It is a distinct pleasure for me to participate in this Festschrift for John Turner. I have known John since 1966 when I joined the Religion faculty at Duke University. John was a doctoral student then, working under the direction of the department’s Coptologist, Orval Wintermute. In the Spring of 1968 James M. Robinson, Director of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at the Claremont Graduate School, came to Duke. He was busy recruiting young scholars for a new project based at Claremont, “The Coptic Gnostic Library,” involving the study and eventual publication of the Coptic codices discovered near Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt in late 1945. Robinson had obtained photographs of the manuscripts from UNESCO in Paris, and these photos became the starting point for our work on the Coptic texts that constituted the “Nag Hammadi Library.” John, Orval Wintermute, and I were recruited to join the project.

John and I came to Claremont in the summer of 1968 and began our work together with others, transcribing the texts that were assigned to us. John had moved to Claremont and had been hired by the Graduate School as a Research Associate, and eventually became a Visiting Assistant Professor. I began my work as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1969, and spent the entire summer working with our team in Claremont. Over the years, John and I spent a lot of time together, in Claremont and eventually in the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo, where the Nag Hammadi manuscripts were housed.

John has been involved in the publication of a number of Nag Hammadi tractates, both in the “Coptic Gnostic Library” series published by Brill and in the “Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi” series published by Laval University in Québec. I think it is fair to say that the definitive work on at least one of these, *Allogenès* (NHC XI,3), has been done by John Turner. He

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is now also well-known as the author of a magisterial treatment of Sethian (“Classic”) Gnosticism.\footnote{Turner 2001.}

In 2007, another Coptic codex was published, the Codex Tchacos, and that manuscript contains fragments of another tractate featuring as recipient of heavenly revelations a figure called Allogen. The title of that tractate is lost, but the editors have given it a title, “A Book of Allogen.”\footnote{Kasser et al. 2007. See also Brankaer and Bethge 2007.}

In what follows I shall treat briefly the content of \textit{Allogen} (NHC XI,3) and the \textit{Book of Allogen} (CT,4), and then offer some comments on how these two tractates relate to one another. I shall then situate the \textit{Book of Allogen} in the context and history of Sethian Gnosticism.

1. \textit{Allogen} (NHC XI,3)

\textit{Allogen} is an apocalypse featuring heavenly revelations given to the main character, Allogen, by heavenly revealers. Allogen can be identified as Seth, son of Adam, come down to earth from his heavenly home. The name Allogen means “another race” or “stranger,” and is based on what is said about Seth in Genesis 4:25, “another seed” (ἕτερον σπέρμα). The revealer in the first part of the tractate is called Youel. The name “Youel” would appear to be based on the divine name Yao: “Yao is God (El).” But Youel here is a feminine figure. Allogen hands down the revelations he has received to his son Messos (from Greek μέσος, “middle”). Messos is thus the mediator of the revelations given to Allogen. Youel is the revealer only in the first part of the tractate; in the second part the revelations are given to Allogen by three heavenly beings called Salamex, Semen, and Arme.

The first part of the tractate consists of five revelations given to Allogen by Youel. The first revelation features the divine aeon Barbelo and the supreme being called “the Triple-Powered Invisible Spirit.” In the second revelation, Allogen is told that he has a great power within him, intellect, which enables him to receive revelations about the divine world. The third, fourth, and fifth revelations feature additional information about the Triple-Powered One and the aeon of Barbelo. Youel then departs from Allogen, and he deliberates on what he has learned for a hundred years.

A hundred years later, Allogen experiences a vision and is then caught up through the various levels of the heavenly world culminating in a revelation featuring the Unknowable One. At the end of the tractate Allogen