

TAXO, THE MESSENGER OF THE LORD

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The following article will deal with the *nuntius* in the Assumption of Moses 10,2. In recent years, interest in this figure has been renewed, especially in connection with the figure of Taxo in ch. 9. It has become clear that some relation between the two must exist. However, the exact nature of this relation has never been explained satisfactorily. In the next pages, I shall suggest that Taxo and the *nuntius* are one and the same person¹). Before that, I must mention some of the presuppositions with regard to AssMos (esp. chs. 8-10) which underlie this suggestion. These presuppositions are the outcome of a study of AssMos as a whole, and will be discussed in full in my forthcoming dissertation, a commentary on AssMos.

The circumstances in which the author lived are described in ch. 7. Ch. 8 as well as ch. 9 are depictions of events the author expected to occur in the eschatological time, in the near future. The ruthless "king of the kings of the earth" (ch. 8) is the last enemy of the time of the end, who will seduce the Israelites and force them to commit grave atrocities. His image is largely derived from the traditions that had grown around king Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Likewise, in ch. 9 which speaks about Taxo and his sons, existing traditions (linked to those about Epiphanes) are used. Taxo and his sons, too, are expected to appear in the future, as forerunners of the advent of God's kingdom. Both ch. 8 and 9 seem to reflect the influence of 1 and 2 Maccabees; accordingly, the author of AssMos may have known and read these books.

Since chs. 8 and 9 do not describe events of the past, there is no reason to doubt the literary unity of AssMos, as it has in recent

¹) I will not venture here to explain the *name* of Taxo, only comment on his function in AssMos. It seems quite likely to me that this name is corrupt. Therefore, all attempts to explain the word are bound to be utterly speculative, as the history of research into this name shows.

years been usual to do. The perspective from which AssMos' survey of the past is written is that of a group which regarded itself as the "true" Israel. This group had particular attention for the Temple and it seems that it rejected the cult of the Temple because of its alleged impurity. Notwithstanding the book's continuous denouncement of the priests, the tribe of Levi plays a considerable role in AssMos. The reasons why may be deduced among other things from Taxo's actions.

I

In ch. 9, Taxo is introduced as a "man from the tribe of Levi", who addresses his seven sons, pointing out that the distress that has come over the people (described in ch. 8) is God's punishment for their impiety and sins. He adds that neither he and his sons, nor their ancestors, have ever transgressed the commandments, and that now, while the tyrant tries to force his scandalous measures upon Israel, they should die, rather than transgress God's commandments.

Hoc enim si faciemus et moriemur, sanguis noster vindicabitur coram Domino (9,7), that is:

"For if we will do this and die, our blood will be avenged before the Lord".

One of the problems concerning Taxo is that the sequel to this passage seems to be lacking. What happened to him and his sons? Did they indeed die? If so, were they killed or did they commit suicide? One way or another, Taxo is clearly presented as a suffering righteous one, which leads us expect some kind of personal vindication, as Taxo himself indicates in 9,7. But although his suffering is followed in the text by the advent of God's kingdom and the exaltation of Israel, he himself seems to disappear from the stage, leaving the almost unacceptable impression that there will be no special reward for those who are prepared to die for the sake of the Law.

II

In 10,1-3 the text continues:

(1) *Et tunc parebit regnum illius in omni creatura illius. Et tunc zabalus finem habebit, et tristitia cum eo adducetur.*

(2) *Tunc implebuntur manus nuntii, qui est in summo constitutus, qui protinus vindicavit illos ab inimicis eorum.*

(3) *Exurget enim Caelestis a sede regni sui et exiet de habitatione sancta sua cum indignationem et iram propter filios suos²⁾*

Nuntius is certainly a translation of ἄγγελος, and is taken to mean "angel" by nearly all commentators³⁾, more specifically to denote Michael, Israel's patron-archangel according to Dan 12,1. This interpretation disregards the distinction introduced in Christian Latin between human and heavenly messengers (*nuntius* and *angelus* respectively)⁴⁾—since, however, neither Greek nor Hebrew (*ml'k*) makes this distinction, and in view of the generally poor quality of the Latin version, this is in itself no decisive obstacle to the interpretation of *nuntius* as "angel"⁵⁾. Yet there is no general consensus. M. SCHMIDT and A. MERX⁶⁾ preferred the more general translation "messenger". T. W. MANSON⁷⁾ agreed and identified this messenger with Elijah, "whose function it is to precede the coming of the Almighty" (Mal 3,1. 23f.; Sir 48,10). Others, such as M.-J.

²⁾ The language of the only extant MS of AssMos is Vulgar Latin, that is, written Latin which to a considerable extent is influenced by colloquial Latin. This is especially clear in those cases in which the orthography deviates from classical standards because of pronunciation. Thus, *zabulus* reflects the pronunciation of *diabolus* and *vindicavit* that of *vindicabit*. Another characteristic of Vulgar Latin is the confusion of the cases after prepositions. This we see in 10,3, *cum* with accusatives. Finally, the meaning of the prepositions themselves (especially as prefixes in compounds) was obscured: *adducetur* has the meaning of classical *abducetur*. My commentary will include an extensive linguistic description of the Latin of AssMos. *Tristitia* in 10:1 is the usual emendation of *tristitiam* (caused by misreading the line as *zabulus finem habebit et tristitiam*); *exurget* is the virtually certain supplement of a partially illegible word in the MS.

³⁾ First by A. HILGENFELD, *Novum Testamentum extra canonem receptum*, Leipzig 1866, 2nd edition 1884, p. 134, and G. VOLKMAR, *Mose Prophetie und Himmelfahrt. Eine Quelle für das Neue Testament zum ersten Male deutsch herausgegeben, im Zusammenhang der Apokrypha und der Christologie überhaupt*, Leipzig 1867, p. 46. Many subsequent authors agree with them.

⁴⁾ T. W. MANSON, "Miscellanea apocalyptica", *JThS* 48 (1945), pp. 41-45, p. 43.

⁵⁾ Moreover, it cannot be excluded that the Latin version was made by a Jew, not by a Christian.

⁶⁾ "Die Assumptio Mosis mit Einleitung und erklärenden Anmerkungen", *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments* I, 2, Halle 1869, p. 149.

⁷⁾ O. c., p. 46. Cf. F. HAHN, *Christologische Hoheitstitel. Ihre Geschichte im frühen Christentum* (FRLANT 83), Göttingen 1963, pp. 355f. HAHN, in discussing Elijah's eschatological functions, among which his High Priesthood, denies that Taxo is a priestly Messiah.

LAGRANGE⁸), see in the *nuntius* the "Messiah"; E. STAUFFER⁹) more precisely considers him to be the priestly Messiah as known from Qumran. The last two authors base this identification on the expression *implebuntur manus*, a technical term for the ordination of priests (*ml' yd'*)¹⁰). It may be noted in passing, that identifications with Elijah and with the Messiah have also been made, by other authors, with regard to Taxo!¹¹)

It appears that the assessment of the exact role of the *nuntius* has often been based upon concepts quite randomly selected from descriptions of the course of eschatological events in other texts.

III

Let us consider more closely the possibilities to translate *nuntius* as "angel". The priestly character of the angelic *nuntius* has been variously explained: militarily¹²) or judicially¹³). G. W. E.

⁸) "Notes sur le Messianisme au temps de Jésus", *RB* 14 (N.S. 2; 1905), pp. 481-514, p. 484: "L'image de 'remplir la main' ... conduit à l'idée de l'onction. Il s'agit donc ici d'un Messie préexistant"; cf. E. DE FAYE, *Les apocalypses juives. Essai de critique littéraire et théologique*, Paris 1892, p. 72. Cf. W. LUEKEN, *Michael. Eine Darstellung und Vergleichung der jüdischen und morgenländisch-christlichen Tradition vom Erzengel Michael*, Göttingen 1898, p. 26, who compares AssMos 10,2 with Dan 12,1-3, as well, and comments on the latter passage: "Keine menschliche Macht hilft dazu (sc. the salvation of Israel), kein Messias; die Rettung ist eine rein himmlische That; Michael steht an der Stelle des Messias."

⁹) "Probleme der Priestertradition", *ThLZ* 81 (1956), cols. 135-150; c. 142; STAUFFER also suggested that this priestly Messiah is identical with Elijah as eschatological High Priest (see below, note 27).

¹⁰) As D. C. CARLSON, "Vengeance and Angelic Mediation in Testament of Moses 9 and 10", *JBL* 101 (1982), pp. 85-98 rightly remarks (p. 94), the singular *yd'* is frequently reflected by a plural in LXX. HILGENFELD considered this expression to be merely analogously used for the inauguration of the angel; SCHMIDT and MERX straightforwardly denied that these words are exclusively used in a priestly context and take them to mean the granting of plenipotentiary powers in general (see the etymological explanations in GESENIUS' dictionary, p. 424a).

¹¹) TAXO = *Elia redivivus*: J. JEREMIAS, "Hλ(ε)tax", *ThWNT* II, pp. 934-5; A. S. VAN DER WOUDE, *Die messianischen Vorstellungen der Gemeinde von Qumran*, Groningen 1957, pp. 85f., 248f., Stellingen III; TAXO = Messiah: HILGENFELD; A. HAUSRATH, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*, IV, Heidelberg, ²)1877, p. 77; suffering Messiah: C. LATTEY, "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'", *CBQ* 4 (1942), 9-21; "Vicarious Solidarity in the Old Testament", *VT* 1 (1951), pp. 267-274, p. 274.

¹²) R. H. CHARLES, "The Assumption of Moses", *APOT* II, p. 421; M. DE JONGE and A. S. VAN DER WOUDE, "11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament", *NTS* 12 (1965/1966), pp. 301-326, p. 306.

¹³) E. BRANDENBURGER, *Himmelfahrt Moses*, in: W. G. KÜMMEL, ed., *JSHRZ* V/2, pp. 58-84, Gütersloh 1976, p. 76.

NICKELSBURG¹⁴) regards AssMos 10 as a conflation of various traditional materials, the basic inspirational source being the theophany of Deut 32. The "great" angel¹⁵) is foreign to this Deuteronomistic background and duplicates the function of the theophany. According to NICKELSBURG, this angel, together with Satan's destruction (10,1), Israel's exaltation to the stars (10,9) and its viewing of its enemies underneath (10,10), was derived from traditions also known to Dan 12,1-3. Disparities even within the image of the angel itself show this image to be composite. On the one hand, the angel is pictured as a legal advocate, who will avenge the wrongs done to Israel; this is consistent with his priestly inauguration, which gives him intercessory functions. On the other, his actions are those of a warrior, which clashes with the normal concept of priestly functions. Apart from some general doubts one may entertain with regard to NICKELSBURG's traditio-historical method, it certainly does not explain everything about "Michael's" role in AssMos 10. The disparities NICKELSBURG notes are mainly those between AssMos 10 and the *in concreto* non-existing tradition NICKELSBURG reconstructs¹⁶). Traditions, however, whether they are composite or not, are used intentionally and with a certain meaning, and this meaning must be established.

In an inspiring article, D. C. CARLSON¹⁷) uttered similar criticisms. He states (p. 94): "In common, the various explanations for the idiom in *Test. Moses* 10,2 tend to devalue the priestly character of it or the importance of the priestly background in its present context." CARLSON himself gives full weight to the priestly quality of the *nuntius*-angel. He adduces several texts (from 1 Enoch and Tobit), in which cries for vengeance uttered by suffering righteous ones, or cries for vengeance emanating from innocently spilt blood, are mediated by priestly angels to the Lord (see esp. Tob 12,12. 15; 1 En 9,1-10,3; cf. T. Levi 3,5-6). Likewise, CARLSON suggests, the *nuntius* in AssMos 10,2 conveys Taxo's cry for vengeance to the

¹⁴) *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (HThSt 26), Cambridge (Mass.) 1972, pp. 28-31.

¹⁵) NICKELSBURG erroneously transfers Moses' title *magnus nuntius* in AssMos 11,17 to the "angel" of 10,2.

¹⁶) Cf. the revealing remark NICKELSBURG makes after having concluded that AssMos is independent of Daniel: "[In view of the parallels in Daniel, the failure of the Assumption of Moses to speak of a resurrection is particularly noticeable]" (p. 30; emphasis added).

¹⁷) See note 10.

Lord, who then intervenes. There are weighty objections to this tempting interpretation. The first one is that such mediation is not referred to in the text. As CARLSON admits, TAXO does not really cry for vengeance, only implicitly, when he asserts his confidence in being vindicated, or when he mentions his blood and that of his sons, which may be implied to "cry unto heaven." But it is an implication of an implication to suppose that the *nuntius* should convey such a cry.

More important are the questions that arise from all identifications of the *nuntius* as an angel.

1. All theories produced so far have in common that they fail to explain that AssMos 10,2 is the only instance in this book in which an angel possibly occurs, and that, if the *nuntius* is indeed an angel in this instance, his not very prominent role hardly seems to justify his appearance. It seems that there are no further instances of comparable angelic activity in AssMos¹⁸). The only instance, which CARLSON oddly does not mention, and which comes closest to being such a parallel, is 4,1, where intercessory prayer is performed by *unus qui supra eos est*. The multi-interpretable phrase could indeed refer to a heavenly being. At the same time, it cannot itself be used as support for the proposed solution in 10,2, precisely because of its equivocality.

2. In whatever way one interprets the *nuntius'* activities in 10,2, it makes no sense to ascribe his functions to an angel, when it is said that he is not inaugurated until the moment meant in 10,2. It is only after Taxo's presumed death, even after the advent of God's kingdom, that the *nuntius* receives his priestly ordination. It may very well be that the *nuntius*, if he is an angel, performs his priestly duties only at this moment. But it is difficult to imagine that he receives notice of these duties at the very moment he is to fulfill them. If the angel functions as a judge, or warrior, or mediator, certainly he has done so since primeval times.

3. The translation of *nuntius* in 10,2 should, if possible, take into account the use of *nuntius* in 11,17 as well.

IV

This difficulties justify the search for an alternative interpretation of the *nuntius*/ἄγγελος. This alternative may be found in the book

¹⁸) For various reasons, I have the alleged quotation from the lost conclusion of AssMos in Jude 9 out of consideration.

of Malachi. This prophet reproaches the priests with taking their duties too lightly, and he threatens them with the Lord's fury over their indolence. In contrast to the priests' practice, the prophet recalls the "covenant with Levi"¹⁹), which is characterized by life, peace, fear of the Lord, justice and truth (Mal 2,5-6). In 2,7 it is stated:

"For the lips of the priest should keep knowledge, and one should seek the Law from his mouth; for he is a messenger (*ml'k*, ἄγγελος; the Vulgate translates *angelus*) of the Lord of hosts."

This passage, in connection with AssMos 10,2, immediately calls to mind that in 9,1 it is emphatically said that Taxo belongs to the tribe of Levi (*homo de tribu Levi cuius nomen erit Taxo*), and the possibility arises that with *nuntius* the author means "Levitical messenger of the Lord, namely Taxo". Such an interpretation is corroborated by the following considerations.

1. If one compares the covenant with Levi in Mal 2,5-7 with AssMos 9 on the one hand, and the denouncement of the profane priests in Mal 1-2 with AssMos 5 on the other, it is seen that AssMos takes a stand against the priests similar to that of Malachi, even if somewhat sharper. Truth, righteousness and justice play an equally important role, and the accusation of the pollution of the temple is the same in Mal 1 and in AssMos 5. Not all agreements are literal, and protests against the practices of the priesthood can be heard elsewhere, but I think it is fair to say that Malachi and AssMos in particular have the intensity of tone and the centrality of the theme in common.

2. In all probability, the *ml'k* in Eccl 5,5²⁰) is a priest as well.

¹⁹) Cf. Neh 13,29; Jer 33,21.

²⁰) The Vulgate again translates *angelus*; LXX (and Syr) has θεός (the other Greek versions read ἄγγελος). Most commentators, especially on the continent, agree that a priest is meant; see, for instance, G. WILDEBOER, "Der Prediger", in: *Die Fünf Megillot* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum AT), Freiburg im Breisgau 1899, p. 139; H. BARDTKE, *Prediger* (KAT XVII,5), Gütersloh 1963, p. 120; W. ZIMMERLI, *Das Buch des Predigers Salomo* (ATD 16/1), Göttingen 1980, p. 185. English commentators tend to read "God" or to agree with RASHI, who considered this messenger to be an embassy who collected promised gifts to the temple. Recently, M. V. FOX, *Qohelet and his Contradictions*, Sheffield 1989, p. 212 (cf. J. L. CRENSHAW, *Ecclesiastes* [OTL], London 1988, p. 117), has renewed the thesis that the reading "God" instead of "angel/messenger" is to be preferred, contending that the two readings must be granted equal claim to textual validity, and that from the literary perspective "God" is preferable (more closely paralleling 5,1). However, FOX offers no explanation whatsoever for the emergence of both variants. I suggest to suppose an original *ml'k h'lym*, variously mutilated in the two existing readings.

This goes to show that the title "messenger" may in Ecclesiastes be applied to priests unemphatically, that is, self-evidently.

3. In AssMos itself, *nuntius* is used to indicate a human messenger. In 11,17 Moses himself, the all-excelling figure in AssMos, is called *magnus nuntius*. This is done in a context of intercessory prayer and atonement, priestly functions *par excellence*²¹); in this connection, it should be remembered that Moses was a Levite as well.

4. Finally, the suggested identification of Taxo with the *nuntius* in 10,2 produces a complete and unstrained interpretation of both ch. 9 and 10. Taxo and his sons hold on to the Law, in contradistinction to the other members of their tribe, who have forfeited the right to be called priests (5,4: *qui non sunt sacerdotes, sed servi de servis nati*²²). Rather than transgressing the commandments of the Lord, Taxo and his sons decide to die, expecting that they will be vindicated (9,6-7). Such words of course lead us directly to the martyrological tradition, or at least to the tradition of the suffering righteous one²³). A constituent part of this tradition is that those righteous ones who suffer for the sake of the Law will indeed receive rehabilitation from the Lord. Taxo's, or the *nuntius*' vindication consists of his elevation up on high²⁴) and of his eventual ordination there as a priest, whose first action it is to avenge Israel²⁵) on its

²¹) See H. J. DE JONGE, "Traditie en exegese: de hogepriester-christologie en Melchizedek in Hebreëen", *NTT* 37 (1983), pp. 1-19 (with a summary in German), p. 9.

²²) Rather than indicating especially one or another high priest, this phrase quite generally denounces the entire priesthood, which, through its moral disbehaviour, has defiled the Temple (thus committing what amounts to idololatri), and so has disqualified itself to officiate.

²³) See especially L. RUPPERT, *Der leidende Gerechte und seine Feinded. Eine Wortfelduntersuchung*, Würzburg 1973, and the articles by various authors in J. W. VAN HENTEN (ed.), *Die Entstehung der jüdischen Martyrologie* (SPB 38), Leiden 1989.

²⁴) The Latin phrase *qui est in summo constitutus* should be understood as the rendering of a Greek aorist participle (e.g., ὑψωθείς) and accordingly be translated as "having been exalted up on high", Cf. *coram Domino* 9,7, that is ἐνώπιον or ἔμπροσθεν κυρίου, to be interpreted as indicating the place where vindication will take place (ἐνώπιον and ἔμπροσθεν agree often with *apud* in the Vulgate).

²⁵) One could object that the word *illos* in the phrase *qui protinus vindicavit illos* (10,2) refers more logically to Taxo and his sons, the subject being the *nuntius*, and that, therefore, Taxo cannot be the *nuntius*. It must then be stressed that Israel in AssMos, as in biblical and related literature, functions, so to speak, as a continuous antecedent for "they" and "them". Furthermore, between 10,1-2 and 10,3-10 a certain parallelism may be noted: the advent of God's kingdom in 10,1 agrees with the theophany in 10,3-7; the removal of the devil in 10,1 perhaps agrees

enemies. The exaltation of the suffering righteous ones is very common in the tradition, as is shown by numerous examples provided by KELLERMANN in a recent article²⁶). Hardly less common is the motif that the righteous ones will, after their exaltation, exert authority (judicial or sovereign) over their enemies; cf. Dan 7,17-18; SapSal 3,5; 1 En 95,3; 96,1; often in Early Christianity, with regard to Jesus Christ; cf. also Ps 148,9LXX.

V

Let me briefly sum up the main arguments for the suggested identity of Taxo and the *nuntius* in 10,2. Firstly, the identification of the *nuntius* with an angel involves grave difficulties, which can only be solved by some *tour de force*. Secondly, the use of *nuntius*/ἄγγελος for human messengers of the Lord is attested in various places of the Old Testament: at least once the word is used for a prophet²⁷). The majority of these instances, however, concern priests. It seems, therefore, that in some circles or contexts, "messenger" could be used to indicate priests without further qualification. Finally, the suggested identity greatly enhances our understanding of the "mechanism" of eschatology behind one of

with the destruction of the idols in 10,7; the removal of sadness in 10,1 contrasts with Israel's happiness and joy in 10,8. 10; the exaltation of Taxo in 10,2 is followed by that of Israel in 10,8-9; finally, the revenge on the nations in 10,2 agrees with that in 10,7 and with their humiliation in 10,10. Thus, it is seen that Taxo's death has beneficial consequences for the entire people, as has the death of the Maccabean martyrs in 2 and 4 Maccabees (see J. W. VAN HENTEN, *De joodse martelaren als grondleggers van een nieuwe orde. Een studie uitgaande van 2 en 4 Makkabeën*, Diss. Leiden [1986]), and Jesus' death in Early Christianity (see H. J. DE JONGE, *o.c.*, and M. DE JONGE, "Jesus' Death for Others and the Death of the Maccabean Martyrs", in: T. BAARDA and others (eds.), *Text and Testimony. Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A. F. J. Klijn*, Kampen 1988, pp. 142-151). Accordingly, the vindication of Israel ensues from God's intervention, set in motion by Taxo's death, so that it is correct to say that Taxo *vindicavit illos*, namely Israel. In the Vulgate *vindicare* most often is equivalent with ἐξδικεῖν; with *de (= ab) inimicis* it occurs in Isa 1:24 (LXX: κρῖσιν ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου ποιήσω).

²⁶) U. KELLERMANN, "Das Danielbuch und die Märtyrertheologie der Auferstehung", in: J. W. VAN HENTEN (ed.), *Die Entstehung*, p. 50-75; p. 75.

²⁷) Hagg 1,13; Haggai's concern was of course mainly cultic as well. Another possible instance of the use of "messenger" for a prophet is Mal 3,1; it should be noted that certain currents in rabbinic exegesis came to see this messenger (identified with Elijah on account of Mal. 3,23) as a Levite, and eventually as an eschatological high priest (STRACK-BILLERBECK, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, München 1922-1928. IV, 2: "28. Exkurs. Der Prophet Elias nach seiner Entrückung aus dem Diesseits", pp. 764-798.

the crucial parts of AssMos. Not only is the disturbing appearance of a superfluous angel discarded; but also, the expected personal remuneration for Taxo's faithfulness, which seemed to be lacking, turns out to be present in ch. 10, 1-2, where he is described as being exalted to heaven and finally receiving his rightful (high) priestly ordination. His functions there may be compared to those of figures like Michael, Melchizedek, even those of Elijah or some Messiah, insofar as they are priestly, judicial and eschatological. The relatively large quantity of differing eschatological deliverers with comparable functions, however, should give cause to heed that there is no "orthodox" system by which "Judaism" believed the eschaton would come about. Consequently, there is no definite figure with whom functions that may or may not feature in the process of the end of time can be connected. This goes to say that Taxo-nuntius is not necessarily to be linked to one of these figures.

As an appropriate rehabilitation, his eventual ordination up on high could mean that Taxo, though a Levite, was not a priest during his earthly existence. This comes as no surprise in view of the denouncement of the officiating priests esp. in ch. 5, and of the rejection of the Temple altogether, probably indicated in 4, 8. It would lead, furthermore, to the conclusion that AssMos is a work of a schismatic Levitical group (Taxo being the eschatological leader, the group indicated as "his sons"²⁸). To the existence of such groups witness is borne by the Damascus Covenant and the community of Qumran, although such a group behind AssMos need not be identical to these "Essenes"²⁹.

²⁸) W. FOERSTER, "Der Ursprung des Pharisäismus", ZNW 34 (1935), 35-51, interprets Taxo and his sons in this way: AssMos has a negative view of the Temple cult, connected with "einem ungeschichtlichen Idealbild von einer treu gebliebenen Gruppe" (p. 44). Similarly E. JANSSEN, *Das Gottesvolk und seine Geschichte. Geschichtsbild und Selbstverständnis im palästinensischen Schrifttum von Jesus Sirach bis Jehuda ha-Nasi*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1971, pp. 105-108.

²⁹) After this article had been sent to the printers, I came across a passage from Hecataeus (in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, XL, 3, 5), in which it is said that the Jews hold the high priest to be a "messenger of the commandments of God" ([ἀρχιερέα] νομίζουσιν αὐτοῖς ἀγγελοῦ γίνεσθαι τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ προσταγμάτων). See M. STERN, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, I, Jerusalem 1974, p. 27.