

THE GARDEN OF EDEN: Exegesis, Iconography and Literature



(Harris Brisbane Dick Fund)
(Metropolitan Museum of Art)

January 8-9 1986

Participants include: Jonathan Magonet, Robert Murray (London);
Leon Yudkin, Philip Alexander (Manchester);
John Sawyer, Stephen Lambdin (Newcastle);
Calum Carmichael (Cornell), Richard Roberts
(Durham); Jennifer O'Reilly (Cork);
Gordon Campbell (Leicester);
Adrian Cunningham, Helen Phillips,
Meg Twycross, Deborah Middleton,
Paul Morris (Lancaster).

A Walk in the Garden

Biblical, Iconographical and
Literary Images of Eden

edited by
Paul Morris
and
Deborah Sawyer





**JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
SUPPLEMENT SERIES**

136

Editors

David J.A. Clines
Philip R. Davies

Editorial Board

Richard J. Coggins, Alan Cooper, Tamara C. Eskenazi,
J. Cheryl Exum, Robert P. Gordon, Andrew D.H. Mayes,
Carol Meyers, Patrick D. Miller

JSOT Press
Sheffield

FROM FIG LEAVES TO FINGERNAILS:
SOME NOTES ON THE GARMENTS OF ADAM AND EVE IN THE
HEBREW BIBLE AND SELECT EARLY POSTBIBLICAL JEWISH WRITINGS

Stephen N. Lambden

In this paper an attempt will be made to outline and comment upon some aspects of the significance of the garments of Adam and Eve in the Hebrew Bible and certain postbiblical Jewish writings. Attention will largely be focused upon early Jewish traditions about the nature of the first couple's attire. No attempt will be made to comment upon either the whole complex of early Jewish interpretations of the key text (Gen. 2.25; 3.7; and 3.21) or upon the rich variety of themes and motifs associated therewith in Christian, Gnostic, Hermetic, Manichaean, Mandaean and Islamic sources.

1. The Biblical Texts

Modern biblical scholars have, on the whole, neglected the importance and interrelationships of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 for the understanding of the opening chapters of Genesis. Considerable attention has been paid, for example, to the motif of the 'serpent' and to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil but the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs usually receive disappointing or cursory treatment. When Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 are read in sequence, they indicate a threefold transition in the status or condition of the first couple of central importance, that is, (1) an initial nakedness and unashamedness, to (2) being clothed in fig-leaf 'aprons', and then (3) being clothed in 'coats of skins'. That the importance of these verses in their Genesis context has been largely unrecognized is doubtless in large measure due to Genesis 2–3 having been much written about by scholars consciously or unconsciously predisposed to read them in Christian terms; the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs being relatively unimportant in the history of Christian biblical exegesis and theology. If, from the

modern scholarly standpoint, it is right to pay more attention to the exegetical implications of the abovementioned texts in their narrative setting, the case cannot here be argued in detail. It must suffice to outline my own conclusion as to the general significance of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 without registering the plethora of scholarly opinions about the Genesis story of the first couple.

Genesis 2.25

And the man and his wife were both naked (עירומים) and they were not ashamed (יחבשש).

In this verse we are informed about the first couple's initial, Edenic state: their 'nakedness' and 'unashamedness'. The implication appears to be that human relationships were originally stable, dignified and innocent. Without mundane wealth or the status that comes from initiation into civilized ways, humankind existed in a world untroubled by fear, hatred or scorn, in a harmonious and obedient condition. With Gen. 2.25 the scene is set for a mythic presentation of the emergence of sophisticated or civilized man who stands, in view of his limitations, in need of God's guidance and blessings.

It is unlikely that Gen. 2.25 is to be understood in terms of the narrative of the first couple being directly indicative of the emergence of human sexuality. Since 'nakedness' in the Hebrew Bible usually refers to the loss of human and social dignity the primordial 'nakedness' and 'unashamedness' most probably indicates that human relationships were originally characterized by innocence and mutual trust and respect before God.

Genesis 3.7

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked (עירומם) and they sewed fig leaves (תאנא) together and made themselves aprons (חגורת).

Gen 2.25 clearly points forward to Gen. 3.1-2, and particularly to Gen. 3.7 which describes the consequences of the first couple's eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Since the forbidden tree most probably symbolizes the whole range (טוב ורע, Gen. 2.17; cf. 3.22) of human wisdom/experiences potentially contrary to the divine purpose (cf. Gen. 2.16), the first couple's eating of the fruit of this tree may be taken to indicate their turning away from God in order to attain a

limited human sophistication (cf. Gen. 3.7a)—which meant the loss of the primordial innocent dignity. Human wisdom outside of obedience to God, it may be gathered, disturbs peaceful human relations and the divine-human relationship. Even when initiated into the ways of the world, humankind ever stands in need of God. This need is underlined by the folly of the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' (Gen. 3.7b).

It is important for the understanding of Genesis 2–3 to note that the very first act of the first couple after eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree was the making of fig-leaf 'aprons'. Modern commentators are generally disappointing in explaining the significance of this act—if indeed, it is commented on at all. The view that the first couple made specifically fig-leaf 'aprons' because of the leaves of the fig tree, being the largest on any Palestinian tree, were most suitable for sewing together and making 'aprons', is not very convincing. Also inadequate is the view that the first couple made fig-leaf 'aprons' because the forbidden tree itself, allegedly being a fig tree, provided them with the necessary material. Rather, it seems to me, the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' is an indication of the fact that, despite their becoming sophisticated or wise as a result of eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, they were still so foolish as to imagine that they could adequately cover their 'nakedness'. Gen. 3.7b points to the folly of the first couple and also, perhaps, in terms of the sexually suggestive associations of the fig tree, to the dangers of participation in fertility cults and rites. Humanity, we learn, despite attaining a certain level of sophistication, remains in need of the divine guidance. The folly of the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' is to be contrasted with the wisdom of God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21).

Genesis 3.21

And the Lord God made for the man and for his wife coats of skins
(כִּטְמוֹת עוֹר) and he clothed them.

Commentators on Genesis 2–3 sometimes maintain that Gen. 3.7b stands in some 'tension' with Gen. 3.21; the first couple having made fig-leaf 'aprons' before God makes the 'coats of skins'. If this alleged 'tension' is not to be explained on the basis of a source-critical theory it may highlight the importance of the contrast between the foolish act implied at Gen. 3.7b and the divine wisdom indicated in Gen. 3.21.

The final form of Genesis 2–3 at least invites some explanation of this ‘tension’. As much uncertainty surrounds the exact meaning of words in the Hebrew Bible indicative of items of clothing, it is difficult to tell whether ‘aprons’ (חגורת, Gen. 3.7; alternatively, ‘loincloths’, ‘girdles’ or ‘sashes’?) signifies a less adequate means of attire than is implied by ‘coats’ (כתנות, Gen. 3.21; alternatively, ‘tunics’, ‘robes’, or ‘shirts’?), although this is possible. The fact, however, that the ‘aprons’ were made of fig leaves and the ‘coats’ of animal skins may indeed highlight the folly of the first couple as compared with the superior wisdom of God. Despite their acquisition of human wisdom, the first couple lacked even the knowledge of how to clothe themselves adequately. Their fig-leaf ‘aprons’ served no real purpose. In their ‘shame’ the first couple still found it necessary to hide from God (Gen. 3.8).

God’s making of the ‘coats of skins’ may be viewed, then, as an expression of his superior wisdom, his awareness of the real needs of his creatures in view of the imminent expulsion from the Garden. The first couple’s limited sophistication will not adequately fit them for mundane post-Edenic existence, although God accepts humankind as it is and caters for its real needs.

Several modern commentators have understood Gen. 3.21 on these lines. Attempts to set forth the significance of this and the other verses discussed above have, however, often been obscured by obviously eisegetical statements informed by Christian teaching. Genesis 2–3 is not, it seems to me, primarily about ‘sin’, ‘guilt’ or ‘emergent sexuality’ in terms of a ‘fall’ but has to do with the emergence of human wisdom potentially capable of upsetting the God–humanity relationship. The taking into account of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 tends to support this level of interpretation.

Finally in this connection it should be noted that it has been popular to see in Gen. 3.21 and sometimes also Gen. 3.7 an aetiological note on the origin of human clothing. Skinner for example, in the *ICC Commentary on Genesis*, wrote (of Gen. 3.21), ‘Another detached notice on the origin of clothing’. Although the author(s) of Genesis 2–3 may have been heir to popular aetiological traditions, Gen. 3.7 and 3.21 have a more profound contextual significance in terms of human folly and the divine wisdom and providence.

2. *Early Jewish Adam Speculation and the Garments of Adam and Eve*

While references to the first couple are few in the Hebrew Bible out-

side Genesis, postbiblical Jewish literatures contain a great deal of Adam speculation. In Genesis, Ezekiel 28 and Psalm 8, Adam receives a measure of glorification, but his exaltation is much more marked in a wide range of early Jewish writings. Eve, also, may play a role quite different from that of the bearer of sin and death. The sources suggest that by about the first century CE, Adam came, in certain circles, to be seen as a royal, kingly, angelic or divine figure who manifested something of the divine 'glory' (כבוד, δόξα) and who exercised primordial priestly functions.

Adam's being pictured, in the probably Maccabaeian and so-called 'Second Dream-Vision of Enoch' (1 En. 85-90) as a 'white bull [cow]'; his initial angelic, glorious and royal status in the longer recension of 2 *Enoch* ('J', 30.11-12); and the striking references to his radiant 'glory' (δόξα) in both the long and short recensions of the *Testament of Abraham* ('A' and 'B'; 1st-2nd cent. CE) are important testimonies to the early exaltation of the first man. The two early and related 'Adam Books', the *Life of Adam and Eve* and the (mistitled) *Apocalypse of Moses*—possibly two versions of a single original written (in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek?) between c. 20 BCE and 70 CE (?)—also make reference to the initial 'glory' of the first couple and contain passages which indicate that the righteous (symbolized by Adam) will eventually inherit the splendid 'glory' of the first man. In the Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch* (3 *Baruch*; 1st-3rd cent. CE?), it is presupposed that Adam possessed an initial 'glory'; he is said to have been divested of the 'glory of God' (in the form of a garment?) after having partaken of the forbidden vine tree planted by the demoniac Samuel (= Samael; Slavonic has Satanael; see 3 *Bar.* 4.16).

The motif of the divine 'glory'/'honour' (כבוד) is of considerable importance in the theology of the Qumran Scrolls. The *Damascus Document*, *Community Rule* and one of the Qumran hymns make explicit reference to the 'glory of Adam' (כבוד אדם) which the probably Essene 'sons of Zadok' hoped to inherit in eschatological times (see CD 3.20; 1QS 4.23; 1QH 17.5; cf., also, 1QS 4.16, 24; 4Q171 3.1-2). It is a commonly held scholarly viewpoint that the Qumran Jews expected to receive (or had already in a certain measure proleptically received) a share of the 'glory' (כבוד) lost (?) by Adam. Qumran eschatological expectations were influenced by the belief that primordial conditions would be renewed at the eschaton, a notion that has biblical roots.

The early exaltation of Adam and the motif of his initial 'glory'

appears to be intimately connected with the various postbiblical references to his (and sometimes Eve's) 'garments of glory' which pious Jews hoped to receive at the eschaton. Adam's allegedly angelic and priestly status is also closely connected with this complex of ideas.

a. *Adam's Primordial Priesthood and his Garments*

The exaltation of Adam as a priestly figure has contributed to the picture of his being clad in special radiant or glorious garments. A number of passages within the pseudepigraphical corpus and in early rabbinic midrashim speak of the first man as exercising priestly functions. Early sources suggest that the concept of the priesthood of Adam played a greater role in early postbiblical Judaism than extant literatures indicate.

Of interest in the attempt to trace the origins of the notion of Adam's primordial priesthood and glorious garments are Ezek. 28.13 (LXX) and Ben Sira 49.16; 50.1ff. Ezek. 28.11-12 is the only text in the Hebrew Bible that reflects royal ideology, first-man mythology and which came to be understood in terms of garment imagery. At Ezek. 28.13 (MT) we read, in the course of a lament over the hybris of the Tyrian king: 'You were in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering' (RSV; כֹּל-אֶדָם יְקָרָה . . . מִסִּכָּחֶם). Although it is not certain that these words originally referred to a jewelled garment worn by an Edenic figure, both the LXX and the Ezekiel Targum (possibly containing tannaitic traditions) are on these lines. The LXX (Greek) version transforms the nine precious stones listed in the Hebrew (MT) into the twelve set on the high-priestly breastplate according to Exod. 28.10-11 (and Exod. 39.10-11). This interpretative version of Ezek. 28.13 is certainly suggestive in terms of the roots of the notion of Adam's priesthood and 'glorious garments'. The Ezekiel Targum lists nine precious stones (like the Hebrew) but has it that they were set upon a garment: 'every precious stone was set upon your garment' (כָּל אֲבִנֵּין מִבְּן מִסְדֵּר עַל לְבִישְׁךָ). In rabbinic literature, furthermore, Ezek. 28.12-13 is related to the idea of Adam's wisdom and to the first couple's clothing: the jewels formed a kind of glorious bridal canopy which contributed to the splendour of Eve's bridal attire (see *Gen. R.* 18.1; *Eccl. R.* 7.3; *Lev. R.* 20.2; etc.).

The book of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus; c. 180 BCE) makes reference at 49.16 to the 'glorious beauty of Adam' (Heb. תִּפְאָרָה). Immediately following this text is a fairly lengthy glorification of the High Priest,

Simon son of Onias (50.1ff.). Ben Sira very probably meant to exalt Simon the High Priest in the light of Adam's primordial priesthood and in view, perhaps, of his own priestly lineage and 'proto-Sadducean' orientation. It is significant that at Ben Sira 50.11, Simon's glorious high-priestly garments are mentioned: 'When he put on his gorgeous vestments, robed himself in perfect splendour, he added lustre to the court of the sanctuary'. Like Adam as pictured in various postbiblical literatures, Simon wears the robe of splendour. Worth noting in this connection also is the fact that the Hebrew word expressive of Adam's 'glorious beauty' (תפארת at Ben Sira 49.16b) is used of the Aaronic high-priestly garments at Exod. 28.2, 40 (along also with the word 'glory' [כבוד]). S. Brock, in a note to a consideration of the origin and significance of the 'robe of honour/glory' in early Syriac literature, writes: 'In Ben Sira 50.11 the "robe of glory" is the priestly robe of Aaron and Simon; the terminology will be derived from Adam's priesthood'.

Various traditions found in the pseudepigraphical writings and in rabbinic literature are also of interest in connection with Adam's primordial priesthood and glorious garments. *Jubilees* 3, for example, has it on the basis of Gen. 3.21 that Adam only made sacrifices to God after he had 'covered his shame'. The mention of the first couple's 'garments of honour/glory' (לבושין דסקר) in the Targums to Gen. 3.21 (*Targ. Onq*; 1TJ.; 2TJ.; *Targ. Neof.*) may presuppose the legend that Adam's garments were glorious priestly garments which were handed down. Adam's having handed down his priestly garments is explicitly mentioned in rabbinic midrashim (see *Num. R.* 4.8.; *M. Tanh.* on Gen. 3.21; etc.) and possibly alluded to in the (so-called) *Apocalypse of Moses* (1.3) where Cain is named *Adiaphotos* (MS 'D'), 'one devoid of light' (?) and Abel *Amilabes* (MSS 'A' and 'D') which may be a garbled transliteration of the Hebrew for 'he who dons the garment [of light]' (מטיל לבש) or the like).

There are then, to sum up, passages in postbiblical Jewish literatures that identify Adam's garments as priestly or high-priestly garments of a splendid or glorious nature.

b. *Angelology and the Garments*

Although there are few passages in postbiblical Jewish writings that explicitly identify Adam's garments as angelic robes, there are a good many texts that speak of angelic beings—as well as certain biblical worthies—as being clothed in radiant or white robes. There are like-

wise texts in which it is predicted that the righteous will come to be clothed in radiant garments or be transformed into the likeness of the angels. Particularly interesting in connection with the question of early notions about the garments of Adam are passages in the Qumran *Manual of Discipline* (1QS) and the Syriac *Apocalypse of Baruch* (2 *Baruch*; early 2nd cent. CE ?).

In that part of the *Manual of Discipline* in the 'glory of Adam' (כבוד אדם) is mentioned (4.23) it is promised that the righteous who walk in the 'true spirit' will, at the eschatological visitation, partake (among other things) of 'a crown of glory (כליל חבור) and a garment of majesty (מדת הדר) in unending light (אור עומים)'. This passage may well reflect Qumran protology and its attendant Adam speculation in terms of the anticipated angelic status of the pious. 2 *Baruch* 51 describes the eschatological splendour of the righteous who have been justified in God's law, mentioning their celestial glory, splendour, light and beauty. They are to be transformed into radiant angelic beings.

The Rabbis were interested in the exalted Adam as a kind of portrait of the righteous and gave considerable importance to the correct estimation of his status; particularly since the first man had come to be so exalted in certain Jewish, Christian and Gnostic circles that biblical monotheism seemed to be endangered. Adam's likeness to the angels is not often spelt out in rabbinic literature. As far as I am aware only one obscure and possibly interpolated passage in *Genesis Rabbah* (21.5) likens Adam to an angelic being, Gabriel, in connection with his having special angelic-type garments which were part of his own being. This is not to say, however, that the motif of Adam's glorious garments is unrelated to the splendid robes of heavenly angels. Although Adam's glorious garments were very seldom directly identified as angelic robes, many texts indirectly suggest that this motif was originally intimately related to Adam's paradigmatic exaltation to the status of an angelic being with an Edenic glory in terms of early Jewish eschatological hopes.

In the light of the above it may be said that the motif of Adam's garment of glory mentioned in the Targums, rabbinic and other Jewish sources is very probably rooted in the notion of the primordial priesthood of the first man and in eschatologically oriented and angelologically informed views of his glorious status as a paradigm of the righteous in the world to come. By the first century CE, Adam was, in certain Jewish circles, regarded as an exalted priestly figure

and one initially in an elevated angelic state. The Jewish yearning for immortality, partly born out of the Maccabaeen crisis and related to the influence of Iranian/Zoroastrian and Hellenistic streams of thought, led to Adam's being viewed as one clothed in glorious priestly attire or in angelic garments of immortality. Whether or to what extent such texts as the *Descent of Ishtar* or Iranian and proto-Gnostic first-man mythology contributed to the Jewish motif of Adam's glorious garments is an issue which cannot be fully discussed here.

3. *The Garments of Adam and Eve* in the Intertestamental Pseudepigraphical Writings

Two of the intertestamental pseudepigraphical writings, the *Book of Jubilees* (100-150 BCE ?) and the *Apocalypse of Moses* (cf. above) contain passages of interest in connection with the matter of the garments of Adam and Eve.

The *Book of Jubilees* contains the earliest extant postbiblical midrashic treatment of the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs. According to *Jubilees* 3 an Edenic seven-year period of the 'nakedness and unashamedness' of the first couple came to an end when the serpent tempted Eve. Having eaten of the forbidden fruit, she 'covered her shame' before giving Adam to eat. On eating, Adam 'took fig leaves and sewed [them] together and made an apron for himself and covered his shame' (3.21.2; see Gen. 3.7). That Eve is said to have covered her shame before proffering the forbidden fruit to Adam hints at a reserved attitude towards nakedness which becomes explicit in the midrashic treatment of Gen. 3.21.

Jub. 3.23-24 follows the Hebrew text of Gen. 3.14-15 fairly closely. Gen. 3.21 is accurately reproduced (3.26a). We learn that Adam, now clothed in 'coats of skins', made an incense offering (cf. Exod. 30.34-35; etc.) with the 'rising of the sun' from the day when God 'covered his shame' (3.28). This, as already noted, is indicative of an early interest in Adam's primordial priesthood. According to Exod. 20.26 priests must not appear naked at the altar but be clothed, among other things, in 'coats' (כְּתוּנֹת; cf. כְּתוּנֹת עֹר, 'coats of skins', Gen. 3.21).

The consequences of the disobedience of the first couple are commented on in *Jub.* 3.28-29. All moving things were scattered over the earth 'unto the places which had been created for them'. The animals were deprived of their powers of speech and, according to *Jub.* 3.30,

'to Adam alone did he [God] give (the wherewithal) to cover his shame, of all the beasts and cattle'. God did not make 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21) for the animals. It is fitting that men cover their 'shame' but the case is different with respect to the animals whose 'shame' (private parts) is naturally exposed. This line of thought and the rationale behind it is partly unveiled in *Jub.* 3.31 where we read: 'On this account, it is prescribed on the heavenly tablets as touching all those who know the judgment of the law, that they should cover their shame, and not uncover themselves as the Gentiles uncover themselves'. Here we have a unique midrash on Gen. 3.21 in the form of a condemnation of Gentile nudity; in all likelihood a pious Jewish and anti-Hellenistic condemnation of the nudity accompanying Greek athletics. Jews who took part in Greek athletics (see 1 Macc. 1.10ff.) may have argued, in view of Adam's initial nakedness, that their nudity was nothing untoward. Alternatively, *Jub.* 3.28ff. may have been intended to counter the various manifestations of sacral nudity that were common in the Graeco-Roman world. Being 'prudish in the highest degree', Jews did not generally share with their Hellenistic neighbours the notion of the natural beauty of the naked human body.

Apocalypse of Moses 15–30 is a lengthy narration by Eve of the story of the first couple (not paralleled in *LAE*). Reference is made to their loss of the Edenic 'glory' (δόξα). The fig-leaf garment episode is expanded upon, although there is no reference to God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21).

According to *Apocalypse of Moses* 15–19, Eve, having been induced by the serpent to eat of the tree poisoned by Satan's wickedness, is divested of her 'righteousness' (δικαιοσύνη) or 'glory' (δόξα). Mention is made of the 'glory' (δόξα) in which she was clothed (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.2). The realization of 'nakedness' (Gen. 3.7) is interpreted in terms of the first couple's realization of their loss of the 'righteousness/glory' in which they had been clothed.

As soon as Eve realized her 'nakedness', she sought, in her own section of the Garden, leaves with which to cover her 'shame'. She quickly became aware that, as a result of her folly, all the Edenic trees save the fig tree had showered down their leaves (see *Apoc. Mos.* 20.4). It was thus from the forbidden fig tree that she made herself a 'girdle' (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.5). Having 'covered her shame', Eve persuaded Adam to eat of the poisoned fruit, promising to show him a 'great secret' (*Apoc. Mos.* 21.1).

As soon as he ate of the fruit he too 'knew his nakedness' and

lamented his being deprived of the 'glory of God' (δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ; *Apoc. Mos.* 21.6). Adam was initially clothed in the very 'glory of God'. Although this was lost, we are not explicitly told in *Apocalypse of Moses* 15–30 that Adam 'covered his shame' with fig leaves. There is no mention of God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21), although Adam is allowed to take fragrant herbs out of paradise for the purpose of making an offering to God (*Apoc. Mos.* 29.1ff.).

To sum up, *Apocalypse of Moses* 20–21 teaches that Eve covered her 'shame' by making a girdle from the forbidden fig tree. It is indicated that both Adam and Eve were initially clothed in divine 'glory' (δόξα = כבוד) which seems to have been a kind of garment (although this is not explicit).

4. From Philo to the Rabbis and Samaritans

In addition to the postbiblical materials touched upon above there exists a rich variety of interpretations of Gen. 3.7 and 3.21 in certain of the works of Philo of Alexandria (died c. 45 CE ?), in the various streams of targumic tradition, in some rabbinic and later midrashic compilations and in writings expressive of Samaritan theology. Only a selective and brief indication of the materials contained in these sources can be given here.

a. *Philo* offered two sexually oriented explanations of the first couple's choice of fig leaves for making of 'loincloths' (Gen. 3.7). They chose fig leaves because: (1) the fig is sweet and pleasant to the taste like the sensual pleasure of coition, (2) the leaves of the fig tree are 'rough' like the 'pain' that accompanies and surrounds sexual intercourse (= psychosexual trauma not unrelated to female menstruation and childbirth [?]; see *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.41–42; cf. *Leg. All.* 2.79–80). The fig had sexual connotations in the ancient Jewish world and to an even more marked degree in Graeco-Roman antiquity. For Philo (on one level) Gen. 3.1ff. indicated that the 'senses' (= the woman) seduced the 'mind' (= the man) as a result of the inclination to pleasure (= the serpent) which led to a loss of innocence (unabashed 'nakedness') and the rise of limited human opinion. Gen 3.7 points to the sexual and sensate nature of human existence (see *Leg. All.* 2.79–80). In reply to those who 'ridicule the text', Philo taught that God at Gen. 3.21 meant to give mankind an example by indulging in the humble work of tailoring. When he underlined the preciousness of the

apparently cheap, animal 'coats of skins' he may have been polemicizing against such as gave weight to Orphic, Bacchic or Pythagorean traditions about the impurity of garments made from animal flesh or products (the polluting nature of woollen garments as opposed to those made of fine linen; cf. *Gen. R.* 20.12; *b. Sot.* 14a). His symbolic interpretation of Gen. 3.21 is summed up at *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.53b where he reckons that the 'tunic of skin' symbolizes the natural skin of the human body. Having formed the 'First Mind' (= 'Life' or Eve; see LXX Gen. 3.20) it was necessary that God make a 'body' (= the 'tunic of skin', Gen. 3.21b) through which these faculties could interrelate or operate (see *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.53; cf. 4.1 on Gen. 18.12). In interpreting Gen. 3.21 in this way, Philo was doubtless influenced by the LXX rendering of 'coats of skins' (χιτῶνας δερμῆτινους) and by Greek philosophical ideas about the body being the 'garment' (χιτῶν) of the soul. Interesting variations on this mode of exegesis are to be found in early ('heterodox') Syrian Christian literatures, in Patristic writings, Mandaean, Manichaean, Samaritan and Hermetic texts as well as at one point in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Nid.* 25a).

b. *The Targumim* are, loosely speaking, Aramaic translations of passages or books of the Hebrew Bible which may or may not be interpretative or haggadic and contain tannaitic (pre-2nd cent. CE) Jewish traditions. Much that is of interest is to be found in the targumic versions of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 in the following major streams of targumic tradition: *Targum Onqelos*, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (= 'The Targum of Jerusalem'), *The Fragment Targum* and *Targum Neofiti*.

Neither *Targum Onqelos*, *The Fragment Targum* nor *Targum Neofiti* diverge radically from the Hebrew text in their translation of Gen. 2.25 and 3.7. Nothing is said about any initial ('pre-Fall') 'glory/honour' (קָדַשׁ; cf. Ps. 49.12 [13]) or special garments in which the first couple were clad. The markedly more haggadic *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen. 2.25 and 3.7 not only suppresses the notion of the first couple's 'nakedness' (Gen. 2.25) by speaking of their 'wisdom' but leads us to believe that they had an initial 'glory/honour' (קָדַשׁ) which they were soon to lose (*Targ. Ps.-J.* to Gen. 2.25). At Gen. 3.7, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* also implies that the first couple were initially clothed or created in (lit.) 'nail-skin garments' (לבוש טופרא) which most likely originated in an attempt to interpret

Gen. 3.21 (the 'coats of skins'; applied to the Edenic or 'pre-Fall' period; cf. *Gen. R.* 18.6). We learn about the post-Edenic attire of the first couple in all four of the streams of targumic traditions mentioned above. At Gen. 3.21, *Targum Onqelos*, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, *The Fragment Targum* and *Targum Neofiti* all make mention of the 'garments of glory/honour' (לְהוֹשִׁין דִּיקָר; *Targ. Neof.*, לְבוּשִׁין דְּאוֹקָר) of the first couple. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen. 3.21 alone has it that the 'garments of glory/honour' were made from the 'skin cast off by the serpent' (cf. *PRE* 20; *Midr. Teh.* 1 on Ps. 92.1). It seems likely that the snake-skin garments tradition was originally distinct from that about the 'garments of glory/honour' for, far from their being 'glorious' or 'worthy', they may have been intended to indicate that the inclination to evil was rooted in the fleshly body. Further traditions about the post-Edenic transmission of Adam's priestly or glorious garments are found in certain of the targumin to Gen. 27.15 and 48.22 as well as in rabbinic and other Jewish sources.

c. *Rabbinic literature* contains a considerable amount of tradition about the initial 'glory' and garments of Adam and Eve. While Gen. 2.25 seems not to have engaged the minds of many among the ancient Rabbis (cf. *Gen. R.* 18.6), some did regard the forbidden tree as a fig tree (this is not explicit in Genesis) which provided the material for the first couple's making of fig-leaf garments (see *Gen. R.* 15.7; *PRE* 20). Gen. 3.7 neither indicates that the first couple were initially blind or that they both wore the same kind of fig-leaf garments (*Gen. R.* 19.6). The act of making fig-leaf garments was taken by some Rabbis to be a sign of their repentance (fig leaves being 'rough'). Clear evidence exists that some Rabbis interpreted Gen. 3.21 in terms of the Edenic and not post-Edenic attire of Adam and Eve (see *Gen. R.* 18.6), which throws light on the tradition that the first couple were originally clothed in 'nail-skin garments' (so *Targ. Ps-J.*) or in 'garments of light' (see below).

Rabbinic interpretations of Gen. 3.21 may be loosely classified in the following manner: (1) *moralistic interpretations*: God's act of making the 'coats of skins' is an object lesson for mankind (see *Gen. R.* 20.12; *b. Sot.* 14a); (2) *somatic interpretations*: here the 'coats of skins' are in one way or another seen to be indicative of or connected with the human body (see *b. Nid.* 25a; cf. on Philo above); (3) *naturalistic interpretations*: concern is here focused on the nature of the mundane material from which the 'coats of skins' were made, or

where God got the material from (see *Gen. R.* 20.12; the 'skins' of *Gen.* 3.21 being taken literally and [usually] in animalistic terms); and (4) *supernaturalistic interpretations*: traditions in which the garments of Adam and Eve are pictured as having been glorious, radiant or luminous or the like; obviously not unrelated to the traditions about the priesthood or angelic status of the first man (see above).

It must suffice at this point to note the following supernaturalistic-type interpretations of the 'coats of skins' of *Gen.* 3.21. Rabbi Isaac the Elder reckoned that the garments of Adam and Eve were 'as smooth as a fingernail and as beautiful as a precious stone [or pearl]' (*Gen. R.* 20.12; cf. the 'nail-skin' garments of *Targ. Ps.-J.*). In *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezar* (14.20), mention is made of the radiant or glorious garments of Adam; a 'skin of [finger] nail' and a 'cloud of [radiant] glory' covered him until he ate of the forbidden tree (cf. *Targs.* to *Gen.* 3.21; *ARN* [B]). It is recorded in *Gen. R.* 20.12 that the Torah of Rabbi Meir (fl. c. 150 CE)—like certain MSS of the so-called *Severus Scroll* (a 1st cent. CE source of popular variant readings [?])—read 'coats of light' (כְּתוּנֹת אֹר) in place of 'coats of skins' (כְּתוּנֹת עוֹר; *Gen.* 3.21). Explanatory glosses have it that Adam's garments were 'garments of light' in that they were 'like a torch' (shedding light [?]; less probably, 'like a rue' or bushy plant) or 'broad at the bottom and narrow at the top' (tapered like a torch or skin tight and translucent [?]). The reading 'garments of light' may have arisen in late Second Temple times in circles influenced by 'proto-Gnostic' Adamology or Iranian first-man mythology (cf. *Gen. R.* 3.4. *Zohar* 1.36b and the *Shi'ur Komah* traditions) and have been encouraged by the general weak pronunciation of Hebrew gutturals around the first century CE (pronouncing *aleph* for the 'ayin in the Hebrew for 'skins' as if the text read 'light'.

In his *Legends of the Jews*, V, p. 103 n. 93 [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955] Ginzberg drew attention to a probably early and 'unknown Midrash' recorded in mediaeval Jewish sources to the effect that the first couple's garments were made from the skin of Leviathan, a creature which figures in a rich variety of myths and traditions recorded in ancient Near Eastern and biblical texts as well as in certain rabbinic, Christian, Gnostic, magical and other ancient literatures. This tradition is of considerable interest in the light of Leviathan's being pictured in rabbinic sources as a creature of great glory (see for example *Pes. K.* [1876 on *Job* 41.7]; *b. B. Bat.* 74b) and the possibility that there existed an early (tannaitic

[?]) branch of Jewish mysticism surrounding Behemoth and Leviathan (reflected in such Gnostic texts as the cosmological Diagram of the Ophians mentioned in Origen's *Contra Celsum* [6.25] [?]) There appears to be some connection between rabbinic Adam speculation and the traditions about Leviathan. Garment imagery and eschatological themes are connected with this complex of traditions. Finally, but by means exhaustively in this connection, it should be noted that there are rabbinic traditions about the pre-existence and handing down of Adam's glorious (sometimes priestly) garments (cf. above).

d. *Samaritan literatures* contain an Adam-Moses typology in which the first man is given an exalted primordial status in the light of the glory of Moses' prophethood. In such texts as the *Molad Moshe* ('The Birth of Moses', 12th cent. CE [?]) but reflecting much earlier traditions), Adam's initial splendour is adumbrated in terms of the pre-existent light of Moses which was the light of creation (Gen. 1.3). According to the Samaritan *Malef* (14th-18th cent. CE, again containing ancient traditions), Adam had no 'evil impulse' (*yetzer ha-ra*) before his expulsion from Eden and both he and Eve were clothed in the primordial light. It was in consequence of the evil Belial's seduction of Eve that they were divested of their light garments and came to be clothed in the 'coats of skins' or fleshly bodies wherein resided the 'evil impulse'. Pious Samaritans who observe the Mosaic law will overcome the death sentence (Gen. 3.19), subdue the 'evil impulse' and ultimately be clothed in the garments of light lost by Adam. While the *Memar Marqeh* (early 4th cent. CE [?]) attests the tradition about Adam's Edenic luminosity and speaks about the primordial light being transmitted down through a chain of ancestral saints to shine in its fullness in Moses (cf. Exod. 34.29-30; see 2.10; 5.23; 6.3-4), the Samaritan *Asatir* (= *Chronicle I*; early mediaeval [?]) teaches that both the rod and garments of Adam were received by Moses (9.22; cf. the Syriac *Book of the Bee* 30). A number of Samaritan works including the *Hilluk* ('Way of Life', 15th-16th cent. CE [?]) have it that the pious will enter the eschatological Eden and, like Adam, be clothed in angelic glory and splendour.

Concluding Note

It has been seen that, apart from some interesting interpretations of Gen. 2.25 and 3.7, early postbiblical Jewish literatures contain a

variety of traditions about the nature of the garments of Adam and Eve (or Adam alone) which came to be associated with or grew out of attempts to clarify Gen. 3.21. Ancient Babylonian and/or Iranian (Zoroastrian) traditions about the splendid garments of various kings, heroes and gods probably contributed to the emergence of those Jewish traditions that picture Adam's garments as being in one way or another garments of light or glory. The early Jewish exaltation of Adam to (high-) priestly and/or angelic status was doubtless also important in this respect. The sources discussed above contain the following traditions about the nature of Adam's/the first couple's garments: (1) the first couple were initially clothed in 'glorious garments' (or less probably, 'worthy garments') or in the the divine 'glory', 'lustre' or 'splendour', in a 'cloud of glory'; (2) Adam's garments were (high-) priestly garments which were handed down; (3) the first couple were clothed in the primordial light or in 'garments of light'; (4) the garments of the first couple were made from the shining skin of Leviathan; (5) the first couple were initially clothed in 'nail-skin' garments perhaps with the implication that their clothes were smooth, tight-fitting, pearly, translucent and luminous, jewel-like or perfumed (?); (6) the first couple's 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21) were their fleshly skin or physical bodies; (7) the post-Edenic garments of the first couple were made from the skin and/or wool of either the goat, hare, lamb/sheep or weasel, or from (fine) linen. It even came to be supposed, in view of the tradition that the first couple were initially clothed in 'nail-skin garments' (seen as a bright integument or fingernail-type coat of light), that the only post-Edenic trace of the primordial clothing is the human fingernails, gazed at at the termination of Sabbaths and Festivals in the *habdalah* light.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailey, J.A., 'Initiation and the Primal Woman in Gilgamesh and Genesis 2-3', *JBL* 89 (1970), pp. 137-50.
- Bowker, J., *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).
- Bowman, J., *The Samaritan Problem* (Pittsburg: Pickwick Press, 1975).
- 'The Doctrine of Creation, Fall of Man and Original Sin in Samaritan and Pauline Theology', *Reformed Theological Review* 19 (1960), pp. 65ff.
- Brock, S., 'Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources', *JJS* 30 (1979), pp. 212-32.

- Charles, R.H. (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).
- Charlesworth, J.H. (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (New York: Doubleday, 1983).
- Ginzberg, L., *Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955).
- Lachs, S.T., 'Some Textual Observations on the Apocalypse of Moses and the Vita Adae et Evae', *JSJ* 13 (1982), pp. 172-76.
- Macdonald, J., *The Theology of the Samaritans* (London: SCM Press, 1964).
- Quasten, J., 'A Pythagorean Idea in Jerome', *American Journal of Philology* 63 (1942), pp. 207-15.
- Scroggs, R., *The Last Adam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).
- Skinner, J., *Commentary on Genesis* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963).
- Smith, J.Z., 'The Garments of Shame', *HR* 5 (1966), pp. 217-38.
- Snaith, J.G., *Ecclesiasticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).
- Vermes, G., *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Pelican, 1968).
- Westermann, C., *Genesis* (Biblicher Kommentar Altes Testament, 1.1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974).