THE "HOLY LAND" IN PSEUDO-PHILO, 4 EZRA, AND 2 BARUCH

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The expression the "holy land" appears only once in the Hebrew Bible: "The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem" (Zech 2:12). It also occurs in the Greek text of 2 Maccabees in the first "cover letter" to that work: "Jason and his company revolted from the holy land and the kingdom" (1:7).

One of the many features that link together Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities (Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum = LAB), 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch are their explicit references to the "holy land" (see LAB 19:10; 4 Ezra 13:48; 2 Bar 63:10). In examining the theme in each of the three works this paper will explore how the motif of the "holy land" functions and how each work treats Jerusalem and Mount Zion in relation to the holy land. The works are treated in the order in which I think that they were composed. Finally it will consider briefly what the developments of this theme might tell us about their historical setting and relations to one another.

I have known Emanuel Tov since the late 1960's when we were graduate students at Harvard. I worked closely with Emanuel in editing Qumran wisdom texts for several years during the 1990's (DJD XXXIV). The topic of this paper touches on Emanuel's longstanding interests in the figure of Baruch and in the genre of "biblical paraphrase" or "rewritten Bible," as well as his love for the land of Israel where he has lived for most of his adult life.

PSEUDO-PHILO'S BIBLICAL ANTIQUITIES

Also known by its Latin title Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (= LAB), this book is a selective retelling of the biblical narrative from Adam to

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David. It interweaves biblical incidents and imaginative expansions, and so is often classified as "rewritten Bible." It now exists in eighteen complete and three fragmentary Latin manuscripts. But it was composed in Hebrew and then translated into Greek before reaching its Latin version. A Palestinian origin in the first century C.E. is very likely. Whether it was composed before or after 70 C.E. remains a matter of dispute among scholars.

The predominant theme of LAB has been summarized by Howard Jacobson in this way: "No matter how much the Jewish people suffer, no matter how bleak the outlook appears, God will never completely abandon His people and in the end salvation and triumph will be the lot of the Jews." In this framework the disasters that Israel experiences are just punishments for the people's sins. But, Jacobson continues, "when the Jews cease sinning grievously and devote themselves faithfully to God and His Law—which is within their power and will at some point happen—salvation will come."

The only explicit reference to the "holy land" (terra sancta) in LAB occurs in the context of God's showing the promised land to Moses (see Deut 34:1, 4). Here God points out "the place in the firmament from which only the holy land drinks" (19:10). There are, however, many references to the "land" in the work, and these are best viewed with reference to the predominant theme as enunciated by Jacobson.

The first important references appear in LAB 7:4 as part of the Tower of Babel episode in which God promises to bring Abraham "into the land upon which my eye has looked from of old." God goes on to observe that the holy land had alone escaped the destruction wrought by the waters of the flood in the days of Noah: "For neither did the springs of my wrath burst forth in it, nor did my water of destruction descend on it."

Several mentions of the holy land in LAB are associated with Israel's entry into the promised land. At the exodus when the people find themselves trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian armies, they wonder whether they will ever reach the land promised

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