

# THE FALL OF SATAN IN THE THOUGHT OF ST. EPHREM AND JOHN MILTON

GARY A. ANDERSON

HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL  
CAMBRIDGE, MA  
USA

## ABSTRACT

*In the Life of Adam and Eve, Satan “the first-born” refused to venerate Adam, the “latter-born.” Later writers had difficulty with the tale because it granted Adam honors that were proper to Christ (Philippians 2:10, “at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend.”) The tale of Satan’s fall was then altered to reflect this Christological sensibility. Milton created a story of Christ’s elevation prior to the creation of man. Ephrem, on the other hand, moved the story to Holy Saturday. In Hades, Death acknowledged Christ as the true first-born whereas Satan rejected any such acclamation.*

- [1] For some time I have pondered the problem of Satan’s fall in early Jewish and Christian sources. My point of origin has been the justly famous account found in the *Life of Adam and Eve* (hereafter: *Life*).<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See G. Anderson, “The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan,” *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 6 (1997): 105–34.

I say justly famous because the *Life* itself existed in six versions-Greek, Latin, Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic, and Coptic (now extant only in fragments)-yet the tradition that the *Life* drew on is present in numerous other documents from Late Antiquity.<sup>2</sup> And one should mention its surprising prominence in Islam-the story was told and retold some seven times in the Koran and was subsequently subject to further elaboration among Muslim exegetes and storytellers.<sup>3</sup> My purpose in this essay is to carry forward work I have already done on this text to the figures of St. Ephrem and John Milton. Why Milton? Because the narrative problems faced in a work like *Paradise Lost* are not so dissimilar from those faced by Ephrem in his own Christian poetry. Indeed, over the course of my own research, I only came to understand the way the tradition functioned in Ephrem once I had a grasp on how Milton used it. As we shall see, though both writers have very different points of origin, they both are heir to a common Christian tradition and their deployment of this theme from the *Life*-though different in their own ways-share a single theological vision.

---

<sup>2</sup> For a review of the critical issues and literature dealing with this complex document, see the recent work of M. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) and M. de Jonge and J. Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997). For a synoptic edition of the work with the versions printed in parallel columns, see G. Anderson and M. Stone, *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve, Second Revised Edition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> The story can be found in the following Surahs of the Koran: 2:31-9, 7:11-8, 15:31-48, 17:61-5, 18:50, 20:116-20, 38:71-85. For a review of the issues in Islamic studies, see P. Awn, *Satan's Tragedy of Redemption: Iblis in Sufi Psychology* (Leiden: Brill, 1983).

## 1. SATAN'S FALL IN THE *LIFE OF ADAM AND EVE*

[2] Let me begin with the text as we find it in the *Life of Adam and Eve*.<sup>4</sup> It occurs somewhat oddly in this story: Adam and Eve have been searching for food outside of Eden and find the earth to be completely lacking. All they can find is the herbage reserved for the animals. Despairing over their condition they resort to penitence and prayer. They hope to move the Almighty to bring them back to Eden or, failing that, to ameliorate their present circumstances. They embark on a forty-day rite of fasting.<sup>5</sup> Just over halfway, Satan appears before Eve in the form of an angel and tempts her to abort their penitential rite. He is successful this second time just as he was the first time.

[3] When Adam hears about this, he is outraged. He demands that Satan account for his enmity. Satan answers that his wrath is due to the honor bestowed upon Adam and Eve at creation. "When God blew into you the breath of Life," he recounts, "your countenance and likeness were made in the image of God."<sup>6</sup> Satan continues the story by recounting how Michael came forward and presented Adam to God, whereupon Adam did obeisance. Michael then turned to the angels in attendance and said, "Worship the image of the Lord God just as the Lord God has commanded." Satan found this demand an outrage. "I do not have it within me to worship Adam," he replied, "I will not worship him who is lower and posterior to me. I am prior to that creature. Before he was made, I had already been made. He ought to worship me."

[4] The counterclaim of Satan is as true as it is remarkable. If birth order has any claim to privilege, then how could Adam, as a latter-

---

<sup>4</sup> Because of the history of this tale's publication, citation of the document has generally followed either the Latin or the Greek version. In the case of the story of Satan's fall, the reference is *Life*, 12–7. The story occurs in the Latin, Armenian, and Georgian versions of the *Life*; the Slavonic and the Greek omit it. J. Daniélou in his book, *The Angels and their Mission according to the Fathers of the Church* (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1953), is the only scholar I know of who relates this tradition in the *Life* to Patristic thought about the status of the human person over against the angels. His brief discussion has significant overlaps with mine.

<sup>5</sup> On this part of the tale see G. Anderson, "The Penitence Narrative in the *Life of Adam and Eve*," *HUCA* 63 (1992): 1–38.

<sup>6</sup> The citation is from *Life*, 13:2–14:3 and is taken from the Latin version. The Armenian and Georgian are almost exactly the same.

born, be worthy of such an honor? At one level, Satan's remonstrance is quite understandable. Indeed his reaction to Adam anticipates the behavior of other non-elect figures in the book of Genesis. Like many of these persons, he is surprised and angered by the mysterious electing hand of God. Time and again, God favors the latter-born over the first-born. Esau, though born before Jacob, is doomed to eternal servanthood: "The older shall serve the younger" (Gen 25:23). Joseph, the son of his father's old age, becomes master over his brothers in Egypt as predicted in his dream. Satan's surprise can equally be our surprise—even the patriarchs had difficulty grasping the ways of God with men.<sup>7</sup>

[5] Yet Satan's reluctance to venerate has a darker side. His words, when compared to those of John the Baptist, can be read to reveal a not-so-subtle blasphemy. When Jesus is presented to John the Baptist, the writer of the Gospel of John records that the Baptist was loath to exercise any authority over him. Though John clearly preceded Jesus in time ("Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." John 1:26–7), John understands his honor to follow that of Christ: "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me" (1:30). What the Baptist knows so well as revealed truth is an utter surprise and falsehood to Satan.

[6] The *Life of Adam and Eve* redeploys this literary *topos* later in the tale when Satan approaches the snake and suggests that he assist in the downfall of the human couple. The conversation is worth citing in full.

When the devil came to your father's portion, the devil summoned the serpent and told him, "Arise and come to me and I will teach you a useful word." Then the serpent came and the Devil told the serpent, "I (hear) that you are wiser than all the animals and I have come to test your wisdom, for Adam gives food to all the animals, thus also to you. When then all the animals came to bow down before Adam from day to day and

---

<sup>7</sup> On the importance of the theme of the first-born in the Adam literature, see "The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 6 (1997): 107–9, 131–4. For an excellent review of the Biblical data and its theological importance, see J. Levenson, *Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

from morning to morning, every day, you also come to bow down. You were created before him, as old (as you) are, and you bow down before this young one! And why do you eat (food) inferior to Adam's and his spouse's and not the good fruit of paradise? But come and hearken to me so that we may have Adam expelled from the wall of paradise just as we are outside. Perhaps we can reenter somehow to paradise."<sup>8</sup>

There can be no doubt as to the source of Satan's rhetorical ploy. The cause that set in motion his own fall is recycled to win over the serpent. It is also worth noting that not every version of the *Life* makes this correlation. It occurs only in those versions that contain the earlier tale of Satan's fall. Thus the Greek version, which does not know the tradition of Satan's fall, makes no mention of the serpent's prior birth.<sup>9</sup> Satan tempts the serpent solely by pointing out the inferior nature of his food supply compared to Adam's. It is certainly logical to conclude that Satan's tempting of the snake through the suggestion of his latter-born status is directly and unambiguously mapped from his own experience.

[7] Alexander Altmann noted a clear parallel to this apocryphal tradition in Rabbinic sources.<sup>10</sup> There are several stories about the veneration of Adam by the angelic host that portray this event in the most negative of terms. In one midrash, the angels mistake Adam for a divine being and desire to shout "Holy" before him.<sup>11</sup> Rabbi Hoshaya compares this to a king who went about town in a chariot with his governor beside him. The subjects wished to shout

---

<sup>8</sup> The citation is from the Georgian version [44]16:1–3. It is closely paralleled in the Armenian and the ATLC manuscripts in the Greek. On the problem of the Greek versions here, see below.

<sup>9</sup> Yet it should be noted that the Greek ATLC manuscripts are quite different here. These texts present a figure of Satan who does know the argument about the first-born and uses it to entice the snake. Stone has asked, very perceptively, ("The Fall of Satan and Adam's Penance: Three Notes on the Books of Adam and Eve," *JTS* 44 [1993]: 153–5) if this does not demonstrate that the Greek version at one time included a tradition of Satan's fall. On the nature of the ATLC manuscripts see de Jonge and Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve*, 31–35 and the dissertation of M. Nagel, *La Vie grecque d'Adam et d'Eve* (Strasbourg, 1974).

<sup>10</sup> "The Gnostic Background of the Rabbinic Adam Legends," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 35 (1945): 371–91.

<sup>11</sup> *Genesis Rabbah* 8.10.

“Domine” before their king but did not know to whom their acclamation should be directed. What did the king do? He pushed the governor from the chariot in order to avoid any hint of error. Just so, the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam in his own image. When the angels nearly venerated him, God put him to sleep in order to create Eve. Thereupon the angels learned of his non-divine status and did not mistake him for God. Altmann argued that a midrash like this only makes sense if we presume an antecedent story like that of the *Life of Adam and Eve*. Unlike that tale, the Rabbis teach that no human is worthy of angelic veneration.

- [8] But the Jewish tradition cannot be interpreted quite that simply. As I argued in my earlier essay, the Rabbis were disinclined to shower such honors on the figure of Adam *qua* Adam.<sup>12</sup> However, when the topic of discussion turns to the election of Israel, the story changes quite dramatically. Here God acts to elect not only Israel over against the other nations, but also Israel over the angels.<sup>13</sup> The issue is not what is the ranking of the generic class ‘man’ over against the angels, but rather the value of the human person when viewed through the lens of Sinai. Considered from the vantage point of Rabbinic thinking, the status of the person is little different than that of the *Life*. The gift of Torah and its observance nearly deifies man. At Sinai he is made just “a little lower than the angels.”<sup>14</sup>

## 2. THEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE STORY OF SATAN’S FALL

- [9] One question worth asking about this tradition of Satan’s fall in the *Life* is whether its provenance is Jewish or Christian. This has been exceedingly difficult question to answer, and in this essay we shall not be able to answer it. But the methodological problems this

---

<sup>12</sup> G. Anderson, “The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan,” *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 6 (1997): 111–23.

<sup>13</sup> This surprising detail has eluded many interpreters. For an excellent analysis of the texts at issue, see P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975).

<sup>14</sup> The reference is to Psalm 8. On the significance of this psalm to this entire problem see G. Anderson, “What Is Man That You Mention Him,” forthcoming in a volume edited by B. Daley on the Psalms in early Christian exegesis.

question raises shall be central to my thesis. For even though Rabbinic and Patristic sources put the highest possible value on the human person, I would like to claim that both traditions become nervous if these anthropological concerns are too tidily cut off from their Christological or nomocentric matrix.

[10] Christian concerns about this tale are evident in a set of *Quaestiones* attributed (falsely) to Athanasius.<sup>15</sup> In one of them we read:

Question: When and on account of what reason did the Devil fall? For certain mythmakers have said that he received a command to venerate Adam (and having refused to do so) fell.

Answer: Such is the nonsense of foolish men. For the Devil fell prior to the existence of Adam. It is clear that he fell because of his arrogance as Isaiah the prophet says: "I shall place my throne upon the clouds and I will become like the Most High." (Isa 14:14)

This text evinces an argument that will become standard in the West after Augustine: Satan does not fall due to envy toward Adam but rather due to envy toward God. And, as such, the fall takes place prior to Adam's creation. Augustine, of course, locates that fall as close to creation as possible without sacrificing the goodness of all creation at its inception.

[11] Even more striking is the rebuttal of this story that is found in Bartholomew of Edessa.<sup>16</sup> He claims that the story is not Christian at all, but rather Islamic in origin. "For the Muslims say," Bartholomew writes, "that when Adam had been made, all the angels worshipped him at the command of God. But Beliar alone did not obey this command to worship Adam and on this account he fell."

[12] What is lacking in these texts, however, is an account of why the *Life of Adam and Eve* traditions became objectionable. I would suggest from the outset that the reasons are Christological. By having the entire angelic host venerate Adam at his creation, there is nothing the second Adam can do that could go beyond this glorious moment. The angelic veneration which will be due the

---

<sup>15</sup> *Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, PG 28:604C. The text is clearly not Athanasian, but a more precise attribution is not possible.

<sup>16</sup> PG 104:1453C.

resurrected Christ is simply a return to what was offered Adam at creation's origin. The christological mystery, on this view, does not deepen or expand our sense of the human person. It simply recapitulates a glorious beginning. Like the Rabbis, the Church Fathers were unhappy with such a scenario. Adam was to be the subject of considerable glory but not apart from the revelation of Jesus Christ. In order to prove my thesis, I would like to examine the use of this tradition in two very different authors: St. Ephrem, the Syrian and John Milton, the English Puritan.

### 3. THE FALL OF SATAN IN *PARADISE LOST*

- [13] There seems to be little doubt that Milton knew the story of Satan's fall as we have in the *Life*. Yet he made one dramatic alteration that allowed him to maintain the narrative elements of the story without its accompanying theological problem: the heavenly host is witness to the sudden elevation of Christ rather than to the creation of Adam.

Hear all ye angels, progeny of light,  
 Thrones, dominations, pryncedoms, virtues, powers,  
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.  
 This day I have begot whom I declare  
 My only Son, and on this holy hill  
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint;  
 And by my self have sworn to him shall bow  
 All knees in heaven, and shall confess him Lord.<sup>17</sup>

This decree to elevate God's Christ among the heavenly host is made up of a pastiche of biblical texts including Colossians 1:16, Psalm 2:6–7, and Philippians 2:9–10.<sup>18</sup> From these texts, Milton

---

<sup>17</sup> *Paradise Lost*, V: 600–8.

<sup>18</sup> The form of this command is modeled on the famous hymn found in Philippians 2:9–10: “*Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*” In the use of this particular text, we see the outlines of a brilliant Miltonic irony. As any seasoned reader of the Bible recognizes, this hymn to Christ's universal kingship is founded upon Christ's *emptying* (*kenosis*) himself of his divine glory. For it was Christ Jesus “who, though he was in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but *emptied himself, taking the form of a slave and being born in human likeness*. And being found in human form, he



derives the key elements of his plot: the assembly of the angels, the coronation of the Messiah,<sup>19</sup> and his subsequent veneration. Yet Satan's reaction to all of this can be found nowhere in the Bible, and here Milton relies on the *Vita*. Satan refuses to honor God's Christ for to do so, he infers, would be an affront to his stature.

[14] Yet Satan's refusal to venerate Christ is not all of what is going on in this story. Milton has not dropped an interest in the status of Adam and Eve-and so of humanity in general-he has simply re-deployed it. To appreciate Milton's anthropology we must turn to his account of human origins. As it happens, Satan has heard a rumor about the creation of Adam and Eve just prior to the elevation of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

[15] We first hear of this rumor after Satan has been evicted from heaven and sits in Hades with his rebellious cohort. There he engages his comrades in conversation:

O myriads of immortal spirits, O powers  
Matchless, but with the Almighty, and that strife  
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,

---

humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8). Yet Satan detests the elevation of Christ because he believes it to be naked power grab. Christ, he believes, is trying to violently wrest from him the honors that are his alone. But the truth of the matter is that Christ's status as the exalted Son of God is predicated on His willingness to die for mankind (See *Paradise Lost*, III: 227ff). Only by giving up all that is his will he receive the honors due his name.

<sup>19</sup> Much can be said about this daring narrative move, for Milton seems close to a semi-Arian position. There appears to be a time when the Son was not, or at the very least when His status in the heavenly realm was altogether unclear. For a fine discussion of the problem, see W.B. Hunter, "The War in Heaven: The Exaltation of the Son," in W. Hunter, C. Patrides and J. Adamson (eds.), *Bright Essence* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971) 115-30. I don't think Milton intends to verge on heresy here. As my discussion below will reveal, he wishes to link Christology to anthropology.

<sup>20</sup> It is worth noting that Milton, following a Patristic and Medieval commonplace, explains the creation of human beings as a form of cosmic redress for the loss of an entire angelic array. Human beings fill the slot of the fallen angels. The fact that Satan hears a rumor of man's creation prior to his fall reveals that there is a larger story to be told. The place of human beings in the created order has a firmer foundation than the theory of a cosmic rebalancing of the heavenly host might suggest.

As this place testifies, and this dire change  
 Hateful to utter: but what power of mind  
 Forseeing or presaging, from the depth  
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared,  
 How such united force of gods, how such  
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse?<sup>21</sup>

Satan, though pummeled by the heavenly armies, remains unbowed. He stirs his fellow militia members by reminding them of their “united force.” Carrying his argument forward, he concedes that a direct assault on heaven would be foolish. But so would a craven servitude in the dingy confines of hell. An avenue of revenge must be sought.

[16] He recalls to his comrades that sometime before the exaltation of the Son, “There went a fame in heaven that he ere long / Intended to create, and therein plant a generation, whom his choice regard / Should favor equal to the sons of heaven.”<sup>22</sup> Here is our opening, Satan argues. Let us wage war against this new creation and wreak our havoc on the heavenly throne. Sometime later, he returns to his suggestion of vengeance and reveals more about the rumor he had heard concerning the creation of man. Conceding yet again that the walls of heaven “fear no assault or siege” he suggests a simpler course:

What if we find  
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place  
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven  
 Err not) another world, the happy seat  
 Of some new race called Man, about this time  
 To be created like to us, though less  
 In power and excellence, but favoured more  
 Of him who rules above; so was his will  
 Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,  
 That shook heaven’s whole circumference,  
 confirmed.<sup>23</sup>

Having revealed the contents of this “ancient and prophetic fame,” Satan suggests that his cohort learn the nature of these creatures to be fashioned “of what mould, / Or substance, how endued, and

---

<sup>21</sup> *Paradise Lost*, I: 622–30.

<sup>22</sup> *Paradise Lost*, I: 651–4.

<sup>23</sup> *Paradise Lost*, II: 344–53.

what their power, / And where their weakness, how attempted best, / By force or subtlety.”<sup>24</sup>

[17] The source of this ancient fame is crystal clear. In Psalm 8 one reads of the figure of man to be created just slightly lower than the divine beings in heaven yet adorned with glory and honor that so distinguish them that God places below their feet all the works of his created order. Satan knows of this favor to be shown toward man and envies him all the more.

[18] But this is an altogether unexpected use of Psalm 8. For to use the psalm this way, Milton must presume that the psalm refers to the creation of Adam. Yet the New Testament understood the psalm in reference to Christ.<sup>25</sup> Why, then, does Milton go against the grain of the New Testament and redirect the psalm to the figures of Adam and Eve and their progeny? Milton himself gives no clear and explicit answer to this question, but a couple lines of reasoning do suggest themselves.

[19] First, Satan hears of the rumor of man’s creation and elevation, an elevation that will result in a figure more favored than he. Yet before the rumor is fulfilled, God elevates his Christ as king over the heavenly host. If Satan found this objectionable and a cause for rebellion, then it is hardly idle speculation to say that he would have found the figures of Adam and Eve more objectionable. In some sense the elevation of Christ is a provoking moment that provides the necessary occasion for Satan to vent his hostility towards God’s larger designs with His universe. The elevation of

---

<sup>24</sup> *Paradise Lost*, II: 355–8.

<sup>25</sup> See the Epistle to the Hebrews 2:5–9,

Someone bore testimony [to this] somewhere saying, “What is man that you should remember him or the son of man that you watch over him? You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; with glory and honor you have crowned him; you have subjected everything under his feet.” Now in subjecting all things, God left nothing unsubjectable to him. As of now we do not yet see all things subjected to him; but do behold the one who “was made for a little while lower than the angels.” Jesus, because of his suffering death was “crowned with glory and honor,” so that by God’s grace he might taste death for everyone.

The translation is that of H. Attridge, *Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989).

Christ smokes-out the secret hatred of this formidable angel and foe.<sup>26</sup>

[20] Second, we can say that Christ's elevation prior to the creation of man is itself a soteriological act. If the rebellion against God's Christ and His armies was at times a seesaw battle that took nearly three days to overcome, then what would have happened if this vigorous fury had been unleashed on the figures of Adam and Eve? The destiny of humankind might have looked quite different.

[21] In any event, it is clear that the office of Christ has been closely juxtaposed with that of Adam and Eve. The character and status of the elected *Christos* is not clear without reference to the making of men and women, and the virtues of the *anthropos* shine by way of the reflected glory of Christ. The plot line of the *Life of Adam and Eve* has been changed to put primary emphasis on Christ, but the requisite honor due man as made in the image of God has not been lost.

#### 4. THE FALL OF SATAN IN *CARMINA NISIBENA*

[22] The figure of Satan occupies a large place within the theology of St. Ephrem. It has been argued recently that Ephrem's thought exerted considerable influence on the writings of Romanos the Melodist.<sup>27</sup> I mention this fact because Romanos was familiar with the tradition of Satan's fall that we find in the *Life*. During Christ's descent to Hades, Satan mentions the occasion of his jealousy over the state of humankind (*On the Resurrection* V:23).<sup>28</sup>

The wily one, the hostile Serpent, lamented with groans  
What he had undergone from the beginning through  
Adam:

---

<sup>26</sup> I owe this suggestion to James Nohnberg (English Department, University of Virginia); indeed, he suggested the terms "provoking moment" and "smoking-out" the designs of Satan as the best way to characterize the story of his fall.

<sup>27</sup> See L. van Rompay, "Romanos le Mélode, Un poète syrien à Constantinople," in J. van Boeft and A. Hilhorst (eds.), *Early Christian Poetry* (Leiden: Brill, 1993) 283–96 and W.L. Petersen, *The Diatessaron and Ephrem Syrus as Sources of Romanos the Melodist* (CSCO 475; Louvain, 1985).

<sup>28</sup> For the text, see J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode, Hymnes. Introduction, texte critique et notes* (Source Chrésiennes 128; Paris, 1967) 528.

Saying, "When God created man from the earth,  
indeed He ordered us,  
All of us, as One who knows the future and is Lord,  
Saying, 'Come, all powers together now  
Kneel before the one in my image whom I have  
created.'  
And at that time I fled, since I did not wish this;  
I was not willing to kneel before a created being,  
And I did not know, wretched me, that He would save  
the mortal,  
He who has destroyed the weapons of Belial,  
The victory of Hades,  
And the sting of Death."

What is striking is that Ephrem, unlike Romanos, shows no explicit knowledge of this tradition. One might advance this as evidence for a relatively late dating of the origin of the tale. On this view, the appearance of the tradition in the writings of Romanos would show us that it was a product of the fifth century.

[23]

But this does not seem likely to me. Ephrem does seem to be acquainted with a form of the tradition. This is evident from the way in which he treats the motivations of the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve. Consider the curious and quite imaginative conversation Ephrem has with Eve. He provides Eve with the type of response she should have given the snake in Genesis 3:<sup>29</sup>

8. Come let's compare you and Adam,  
With what can we compare an animal and a man?  
Should you claim to be more senior  
Than Adam; Then [the giving of] your name can rebuke you
9. For it is younger by far than Adam. God allowed Adam  
to name the animals  
Because he made Adam an elder over the animals.  
Children do not give names  
To their parents. From those who are older  
Come the names of the youngsters.
10. Just as God, being first in existence,  
Gave names to every created thing,  
So he allowed the last formed being, who was  
Older than all, to give names

---

<sup>29</sup> *De Ecclesia* 47; the translation is my own. For the text see E. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, De Ecclesia* (CSCO 198–9; Louvain, 1960).

To all living things, on the basis that he was oldest.

11. He is both God's last and first work,  
 Though younger in physical construction, he was older in honor.  
 Those who were born early, and came into being  
 Before him, became latter-born  
 When they received their names.

In these stanzas, Ephrem writes the script that Eve should have followed: the snake, Ephrem reasoned, should have been reproved by Eve for not paying heed to his subservient role. Why was the snake to be so docile? Because Eve and Adam were more senior than he was. This assertion contradicts the narrative order of scripture, for in the first chapter of Genesis the animals are created prior to human beings. Nevertheless, Ephrem declares, it was clear that Adam and Eve were the true first-born. Why? Because it was on account of them that all created matter had come into existence. The deeper mystery of who constitutes "the first-born of all creation" is hidden (*kasyā*) in the fabric of the universe. The insightful can tease out and adore this profound mystery while the proud and obstinate cannot; they are bound to the world of mere external appearances.

[24] Such an unusual and striking image! The snake fails in his role as creature because he cannot appreciate the true nature of Adam and Eve. He sees himself created prior to them and hence arrogates to himself a false air of superiority. It is difficult not to correlate these stanzas of Ephrem to the *Life of Adam and Eve*. There, as we saw, Satan teaches the snake to make the same mistake he did: to argue superiority on the basis of physical birth order. Yet the versional evidence of the *Life* is striking in that only those versions of the tale that included the fall of Satan also included a similar grounding for the serpent's fall. There is no question of the secondary nature of this *topos* when applied to the snake. It takes its bearings from a prior story about Satan.

[25] But Ephrem, unlike Romanos, passes over the story of Satan's fall in silence. How can we explain this curious fact? I would suggest that Ephrem has not included such a story because to do so would involve him in the same category confusion Milton worried about. Adam, at his creation, is not worthy of such laud and honor. It is only man *in potentia* (*b-kasyā* in the terminology of Ephrem) that could lay claim to such a privilege.

[26] How can such a claim be demonstrated? There is another place within the writing of St. Ephrem where the issue of first-born and latter-born comes to the surface: the descent of Christ into Sheol on Holy Saturday. In the remarkable portrait that Ephrem draws, he distinguishes quite carefully and clearly between the figures of Satan and Death.<sup>30</sup> Though they are comrades at one level and worthy of all the vitriol Ephrem's pen can muster, one should not confuse this rhetoric with evidence for their having similar dispositions. Death has acted as a swift and just executant of the divine command. Though apparently heartless in his conscription of a reluctant citizenry, he takes human life with punctilious fairness. He is faithful to his charge. "Equality I have preached," Death boasts, "I treat slave and owner alike in Sheol."<sup>31</sup> Satan also serves a purpose within the economy of salvation—he tests human souls—but he does so for the most ignoble of reasons: he desires to destroy what God so dearly loves. Appropriately, Satan's truer comrade goes by the name of "Sin," whereas the bosom buddy of Death is "Sheol."

[27] Because Death is a just and faithful servant in the larger divine economy, he is eager to please his creator. When Christ appears in Sheol, he confesses that the treasury he is guarding is merely "a temporary deposit."<sup>32</sup> At the general resurrection, he will return the entire lot to Christ, its rightful owner. The humility of Death is touching in its own way, for Death does not stand to gain anything for his selfless acts. Easter, for him, represents the first stage in the demolition of his kingdom. At the general resurrection all his goods will be cleared out. In light of this it is all the more striking that he chooses to venerate Christ rather than rebel:

Concerning Satan, who is enraged  
May seven woes be made. Though the Son of Mary has  
truly trodden upon him, (Gen 3:14)

---

<sup>30</sup> See the excellent study of *Carmina Nisibena* in J. Martikainen, *Das Böse und der Teufel in der Theologie Ephraems des Syrers* (Dissertation, Stiftelsen för Abo Akademi Forskningsinstitut, 1978), especially pp. 77–100.

<sup>31</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 38:2; the translation is from a forthcoming edition of this cycle being prepared by G. Anderson [and Ed Mathews]. For the original Syriac see E. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, Carmina Nisibena* (CSCO 240; Louvain, 1963).

<sup>32</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 37:3.

His spirit is exalted. He is the serpent who perseveres  
 while being bruised.  
 It is better for me to fall prostrate  
 Before Jesus, this one who vanquished me by his  
 Cross.<sup>33</sup>

[28] But there is more. Death does not just acquiesce to the inevitable, he confesses his error in reviling Christ. He reviled Christ because he was fooled by His bodily nature, which had covered over His divine attributes. And then the surprise: Death steps forward and acts like John the Baptist, heralding the advent of the Messiah to all the denizens of the Netherworld:

When He enters the gate of Sheol,  
 I will announce his arrival in place of John.  
 I shall cry: "Behold, the One who gives life to the dead  
 has arrived.  
 I am your servant from henceforth, O Jesus. Because  
 of Your body I reviled You  
 With which you veiled your divinity. Do not be angry,  
 O Son of the King,  
 Against your treasurer. At your command I have  
 opened and closed.<sup>34</sup>

[29] After the Centurion at Golgotha, Death is the first to understand the Christological mystery. Like John the Baptist, Death performs the role of a herald and reveals the cosmic implications of the death of this just man.

[30] But Death is like John in another respect: now he understands the peculiar nature of the *elected* status of Christ. Unlike Satan in the *Life of Adam and Eve* and its various congeners, Death is aware that the mystery of divine birth order need not conform to the appearance of physical birth order. Those who are last can truly be first:

7. All who were resurrected were not the first-  
 born ones,<sup>35</sup>  
 For our Lord is He who is the First-Born of  
 Sheol.  
 How can any dead one precede

---

<sup>33</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 38:5.

<sup>34</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 38:6.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Col 1:18.



- That Strong One, though whom he was  
raised?  
Those who were first have become last,  
The most recent-born have become first-born.  
If Manasseh was the first-born  
How did Ephrem assume his rights?  
If a child born later could precede him,  
How much more should the Lord and Creator  
be first at his resurrection.
8. Behold, John was like a herald,  
Informing that he was later though he was  
older.  
For he said: "Behold a man comes after me  
Who will become before me." How could he  
precede that Strong One  
Through whom he was the herald? Everything  
exists for the sake of something else  
He was last even though He was first.  
For that cause which called it into being<sup>36</sup>  
Is older even though it is younger in every  
other way.<sup>37</sup>

The language of election defines this Christological confession. According to the world of appearances, the latter-born son has usurped the rights of the first-born. But in actuality, the nature of the true first-born has surfaced for the first time in human history. Death avoids all the errors that had plagued the serpent in the Garden. True Christ was not the first to be resurrected-long ago, Elisha's corpse had raised the body of a dead man, and the Gospel of Matthew records that at Jesus' cry of dereliction on the Cross, tombs were opened and certain dead persons were raised to new life. Yet it was the person and work of Christ that provided both the type and the cause for these earlier events. Just as Adam's naming of the animals established him as first-born, so Christ's providential guidance of creation revealed his primordial glory.

[31] Up to this time, Death had thought his reign over Adam and Adam's progeny was eternal. After Adam's sin a contract had been signed, and all the children of Adam were consigned to the kingdom of Sheol: "Adam returned to his earth and made a pact

---

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Gen 2:18.

<sup>37</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 38:7–8.

(cf. Col 2:14) / 'Through writing he became gravely liable (*hab*) to sin and death."<sup>38</sup> But at the crucifixion, Death realizes that his charge over man was only temporary. His contract is about to be altered. At the end of time, Death promises to return all the captives, and he bids Christ to take Adam as a payment in kind: "Death rewrote (the contract), Sheol stood as surety with him. / All they had snatched and plundered would be returned at the resurrection."<sup>39</sup> Through the taking of Adam all had died; through the resurrection of Adam all had the possibility of new life.

[32] The mention of the new status for Adam is hardly fortuitous. For, as we saw in the work of John Milton, Christology cannot be severed from anthropology. As Death confesses the true nature of Christ, so for the figure of man:

The cause of Adam was older  
 Than the other created things which were created for  
 him.  
 For the Creator had Adam in mind the whole time  
 He was creating. And if Adam, who was not yet made,  
 Was older than all of creation, then how much older,  
 My Lord,  
 Is Your manhood within Your godhead.  
 That [manhood] which was with Your Begetter from  
 aforeside.  
 To You be praise and to Your father through You,  
 from all of us.<sup>40</sup>

Though Christ precedes Adam, the status of Adam is inseparably bound to the status of Christ. Both are first-born sons in relation to the present created order. Death acknowledges this; the serpent and Satan cannot.

[33] And what of Satan? In most patristic and apocryphal materials about the descent of Christ into Hades, the figures of Death and Satan are nearly inseparable. Both are equally culpable figures who must be destroyed in order for the Kingdom of God to take root. As Anna Kartsonis documents, the iconography of the *anastasis*

---

<sup>38</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 48:9.

<sup>39</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 48:9.

<sup>40</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 38:9.

makes no attempt to distinguish between the two.<sup>41</sup> Whether it is Satan or Hades who resists Christ's entry is of little significance.

[34] Not so for Ephrem. Death and Satan are two very different persons. Death confesses, Satan rebels. Where one sees his own error by dint of God's light, the other remains blinded by his ignorance.

[35] Ephrem's plot development is not always easy to follow. He skips back and forth between the overall drama and individual closeups that reveal the internal psychology of the respective characters. Hymn 35 presents the entire tableau *in nuce*, beginning with the moment of Christ's death and tracing the reactions to it among all the denizens of the underworld: Death, Sheol, Satan and his henchmen, and Sin. Hymns 36–9 consider the events from the perspectives of Death and Sheol. In Hymns 40–1 we are privy to Satan's understanding of the events. Martikainen, in his book on Satan, wrongly attributes the two reactions of Death and Satan to two separate climaxes in the narrative.<sup>42</sup> But the plot is not advancing in a sequential fashion. Ephrem, like Milton, has taken the liberty of proceeding in an atemporal fashion.

[36] Consider, for example, the last stanza of Hymn 41:16. Here Satan advances to Sheol to see the Christ who has lain dead in Sheol some three days. Satan and Death wait with some trepidation. They attempt to cover themselves with a show of bravado. Death begins the mockery:

O raiser of the Dead, where are you?  
 Are you to be my food in place of the sweet Lazarus?  
 Lo, the taste of him is yet in my mouth. O daughter of  
     Jarius, come and see  
 This, your crucified one. The son of the widow gazes  
     upon you.  
 With wood I captured Adam;  
 Blessed is the cross, which captured for me the son of  
     David.  
 And Satan, not to be outdone, mimics the mockery of  
     Death:  
 Open up for us that we might see and mock Him;  
 Let us answer and say, "Where is your power?"

---

<sup>41</sup> *Anastasis: The Making of an Image*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 14–5.

<sup>42</sup> *Das Böse*, 88–94.

Lo, because He has spent three days here,  
 Let us say to Him, "O Third-day One, who brought  
 Lazarus,  
 The fourth-day one, back to life, bring Yourself to life."  
 Death opened the gates of Sheol;  
 The effulgence of the face of our Lord shone forth.  
 Like those of Sodom, who were smitten with blindness,  
 They groped and sought the gate of Sheol; which had  
 perished.<sup>43</sup>

Yet alongside this shared desire to slay Jesus at the point of crucifixion, they part ways when Christ's divine status is revealed. Death learns; Satan remains ignorant. Unlike Death, Satan is not amenable to instruction. "The knowledge I possess," he boasts, "little of it is from nature. / The far grater part is from learning. I was my own teacher, / I took great pains to learn; without a teacher I was instructed. / I armed myself with every weapon; / I seized the crown I coveted among mankind."<sup>44</sup> For Death, Christ is the true first-born; Satan remains impressed with his own antiquity. "Lo I am thousands of years old," Satan muses, "and never was I idle."<sup>45</sup>

[37]

At one level, this interest in contrasting the response of Satan with Death is a working-out of the teaching of Christ: "If a house is divided against itself it cannot stand" (Matt 12:26). Ironically, Death believed this teaching would be the key to Jesus' own undoing.<sup>46</sup> Death recommended that Satan tempt Judas in order to turn the house of the disciples against one another. But in fact it became the occasion for the separation of sin from hell. Death became a disciple of Christ, thereby robbing Satan of his best weapon against the creatures so richly favored by God. In the Hymns that follow, the contrast becomes even starker. Death rewrites his contract such that he now promises to return all human beings to their Creator at the end of time. Death's period of ignorance and tyranny is over; he is now an obedient servant in God's kingdom. Satan, on the hand, is enflamed with still greater envy. He vows to carry on his fight among the apostles and all others who would claim their lineage through Christ. Here we

---

<sup>43</sup> *Carmina Nisibena* 41:16.

<sup>44</sup> *Carmina Nisibena*, 40:1.

<sup>45</sup> *Carmina Nisibena*, 41:1.

<sup>46</sup> *Carmina Nisibena*, 35:20–2.

might simply observe that, for Ephrem, each and every Christian lays claim to the status of “first-born” at his or her baptism, when the storm and fury of the salvific drama is quickened anew.

- [38] Yet I would suggest that there is another level to our story. I argued earlier that Ephrem knew a tradition like that found in the *Life of Adam and Eve*. We saw evidence of this in the way he has framed the story of the serpent’s fall and Death’s confession of Christ’s true status as first-born. I have claimed that it is hard to imagine that Ephrem would have constructed the story of the serpent’s temptation without a prior model for how Satan himself fell. But if this is so, what did Ephrem do with the story of Satan’s fall itself? The answer seems unavoidable. Like Milton, Ephrem has altered this story such that the main protagonist becomes Christ, not Adam. Or, perhaps to be truer to the irony of Milton and Ephrem, the antagonism toward Adam is made manifest through the figure of Christ. Satan falls, as it were, when the true nature of Christ is revealed. And he falls again and again as each Christian disciple steps forward to the baptismal font to lay claim to that inheritance. The ‘Fall of Satan’ is not just a literary motif in the theology of Ephrem, it is part of the fabric of Christian life.

## 5. ANGELIC RIVALRY IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- [39] One can see a remarkable continuity between Rabbinic sources and the writings of Ephrem and Milton on the theme of angelic misgivings about the status of man. All three show familiarity with the ‘Fall of Satan’ tradition documented in the *Life of Adam and Eve*, and all three are uncomfortable with the tradition when it is tied to the figure of Adam alone. The human person is worthy of angelic adoration, but only when refracted through the prism of the elected nation, Israel, or the elect man of God, Christ.

- [40] For Milton, the grounds for refracting Adam through the lens of Christ are several. The Miltonic picture is characterized by a very dense symbolism. Adam, as mere molded flesh, would be especially vulnerable to the unmediated fury of Satan. God smokes-out this antagonism toward man by elevating His Christ. This provoking moment solidifies Christ’s status as heaven’s ruler (in conformity with the pre-Pauline hymn in Philippians 2:5ff, though leaving a door open to charges of semi-Arianism); defines that rulership as his peculiar desire to empty himself of his divine attributes and die

for men and women; and establishes Christ as mankind's savior from the earliest possible moment because it is He-not Adam and Eve-who bears the full brunt of Satan's ire.

[41]

For Ephrem, Adam is not worthy of veneration at his creation because he was created as a mutable being.<sup>47</sup> Adam's true nature was still a mystery to him and to Moses who recorded the story. Being halfway between human and divine form, it was within the

---

<sup>47</sup> The closest that one comes to this view is in *Carmina Nisibena* 68:3–4 where Mankind rebukes Death and says: "Adam was chosen and put in authority. Under his yoke / You, O Death and the Evil One, your companion, were slaves." Death then responds: "This is our cause for pride: Slaves have become lords / Death and Satan, his companion, trampled upon Adam." Mankind then rebukes Death with the promise that all will be reversed at the end of time: "Tremble, O Death, at man, for though he be a slave / The yoke of his lordship shall reign over the created things." Consider also *Hymns on Paradise* 3:15 (trans. S.P. Brock; St. Vladimir's Press, 1990):

Even though all the trees of Paradise are clothed each in its own glory, yet each veils itself at the Glory; the Seraphs with their wings, the trees with their branches, all cover their faces so as not to behold their Lord. They all blushed at Adam who was suddenly found naked; the serpent had stolen his garments, for which it was deprived of its feet.

It is not clear whether the Seraphs stand in awe of Adam, their lord or the Lord, their maker. Compare the comments of Beck, (*Ephraems Hymnen über das Paradies* [Studia Anselmiana 26; Rome, 1951] 29–30): "Strophe 15 trägt zwei weitere Einzelheiten zur Flucht Adams aus dem Paradiese nach. Sie beginnt mit der Behauptung, dass im paradies auch die Bäume ihr Lichtkleid haben. Der Sinn des anschliessenden Sätzchens, in dem neben den Bäumen die Seraphim genannt werden, muss erst eindeutig festgelegt werden. Wer ist mit dem Ausdruck 'ihr Herr' gemeint? Man könnte an Adam denken, da Adam in der patristischen Literatur gelegentliche auch über die Engel und Bäume gestellt wird. Dann wäre der Sinn des Satzes folgender: Engel und Bäume bedecken ihr Antlitz um nicht die Schande Adams ihres Herrn zu sehen. Doch liegt eine erste Schwierigkeit gegen eine soche Interpretation im Pempus. Im Schluss der Strophe, wo offen von Adam Die Rede ist, steht das Perfekt, in dem fraglichen Satze dagegen das Partizip. Entscheidend ist aber wohl, dass Ephräm nicht 'Engel' schlechthin sagt sondern 'Seraphim.' Offenbar schwebte ihm Isaías cap. 6 vor Augen und der Sinn des Satzes ist daher: Die Bäume verhüllen wie die Seraphim ihr Angesicht aus Ehrfurcht vor Gott ihrem Herrn." It would seem to me that Ephrem leaves the identification of "their Lord" intentionally ambiguous; but this matter warrants further study.

power of Adam's free will to become the full image of God. But to do so, he and Eve had to keep the command issued by God. The mutable and less-than-perfect status of Adam and Eve is evident from the way in which their luminous garments of glory are portrayed. This can be confusing because certain texts give the impression that Adam and Eve already possessed the perfect divine form. For example, in his commentary on their nakedness without shame, Ephrem remarks that "it was because of the glory in which they were wrapped that they were not ashamed."<sup>48</sup> So luminous were those bodies that the animals could not look upon the radiance of their being:

For Adam, who had been set in authority and control over the animals was wiser than all the animals, and he who gave names to them all was certainly more astute than them all. For just as Israel could not look upon the face of Moses, neither were the animals able to look upon the radiance of Adam and Eve: at the time when they received names from him they passed in front of Adam with their eyes down, since their eyes were incapable of taking in his glory. So even though the serpent was more astute than the other animals, compared to Adam and Eve, who had authority over animals, it was foolish.<sup>49</sup>

[42]

Yet this glory, as great as it seems, was only partial. It awaited translation from a mutable state-and hence prone to devolution-to a permanent condition. Consider the following stanza in his *Hymns on Paradise*:

God established the Tree [of Knowledge] as judge  
so that if Adam should eat from it,  
it might show him that rank  
which he had lost through his pride,  
and show him, as well, that low estate  
he had acquired, to his torment.  
Whereas, if he should overcome and conquer,  
it would robe him in glory  
and reveal to him also  
the nature of shame,

---

<sup>48</sup> *Commentary on Genesis* II.14 (trans. Brock: *St. Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns on Paradise*, 206).

<sup>49</sup> *Commentary on Genesis* II.15 (trans. Brock, *ibid.*, 207).

so that he might acquire, in his good health,  
an understanding of sickness.<sup>50</sup>

Ephrem interprets the nature of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in a twofold manner. Had Adam persevered, he would have known (in the sense of experienced firsthand) the ravishment of the Divine Good, but he would have known only in a theoretical manner the nature of evil. Having exercised his free will irresponsibly, Adam came to know the tragic nature of human evil and to intuit only in an abstract way the promise of the true Good. And most importantly, had Adam persevered, he would have exchanged his glorious body for one more glorious still.

[43]

Because Adam's nature is still in need of perfection, his status as the image is inchoate. He wears less than perfect garments and exercises authority over the animals outside of Eden and the trees within.<sup>51</sup> Adam's true status as image and likeness could have been realized in Eden had he been obedient to the command of God. But because of his transgression, the full revelation of that status would have to await the coming of the second Adam. For it is only in the dark bowels of Hades, as we see Death express the matter so eloquently, that the true brilliance of the human form comes to light.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altmann, A. "The Gnostic Background of the Rabbinic Adam Legends." *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 35 (1945): 371–91.
- Anderson, G. "What Is Man That You Mention Him?" forthcoming in a volume edited by B. Daley on the Psalms in early Christian exegesis.
- . "The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan." *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 6 (1997): 105–34.
- . "The Penitence Narrative in the *Life of Adam and Eve*." *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 63 (1992): 1–38.
- Anderson, G., and E. Mathews. *Carmina Nisibena*. trans. forthcoming.
- Anderson, G., and M. Stone. *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve, Second Revised Edition*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999.

---

<sup>50</sup> *Hymns on Paradise*, 3:10 (trans. Brock).

<sup>51</sup> In Ephrem's view, the animals were outside of the domain of Paradise; only he and Eve were granted entry to this sacred abode. Adam had to go to the boundary of Eden to name them and tend to them. Such is also the picture that obtains in the *Life*.



- Attridge, H. *Hebrews*. Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989.
- Awn, P. *Satan's Tragedy of Redemption: Iblis in Sufi Psychology*. Leiden: Brill, 1983.
- Beck, E. *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, Carmina Nisibena*. CSCO, 240. Louvain, 1963.
- . *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, De Ecclesia*. CSCO, 198–9. Louvain, 1960.
- . *Ephraems Hymnen über das Paradies*. Studia Anselmiana, 26. Rome, 1951.
- Daniélou, J. *The Angels and their Mission according to the Fathers of the Church*. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1953.
- de Jonge, M., and J. Tromp. *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Ephrem the Syrian. *Hymns on Paradise*. Trans. S.P. Brock. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990.
- Grosdidier de Matons, J. *Romanos le Mélode, Hymnes. Introduction, texte critique et notes*. Source Chrétiennes, 128. Paris, 1967.
- Hunter, W.B. "The War in Heaven: The Exaltation of the Son." In Hunter, W., C. Patrides, and J. Adamson, eds. *Bright Essence*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971.
- Kartsonis, A. *Anastasis: The Making of an Image*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Levenson, J. *Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Martikainen, J. *Das Böse und der Teufel in der Theologie Ephraems des Syrers*. Dissertation, Stiftelsen för Abo Akademi Forskningsinstitut, 1978.
- Milton, J. *Paradise Lost*.
- Nagel, M. "La Vie grecque d'Adam et d'Eve." Strasbourg, 1974.
- Petersen, W.L. *The Diatessaron and Ephrem Syrus as Sources of Romanos the Melodist*. CSCO, 475. Louvain, 1985.
- Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, PG 28.
- Schäfer, P. *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975.
- Stone, M. "The Fall of Satan and Adam's Penance: Three Notes on the Books of Adam and Eve." *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1993): 153–155.
- Stone, M. *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.
- Van Rompay, L. "Romanos le Mélode, Un poète syrien a Constantinople." In van Boeft, J., and A. Hilhorst, eds. *Early Christian Poetry*. Leiden: Brill, 1993.