

## The Paraclete

Margaret Barker: in *The Temple in Text and Tradition. FS for Robert Hayward* 2014.

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The Paraclete, *paraklētos*, is only mentioned in the writings of John,<sup>1</sup> and the form of the word suggests that it meant ‘the one who is summoned/called’. Although the word is a passive participle of *parakalō*, call, encourage, it has come to be understood as an active participle, *parakalōn*, the encourager, the comforter.<sup>2</sup> Westcott warned:

[This interpretation, using the active participle] conveys a partial truth, but by an inaccurate method... But this secondary application of the term cannot be used to confirm an original meaning *which is at fatal variance with the form of the word*, and also against undoubted use elsewhere. It may also be added that *parakalein* is not found in the writings of St John, though it is common in the other parts of the New Testament.<sup>3</sup>

If John did not use the verb, it is possible that the title Paraclete did not originate with him, and since it is also unlikely that Jesus spoke Greek when teaching his disciples, there must have been a Hebrew equivalent of the idea of the Paraclete.

The name itself was transliterated into Hebrew as *prqlyt*<sup>4</sup>, and so its immediate origin must have been a Greek speaking Jewish community. In this respect it belongs with other names or titles that were transliterated [back?] from Greek. There was *twtrwsy*’y, a title clearly derived from the Greek *tetra*, four, and *ousia*, meaning being or essence, ‘the LORD in four beings’: ‘R Ishmael said: Thus said R Nehunyah ben Hakkanah: *Tootrousea Yahweh*, LORD of Israel, dwells in seven palaces, in the innermost room thereof...’<sup>5</sup> This was a title for the LORD in the holy of holies, and the ‘four’ were probably the throne names given to the king when he became the human presence of the LORD (Isa.9.6). It was also the Greek speaking Jewish community, with their LXX, who knew that the four titles of the king represented the one Angel of great counsel, and they emphasised that the angel of the Presence was the LORD himself and not another being (LXX Isa.63.9).

A second title derived from the Greek was Metatron, *mṭtrwn*, described as Prince of the Divine Presence<sup>6</sup> Various meanings have been proposed for Metatron, such as the Latin *metator*, the officer who prepares the way; or the Greek *metaturannos*, the one who is next to the ruler. Eusebius, a bishop in Palestine, understood the name as ‘throne sharer’, the one ‘in the midst of the throne’. When expounding Psalm 45.6-7, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever... Wherefore God, thy God hath anointed thee...’ he wrote:

The Anointer, being the supreme God, is far above the Anointed, he being God in a different sense... Therefore in these words you have it clearly stated that God was anointed and became the

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<sup>1</sup> John 14.15-17, 26; 15.26-27; 16.7-14; 1 John 2.1.

<sup>2</sup> The word is not found in the LXX.

<sup>3</sup> B F Westcott, *The Gospel According to St John*, London: John Murray, 1903, p.212, my emphases.

<sup>4</sup> M Aboth 4.11.

<sup>5</sup> *Hekhalot Rabbati* # 206, also 219, Schäfer’s numbering.

<sup>6</sup> 3 *Enoch* 1.9.

Christ... And this is he who was beloved of the Father and his Offspring and the eternal priest and the being called the Sharer of the Father's throne.<sup>7</sup>

The heavenly LORD had promised the same to the faithful of Laodicea:

He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Rev.3.21).

And the Lamb/ Servant took his place in the midst of the throne and in the midst of the four living creatures and the elders (Rev.5.6).

Metatron had been the human Enoch<sup>8</sup>, but whether or not he was also the angel of the Presence became a point of dispute between Jews and Christians, reflecting the disagreement implicit in LXX Isaiah 63.9: was the angel of the Presence only a messenger or was he the LORD? Here, the question is: should the angel of the Presence be worshipped, implying that the Christians did worship the angel of the Presence.<sup>9</sup>

Once a Min [a Christian] said to R. Idith: 'It is written, And unto Moses He said, Come up to the LORD (Exod.24.1). But surely it should have stated, Come up unto me!' 'It was Metatron [who spoke]', he replied, 'whose name is similar to that of his Master, for it is written, For my name is in him.' (Exod.23.21). 'But if so, [said the Min] we should worship him!' R. Idith replied 'The same passage says: Do not rebel against/exchange him' (Exod.23.21)<sup>10</sup>. 'But if so,' [said the Min] 'why is it stated: He will not pardon your transgression?''<sup>11</sup> He answered: By our troth we would not accept him even as a messenger, for it is written, And he said unto him, If Thy Presence go not with me... (Exod.33.15).<sup>12</sup>

Tootrousea, the Fourfold One and Metatron, the throne sharer, are titles rooted in the cult of the Davidic kings who were 'born' in the holy of holies and emerged as the LORD's human presence, his 'son'. The latter clear in the account of Solomon's coronation, where he sat on the throne of the LORD as king (1 Chron.29.23). Paraclete, or rather the Hebrew idea whence it derived, is also found in the throne hymn in Revelation 4.8: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD God Almighty, who was and is and is to come.' 'Who was and is' is recognised as the Greek of 'ehyeh 'ašer 'ehyeh as expanded in the Targum Neofiti of Exodus 3.14: 'He who said, and the world was there from the beginning, and who is to say to it "Be there" and it will be there, he has sent me to you.' The Christian [and maybe pre-Christian] temple hymn also has 'is to come' as part of the title, although the Greek *erchomenos* is more accurately 'the one who comes'. Since the 'ehyeh became what the Targums call the *Memra*, the presence of the

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<sup>7</sup> Eusebius, *Proof of the Gospel* IV.15.

<sup>8</sup> 3 *Enoch* 4.3.

<sup>9</sup> C.f. the report of the Gentile Hecataeus, who had seen the high priest in the temple about 300 BCE. 'The high priest... is an angel to them of God's commandments.' When he speaks to them, the Jews 'immediately fall to the ground and worship, *proskunein*, the high priest as he explains the commandments to them.' Quoted in Diodorus of Sicily, XL.3.5-6.

<sup>10</sup> Playing in the two meanings of the Hebrew verb *mrh*: 'to rebel' or 'to exchange'. 'Do not rebel against him' and 'Do not exchange him for another', that is, treat him as the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> One who forgives transgression cannot be just an angel, c.f. Luke 5.21: 'Who can forgive sins but God only?'

<sup>12</sup> B.*Sanhedrin* 38b.

LORD, the form ‘Yahweh’ must by definition be the LORD when he is not present. But he comes, *erchomenos*, and as the *'ehyeh*, the Name, he is present.

The Paraclete is a unique glimpse of the first Christians’ way of thinking within the world view of the first temple, and searching for the Paraclete means entering again the world of the ancient angels, where heaven and earth were not always distinct, where one being had many names and many forms, and where the ‘Jewish’ sources show signs of unease and even hostility towards angels. The titles used by Greek speaking Jews and then returned in transliteration to Hebrew - Metatron, Toutrouisia, Paraclete – suggest that the aspects of temple tradition that they represent were preserved outside the Hebrew-speaking culture of Palestine, most likely in Egypt.

This may also be true of the *Memra*, the I AM, originally a way of describing the divine Presence. A comparison of the *Memra* of the Targums, especially the Palestinian Targums, and the Logos of Philo shows that, whatever the date of the various Targums, they reproduced faithfully what Philo knew in Egypt. In other words, the Targumists show that people in the synagogues where the Targums originated had more or less the same way of thinking as Philo. He described the angel of the Exodus as the Logos: ‘He has the divine Logos as his leader, since there is an oracle which says “Behold, I send my angel before your face, to guard you in the way...”’; and in the Targum this became: ‘The Shekinah of the *Memra* of the LORD will go before you.’<sup>13</sup> As Robert Hayward concluded nearly forty years ago, as a result of his study of Neofiti and its glosses:

[This] allows us to observe a change and development in the meaning of *Memra* in the course of Targum tradition. Originally a term bearing a particular and distinctive theology of the Divine Name and Presence, it was used sparingly in carefully chosen contexts...

But at some point in the tradition the content of *Memra* was lost: how or why we do not clearly know...

Thus strangely, one of the richest and most fertile ideas of Jewish exegesis faded away.<sup>14</sup>

*It may, however, have survived in the Paraclete.*

The Hebrew title underlying *paraklētos* probably derived from *zākar*, meaning invoke, but also remember. In Exodus 3.15 either translation is possible: ‘The LORD... this is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered/invoked throughout all generations’; but in Psalms 38 and 70 which have *ʿhazkîr* in their titles, ‘invocation’ would be a more appropriate translation than the customary ‘memorial offering’ since the LORD is asked to come (Ps.38.22; 70.1,5). So too when the Levite musicians were appointed to praise, thank and remember/invoke, *ʿhazkîr*, the LORD before the ark (1 Chron.16.4), ‘invoke’ is the more likely meaning, since the LORD met with Moses over the ark and appeared there to the high priest (Exod.25.22; Lev.16.2). The LORD came.

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<sup>13</sup> *Migration of Abraham* 174; Tg.Ps-Jon. Deut.31.6.

<sup>14</sup> C T R Hayward, ‘The *Memra* of YHWH and the Development of its Use in Targum Neofiti 1’, *Journal of Jewish Studies* xxv (1974), pp.412-418, p.418.

The Christians had a similar style of worship: praising and thanking the LORD with music and being filled with the Spirit (Eph.5.19). They thought of themselves as the holy priesthood (1 Pet.2.5), and they too called on the Name of the LORD (Rom.10.12; 1 Cor.1.2). They prayed ‘Come LORD’, *Marana tha* (1 Cor.16.22), to which the LORD responded ‘I am coming soon’ (Rev.22.20). The first Christians knew the LORD as the one who comes, just as he came to his ancient temple. Paraclete would be the Greek equivalent of ‘the one invoked’.

The correspondence between the roles of the Paraclete and the nuances of *zākar* is striking. There was a court officer, ‘the recorder’, literally the one who causes to remember: e.g. Jehoshaphat (1 Chron.18.15) and Asaph (Isa.36.3). There was the context of recollection:

I will call to mind the works of the LORD,

I will surely *remember* your wonders of old... (Ps.77.11)

And there was the context of blessing:

In every place where I cause my name *to be remembered/invoked*, I will come to you and bless you. (Exod.20.24)

If this was the origin of the name, we should expect the Paraclete to cause to remember and to come to help, and this is exactly how John describes him.

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In his farewell discourse on the eve of Passover according to John’s calendar, Jesus described his role leading his new people on their Exodus. Many of the themes of Deuteronomy – Moses’ farewell discourse - occur also in John 13--17, but Jesus teaches his disciples that he is the LORD himself leading his people. He is the LORD and the angel of the LORD. He had come into the world as the Logos incarnate, and was about to return whence he had come. In his place, and after he had departed, the Paraclete would come. John represents accurately what must have been Jesus’ teaching about his future presence with them as the Paraclete: coming from the Father at Jesus’ request, remaining with the disciples and teaching them, bearing witness against the world and showing that the world had been wrong in its judgement. Westcott observed of John 16.7: ‘The departure of Christ was in itself a necessary condition for the coming of the Spirit to men. The withdrawal of his limited bodily Presence necessarily prepared the way for the recognition of the universal Presence.’<sup>15</sup> But the Christians also expected the LORD Jesus to be revealed from heaven ‘with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our LORD Jesus’ (2 Thess.1.7-8). It was the delay in this return from heaven that caused the problems which John addressed in his gospel. The Parousia, he showed, had already happened with the return of the LORD at Easter and coming of the Paraclete.

The new Exodus brought new commandments: Jesus said: ‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father and then he will give you the Paraclete...’ (John 14.15-16). This is an element of Jesus’ teaching similar to something found in the later

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<sup>15</sup> Westcott, op.cit. n.3 above, p.227. ‘Spirit’ here is in fact the word Paraclete.

Merkavah and Kabbalah texts which preserve ancient temple tradition.<sup>16</sup> Early Judaism linked keeping the commandments to the indwelling of the Divine Presence, which had once been in Paradise but left due to human sin. The Presence, that is, the angel of the Presence, was brought down to earth again by good deeds, beginning with Abraham and culminating in the construction of Solomon's temple.

This manifest correlation between human acts and the divine presence must be understood as the result of a theurgical conception of the commandments, whose performance is seen as having substantial bearing on the Divinity; the commandments not only draw it downwards, but also facilitate its indwelling.<sup>17</sup>

So too, the Christians who kept the LORD's commandments enabled the LORD to come to them and dwell in them. The Christians prayed *Marana tha*, and the later Kabbalists had prayers and rituals to bring the Angel of the Presence so that he could reveal the mysteries of heaven and earth and the secrets of wisdom. He was accompanied by the Shekinah or the throne of glory. These revelations took place in a temple setting, and Idel concluded, on the basis of the later Kabbalistic texts: 'We can seriously consider the possibility that the Temple service was conceived as inducing the presence of the Shekinah in the Holy of Holies...'<sup>18</sup> One might add 'and inducing the Angel of the Presence'. In other words, they called on the divine Presence, and even without the title, this was the Paraclete. The Book of Revelation is a much earlier text within the same temple tradition, and John describes the Shekinah as the Bride appearing in clothes of fine linen that were the righteous deeds of the saints; she was proof that the commandments had been kept, and so the Logos, yet another title for the LORD, rode forth to bring the judgement with the sword [of true revelation] in his mouth (Rev. 19.7-8, 13-14).

In his farewell discourse, Jesus told the disciples that he was going to Him who sent him (John 16.5). 'Going', *hupagō*, has the sense of withdrawing and even of withdrawing secretly (also in 16.10, 17; and in 8.14, 21; 13.3, 33, 36; 14.4, 5, 28). John here gave a new understanding of Jesus' departure and the manner of his return, prompted by the delay in the future Parousia. In 'a little while', *mikron*, his disciples would see him no more, and then in a little while, presumably a similar length of time, they would see him again (John 16.16). The emphasis is on the 'little while', and on the disciples not at first understanding what Jesus meant about going to the Father in a little while and then, in a little while, returning.<sup>19</sup>

One problem may be 'he will give you *another* Paraclete to be with you for ever' (John 14.16). Unless Jesus delivered these teachings in Greek, which is unlikely, the word would have been *'ahēr*, another, which is very easily confused with *'ahar*, afterwards. There was a similar confusion when Revelation was put into Greek, resulting in a whole series of mighty angels when in fact some instances of 'another' should be read as 'afterwards' (e.g. Rev. 7.2;

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<sup>16</sup> This paragraph is drawn from M Idel, *Kabbalah. New Perspectives*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988, chapter 7: 'Ancient Jewish Theurgy'.

<sup>17</sup> Idel, p.167.

<sup>18</sup> Idel, p.168.

<sup>19</sup> 'Little while' appears seven times: twice in v.16, twice in v.17, once in v.18, twice in v.19.

10.1; 18.1). This gives not several mighty angels, but several appearances one *after* another of one mighty angel, the Angel of the LORD, whom John called the Paraclete. The Sinai Syriac text was aware of this problem, and renders the verse ‘He will give you Another, the Paraclete’,<sup>20</sup> but such a change does not accord with Jesus’ words that he himself would return.

John did describe a few resurrection appearances, but his main emphasis was on the coming of the Paraclete, the implication being that *this was how Jesus would return and remain with his disciples*. Thus Brown concluded: ‘Virtually everything that has been said about the Paraclete has been said elsewhere in the Gospel about Jesus.’<sup>21</sup> This identification of Jesus as the Paraclete was known to the disciples of Valentinus in the second century CE. Theodotus, according to Clement of Alexandria, said that Jesus was the Paraclete, but that people did not [no longer?] realise the true identity of the Paraclete:

The followers of Valentinus say that Jesus is the Paraclete...

But [the Valentinians] do not know that the Paraclete, who now works continuously in the Church, is of the same substance and power as he who worked continuously according to the Old Testament.<sup>22</sup>

If Jesus was the Paraclete and the Paraclete was the One at work in the Old Testament, this implies that Jesus was the LORD at work in the Old Testament, which is exactly how the New Testament and other early Christian writers understood the pre-incarnation existence of the Second Person. Jesus was recognised and proclaimed as the LORD, that is, as Yahweh incarnate, and so he was the One ‘at work in the Old Testament’. For the first Christians, the LORD was the Son of El Elyon, and Jacob was allotted to him as his special people (Deut.32.8-9).<sup>23</sup> The distinction had been lost when the cultural revolution under Josiah, in the late seventh century BCE, imposed monotheism as it is known in the second temple period. This monotheism was proclaimed by the Second Isaiah – ‘I am El’ (Isa.43.12 (13)) - and adopted by the Jews of the second temple. The identity of Father and Son was lost. The Enoch tradition, however, regarded them as an apostate generation, whose priests had lost their spiritual sight<sup>24</sup>. The earliest ‘Gnostics’ described this monotheism as the Error, and those who held it were the people in darkness who killed Jesus. The error and darkness were because they had lost the knowledge of the Father<sup>25</sup>. The Christians recognised Jesus as the Son of El Elyon, God Most High (Luke 1.32). The distinction between Father and Son was known to Paul (1 Cor.8.6), and he could quote a text written of the LORD and apply it to Jesus (Rom.10.13). The lost Father and Son was a recurring theme in John’s gospel: ‘the Jews’ with whom Jesus spoke in Jerusalem did not recognise Jesus the Son in the Hebrew

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<sup>20</sup> J H Bernard, *The Gospel According to St John*, vol.2, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928, p.545.

<sup>21</sup> R E Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, (1970) 2008, p.1140.

<sup>22</sup> Excerpts from Theodotus 23, 24, in R P Casey, *The Excerpta ex Theodoto of Clement of Alexandria*, London: Christophers, 1934.

<sup>23</sup> Thus 4Q Deut<sup>l</sup> and Lxx Deut.32.9-8.

<sup>24</sup> *I Enoch* 93.8-9

<sup>25</sup> *Gospel of Truth*, CG I.3.17-19

Scriptures (John 5 37-47; 8.19); they did not realise that he had known Abraham (John 8.58); and Isaiah, who had seen the pre-incarnate glory, had predicted that the people would not understand (John 12.37-41).

The earliest Christian writers read the Old Testament this way: Justin [mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century] explained to Trypho that the LORD of the Hebrew scriptures was the Son of the ineffable Father<sup>26</sup>; Irenaeus [late 2<sup>nd</sup> century], the self proclaimed guardian of true teaching, taught that it was the Son who had appeared in the Hebrew scriptures<sup>27</sup>; Novatian [mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century], writing on the Trinity, taught that it was Christ who appeared in the Old Testament theophanies<sup>28</sup>; and Eusebius [early 4<sup>th</sup> century] had made clear the distinction of Father and Son in the Old Testament<sup>29</sup>. There are many examples.<sup>30</sup> This establishes the first identifications: Jesus was the LORD of the Hebrew scriptures, the Paraclete was the LORD returning, and the Paraclete had been at work in the Hebrew scriptures.

Jesus and the promised Paraclete were both the angel of the LORD. Since Deuteronomy has no place for angels, we leave Moses' farewell for a moment and supplement the story with words from Exodus. As the people of Israel prepared to leave Sinai, the LORD said:

Behold I send an angel [my angel]<sup>31</sup> before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my Name is in him (Exod.23.20-21).

The angel of the LORD went before the LORD's people to prepare the way for them (Gen.24.7, 40; Exod.14.19; Exod.33.1-2; Num.20.16). Deuteronomy says it was the LORD himself who went ahead of his people, to find resting places for their tents and show them the way (Deut.1.30-33), just as Jesus promised his disciples: 'I go to prepare a place for you... that where I am you may be also... I am the way, the truth and the life...' (John 14.2-6). Further, Jesus said that his mission had been 'manifesting the Name' (John 17.6), and so he identified himself as the angel of the Presence in whom was the Name. 'The Paraclete whom the Father will send in my name' (John 14.26), - possibly 'with the Name' - echoes the acclamation on Palm Sunday: Jesus as the One coming, *erchomenos*, with the Name of the LORD, as in the hymn in Revelation 4.8. At the time, John observes, the disciples did not understand this, 'but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him.' (John 12.16). The Name was with him, as with the angel of the Exodus, and the Paraclete who would be sent was also the angel with the Name.

The angel of the LORD' is often mentioned in the Hebrew scriptures (e.g. Gen.16.7, 9, 10, 11; Gen.22.10, 15; Exod.3.2; Num.22.21-35; Judg.2.1,4), but in some cases it is not easy to distinguish between the angel of the LORD and the LORD himself. The angel of the LORD

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<sup>26</sup> *Trypho* 126-127.

<sup>27</sup> *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 43-45

<sup>28</sup> *On the Trinity* XVIII

<sup>29</sup> e.g. *Preparation* XI.14; *Proof* I.5.

<sup>30</sup> See my book *The Great Angel. A Study of Israel's Second God*, London: SPCK, 1992, pp.190-212.

<sup>31</sup> The Samaritan, Greek and Latin versions have 'my angel', as does v.23.

who appeared the Balaam (Num.22.21-35), the angel of the LORD who came to destroy Jerusalem when David had conducted a census (2 Sam.24.15-17) and the angel who vested Joshua the high priest (Zech.3.1-10) seem to be distinct from the LORD, but in the story of Hagar the two are not (Gen.16). In Deuteronomy, however, the guiding and protecting angel became the prophet who would succeed Moses.

[The LORD said], ‘I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him’ (Deut.18.18-19).

Childs commented: ‘The tradition of the guiding angel is clearly pre-Deuteronomic, and indicates that an older tradition has been employed for the later homily.’<sup>32</sup> Jesus’ discourse for his new Passover promises himself as the guiding and protecting angel of the older tradition for his new people’s Exodus.

An angel was also a spirit - ‘He makes his angels spirits’ (Ps.104.4, my translation) – and so the angel of the LORD was also the Spirit of the LORD, which came upon David and spoke through him (1 Sam.16.13; 2 Sam. 23.2)<sup>33</sup> The Spirit of the LORD GOD was upon the Third Isaiah (Isa. 61.1), a prophecy that Luke’s Jesus claimed to fulfil (Luke 4.16-21). The Spirit of the LORD spoke through him, just as John’s Jesus said that he did not speak his own words (John 14.10). The ‘Spirit of the LORD’ meant both the Spirit from the LORD but also *the Spirit that transformed the recipient into the LORD*, the Son of God, and so Paul wrote: ‘All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God... When we cry “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God’ (Rom.8.14-16). So too: ‘The Paraclete... the Spirit of truth... he dwells with you and will be in you’ (John 14.16-17).

The Spirit of the LORD, that is, *the Spirit that transformed the human into the LORD*, spoke within the king (2 Sam.23.2; Ps.2.7) and rested upon him to make him wise (Isa.11.2). He received the Spirit of the LORD when he was anointed and enthroned and became the LORD. He had wisdom like the angel of God (2 Sam.14.20). In other words, the Paraclete was within him (c.f. John 14.17). This appears in Revelation as the Lamb/Servant who has seven eyes and seven rays of light [meaning the human figure who has the sevenfold Spirit and the sevenfold light] enthroned and then becoming [One with] the LORD (Rev.5.6, 13). The Davidic king was ‘God with us’ in human form (Isa.7.14). After being anointed by the Holy One, the disciples too would know all things and the truth (1 John 2.20-21, 26-27).

John at first understood that the promised Paraclete would reveal to him the meaning and the future fulfilment of Jesus’ visions:

The Spirit of truth... will reveal to you, *anaggellō*, the things that are coming... He will glorify me, for he will take from what is mine and reveal it to you. All that the Father has

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<sup>32</sup> B S Childs, *Exodus*, London: SCM Press, 1974, p.487.

<sup>33</sup> The Spirit of the LORD also came upon Othniel and Gideon, Judg.3.10; 6.34; upon Saul, 1 Sam.10.6, 24. It gave the gift of prophecy Num.11.24-30; 2 Chron.15.1; 2 Chron.20.14; 2 Chron.24.20-22.



is mine, therefore I said that he takes from mine and reveals it to you' (John 16.13-15, my translation).

What Jesus had first received was 'The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him to show to his servants what must soon take place' (Rev.1.1a). The work of the Spirit of truth in revealing the meaning and the fulfilment of the visions is what follows: 'He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John' (Rev.1.1b). This is the Paraclete by one of his other names: the angel of the LORD. But the Paraclete had another role, causing to remember, and so 'the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that *I have said* to you.' (14.26). He would reveal the meaning of Jesus' teaching after Jesus had left them and 'been glorified' (John 2.22 and especially 12.16).<sup>34</sup>

The letters to the seven churches (Rev.2—3) describe the risen LORD, dressed as a high priest *who calls himself the Spirit speaking to the churches*, and so these are the earliest Christian pictures of the Paraclete. He is:

- The One who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands (Rev.2.1).
- The First and the Last who died and came to life (Rev.2.8).
- The One who has the sharp two-edged sword (Rev.2.12), c.f. Rev.19.15, the sharp sword in the mouth of the Logos.
- The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze (Rev.2.18), c.f. Rev.10.1 the mighty angel with a face like fire and legs like pillars of fire.
- He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars (Rev.3.1).
- The Holy One, the True One, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens (Rev.3.7).
- The Amon, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation (Rev.3.14).<sup>35</sup>

The figure whom John saw as the Spirit speaking to the churches was the heavenly LORD about to emerge and fulfil the words of Deuteronomy 32.43, coming to bring the judgement. Later he saw the same figure, the Logos of God, the King of kings and LORD of lords riding out from heaven to bring judgement (Rev.19.11-16).

This too was a role of the Paraclete, who would convince, *elegchō*, the world about sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16.8-11). The verb here has the sense 'show where it is wrong': about sin, because real sin was not recognising and believing in Jesus; about righteousness, or perhaps better, about the Righteous One, because Jesus was going to the Father and his disciples would see him no more (c.f. Acts 3.14, 21), and about the judgement that would follow. The Paraclete and the disciples would be witnesses to Jesus and would show that he was the Righteous One because he had gone to the Father. The context here is

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<sup>34</sup> This is the only place in John's writings where the Paraclete is identified as the Holy Spirit, and although there is good authority for reading the text as it is, there is also a suspicion that 'Holy' may have been added at an early stage. In all other instances, the Paraclete is the [angel of the] LORD.

<sup>35</sup> *Amon*, not *Amen*, see my *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 2000, p.112.

Enoch's second *Parable*, now much confused through interpolations. It first warns those who deny the Name of the LORD of Spirits [the LORD of Hosts], that is, they do not recognise him.<sup>36</sup> Then Enoch sees how the Son of Man, presumably the Righteous One, is given the Name,<sup>37</sup> and the wisdom of the LORD of Spirits reveals his identity to the holy and righteous ones, but those who do not recognise him are punished 'for they have denied the LORD of Spirits and his Messiah.'<sup>38</sup> Not recognising the Servant, the Righteous One, was a theme in the fourth Servant song (Isa.52.13-53.12).

Several of the roles of the Paraclete show that he was also the Logos. In the Prologue the Presence was described as the Logos incarnate in Jesus, but in the farewell discourse as the Paraclete who would return and dwell with the disciples and in them (John 14.17). They too would become children of God: 'To all who received [the Logos], who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God' (John 1.12); and Paul said: 'All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God... heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ provided that we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.' (Rom.8.14, 17). The Paraclete would be recognised by the disciples (John 14.17): so too the incarnate Logos was recognised by the disciples and the Baptist (John 1.29-51). The Paraclete would be neither recognised nor received by the world (John 14.17): so too the Logos was neither recognised nor received by the world (John 1.10-11; 5.43; 7.7).

In the new understanding, John emphasised that the disciples were already beholding the Face/Presence even though they had not realised this (John 14.8-9). Jesus' soliloquy (John 12.44-50) reflects on his role as the incarnate Logos: 'He who sees me see him who sent me' (John 12.45). As the incarnate Logos he has already come and continues to come 'to be with you for ever' (John 14.16). The Parousia is no longer the LORD returning at some time in the future, and so the prayer *Marana tha*, 'Come LORD' became *Maran atha*, 'The LORD has come.' What is said of the future Paraclete has already been said of the incarnate Logos. The Logos came into the world and his work would continue in as the Paraclete worked through the disciples

The Paraclete will remain with the disciples and in them (John 14.17). The Paraclete *in* the disciples would be equivalent to the claim of David: 'The Spirit of the LORD speaks *by me*, his word is on my tongue' (2 Sam.23.2); and the claim of Zechariah: 'The angel who spoke *within me* said to me....' (Zech.1.9, translating literally). Jesus begged the Jews to recognise from his works who he was, 'that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father' (10.38). The incarnate Logos remained in those who ate his flesh and drank his blood (6.56), and the Truth was within Christians for ever (2 John 2). The Qumran community had a similar belief: the God of Israel and his angel of truth would succour all the sons of light.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *I Enoch* 45.1.

<sup>37</sup> *I Enoch* 48.1-2.

<sup>38</sup> *I Enoch* 48.10.

<sup>39</sup> 1QS III.24.

The Paraclete appears in the writings of Paul as the Spirit who is the LORD: ‘the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is freedom ... for this comes from the LORD who is the Spirit’ (2 Cor.3.17-18); ‘God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts...’ (Gal.4.6); ‘the Spirit of Jesus Christ’ (Phil.1.19). In Acts, the angel/Spirit of the LORD appears frequently in the stories of the early community: releasing Peter from prison (Acts 5.19-21; 12.6-11); telling Philip to go towards the Gaza road where he met the man from Ethiopia, and then taking him away again (Acts 9.26, 39). Agabus prophesied by the Spirit (Acts 11.28); an angel of God came to Paul [in a dream?] and assured him that he would reach Rome safely (Acts 27.23). There are also many references to the Holy Spirit, which raises the question implicit in John’s usage: was there originally a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the LORD/LORD /Spirit of Jesus/ Spirit of his Son? The problem is well illustrated by the visions that determined the course of Paul’s second missionary journey, since we cannot know whether or not these names are synonyms: the Holy Spirit forbade them to go into Asia, the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them into Bythinia, and then a man of Macedonia appeared to Paul in a night vision and asked him to go to Macedonia. Paul understood this as a call from God (Acts 16.6-10).

This variety, one might say confusion, in early descriptions of the Spirit, must have been known to John, whose own usage is precise. He is the only New Testament writer to use the [technical?] terms Logos and Paraclete, which he distinguished from the Holy Spirit in all but one case (John 14.26). The LORD/ the angel of the LORD/ the Spirit of the LORD/ the Spirit of Jesus continued with the Christian community. John represents accurately what must have been Jesus’ teaching about his future presence with them as the Paraclete: coming from the Father at Jesus’ request, remaining with the disciples and teaching them, bearing witness against the world and showing that the world had been wrong in its judgement.

The angel of the Presence was a multiform presence. He revealed to Moses on Sinai all the history of his people and told him to write it down,<sup>40</sup> but the angel then spoke of himself in the plural. ‘We appeared to Abraham at the oak of Mamre (Gen.18) and we talked with him and we caused him to know that a son would be given to him by Sarah his wife.’<sup>41</sup> Now the Hebrew word for presence has a plural form. The LORD, though One, was thought to be a manifold presence, and so the angel of the Presence spoke of himself in the plural. So too in Josephus’ retelling of the LORD appearing to Abraham at Mamre, apparently as three men (Gen.18.1-2). In the biblical text, the LORD/the three men spoke in both singular and plural forms: ‘They said to him... The LORD said...’ (Gen.18.9, 10). Then two of the men went towards Sodom and Abraham remained before the LORD (Gen.18.22). Josephus does not mention the LORD, but says only that Abraham was visited by three angels: one to tell him about the birth of Isaac, and the other two to overthrow Sodom.<sup>42</sup> This means that an

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<sup>40</sup> *Jubilees* 2.1.

<sup>41</sup> *Jubilees* 16.1.

<sup>42</sup> *Antiquities* 1.11.

educated Jew in the time of Jesus could describe the presence of the LORD as three angels and not even mention the LORD. This is how the story came to be told.<sup>43</sup>

The angel(s) of the Presence(s) could thus take several forms simultaneously, and the *Shema* itself recognises plurality within the One LORD: ‘Hear O Israel, the LORD our *’elohîm* is One LORD’ (Deut.6.4). This belief underlies Jesus’ high priestly prayer with which the Passover discourse concludes: the disciples to whom the Paraclete would come and in whom the Paraclete would dwell should all remain One, so that the world would know who they were and whence they came. (John 17.23).

In his use of the title Paraclete, John shows how the Christians preserved the ways of the older temple: the LORD who came to his people and tabernacled with them (John 1.14). As with the nuances of *Memra* in later Jewish exegesis, so too here, the subtleties of the title Paraclete were almost lost when the Church formulated the idea of the Trinity.

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<sup>43</sup> B. *Baba Metzia* 86b, and with different detail in *Genesis Rabbah* L.2.