,  
158, 161–170, 178, 180–181, 186,  
191–192, 194, 196, 198, 201, 203–  
204, 208, 215, 217, 221, 250–251,  
273–274, 277, 289, 292–294, 297,  
301, 303, 305, 309, 316, 328, 338,  
343–344, 385–386  
Wirceburgensis, Codex of 18–19, 135–  
137  
Zion 29, 86, 108, 115–116, 120, 122,  
124–125, 129, 153, 160, 328, 331,  
380



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## *Alphabetical Index of the First and Second Series*

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- Bayer, Hans Friedrich:* Jesus' Predictions of Vindication and Resurrection. 1986.  
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*Volume II/63.*  
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- Bergman, Jan:* see *Kieffer, René*
- Bergmeier, Roland:* Das Gesetz im Römerbrief und andere Studien zum Neuen Testament. 2000. *Volume 121.*
- Betz, Otto:* Jesus, der Messias Israels. 1987.  
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– Jesus, der Herr der Kirche. 1990. *Volume 52.*
- Beyschlag, Karlmann:* Simon Magus und die christliche Gnosis. 1974. *Volume 16.*
- Bittner, Wolfgang J.:* Jesu Zeichen im Johanness-evangelium. 1987. *Volume II/26.*
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- Bockmuehl, Markus N.A.:* Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity. 1990. *Volume II/36.*
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*Volume II/ 135.*
- Böhlig, Alexander:* Gnosis und Synkretismus. Teil 1 1989. *Volume 47 –Teil 2 1989. Volume 48.*
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– Studien zur Theologie, Sprache und Umwelt des Neuen Testaments. Hrsg. von D. Sänger. 1998. *Volume 107.*
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– see *Fridrichsen, Anton.*
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- Dobbelner, Axel von:* Glaube als Teilhabe. 1987. *Volume II/22.*
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- Dunn, James D.G. (Hrsg.):* Jews and Christians. 1992. *Volume 66.*
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- Ego, Beate:* Im Himmel wie auf Erden. 1989. *Volume II/34*
- Ego, Beate und Lange, Armin sowie Pilhofer, Peter (Hrsg.):* Gemeinde ohne Tempel – Community without Temple. 1999. *Volume 118.*
- Eisen, Ute E.:* see *Paulsen, Henning.*
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- The Old Testament in Early Christianity. 1991. *Volume 54.*
- Ennulat, Andreas:* Die >Minor Agreements<. 1994. *Volume II/62.*
- Ensor, Peter W.:* Jesus and His >Works<. 1996. *Volume II/85.*
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- Fornberg, Tord:* see *Fridrichsen, Anton.*
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- Frenschkowski, Marco:* Offenbarung und Epiphanie. Volume 1 1995. *Volume II/79 – Volume 2 1997. Volume II/80.*
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- see *Feldmeier, Reinhard.*
- see *Hengel, Martin.*
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- Hellholm, D.:* see *Hartman, Lars.*
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*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*

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- Herzer, Jens: Paulus oder Petrus? 1998. *Volume 103.*
- Hoegen-Rohls, Christina: Der nachösterliche Johannes. 1996. *Volume II/84.*
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- Der Christushymnus Philipper 2,6-11. 1976, <sup>2</sup>1991. *Volume 17.*
- Paulusstudien. 1989, <sup>2</sup>1994. *Volume 51.*
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- Hvalvik, Reidar: The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant. 1996. *Volume II/82.*
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- Kähler, Christoph: Jesu Gleichenisse als Poesie und Therapie. 1995. *Volume 78.*
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- Kammler, Hans-Christian: Christologie und Eschatologie. 2000. *Volume 126.*
- see Hofius, Otfried.
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- Kieffer, René und Jan Bergman (Hrsg.): *La Main de Dieu / Die Hand Gottes*. 1997. *Volume 94.*
- Kim, Seyoon: The Origin of Paul's Gospel. 1981, <sup>2</sup>1984. *Volume II/4.*
- „The Son of Man“ as the Son of God. 1983. *Volume 30.*
- Klein, Hans: see Dunn, James D.G..
- Kleinknecht, Karl Th.: Der leidende Gerechtferigte. 1984, <sup>2</sup>1988. *Volume II/13.*
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- Köhler, Wolf-Dietrich: Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Zeit vor Irenäus. 1987. *Volume II/24.*
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- see Walter, Nikolaus.
- Kuhn, Karl G.: Achtzehngebet und Vaterunser und der Reim. 1950. *Volume 1.*
- Kvalbein, Hans: see Ådna, Jostein.
- Laansma, Jon: I Will Give You Rest. 1997. *Volume II/98.*
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- Löhr, Hermut: see Hengel, Martin.
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- Luz, Ulrich: see Dunn, James D.G..
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- Markschies, Christoph: Valentinus Gnosticus? 1992. *Volume 65.*
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- Mell, Ulrich:* Die „anderen“ Winzer. 1994. *Volume 77.*
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- Merklein, Helmut:* Studien zu Jesus und Paulus. Volume 1 1987. *Volume 43.* – Volume 2 1998. *Volume 105.*
- Metzler, Karin:* Der griechische Begriff des Verzeihens. 1991. *Volume II/44.*
- Metzner, Rainer:* Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums im 1. Petrusbrief. 1995. *Volume II/74.*
- Das Verständnis der Sünde im Johannesevangelium. 2000. *Volume 122.*
- Mihoc, Vasile:* see Dunn, James D.G.
- Mittmann, Siegfried:* see Hengel, Martin.
- Mittmann-Richert, Ulrike:* Magnifikat und Benediktus. 1996. *Volume II/90.*
- Mußner, Franz:* Jesus von Nazareth im Umfeld Israels und der Urkirche. Hrsg. von M. Theobald. 1998. *Volume 111.*
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- Heidenapostel aus Israel. 1992. *Volume 62.*
- Nielsen, Anders E.:* „Until it is Fullfilled“. 2000. *Volume II/126.*
- Nissen, Andreas:* Gott und der Nächste im antiken Judentum. 1974. *Volume 15.*
- Noack, Christian:* Gottesbewußtsein. 2000. *Volume II/116.*
- Noormann, Rolf:* Irenäus als Paulusinterpret. 1994. *Volume II/66.*
- Obermann, Andreas:* Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift im Johannesevangelium. 1996. *Volume II/83.*
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- Oropeza, B. J.:* Paul and Apostasy. 2000. *Volume II/115.*
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  - see Ego, Beate.
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- Pokorný, Petr und Josef B. Souček:* Bibelauslegung als Theologie. 1997. *Volume 100.*
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- Prieur, Alexander:* Die Verkündigung der Gottesherrschaft. 1996. *Volume II/89.*
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- Räisänen, Heikki:* Paul and the Law. 1983, <sup>2</sup>1987. *Volume 29.*
- Rehkopf, Friedrich:* Die lukanische Sonderquelle. 1959. *Volume 5.*
- Rein, Matthias:* Die Heilung des Blindgeborenen (Joh 9). 1995. *Volume II/73.*
- Reinmuth, Eckart:* Pseudo-Philo und Lukas. 1994. *Volume 74.*
- Reiser, Marius:* Syntax und Stil des Markus-evangeliums. 1984. *Volume II/11.*
- Richards, E. Randolph:* The Secretary in the Letters of Paul. 1991. *Volume II/42.*
- Riesner, Rainer:* Jesus als Lehrer. 1981, <sup>3</sup>1988. *Volume II/7.*
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  - see Burchard, Christoph
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- see *Thüsing, Wilhelm.*
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- Spanje, T.E. van: Inconsistency in Paul? 1999. Volume II/110.*
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- Tajra, Harry W.: The Trial of St. Paul. 1989. Volume II/35.*
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- Theissen, Gerd: Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums. 1979, <sup>3</sup>1989. Volume 19.*
- Theobald, Michael: see Mußner, Franz.*
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- Thüsing, Wilhelm: Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie. Hrsg. von Thomas Söding. 1995. Volume 82.*
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- Welck, Christian: Erzählte ‚Zeichen‘. 1994. Volume II/69.*
- Wiarda, Timothy: Peter in the Gospels. 2000. Volume II/127.*
- Wilk, Florian: see Walter, Nikolaus.*
- Williams, Catrin H.: I am He. 2000. Volume II/113.*
- Wilson, Walter T.: Love without Pretense. 1991. Volume II/46.*
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