MYSTICISM AND APOCALYPTIC IN EZEKIEL'S EXAGOGÉ*)

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As part of his attempt to demonstrate the widespread existence of a mystical Judaism in antiquity, Erwin Goodenough turned his attention to Moses' dream in Ezekiel's Exagoge.

Here is the text, followed by Goodenough's remarks:

The throne... is exactly the divine throne we have met in the Orphic fragment. We have not left the Orphic atmosphere at all... As he counted (the stars) he awoke. Here is unmistakably the divine kingship of Moses set forth, a kingship not only over men but over the entire cosmos. He is in the place of God!... The conception of God has come directly from Orphic sources, and the idea is, as Cerfiaux has pointed out, the astral mystery of Egypt. Moses' nature is taken up to associate itself with the nature of the stars.

Here then is a picture of a "mystic Moses" which splendidly supports Goodenough's general theory. Unfortunately,
Goodenough's description is not consistent with Ezekiel's text. His starting point is an Orphic hymn in which inter alia God is described as sitting on a throne of gold on high with his feet resting upon the earth. The solitary similarity between the two texts is the presence of "God" sitting on a throne on high, a picture thoroughly familiar from the Bible. Neither the golden character of the throne nor even the notion of God using the earth as a footstool (cf. Isa. 66:1) is present in Ezekiel. Indeed, the latter's description of God on his throne is as straightforwardly simple as could be. As for Moses' kingship over the entire cosmos, the astral mystery and Moses' association with the nature of the stars, all this is quite foreign to the tone and tenor of the text. On the matter of the "kingship of the cosmos" Goodenough is patently reading Philo into Ezekiel (cf. Moses 1.155ff). That Moses beholds the cosmos does not mean he is made master of it. Indeed, Raguel's interpretation of the dream makes not the slightest allusion to such a possibility. Further, Ezekiel distinctly limits the obeisance to a τι πλὴν οὐ ἄστερων, which does not seem equivalent to "all the stars" nor does he mention the sun and moon. In what sense Moses is associated with the nature of the stars is hard to see, as is the presence of the astral mystery. Is this Orphic and astral or is it a recollection of Joseph's dream wherein stars prostrate themselves before the youth (Gen. 37:9)? It is in general worth noting that most of the Biblical narrative retold in Ezekiel is also present in Philo, but all the mysticism of the Philonic accounts is lacking in the Exagoge.

Indeed, if one compares Ezekiel's dream to other dreams in Jewish literature of the second commonwealth and also to "ascension" scenes (for Moses' vision here belongs to that genre too), we may come to conclusions quite different from Goodenough's.

We begin with I Enoch 13.7ff. Enoch falls asleep and a dream-vision comes to him. In it the stars, clouds and other celestial phenomena carry him heavenward where he beholds splendid and marvelous things: a wall of crystal, tongues of
fire, a crystal house, Cherubim, a house of fire. At this point in the narrative (14.18) the relevance to Ezekiel becomes clearer. I quote verses 18-25.6)

And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne; its appearance was as hoarfrost, its circuit was as a shining sun and the voices of cherubim. And from underneath the great throne came streams of flaming fire so that it was impossible to look thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and behold the face of the Honoured and Glorious One and no flesh could behold Him. A flaming fire was round about Him, and a great fire stood before Him, and none of those who were around Him could draw nigh Him: ten thousand times ten thousand were before Him, but He stood in no need of counsel. And the holiness of the holy ones, who were nigh to Him, did not leave by night nor depart from Him. And until then I had had a veil on my face, and I was trembling: then the Lord called me with His own mouth and spake to me: "Come hither, Enoch, and hear My holy word." And he made me rise up and approach the door: but I turned my face downwards.

Here is the lofty throne with God upon it, here too the invitation to the mortal being to approach the divinity. Yet, the atmosphere, the tone, the very conception is totally different. In Enoch we are in a world of thoroughly supernatural phenomena replete with the panoply of mysticism. There is nothing in the description that has a counterpart in the earthly sphere, nothing that is susceptible of recognition by the human mind. In contrast, Ezekiel's account is almost all replica of the earthly scene. Even the one exception, Moses' vision of the cosmos, does not greatly differ from a description of the view from a mountain-top. Its stark simplicity and its closeness to reality can also be appreciated by a comparison with later parts of Enoch's visions. Thus, at 33.2-4, Enoch too sees and counts the stars. But how different is the account:

I saw the ends of the earth whereon the heaven rests, and the portals of the heaven were open. And I saw how the stars of the heaven come forth, and I counted the portals out of which they proceed, and wrote down all their outlets; of each individual star by itself, according to their number, their names, their connexions, their positions, their times and their months, as the holy angel Uriel who was with me showed me. He showed all things to me and wrote them down for me: also their names he wrote for me, and their laws and their companies.

Even this is but a pale reflection of the depiction of the heavenly luminaries at chapters 72-82, a spectacularly
elaborate recounting of Enoch's visions of the sun, the moon, the wind, the stars, etc., with a lengthy description of the stars at 82.10ff. So too the vision of chapter 71, another translation of Enoch to heaven, is replete with sons of God, flakes of fire, faces like snow, revelations of all the secrets, crystal structures, Seraphim, Cherubim, Ophanim, throne of glory, millions of angels, the Head of Days and the Son of Man.

Lastly, Enoch's dream at chapter 85 where, like Moses, he sees stars falling from the heaven. These prove to be the fallen angels. In Moses' dream the stars, though in a sense personified, are never anything but stars. If this is of any import, then it may suggest that Ezekiel's account, rather than representing the astral mystery, is polemic against the deification or angelization of the stars. And if any generalization at this point is in order in light of the comparison with I Enoch, it is the following: Ezekiel's version of the ascension-type vision is a demythologization of the Enoch-type. Many of the elements are held in common, but in Ezekiel they are, so to speak, naturalized. What makes his treatment significant and noteworthy, however, is not merely that it is in principle so different from I Enoch, but that the conceptions present in Enoch were common and widespread, even if not always set forth in so extreme a fashion as in Enoch. The culmination, of course, comes later, in such works like Midrash Ketappuah where Moses himself turns into fire on his ascent and 3 Enoch and other works of the developed Merkabah mysticism. But Enochian elements are not that unusual even earlier. Thus, descriptions of heavenly ascents in Pesiqta Rabbati 20 and Apoc. Abr. 15ff depict the translation in terms of thrones of fire, angelologies and the like.

On the other hand, there are accounts which are closer to Ezekiel. A passage in the Testament of Levi, while more extravagant than Ezekiel in some respects, is even barer in others. Thus, Levi (2.5ff; 5.1ff) falls asleep and sees himself on a high mountain (precisely as in the Ezagoge). The heavens open and he enters, which takes the ascension beyond the point Ezekiel is willing to go, at least in such explicit terms. Later, Levi beholds God on his throne of glory and God speaks
to him. At Gen. Rab. 44.12 we are told no more than that God elevated Abraham above the heavens, showed him the stars below and asked him to attempt to count them (similarly LAB 18.5). What is of special importance here is that we have a conflict that centers around differing attitudes to certain Biblical texts. Visions or descriptions of God are common in the Bible, ranging from the sparsest delineation to highly elaborate ones. Notable among the latter are the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. In these, which portray God on his throne accompanied by all manner of heavenly beings, fire, etc. (Isa. 6; Ezek. 1; Dan. 7), lie the seeds of the Enoch-type vision and of the Merkabah mysticism. On the other hand there are simple assertions like that of Amos (9:1), "I saw the Lord standing by the altar and He said". Or the slightly more elaborate one at I Kings 22:19, "I saw the Lord seated on His throne, with all the host of heaven in attendance." One wonders whether I Kings 19:11ff is a rejection of the elaborate descriptions of God's presence. Straightforward allusions to God on His throne also occur (e.g., Ps. 47:9).

I think it fair to say that, whereas I Enoch took the path of the prophet Ezekiel which was leading toward Merkabah mysticism, the tragedian Ezekiel rejected it in favor of the attitude which de-emphasized the mystical and apocalyptic aspects of the vision of God, which, so to speak, allowed it purely anthropomorphic expression and would not go further, ἰδεῖν γὰρ ὄψιν τὴν ἐμὴν ἀμήχανον as Ezekiel later writes (101).

It is probable that the heavenly ascension theme in Jewish literature has its roots and beginnings in the Biblical account of the revelation on Sinai, whether or not this event is strictly speaking an ascension. For though the text simply tells of Moses' climbing of Mount Sinai and his receiving there of the Law from God, there are enough vague suggestions in the narrative that probably well served later writers in their establishment of this theme. Moses, Aaron and the elders are said to see God and some sort of splendid vision under God's feet (Exod. 24:9). After Moses ascends the mountain, it is covered by a cloud. Six days later God's glory settles on the mountain-top and Moses enters the cloud. The vision of God, the ascent, the entry into the cloud with God's presence are all the seeds of the later heavenly ascension motif. But for Ezekiel this episode (Exod. 24:9-18) is not merely the parent of the genre but the direct impetus
for his own work. Totally different though the substance may be, we can scarcely doubt that in describing an ascent by Moses on a mountain culminating in a confrontation with God Ezekiel was directly influenced by the Biblical episode.¹³)

We possess a number of texts which recount a heavenly ascension by Moses, for instance, *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, *Genesis Rabbati* pp. 136-7 (Albeck), *Ma'yan Hokhmah* (Jellinek 1.58-61), *2 Baruch* 59.3, *3 Enoch*, the Samaritan *Death of Moses*, *Petirat Mosheh* (*Yerushalayim shel Ma'alah*: Jellinek 6. xxii-xxiii). Other sources imply such an ascension, including Philo *QE* 2.44, the title of the work *Assumption of Moses* and perhaps Josephus at *AJ* 3.137.¹⁴) Some treat Moses' ascension at the time of the giving of the Law, others the ascension granted him before his death. What is crucial is that all speak of a real ascension, not a visionary one. None reports his ascension as a dream. Had he wanted, Ezekiel too could have easily represented the ascension as real by simply changing a few words at the beginning and end of Moses' account and having him describe the event as an actual occurrence.

In other words, Ezekiel deliberately chose to portray the "ascension" as an imaginary event. How strongly he felt the importance of this may be illustrated by one fact. As far as I know, nowhere else in ancient Jewish literature is Moses said to have had a significant dream. In the Bible, in Rabbinic literature and in apocryphal texts such dreams are commonplace. Joseph, the patriarchs, Daniel, Nebukhadnezzar, Miriam (*LAB* 9.10) and many others dream. But never Moses. The reason is not hard to find: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision and will speak to him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so. He is faithful in all my house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, openly, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord he will behold" (*Numbers* 12:6-8). In spite of this explicit declaration in the Bible, Ezekiel felt compelled to turn Moses' ascension into a dream. Is this not then a conscious rejection on Ezekiel's part of the legend that Moses actually ascended to heaven, beheld God, perhaps
sat on the heavenly throne, etc.? We know that later on some Rabbis had the same qualms. R. Akiva was unwilling to grant that the divine cloud had descended on and covered Moses, lest it lend a superhuman aura to Moses' being.\(^{15}\) Josephus' account of Moses' death appears to express the same sort of fear with regard to legends of ascension surrounding Moses' death.\(^ {16}\)

There was a midrashic theme that (on his ascension) God revealed to Moses המ לועלו הת למש הת תבנוי הת אוהור (a striking echo of Moses' dream and Raguel's interpretation)\(^ {17}\) or, as Enoch puts it, דרוי עליונים ובר(chr)ותים (48c4) and דנה עליונים וברו`הותים (48d8), or elsewhere כל המ שמעלו ושמשת גלעדי ל.\(^ {18}\) All this revelation and knowledge is now made no more than the substance of a dream. Another midrashic passage appears, like Ezekiel, to be aware of the tradition that Moses received this special revelation from God, but also rejects it. Exodus Rabbah 3.1 says that had Moses not turned his head away God might have taught him המ לועלו הת למש הת שטיית הת (49b) שטיית לחיות. How Ezekiel further incorporates, yet modifies, the traditional material is fascinating. For the other texts distinguish between the mystical knowledge of "above and below" and that of "past and future." Ezekiel, by virtue of the symbolic nature of the dream, can have Moses see (in the dream) what is above and what is below and then have it interpreted temporally, as knowledge of past and future,\(^ {20}\) thus granting Moses the gift of prophecy but denying him knowledge of the divine mysteries of the universe.\(^ {21}\)

One more point in this regard. Commentators routinely understand the dream to portray Moses' presentation before God on His divine throne.\(^ {22}\) Precisely because this is widely assumed, one welcomes Gutman's reservations and indeed his rejection of this view (43-5).\(^ {23}\) He points out that the being on the throne is called פיס (70), a word which indisputably means "man," not "God" (though it is used sometimes of "heroes"). Consequently, Gutman argues that the man should be identified as Enoch who, as Gutman shows, was at times in Jewish tradition portrayed as God's agent who leads Moses to heaven.\(^ {24}\) Well taken as this is, one still has reservations. Most important, had Ezekiel wanted his audience to un-
stand that this figure was Enoch-Metatron, he would have said so— or at least in some way made it clearer than it is. One can rest assured that no audience would have recognized Enoch in this scene without being so informed. Further, when Gutman not merely rejects the possibility that God is meant here, but also refuses to admit the presence of a "divine being" he seems to go too far. Nor need he. For Enoch-Metatron himself is virtually a divine sort of being. The setting of the dream with mountain-top reaching into the heavens, the vision of above and below, the presence of the stars doing obeisance— all this renders it hard to believe that that audience would not have taken this as a divine setting, if not necessarily an epiphany.

In addition, it is common tradition, both in Greek and Jewish texts, that a divine personage appears in human form, especially in dreams and visions. Here in particular one suspects that the significance and force of the dream and its interpretation may depend on the divine nature of the figure on the throne. Thus, on the one hand divine, on the other φῶς. Ezekiel meant this figure to be divine, yet represents him as a man because he was deliberately rejecting the traditions which granted Moses physical contact with God, which allowed God to be seen and described in His "divine" form. Once again Ezekiel takes the bare anthropomorphic route. What Ezekiel describes is simply a φῶς, yet this φῶς is in some sense divine, most probably a surrogate for the Deity Himself.

Mysticism has also been detected in a second scene of the Exagoge, that of the burning bush. At verse 99 God reveals to Moses the divine nature of the speaker, ὁ δὲ ἐκ βάτου σει Ἑσίων ἐκλάμαει λόγος. Kuiper has argued that Ἑσίων λόγος here is the specialized and significant term that is familiar from Philo, namely the notion of a personification or hypostatization of God, an intermediary between God and the world. Wieneke rejected this view, but it has been taken up with a vengeance by recent scholars, most notably by Goodenough in his attempt to establish Ezekiel as a forerunner of Philo. Moses "met the Divine Logos." "The fire in the bush is the Divine Logos shining out upon him." In Goodenough’s footsteps, Meeks goes so far as to use Ezekiel’s account to support his interpretation that Philo’s Moses sees the Logos of God at the bush, believing this confirmed by Ezekiel’s Ἑσίων λόγος.
Probably the single most cogent argument on behalf of the Goodenough view is that of Kuiper's, that the Biblical narrative on which Ezekiel is based reports ἢφη δὲ αὐτῷ ἀγγέλος κυρίου ἐν φλογὶ πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ βάτου (Exod. 3:2). Thus, when Ezekiel writes ὁ δὲ βάτου σοι ἐκλάμπει λόγος it appears that he is merely substituting one designation for another, but each is meant to represent some kind of intermediary between man and God who represents God. Thus, as Goodenough would write, the Divine Logos. But I think this point not so cogent as it appears on first glance. Ezekiel may have wanted to avoid the revelation of an ἀγγέλος because of the potential problem it might have raised for the pagans in the audience and for the difficulty it would have created in the staging, since, as angels are routinely visible in Scripture, he would have felt compelled to represent this being on stage (this is not a problem at verse 159). Further, Ezekiel may have eliminated the angel here because he did not want to become entangled in the apparent contradiction in the Biblical text, for no sooner does the Bible tell us that an angel appeared to Moses from the bush (3:2) than it reports that God Himself spoke to Moses from the bush (3:4). By ignoring the angel Ezekiel avoided getting involved in some such apparent internal contradiction. Further, there are compelling - if not decisive - considerations which suggest that the evidence is entirely too flimsy to justify jumping to so serious and significant a conclusion as Goodenough's.

In the first place, we must remember that there is no reason to believe that the phrase θεῖος λόγος (or λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) existed with the Philonic sense some 100 years or more before Philo. The case for such a conclusion rests solely on this sentence in Ezekiel.31) On the other hand, the phrase θεῖος λόγος readily lends itself to other meanings. Even in Philo it occurs with other senses. Thus, he writes that the road which is the true philosophy is called θεοῦ δῆμα καὶ λόγος (Post. Cain. 102); also, that when Genesis 26:5 describes Abraham as heeding the instructions of God this is θεῖος λόγος enjoining us what to do and what not to do (Migr. Abr. 130). At Somn. 1.190 ὁ θεῖος λόγος seems virtually to mean
"the text of scripture." Thus, not even for Philo himself does θείος λόγος have a solitary and restricted meaning. Moreover, while θείος λόγος does not occur in either the Septuagint or the New Testament, the phrase λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ occasionally is found. In the latter it is the revelation or the message of God, as at John 10:35. The Septuagint uses λόγος θεοῦ interchangeably with λόγος κυρίου, φωνή κυρίου and especially ρήμα κυρίου as translation of "the word ( λόγος) of God." The fact is that λόγος is used in classical Greek of "divine utterance." In post-Biblical Hebrew texts דאָו and דיוֹנְיָה become key words for God's prophecy and revelation and have nought to do with Stoic, Neoplatonic or Philonic Logos, no more than do the terms אדר and דוה of God. When Targum Neofiti translates Exod. 3:4 with אָדֹו לְיָה this is the routine Targumic paraphrase-translation for "God." There is then nothing unnatural in assuming that Ezekiel's θείος λόγος means plainly and directly "the word of God."

Indeed, Philo's own narrative of the bush-scene does not refer to any "Philonic" θείος λόγος, though it is plausible that such may be alluded to. He describes the appearance of a μορφή τίς... περικαλλεστάτη in the midst of the flame, a θεο-ειδέστατον ἁγάλμα and observes that one might suppose this to have been εἰκών τοῦ δυντός (Moses 1.66). He is content to leave it as an ἅγγελος. Since, however, he does refer to the presence as εἰκών τοῦ δυντός we must note that at Fuga 100 he states that λόγος θείος is εἰκών υπάρχων θεοῦ (cf. too Spec. Leg. 1.81). So Philo may indeed have held in mind the possibility that the divine being who appeared in the bush was the θείος λόγος, though he does not explicitly say so. Yet, even this is not certain for Philo and much less so for Ezekiel. More than once Philo states or implies that the θείος λόγος is not susceptible of material representation or perception. Thus, he explains (Fuga 100) that the θείος λόγος is not portrayed in the sanctuary (εἰς ὅρατην οὐκ ἔλθεν ἔδαυ) because it is not similar to sense-objects. At Quis Heres 119 the θείος λόγος is said to be ἄδορατος. This would seem hard to reconcile with a μορφή τίς... περικαλλεστάτη... ἁγάλμα. But the difficulty
of such a view is compounded in Ezekiel, for while Philo ignores the Biblical element here of Moses’ looking upon God, Ezekiel emphasizes it to a point far beyond the text of the scriptural narrative, an emphasis that is built around contrast:

ο δ’ έκ βατον σοι θείος έκλάμπει λόγος. Θάρσεσον, ο παί, καί λόγων ἁκού’ ἐμών· ἔδειν γάρ δψιν τὴν ἐμὴν ἀμήχανον θυντόν γεγότα, τῶν λόγων δ’ έξεστί σοι ἐμὼν ἁκούειν, τῶν ἐκατ’ ἐλήλυθα. (99-103)

First, he makes it crystal-clear that it is God and no surrogate, no intermediary, who is speaking here. Then he stresses that Moses may only hear words, but may not see. Moses is permitted audition, but not sight. That is to say, whatever we take ἐκλάμπει λόγος to signify, it is not productive of an act of sight – nothing divine is being seen here. Moses is granted only hearing. What then should we make of ἐκλάμπει? For Goodenough and those who share his opinion, the notion of a "shining forth" suits their image of a Philonic mysticism here.38) Wieneke’s brief remarks and parallels on this point may in themselves suffice to alleviate all doubts and remove all questions. He accurately observes that (ἐκ)λάμπω is used in standard Greek writers of sound as well as of sight, and notes passages in Sophocles, Polybius and the following phrase in Aeschylus (ἈV 21), φωνήν... δψεί.39) Thus, ἐκλάμπει λόγος in the sense, "the voice-speech-word rings out" is in no way bizarre or defective Greek. ἐκλάμπει λόγος is then a more vivid and graphic version of what Josephus expresses by φωνήν τοῦ πυρός ἀφέντος (ἈJ 2.267).40) The verb ἐκλάμπει, as Gutman has noted (50), is also suitable because of the context of the burning bush.41) It is worth adding that this scene is filled with λόγος / λέγειν words referring to speech (100, 102, 104, 109, 113, 114, 117, 120).

More remains to be said. As far as I know, there is no example (not even in Philo) of a -λάμπω verb coupled with the Divine Logos. In a passage which seems to be referring to the episode of the burning bush Philo writes (Migr. Abr. 76):
which may suggest that God sent forth in a flash the λόγοι which he spoke to Moses at the bush, a view consonant with Philo's sense of the words of God as concrete and physical manifestations. Thus, even though the sense would be peculiar to Philo and his philosophy, we might have to say that even for him the words of God, but not the Divine Logos, would flash out to Moses. If however one assumes, on the basis of Her. 203-5 (cf. Sirach 24:4), that the guide in the cloud-pillar (Moses 1.166) is indeed the Logos, then ἐκλάμπουσα φέγγος suggests a Logos at once invisible yet capable of radiating light.

What is of particular interest in the Exagoge passage is the association of a verb of primarily visual significance with the voice or speech of God in an event intimately tied to the Exodus. For this connection or motif is found both in Philo and in Rabbinic tradition. Its foundation, to be sure, is the Bible itself. We read that at the revelation at Sinai וְלֵךְ וְיָדֵי ה' קרִית (Exod. 20:18). The Septuagint translates, ἐφορά τὴν φωνὴν. This peculiarity of expression is seized upon by both the Rabbis and Philo for significant explication. One Midrash reads:

In more sophisticated fashion Philo observes on three occasions the import of this phrase, e.g., at Moses 2.213: ἐξέσπεισεν... ὁ θεὸς διὰ φωνῆς - τὸ παραδοξότατον - ὁρατῆς ή... ὀφθαλμοὺς ὄτων ἐπηγείρε μᾶλλον. It seems not unreasonable to assume that the oddity of expression in the Biblical text produced a widespread and well known interpretation along the lines indicated in Philo and the Midrash which would have been familiar to the Jewish educated. If so, we can argue that Ezekiel made deliberate use of an acceptable, if a bit unusual, Greek idiom because he saw that it corresponded to traditional Jewish exegesis.

In sum, one cannot finally exclude the possibility that Ezekiel may be describing a kind of Philonic invisible Logos that radiates light. But on balance it seems a quite
unnecessary hypothesis and one feels justified in rejecting this view. 46) In the Bible God calls out to Moses, declaring that the spot is holy and announcing Himself as the God of the patriarchs. At which point Moses turns away so as not to look at God (Exod. 3:5-6). Ezekiel has much elaborated this simple account: God tells Moses to heed his words, for he may not see God, but only hear his speech (100-103). 47) One senses here Ezekiel addressing his pagan audience who might have wondered why the divinity does not step forward in full splendour and speak, as sometimes happens in Greek drama. To be sure, there are places in Greek drama where the gods are described as unseen, e.g., Athena at Soph. Ajax 14ff is ἀποστός, but this simply means that Odysseus at the moment cannot see her. 48) Ion is fearful of seeing the goddess at what is evidently (in his mind) an improper time, but in fact she does appear (Ion 1549-52). Perhaps most striking is Hippolytus 84-6 where Hippolytus declares:

μόνος γάρ ἢστι τοῦτ’ ἐμοί γέρας βροτῶν·
σοὶ καὶ Ξύνειμι καὶ λόγος ἀμείβομαι,
κλών μὲν αὐθήν, δίμα δ’ οὐχ ὀρών τὸ σῶν.

Whatever this means, it surely does not carry with it a notion of the invisibility of deity; witness the appearance of Aphrodite in the prologue. This is not, however, to deny that some sort of concept of invisibility of deity was held by certain sophisticated or mystically oriented Greeks. Consider the Orphic fragment cited earlier (Kern no. 245) and perhaps the analogy used by Socrates at Xen. Mem. 4.3.13-14. Ezekiel has introduced here Scriptural material not found in the immediately relevant Biblical episode. He is relying on Exod. 33:18ff where Moses asks to see God's glory and the latter responds, ὦ δυνηθή λέειν μου τὸ πρόσωπον· ὦ γάρ μὴ ἵνα ἀνθρώπως τὸ πρόσωπόν μου καὶ ἠθέτω. This clearly corresponds to verses 101-2 of the Exagoge. We should also observe, though I am unsure as to what, if any, inferences ought to be made, that Philo, in an interesting allegorical interpretation of the bush-scene at Fuga 161ff, jumps directly from Moses' desire to approach the bush and God's rejection of this possibility to the answer that God gives Moses in the
passage at Exod. 33, the precise line of development that we meet in Ezekiel. We must become briefly involved here in the question of the "seeability" of God in Jewish tradition. It is well known that ultimately the Jewish view of an unseeable and inimitable God became familiar - indeed notorious - to non-Jews. Tacitus' scorn on this count is a prime example (Hist. 5). But to trace the development - if development there be - of this concept is difficult. The Bible itself is filled with passages that render the question vexed: From a passage like that in Exod. 33, which - let it be noted - does not say that God is unseeable but that no man can see him and live, to numerous passages wherein in one degree or another it seems that someone does in fact see God. For instance, in the commission episode at Isa. 6:1ff the prophet says that he has seen God. At Exod. 24:10 a group of Israelites is said to see God.

In other places the non-perceptibility of God seems impaired or logically impossible due to the graphic and physical description of Him, e.g., Isa. 29:2ff, 63:1ff, Ps. 18:9ff. Indeed, this is a tendency that does not entirely disappear. It is found occasionally in Midrashic literature, as in the tradition that Isaac, on the altar and about to be sacrificed, looked up and saw God.49) But when Goodenough asserts that the invisibility of God is a concept of the New Testament, but not of "normative Judaism" before that time, he is on rather shaky ground.50) It is true, as Goodenough states, that the notion that a direct vision of God is fatal is not the same thing as God's being ἀδόρατος (as at Col. 1:15, I Tim. 1:17, Heb. 11:27), but then neither is ἀδόρατος inexorably the equivalent of "invisible."

"Unseen" and "invisible" are not necessarily one and the same. When Josephus calls the sanctuary (BJ 1.152) and a town (BJ 3.160) ἀδόρατος, he only means that (up to a particular moment) each had not been seen. In Aristobulos' Jewish-Orphic text (Kern no. 247) God is not seen but it is hard to determine whether this is because he cannot be or simply is not. It is interesting to note that the original Orphic text declares that God is wrapped in a cloud and so not seen, while the Jewish version says that man is in a cloud and so does not see Him. But the section
concludes by saying that no man could see God εἶ μὴ μουνογενής τις ἀπορρωξ φύλου ἀνωθέν Χαλδαίων, which in fact seems a reference to Abraham (Moses?). 51)

When the Septuagint revises the Hebrew original so as to remove a direct vision of God (as at Exod. 24:10), it is not possible to ascertain whether this was done to avoid a vision of God without ensuing death or rather to avoid a vision of God as being impossible. When pseudepigraphic works occasionally make reference to the "unseen God", we are too often unable to determine exactly what this means in a given text, when the text dates from and what chance there is of Christian interpolation. Thus, Test. Abr. A 16 mentions ὁ ἀόρατος πατήρ and ὁ ἀόρατος θεός and Or. Stb. 3.9ff calls God ἀόρατος ὑπώμενος αὐτός ἄπαντα... τίς γὰρ ἡμιτόθες ἑών κατίδεειν δύναται θεόν ὄσσοις, (note too the very similar text at fg. 1.8ff). The same phrase occurs in Rabbinic writings; הַשָּׁמֶר וּלְאֵת הַמָּטָּר. 52) On the other hand, Test. Zeb. 9.8 records that at the end of time δικασθε αὐτὸν [i.e. God] ἐν Ἰερουσαλήμ.

The combination of the conceptual ambiguity of these texts and the virtual absence of Hebrew and Aramaic Rabbinic texts which can unquestionably be dated to the pre-Christian era leads us inevitably to Philo who is famous for his repeated use of a Hebrew etymology which takes יהוז to mean "seeing God", whether based on יהзв see 53) or on something else. 54) Israel is, as Philo often puts it, the people that sees God. 55) Now for Philo, as he makes abundantly clear, Israel's seeing God has nothing to do with material, visual perception, but is rather a kind of intellectual and spiritual apprehension of God. 56) God is not such that he can be visually, physically comprehended. From the brief lines in Ezekiel, it seems that he may represent fundamentally the same opinion as Philo, if not on so subtle and sophisticated a level, that God is not susceptible of visual cognition. 57) It is δυμηχανον. This is the very term that Philo uses on two occasions when treating the idea of "seeing God," once indeed in the context of the revelation at the burning bush: ἐπιδείκνυμένου εαυτοῦ τοις γλυκερένων ἵθειν, οὐχ οἷς ἔστιν - δυμηχανον γάρ, ἐπεὶ καὶ μονοθής ἀπέστρεψε τὸ πρόσωπον· εὐλαβεῖτο
It may then be that this passage in the *Exagoge* represents our earliest extant evidence for the Jewish doctrine of the "invisibility" of God. 58)

**APPENDIX: MOSES' THRONE**

In an interesting article Holladay has recently suggested that the seemingly disconnected facets of the dream and interpretation, namely the royal character of the throne as against the prophetic aspect can be reconciled by realizing that the throne is not the kingly throne, but the mantic one. 59) For this reason the total emphasis of dream and interpretation is on the future role of Moses as seer. Ezekiel deliberately draws Moses in the guise of Apollo so that "Moses replaces Apollo as the spokesman for God; accordingly, the whole of mankind is to seek the divine will not from the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, but from the law of God given to Moses at Sinai." (452) Attractive as this is, it is not likely and the arguments brought in its support are sometimes flawed. Holladay writes, "The dominant image of Raguel's interpretation (lines 20-26) is Moses the prophet" (448). This is false. Only two lines here are relevant, 89 and 86, the former of which clearly speaks of the mantic art, while the latter has nothing to do with it.

Holladay offers fuzzy objections, arguing from the absence of βασι- λεύειν terminology and the "somewhat surprising formulation καὶ αὐτὸς βραβεύσεις καὶ καθηγήσῃ βροτῶν;" (449). But nothing is surprising here. Both βραβεύω and καθηγέω are perfectly apt terms for the leader (ruler) of a people. Βραβεύς can be a military leader (as at Aesch. *Persae* 302) or a "judge, arbitrator" or "one who sees that rules, resolutions and verdicts are carried out," 60) a routine function in antiquity of rulers. 61) In the *Exagoge* itself Raguel is described explicitly as ruler and judge (62-4). Καθηγέω too is a perfectly suitable word for a ruler, but may have particular relevance to Moses who will "lead" his people out of Egypt. Thus, Raguel's interpretation of the dream is equally divided between Moses the leader and Moses the seer. Further, Holladay skirts the difficulty involved in μέγαν τιν' ἔξαναστησεις θρόνον. While it may be possible for a man to set up his own royal power (throne), it seems much less likely for someone to
set up his own mantic status. As Holladay himself notes, it is Zeus who sets Apollo on his mantic throne.

Even more problematic is the identification Holladay makes between the Apolline mantic throne and the μέγας θὸνος here. First, there is no "mantic throne," but rather the mere tripod upon which the Pythia sat. θὸνος in a mantic context and connected to Apollo would readily be understood as the mantic tripod, but without the context it is doubtful whether it could be so recognized. Further, how the Apolline tripod could be described as a μέγας <θὸνος> seems hard to fathom. In general, the Greeks would not have associated a throne with Apollo, but with Zeus. This is not to deny that Apollo could be given a throne (cf. Paus. 2.18.9f.), but since Holladay's argument is based on the spectator's act of association, we must admit that the audience would have been quite unlikely to see the throne as a reflection of Apollo and the mantic art.

Of equal difficulty for Holladay's thesis is the transmission of crown (βασιλικόν, no less) and sceptre in Moses' dream. This suits a king much more readily than a seer and is what Thucydides calls Ἡ τοῦ σκίτατον παράδει» (1.9). Why then is Raguel's interpretation so skimpy on the "royal" side and perhaps more heavily weighted in the mantic area, when the opposite seems true in the dream itself? The answer is patent. The royal aspect of the dream is straightforward and simple and requires no elaborate interpretation. The mantic aspect is not so clearcut and demands more detailed attention.

Two final points on the broad implications that Holladay sees here. First, the identification of Moses with Apollo (or the replacement of the latter by the former). Ezekiel would have had no inclination to make such an identification nor would he have felt it useful or suitable vis-à-vis his pagan audience. Moses is a human being and no more. This is true both in the Bible and in the Ἠμάργας. Apollo is, of course, a god. Thus, besides Ezekiel's own feelings on the matter, his audience would probably have neither understood nor appreciated such an "identification."

Finally, when Holladay speaks of Ezekiel's replacing the Delphic pronouncements with the law given at Sinai, let us remember that all evidence suggests that the ἦμαργα did not include the revelation at Sinai nor could he have expected the pagan audience to make a mental leap from the mere mention of Sinai (if such there even is, which is doubtful) to the giving of the law at Sinai without some explicit indication of such in the play. Let us also remember that in the scene of the burning bush
Ezekiel leaves out God's prophecy that the Israelites on leaving Egypt would come to that place to worship (Exod. 3:12). It is true, as Holladay has well noted, that the language of Moses' seerhood at 89 δψει τά τ' ὀντα τά τε πρό τού τά δ' ὀπτερον is that of the Greek mantic, but this is merely one example of how freely Ezekiel floats between the Jewish and Greek traditions, for while the idiom is indeed Greek, the conception involved is, as illustrated above, solidly in the Jewish tradition.

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NOTES


1) E. R. Goodenough, By Light Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism (New Haven 1935) 290. In all this he is elaborating the briefer exposition of L. Cerfau who speaks of Moses' initiation into the astral mysteries and his participation in the power and knowledge of God. The dream, in Cerfau's view, is nothing but the theophany of the burning bush in a different guise. See Recueil Lucien Cerfau vol. 1 (Gembloux 1954) 85-88 (originally published at Museon 37 (1924) 54-8). Even earlier F. Momigliano, Nuova Rassegna 1 (1893) 313 had seen the influence of "filosofia cabalistica" here. The Cerfau-Goodenough view has followers. J. A. Sanders, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan IV (Oxford 1965) 62, writes of the scene in the Ezagoge, "the Orphic god appears to Moses in a dream." This is repeated uncritically from Sanders by R. Meyer in Josephus-Studien, ed. O. Betz (Göttingen 1974) 296. A.-M. Denis, Introduction aux Pseudopigraphes Grecs d'Ancien Testament (Leiden 1970) 274 has Moses receiving "la science même de Dieu, principalement celle des astres," a sort of initiation into the astral liturgy. It is hard to see how one can get this, either directly or indirectly, from Ezekiel's text. Astral and mystical elements are much more readily seen in Joseph and Aseanath. See H. C. Kee, SBL 1976 Seminar Papers (Missoula 1976) 184-6. For Philo's account of Moses' initiation into the great mysteries, see LA 3.100ff. It bears little or no similarity to the description in Ezekiel.

2) See Kern fragments 245 and 247.

3) No more than Scipio's wonderful vision of the stars and cosmos makes him master of the universe (Cic. Rep. 6.16-17). It is worth contrasting the pale and bare vision of Moses with the grand and elaborate
one of Scipio.


5) Qumran texts are evidence that much of I Enoch, including ascents to heaven, goes back to the third century B.C. See J. T. Milik, Books of Enoch (Oxford 1976) and M. E. Stone, CBQ 40 (1978) 479-92.


8) Midrash Ketappah ba'atse hay'ar in S.A. Wertheimer, Batei Midrashot (Jerusalem 1968) 1.277, sect. 2.

9) Cf. 2 Enoch 20.3ff. Apoc. Abr. 18ff has some striking similarities, including the mountain, throne, panorama of great expanses, the stars, the vision of past and future. But for all the similarities in points of detail, the complexity and elaborateness of the lengthy description in Apoc. Abr. make it quite distinct from Ezekiel's dream.

10) W. A. Meeks, The Prophet-King (Leiden 1967 = NT Supp. v. 14) notices parallels to the dream's content in Daniel, Test. Levi and 2 Enoch (148) but does not remark the even more significant differences (not to mention the differences between the Enoch, Daniel and Test. Levi passages themselves).

11) If Ezekiel's account of Moses' dream is consciously anti-apocalyptic, this would lend support to a date from the second half of the second century B.C. since it was only the middle of that century that saw the beginning of the flowering of apocalyptic literature.

12) Compare how Philo exploits this scene for his own mystical purposes (Moses 1.158-9; Post 14).

13) The "non-mystical" character of Ezekiel's description may be appreciated by contrasting it to Philo's observation that Moses' ascent at Exod. 24 is his divinization (QE 2.40).

14) See too Targ. Jerus. ad Deut. 30:12; Targ. Jon. ad Deut. 34:5; Targum ad Ps. 68:19, Deut. Rab. 11:4; Koh. Rab. 9:2; Yalkut ad Koh. 9:11 (sect. 989); Mekhilta Bahodesh 4 (ad 19:20), p. 217, seems to be polemic against Moses' ascension. Meeks (supra n. 10) 301 suggests that John 3:13 also is. On Targ. Jon. ad Deut. 34:5 see Meeks 191-2. See 192-5 for further examples in Rabbinic literature of Moses' ascension and coronation; also pp. 205-9.


16) Ad 4.326. Note especially γέγραφε δ' αυτόν ἐν ταῖς ἱεραίς βίβλιοις τεσσενῶτα, δείσας μή δι' ὑπερβολήν της περὶ αὐτόν ἀστικής πρὸς τὸ δετον αὐτόν ἀναχωρήσαι τολμήσωσιν εἰπεῖν.


18) Siphre Zuta (ad Numbers 12:6).
19) I do not know whether Wisdom 7:18 is in any way related to this theme.

20) M. Gaster, The Asatir (London 1927) 303 remarks that in the Samaritan story of the death of Moses (Ibid. 319) the description of Moses lifted up and beholding "the whole world, as it were, under his feet, is strongly reminiscent of the wonderful vision of the Hellenist poet Ezekiel." In truth, it is not and may shed more light by its contrast to Ezekiel. I note with puzzlement that J. D. Purvis (in Studies in the Testament of Moses, ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr (Cambridge Mass. 1973) 98 n. 10) makes the same observation as Gaster when speaking of the episode in Memar Margah. But as he himself notes, indeed with reference to Gaster's edition of the "Death of Moses", the latter is basically an abridgement of Memar Margah 5.2-3. Yet, he gives no indication he is merely repeating Gaster's old view.

21) One might object that since in the Exagoge Moses is at this point of the play not yet God's prophet, there could not be a direct encounter between him and God, certainly not a genuine ascension with the revelation of the mysteries of the universe. But Ezekiel could have deferred the ascension and revelation till later in the play and thereby given Moses a real ascension, while presenting here a mere omen to forecast Moses' later role as king and seer. That he did not do so but rather cast it all as a dream suggests he had an ulterior motive.

22) Thus, B. Snell, Szenen aus griechischen Dramen (Berlin 1971) 179 writes, "ein edler Mann (d.h. Gott)." Meeks (supra n. 10) 148, "Can be no other than God himself."


24) But Gutman's association of Enoch with Mount Sinai on the basis of Jub. 4:25-6 is not admissible.

25) This goes back to the three "men" (angels) who appear to Abraham in Genesis 18. The following passages in pseudepigraphic texts refer to divine agents as men, 2 Enoch 1, Joseph and Asenath 14.4ff, Apoc. Abr. 10.

26) K. Kuiper, Mnemosyne n.s. 28 (1900) 251 and at much greater length RSA 8 (1904) 79-87.

27) Cf. D. A. Schlatter, Geschichte Israels von Alexander dem Grossen bis Hadrian (Stuttgart 1925) 215, who argued that Ezekiel's Θεῖος Λόγος was a reflection of popular Stoic beliefs.

28) G. B. Girardi, Di un Drama Greco-Giudaico nell'Età Alessandrina (Venice 1902) 11 had already argued against the view that the phrase proved that Ezekiel was either Christian or from the Christian era. He concluded that Θεῖος here meant "speech."

29) Supra n. 1, 290f.

30) Supra n. 10, 156f.

31) There is no reason to believe that Θεῖος Λόγος in the Orphic text 245K and in its Aristobulean version 247K means anything other than "the word of God." At any rate, the difficulties in dating these texts and sorting out the layers of interpolation are enormous. For a thorough discussion of these problems, see N. Walter, Der Thoraausleger Aristobulos (Berlin 1964) 202-261. Goodenough's treatment of these texts in By Light Light totally ignores all the critical questions of dating, strata of interpolation, etc. Walter seems not to know either Goodenough's
discussion or Gutman's lengthy study of Aristobulos in his *Beginnings* vol. I (Jerusalem 1958) 186-220. The text at Eus. PE 667a-668b may provide evidence that Aristobulos identified Wisdom/Light with the Logos, but it is not sufficiently clear.


33) E.g., Pindar *P. 4.59*, Plato Phaedr. 275b.


35) The matter is of course further complicated by the question of the audience for whom Philo intended this work.

36) In the phrase εἰς δὲ λόγον θείον βλέψας at Orph. 245 Kern εἰς... βλέψας is to be taken, I imagine, in the sense "attend to" have regard for." λόγος θείος presumably means simply "word of God."

37) One must however remember that Philo was capable of describing the Logos in material terms. Thus, it has spatial extension at Plant. 9. At Chil. 30 λόγος is hot and fiery (cf. νοῦς at Fuga 134). Thus, we should be wary of demanding from Philo strict consistency of language here.

38) He might perhaps have cited *Quis Heres* 264, ὦς το θείον ἐπιλάμψει. But cf. TUR, adesp. fg. 500, Δίκας δ' ἔξελαμψε θείον φῶς.

39) Cf. too Aeschylus' κυτύπων δέσορκα (Sept. 103). On the use of such sound/sight "mixed metaphors" in Greek poetry, see W. B. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor* (Oxford 1936) 47-59.


42) LAB 37.3, speaking of the bush episode, writes: veritas illuminabat Moysen per senticem.

43) Mekhila deRashbi, p. 154 (Epstein).

44) See too Decal. 46-7, Migr. Abr. 47.

45) Gutman's association (49-50) of Ezekiel's θείος λόγος with the hypostasized Wisdom (Sophia) of Wisdom of Solomon seems to lack all foundation. The "parallels" that he brings with reference to the Logos, the plague and the conflict between Jewish and Egyptian wisdom simply have nothing to do with the bush-scene in the Exagoge. Nor do they seem to be relevant to anything else in the play.

46) It is instructive to observe that A. F. Dähne, *Geschichtliche Darstellung der Jüdisch-alexandrinischen Religions-Philosophie* vol. 2 (Halle 1834), has a brief discussion of Ezekiel's religious thought (200, n. 157) which clearly indicates that it never occurred to him - nor would he have tolerated the view - that Ezekiel was here delving into the Philonic mysteries of the Logos.

47) For auditory divine revelations one may compare Apoc. Abr. chapters 8 and 9.


49) Deut. Rabbah 11.3; Pirqé de Rabbi Eliezer 32; cf. Midrash Hagadol ad Gen. 35:9.

51) Is this related to the statement at Philo Quis Heres 78?


53) The only Rabbinic text I know that offers such an etymology is Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah ch. 27, pp. 138-9 (Friedmann).


55) E.g., Leg. All. 3.38, 172, 186; Legat. Gai. 4.

56) See e.g., Conf. Ling. 92; Mut. Nom. 2ff; Praem. et Poen. 44; QE 2.37. Cf. Aristobulos loc. cit. 11ff.

57) Though one wonders how far to press θυητόν γεγωντα as a qualification of this.

58) See too J. Danielou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture (London 1973) 325-26 who treats άδόρατος of God in Jewish and Christian texts, within the context of his discussion of the significant influence of Hellenistic Judaism on the development of the theology of God's transcendence. It is of course possible that no general theological implications should be drawn from this text and that Ezekiel is merely rationalizing his unwillingness to present God on stage.


60) D. L. Page ad Euripides Medea 274.


62) Holladay (448, bottom) seems aware of the difficulty but somehow completely skirts it.

63) E.g., Iliad 1.70; Verg. Georg. 4.392-3. Note the interesting adaptation of the motif to an Epicurean context by Metrodorus (fg. 37 Koerte) and to a Christian context by Clement (Strom. 6.61.2).