

The Old Testament in Byzantium



DUMBARTON OAKS BYZANTINE SYMPOSIA AND COLLOQUIA

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# The Old Testament in Byzantium



*Edited by Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson*

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The major renovations at Dumbarton Oaks from 2003 to 2008 prompted Alice-Mary Talbot, then Director of Byzantine Studies, to explore other venues and other times for symposia and colloquia. Early in this period plans were afoot to hold a major exhibit of Bible manuscripts at the Freer Gallery of Art, which holds a small but important collection of early Greek Bible manuscripts, seldom seen in public. The planned exhibition inspired Dr. Talbot to form an alliance with the Freer and Sackler Galleries, to hold a concomitant symposium on the Bible. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, Senior Fellows of Dumbarton Oaks, continued the planning of that symposium with Dr. Talbot's help. The Freer's impressive exhibit, "In the Beginning: Bibles Before the Year 1000," displayed more than threescore early manuscripts of the Bible, in many languages, loaned from collections around the world. The Dumbarton Oaks symposium, "The Old Testament in Byzantium," held 1–3 December 2006 in the Meyer Auditorium of the Freer Gallery, shared in the success of that exhibit, and has resulted in this eponymous volume.

As always, Dr. Talbot was gracious and efficient in shepherding the papers delivered at that symposium into the published material that makes up the volume in hand. We are grateful for her aid in this and so many other scholarly endeavors in the past. We also wish to remember the hospitality of the Freer and the Sackler and Dr. Ann Gunter, then the Curator of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Head of Scholarly Publications and Programs at the Galleries, and to thank the staff of the Publications Department at DO for their meticulous care in converting talk into print.

This is the second volume in the series Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Symposia and Colloquia. The first, published in 2009, was *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, edited by Alice-Mary Talbot and Arietta Papaconstantinou. Other volumes in progress include *San Marco, Byzantium, and the Myths of Venice* (edited by Henry Maguire and Robert Nelson), and *Trade and Markets in Byzantium* (edited by Cécile Morrisson).

*Paul Magdalino*  
*Robert Nelson*



## The Old Testament and Monasticism

DEREK KRUEGER

Christian monasticism claimed an Old Testament heritage from its very beginnings. Already in the fourth century, Athanasios of Alexandria described how Antony the Great gained knowledge of his own life from “the career of the great Elijah, as from a mirror.”<sup>1</sup> Jerome, who had practiced monasticism in Syria and observed it in Palestine, reported that some regarded the prophet Elijah to have been the first monk.<sup>2</sup> A monk’s retreat from society, the restriction of diet, and the renunciation of family reprised the lives of Old Testament prophets. In monastic conversation and literature from the fourth century on, biblical figures represented qualities that monastics might invoke in the cultivation of Christian ascetic virtues. Monastic theologians allegorized Old Testament stories for insights into the Christian’s movement toward God and salvation. Monastic liturgies revoiced Old Testament texts from the Psalms and the canticles in worship, while other biblical verses provided words to say in times of trouble. The Old Testament thus shaped the monastic imagination, monastic identities, and the rhythms of devotion.

In all these processes, Byzantine monasticism also reshaped the Bible. Christian monastics systematically and consistently read biblical narratives through the lens of their own rigorous practice.<sup>3</sup> The Old Testament was refigured,

1 *Vie d'Antoine*, ed. G. J. M. Bartelink (Paris, 1994), 154 (chap. 7; and see 155 n. 2); trans. R. C. Gregg, in *The Life of Antony and the Letter to Marcellinus* (New York, 1980), 37.

2 *Life of Paul* 1, see also 13. Edition: W. Oldfather et al., *Studies in the Text Traditions of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum* (Urbana, 1943), 36–42. In later centuries, the prophet’s ascent to heaven prompted the dedication of numerous monastic foundations to Elijah throughout the Byzantine Empire. R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 143–46.

3 See E. A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, 1999).

however improbably it might seem to modern readers, as an ascetic text, licensing and endorsing the renunciation of sexuality in particular. The Old Testament was used selectively, creating a canon within the canon. In addition to the Psalms, which monks chanted during the devotional offices throughout the day, monks regularly heard only those stories and prophecies of ancient Israel that were included in the lectionary, the cycle of liturgical readings. Despite Epiphanius of Cyprus's teaching that "reading the Scriptures is a great safeguard against sin," and that "ignorance of the Scriptures is a precipice and a deep abyss,"<sup>4</sup> only the more learned monks engaged in scriptural study of complete biblical books. Compilations of excerpts deemed useful to cenobitic life, called florilegia, appeared from the eighth century onward; they drew most heavily from the wisdom books: the Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiasticus (Sirach).<sup>5</sup> Monastic literature frequently extolled Old Testament heroes for their virtues without reference to the stories in which these virtues were practiced. Monks participated in a culture of biblical reference that used the Old Testament as it was useful to the practice of monasticism.

This chapter considers the place of the Old Testament in Byzantine monastic culture in the early and middle periods—that is, from the fourth through the seventh century and from the eighth through the twelfth century—primarily among men, charting how monks employed the Old Testament as a tool for understanding and participating in the monastic life. The foundational writings of early Byzantine monasticism, some of which would take on a canonical status of their own, established the patterns for the deployment of Old Testament characters, stories, and texts. The *Apophthegmata patrum*, the *Longer Rules* of Basil of Caesarea, and the Macarian homilies, for example, contain references to the Old Testament that would typify Byzantine monastic discourse for centuries to come. In monastic foundation documents, in hagiography, and in the writings of major monastic theologians, various patterns of biblical reference employed in these early and classic texts continued in use through later antiquity and the middle Byzantine period.

4 *Apophthegmata patrum* (hereafter *AP*) Epiphanius 9 and 10 (PG 65:165); trans. B. Ward, *The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetic Collection* (Oxford, 1975), 58. For an introduction to the *AP*, see W. Harmless, *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford, 2004), 167–273.

5 M. Richard, *Opera minora* (Leuven, 1976), vol. 1, parts 1–5.

*The Sayings of the Fathers and the Illustration of Virtues*

The heroes of the Old Testament provided Byzantine monks with models that they might strive to emulate. Biblical figures such as Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel embodied the practices and modes of being that monasticism valued. A passage from the late fifth-century anthology of sayings of earlier desert fathers demonstrates how Old Testament worthies could serve to indicate key virtues.

A brother questioned an old man saying, “What good work should I do so that I may live?” The old man said, “God knows what is good. I have heard it said that one of the Fathers asked Abba Nisteros the Great, the friend of Abba Anthony, and said to him, “What good work is there that I could do?” Abba Nisteros answered, “Are not all [good] deeds equal? Scripture says that Abraham was hospitable and God was with him. Elijah loved interior peace [ἡσυχία] and God was with him. David was humble, and God was with him. So, do whatever you see your soul desires according to God and guard your heart.”<sup>6</sup>

As this passage from the alphabetical series of the *Apophthegmata patrum* illustrates, biblical heroes played important roles in shaping early Byzantine monastic moral teaching.<sup>7</sup> A patriarch, a prophet, and a king exemplify fundamental monastic virtues: hospitality, quietude, and humility. Abraham and perhaps especially David might seem odd exemplars for a form of life requiring the renunciation of the world and a commitment to celibacy, and Elijah’s period of solitary withdrawal might not seem an obvious model for men living stably in

6 *AP* Nisteros 2 (PG 65:305–6; trans. Ward, 154, modified). The saying appears also as *AP*, *Systematic Collection* 1.18. Edition: J.-C. Guy, *Les Apophthegmes des Pères: Collection systématique*, 3 vols., SC 387, 474, 498 (Paris, 1993–2005). The literary compilation of the *Apophthegmata* likely occurred in the final decades of the fifth century, possibly in Palestine. The alphabetic collection appears to have been assembled first, after which a subsequent redactor collected many of the same and other sayings into the systematic collection, arranged topically by key virtues. Pelagius (later Pope Pelagius I) began a Latin translation of the systematic collection in the 530s; a Syriac translation dates from 534. See Guy, *Apophthegmes*, 1:23–35, 79–84; L. Regnault, “Les Apophthegmes des pères en Palestine aux Ve–VIe siècles,” *Irénikon* 54 (1981): 320–30; C. Faraggiana di Sarzana, “*Apophthegmata Patrum*: Some Crucial Points of their Textual Transmission and the Problem of a Critical Edition,” *StP* 29 (1997): 455–67.

7 On the role of the Bible in the *Apophthegmata*, see D. Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York, 1993); for a brief discussion of this text, see p. 168.

community with each other and thus having a different set of expectations and realities. For the purpose of moral instruction, however, these biblical figures have been reduced to the virtues they exhibited at individual moments in their story: Abraham is brought forward for his hospitality to the three divine visitors in Genesis 18; Elijah for the inner peacefulness exhibited in his stints alone in the wilderness at the brook called Cherith and at Mount Horeb in 1 Kings 17 and 19 when “the Lord came to him”; and David for the humility of his self-abasement after the murder of Uriah the Hittite in 2 Samuel 12.

Perhaps the saying attributed to Nisteros assumes an audience familiar with the entirety of each biblical story, but the text requires familiarity only with those incidents in which the men of the Old Testament exhibit their key virtue. Or perhaps it requires no such familiarity at all. In Abba Nisteros’s saying, each biblical hero stands free of his narrative to embody a single virtue. In an anthology devoted to teaching monastic virtues, the heroes of the Old Testament point neither to themselves nor to their narratives but to a way of Christian life.

As Nisteros’s invocation of biblical exemplars suggests, the holy men of the Old Testament provided early Byzantine monks a lens through which they might understand themselves and their ascetic goals. Even in the absence of significant direct quotation of Old Testament verses, the *Apophthegmata* reveal an extensive culture of biblical reference, in which the monks read themselves and their monastic forebears in the image of biblical heroes. At the same time, the monks reread the biblical narratives as a repository of monastic ideals. In fact, the saying attributed to Nisteros establishes not one but two parallel strands of tradition. The first invokes biblical exemplars: Abraham, Elijah, and David; the second traces a chain of monastic transmission, backward from the late fifth-century written compilation, to a story about a brother questioning an older monk, and then through an oral tradition (“I have heard it said”) to Nisteros, a friend of Antony, himself remembered as the founder of monasticism.<sup>8</sup> To illustrate godly virtues the text both reveals and entwines these two sorts of authority: the wisdom of the desert fathers and the examples of the biblical heroes. Within the anthology, biblical heroes and monastic heroes stand side by side, inhabiting and exhibiting the same virtues. Indeed, in a book on the role of Scripture in the desert tradition, Douglas Burton-Christie has argued, “because the words of the leaders were valued so highly in the desert, there was no clear

8 On the significance of the chains of transmission in a great number of the *Apophthegmata*, see *ibid.*, 78–79.

distinction between the words which came from the sacred texts and the words which came from the holy exemplars.”<sup>9</sup>

The intertwining of the biblical and the monastic within the *Apophthegmata* is even more clearly observable in a saying about Abba John the Persian.

Someone said to Abba John the Persian, “We have borne great afflictions for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Shall we inherit it?” The old man said, “As for me, I trust [πιστεύω] I shall obtain the inheritance of Jerusalem on high, which is written [ἀπογεγραμμένην] in the heavens. . . . Why should I not trust? I have been hospitable like Abraham, meek like Moses, holy like Aaron, patient like Job, humble like David, a hermit like John, filled with compunction like Jeremiah, a master [διδάσκαλος] like Paul, full of faith like Peter, wise like Solomon. Like the thief, I trust that he who of his natural goodness has given me all that, will also grant me the kingdom.”<sup>10</sup>

John catalogues a long list of biblical figures and their virtues. Once again Abraham is remembered for his hospitality, and David for humility. This highly reductive technique distills each personage to a single and differentiable virtue. John’s list of biblical worthies includes figures from both the Old Testament and the New, and not in canonical or chronological order. John the Baptist appears between David and Jeremiah, and Solomon follows both Paul and Peter. Thus while Old Testament figures may tend to predominate in the monastic invocation of biblical exemplars, they do so as part of a larger biblical repository of moral instruction. In the absence of narrative context and order, the biblical exemplars inhabit a nearly timeless realm, a gallery of ancient holy men who stand iconically for cardinal elements of Christian moral life.

In contrast to the biblical figures invoked in his speech, John the Persian himself, however, practices not one but all their virtues. He represents the entire canon of biblical morality in a single person. The text does not seem concerned that John the Persian’s statement might be boastful, manifesting the vices of pride or vainglory. Instead it represents the frank confidence of a self-reflective monk who with God’s help has taken instruction from the biblical narrative to learn how to live in accord with God’s command. The text is just as interested to present John the Persian as an exemplar as it is to promote any of the biblical

9 Ibid., 108.

10 *AP* John the Persian 4; trans. Ward 108, modified.

figures. The saying asserts that the proper practice of monasticism re-enacts and re-presents all the modes of biblically sanctioned behavior.

David's moral complexity became particularly useful for monastic spiritual development. Rather than ignoring David's lack of chastity, monastic teachers cited David's penance after unchastity as a potent model for the disciplining of the monastic self. Another saying in the *Apophthegmata* demonstrates how David's example might be profitable: "A brother asked Abba Poemen, 'What shall I do, for fornication and anger war against me?' The old man said, 'In this connection David said, "I pierced the lion and I slew the bear" [cf. 1 Sam. 17:35–36]; that is to say: I cut off anger and I crushed fornication with hard labor."<sup>11</sup> This persistent interest in David's penance and humility in the face of inner turmoil also appears in the seventh century in Maximos the Confessor's *Chapters on Love*: "Humility and distress free man from every sin, the former by cutting out the passions of the soul, the latter those of the body. The blessed David shows that he did this in one of his prayers to God, 'Look upon my humility and my trouble and forgive all my sins [Ps. 24:18].'" Here David's psalm provides in a verse a model for penitence that the monk could—and did—regularly repeat.<sup>12</sup>

The *Apophthegmata* and their invocation of Old Testament worthies as exemplars of key virtues had a very long afterlife in Christian monasticism. The Latin translation carried out in the 530s by Pelagius and John of the systematic sayings collection soon influenced Western monasticism. In Byzantium, the complexity of the manuscript tradition of both the alphabetical–anonymous collection and the systematic collection attests the copying, reading, reuse, redaction, and rearrangement of these materials in monasteries throughout the empire. There was no one version of the text, but rather multiple dossiers of the sayings of the fathers.<sup>13</sup> In the eleventh century, Paul Evergetinos (died 1054) included a significant portion of these sayings in a massive new anthology of earlier Christian ascetic literature for the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis outside the walls of Constantinople. This compilation, known as the *Synagoge* or *Evergetikon*, tremendously influenced subsequent Byzantine monasticism and survives

11 *AP* Poemen 115; trans. Ward, 184, modified. For a parallel, see *AP Systematic Collection* 5.11 (ed. Guy).

12 *Chapters on Love* 1.76. Edition: Maximos the Confessor, *Capitoli sulla carità*, ed. A. Cerasa-Gastaldo (Rome, 1963); trans. G. C. Berthold, in Maximos Confessor, *Selected Writings* (New York, 1985), 43.

13 On the manuscripts leading to the editio princeps, see J.-C. Guy, *Recherches sur la tradition grecque des Apophthegmata Patrum* (Brussels, 1962). See also J. Wortley, "The Genre and Sources of the *Synagoge*," in *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh-Century Monasticism*, ed. M. Mullett and A. Kirby (Belfast, 1994), 321.

in more than eighty copies.<sup>14</sup> Paul transmits from the *Apophthegmata* many sayings that invoke Old Testament exemplars, thus ensuring the persistent impact of the *Apophthegmata*'s pattern of citing Old Testament figures for their individual virtues.<sup>15</sup>

Invocations of Old Testament precedents, although they persisted in the literature we have just considered, are not common in the monastic foundation documents known as *typika*, which lay out the rules and character of individual monastic communities. When such references do occur, they suggest familiarity with the patterns and style of the *Apophthegmata* or other literature of the patristic period. In some cases they restate the commonplace that Elijah and John the Baptist were the founders of monasticism. For example, Isaac Komnenos's twelfth-century *typikon* for the Kosmosoteira monastery—citing an oration of Gregory of Nazianzos—envisions the monastic ideal as “Elijah’s Carmel and John’s [the Baptist’s] desert.”<sup>16</sup> In a similar vein, the thirteenth-century *typikon* of the Monastery of St. Neophytos on Cyprus includes a prayer to be recited for a new leader, or “recluse,” calling on Christ, “who strengthened and shed thy grace on Elijah of Tishbe in the old days and more recently upon John thy Forerunner and Baptist so that they led the solitary and eremitic life and achieved the angelic life on earth (emulating their life and following on their footsteps were Antony, Euthymios, Onouphrios and their companions).”<sup>17</sup> This same *typikon*, where it requires a full, regular reading of the monastery’s rule and canons, cites Moses’s practice of regular oral recitation of the Law (Deut. 31:11) and mentions how Josiah rent his clothes after hearing the law and realizing that his peo-

14 Paul Evergetinos, *Συναγωγή τῶν θεοφθόγγων ῥημάτων καὶ διδασκαλιῶν τῶν θεοφόρων καὶ ἁγίων πατέρων*, ed. V. Matthaiou, 4 vols. (Athens, 1957–66). An English translation is in press: *The Evergetinos: A Complete Text*, trans. Chrysostomos et al. (Etna, CA, 1988–). A second English translation is in progress at Queen’s University, Belfast as part of the British Academy Evergetis Project. See R. Jordan in *BMFD*, 2:454–55; J. Richard, “Florilèges spirituels grecs,” *DSP* 5 (1964): 502–3. See Wortley, “Genre and Sources,” 306–24; B. Crostini, “Towards a Study of the Scriptorium of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis: Preliminary Remarks,” in *The Theotokos Evergetis*, ed. M. Mullett and A. Kirby, 177–78. For a number of studies of the source material for the *Synagoge*, see *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis 1050–1200*, ed. M. Mullett and A. Kirby (Belfast, 1997).

15 For the use of Old Testament examples in sayings culled from the tradition of the *AP*, see for example *Synagoge* 1.40.33 (cf. *AP Systematic Collection*, ed. Guy 7.46); 1.45.18 (cf. *AP* John the Dwarf 20); 1.45.38 (cf. *AP* Poemen 71); 2.15.10 (cf. *AP* Poemen 178); 2.22.16 (cf. *AP* Sisoës 23). A full study of the use and effect of the Bible in the *Synagoge* would further illuminate the place of Old Testament exemplars in middle Byzantine monastic literature.

16 Kosmosoteira 29; *BMFD*, 2:801; see Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 14.4 (PG 35:861).

17 Neophytos 14; *BMFD*, 4:1356.

ple had gone astray (2 Kings 22:12).<sup>18</sup> The typikon thus functions like the Torah (Νόμος) and in a peculiar way comes to substitute for it.

The commonplace of Abraham's hospitality continued to serve as a model, although the variety of uses to which the typika put him suggests no single way to interpret his philanthropy. In one case, the biblical patriarch offers a type for the monk who might also "receive God in his soul";<sup>19</sup> in another, he provides an example for how the hospice host might maintain his fasting and abstinence while showing "appropriate hospitality . . . do[ing] as Abraham, the archetype of hosts," who did not eat with his guests.<sup>20</sup>

The evidence of the apophthegmatic literature and the infrequent references to Old Testament figures in the typika affirm that one of the primary ways monks encountered the Old Testament was through stock invocation of biblical figures as exemplars of monastic virtue. One result was that monasticism acquired an enduring biblical veneer, such that the practice of asceticism and the cultivation of virtue engaged in a reprise of biblical narrative: the monk formed himself in the image of biblical heroes. A second result was the reflexive reconception of the Bible as a monastic text: monks found the Old Testament relevant to the extent that it contributed to the monastic way of life.

### *Old Testament Models in Monastic Hagiography*

The tendency to see monasticism as a reenactment of biblical modes of life features prominently in early Byzantine hagiography, where the citation of biblical precedents serves as an apologia for the veneration of Christian saints.<sup>21</sup> In his *Religious History*, written in the 440s, Theodoret of Cyrrihus associates the Christian holy men and women of northern Syria with a wide variety of biblical heroes. He compares the hermit turned bishop James of Nisibis with six Old Testament figures, including Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, as well as with the apostles, especially Peter, and with Christ himself.<sup>22</sup> His treatment of Symeon the Stylite compares the saint's origins as a shepherd to Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and Micah; he compares his fasting to the fasting of Moses and Elijah. Theodoret

18 Neophytos 11; *BMFD*, 4:1354.

19 Eleousa (eleventh century) 15; *BMFD*, 1:185.

20 Roidion (twelfth century) [B]8; *BMFD*, 1:433.

21 See for example D. Krueger, "Typological Figuration in Theodoret of Cyrrihus's *Religious History* and the Art of Postbiblical Narrative," *JECrSt* 5 (1997): 393–419, reprinted in *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004), 15–32.

22 *Religious History* 1. Edition: *Histoire des moines de Syrie*, ed. P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Molinghen, 2 vols., SC 234, 257 (Paris, 1977–79).

explains Symeon's innovative practice of standing on a pillar by asserting its continuity with the peculiar asceticisms of the biblical prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Ezekiel.<sup>23</sup> The *Syriac Life of Symeon the Stylite* associates Symeon's fasting with Moses, Elijah, and Daniel, and implicitly connects his ascending the pillar with Moses on Sinai and Elijah in the chariot.<sup>24</sup> Drawing correspondences between events in the biblical narrative and in the lives of the saints, hagiography reread monasticism through the lens of the Bible.

Occasionally authors of monastic hagiography would shape an entire hagiographical narrative on the account of a biblical hero, as in the case of John Rufus's late fifth- or early sixth-century *Life of Peter the Iberian*. Throughout the work, John stresses how Peter's deeds reenact events in the life of Moses. The allusions go beyond the standard invocations of Moses' asceticism to include his journey toward the Holy Land and his visit to Mount Nebo. Peter's life becomes a recapitulation of Moses's. At a key point in the narrative, Peter visits Moses's tomb.<sup>25</sup> Such efforts result in an integration of the biblical narrative and the monastic saint's *Life*. This level of intertextual correspondence stresses the biblical character of monastic heroes and thus governs and shapes perceptions of monasticism for hagiography's audiences, both monastic and lay. In a mirroring way, the Old Testament came to be regarded as a hagiographical text, that is, as a text that told of the holy men of old.<sup>26</sup>

The Old Testament books of histories and the prophets were not the only parts of Scripture recapitulated in monastic literature. Ascetic wisdom might also reprise or extend biblical books of wisdom. The early fifth-century *Life of Synkletike* presents that ascetic mother's teaching as biblical in character. She humbly instructs the community of women that she leads to regard Scripture as sufficient nourishment in a life of rigorous fasting. "We draw spiritual water from the same source; we suck milk from the same breasts—the Old and the New Testaments."<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile the author of her biography presents the saint's own teaching as an expansion of biblical wisdom literature, especially Proverbs.

23 Ibid. 26.

24 *Syriac Life of Symeon the Stylite* 108 (trans. in R. Doran, *The Lives of Simeon Stylites* [Kalamazoo, 1992], 176–77); and *Syriac Life of Symeon the Stylite* 41–42 (trans. Doran, 125–26).

25 John Rufus, *Petrus der Iberer: Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen- und Sittengeschichte des fünften Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1895). For an excellent discussion of Mosaic themes in the text, see B. Bitton-Ashkelony and A. Kofsky, *The Monastic School of Gaza* (Leiden, 2006), 62–81.

26 See Krueger, *Writing and Holiness*, 30–31.

27 *Life of Synkletike* 21 (PG 28:1500); trans. in E. B. Bongie, *The Life and Regimen of the Blessed and Holy Teacher Synclitica* (Toronto, 1996), 19. For a discussion of this aspect of the text, see Krueger, *Writing and Holiness*, 144–46.

While other authors presented the saints as latter-day prophets and miracle workers, this anonymous male author invoked the model of the Old Testament sage to portray his monastic heroine. The *Life of Synkletike* proved popular in subsequent centuries, and Paul Evergetinos excerpted a significant percentage of the text in his *Synagoge*, thus ensuring that monastic teachers could be seen in the model of biblical wise men.

The connection to biblical figures could also function more statically, abstracted from biblical action and teaching. Hagiographers trained their audiences to see the Bible in monks' faces.<sup>28</sup> The anonymous late fourth-century author of the *History of the Monks of Egypt* relates that the hermit John of Diolkos "looked like Abraham and had a beard like Aaron's."<sup>29</sup> One finds such comparisons in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* as well, where Abba Arsenios's appearance is "angelic, like that of Jacob," and Abba Pambo "was like Moses, who received the image of the glory of Adam when his face shone."<sup>30</sup> The fragmentary Coptic *Life of Makarios of Alexandria* (24) remembers that the saint was "gentle like Moses [Num. 12:3]."<sup>31</sup> Engaging in what Georgia Frank has called "biblical realism," hagiography asserted that the world of the Bible continued to live on in the world of Christian ascetics.<sup>32</sup>

After the seventh century, sustained reference to Old Testament figures in Byzantine hagiography became less common; however, incidents in monastic saints' lives continued to provide opportunities for comparison with Old Testament figures. Thus, the eighth-century *Life of David of Thessalonike* compares him to Elijah and contrasts the empress Theodora's treatment of David with Jezebel's persecution of the prophet.<sup>33</sup> In the eleventh-century *Life of Symeon the New Theologian*, when the young mystic surpasses his elders in asceticism and

28 G. Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2000), 134–70. For Old Testament overtones in Christian monasticism in the Egyptian desert, see C. Rapp, "Desert, City, and Countryside in the Early Christian Imagination," in *The Encroaching Desert: Egyptian Hagiography and the Medieval West*, ed. J. H. F. Dijkstra and M. van Dijk (Leiden, 2006), 93–112.

29 *History of the Monks of Egypt* 26. Edition: *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, ed. A.-J. Festugière, SubsHag 53 (Brussels, 1971).

30 *AP* Arsenios 42; trans. Ward, 97 (parallel in the *Systematic Collection* 15.11). *AP* Pambo 12; trans. Ward, 197. Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 160.

31 T. Vivian, trans., *Four Desert Fathers: Pambo, Evagrius, Macarius of Egypt, and Macarius of Alexandria: Coptic Texts Relating to the Lausiac History of Palladius* (Crestwood, NY, 2004), 162.

32 See Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 29–33.

33 *Leben des Heiligen David von Thessalonike*, ed. V. Rose (Berlin, 1887), 16.31. David lived in the fifth century. See A. Vasiliev, "The Life of David of Thessalonica," *Traditio* 4 (1946): 123.

becomes their leader, Niketas Stethatos compares Symeon's precociousness with that of the "great prophet Daniel."<sup>34</sup> The travails of Daniel and the three Israelite boys continued to fascinate. Their song (Dan. 3:35–65 LXX) had been chanted at morning prayers since the fourth century and in conjunction with their feast day on December 17th from the middle Byzantine period. In the ninth century the Italo-Greek saint Elias the Younger headed toward Persia to see the place where they had contended (ἀγωνιστήριον).<sup>35</sup>

Old Testament typology continued to be a useful tool for denying charges of innovation and asserting the legitimacy of monastic leaders. Both vitae of Athanasios of Athos, who died around 1001, compare the founder of the Great Lavra to biblical precursors to assert that Athanasios did not "destroy the ancient rule and customs" of earlier Athonite monastic patterns.<sup>36</sup> *Vita A*, which Dirk Krausmüller dates before 1025, stresses that when Michael Maleinos died, his spirit came to rest "twofold" on the young Athanasios, just as Elijah's transferred to Elisha and Moses's to Joshua.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Athanasios had taken Michael's cowl when he left Mount Kyminas, continued to wear it for protection, and finally was buried with it.<sup>38</sup> Narratively, the cowl functions like the mantle of a prophet. In praising Athanasios's "virtue and wisdom," the early twelfth-century *Vita B* states that "he possessed the moderation [σωφροσύνη] of Joseph and the sincerity [ἄπλαστον] of Jacob and the hospitality of Abraham. He was a leader of people like the great Moses and his successor Joshua."<sup>39</sup> Moving on from Old Testament exemplars to a series of earlier Christian monastic leaders, the passage

34 *Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, ed. I. Hausherr, *OCA* 12 (1928): 30 (chap. 20).

35 *Vita di Sant'Elia il Giovane*, ed. G. Rossi Taibbi (Palermo, 1962), 32 (chap. 22). On the place of the Benedicite in the monastic office, see R. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, 1993), 88–89. See the readings for Vespers and Orthros on December 16 and 17 in *The Synaxarion of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis: September–February*, ed. and trans. R. H. Jordan, *BBTT* 6.5 (Belfast, 2000), 280–81, 287–91.

36 Both *Lives* appear in J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, CCSG 9 (Turnhout, 1982). Quotation at *Life of Athanasios A* chap. 114. On Athanasios and Athonite monasticism, see K. Ware, "St Athanasios the Athonite: Traditionalist or Innovator," in *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism*, ed. A. Bryer and M. Cunningham (Belfast, 1996), 3–16.

37 *Life of Athanasios of Athos A* chap. 72. For the dates of the lives, see D. Krausmüller, "The Lost First *Life of Athanasios the Athonite* and Its Author Anthony, Abbot of the Constantinopolitan Monastery of *Ta Panagiou*," in *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, ed. M. Mullett, *BBTT* 6.3 (Belfast, 2007), 63–86.

38 *Life of Athanasios A* chap. 240; *Life of Athanasios B* chaps. 12 and 65. See R. Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), 102.

39 *Life of Athanasios B* chap. 64. *Life of Athanasios A* chaps. 219–21, which invokes Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph in similar terms, is clearly related.

invokes the Egyptian desert-father Arsenios, Sabas the founder of the Great Lavra in the Judean Desert, Pachomios, and Antony. In the following section, the author suggests continuity between Athanasios's monastic program and that of Theodore Stoudites.<sup>40</sup> Thus the *Vita B* uses the Old Testament figures as the foundation of a lineage for Orthodox monasticism, a lineage that culminates—or at least passes through—the great Athonite reformer. At the same time, listing both biblical and monastic leaders reifies an essentially monastic reading of the patriarchs and prophets as protomonks, perhaps even as proto-abbots.

In general, hagiography about monastic figures worked to form an onlooker's understanding of an ascetic hero, providing a view of a glorious other, encouraging reverence and veneration.<sup>41</sup> Hagiographers prompted their audiences, whether lay or monastic (or both), to understand the monasticism of others as a continuation of biblical patterns for self-discipline and miracle working; hagiography tended to do so by situating the reader or listener as an onlooker, framing the gaze from the outside. The role of biblical typology in the enterprise was to apply one set of precedents to establish and enhance another. Allusion to biblical precursors was thus a persistent feature of the hagiographical genre. Hagiographers employed key figures and stories from the Old Testament in the literary construction of monasticism.

### *Old Testament Models for Monastic Discipline*

In contrast to hagiography, which trained the eye on the saint, other monastic literature trained the eye on the self. It was in such a reflexive and normative mode that Basil of Caesarea used Old Testament figures in his *Longer Rules*. Written and then revised by Basil shortly before his death in 379, the *Rules* underwent additional redaction in the sixth century and became one of the great foundational texts of the Byzantine monastic tradition.<sup>42</sup> Basil arranged this *Asketikon* in the form of questions and answers, reflecting conversations between the

40 *Life of Athanasios B* chap. 65.

41 On this aspect of hagiography, see P. Brown, "The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity," in *Saints and Virtues*, ed. J. S. Hawley (Berkeley, 1987), 3–14; P. C. Miller, "Strategies of Representation in Collective Biography: Constructing the Subject as Holy," in *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. T. Hägg and P. Rousseau (Berkeley, 2000), 209–54; S. A. Harvey, "The Sense of a Stylite: Perspectives on Symeon the Elder," *VChr* 42 (1988): 376–94.

42 Basil, *Longer Rules*, PG 31:901–1305; trans. M. M. Wagner, *Saint Basil: Ascetical Works* (Washington, DC, 1962), 223–337. J. Gribomont, *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de S. Basile* (Louvain, 1953). J. Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, MD, 1950), 3:212–14.

ascetic leader and his monks.<sup>43</sup> In his preface, Basil frames the monastic life as a fulfillment of divine commandments, implicitly tying his *Rules* to the commandments of Scripture. This same Scripture offers examples of men who kept God's laws, particularly for maintaining a proper interior disposition. Basil asks, "How shall I be worthy of the company of Job—I who do not accept even an ordinary mishap with thanksgiving? How shall I who am lacking in magnanimity toward my enemy stand in the presence of David? Or of Daniel, if I do not seek for God in continual constancy and earnest supplication?"

For Basil, these Old Testament worthies stand within a broader communion of holy people: Basil also asks how he might stand in the presence of "any of the saints, if I have not walked in their footsteps."<sup>44</sup> Thus the canon of the Old Testament does not set a limit to the rolls of the holy, rather it sets the standard. Basil himself, of course, engages in a "speech-in-character [προσωποποιῖα]," a common rhetorical technique through which he models an appropriate interior dialogue for the Christian ascetic, a series of self-accusations that underscore the gap between the self and the biblical and saintly exemplars.<sup>45</sup> The figures of the Old Testament begin a long and continuing series of holy personages that Basil can invoke to mark his own failures and to set goals for his monks.

Old Testament figures appear again in Basil's discussion of self-control in food consumption. Basil warns his monks against ἀκρασία, here meaning "gluttony," and encourages them to practice ἐγκράτεια, in this context "abstemious eating."<sup>46</sup> He teaches that a monk should chastize his body and bring it under submission, to practice "that abstinence from pleasures which aims at thwarting the will of the flesh for the purpose of attaining the goal of piety."<sup>47</sup> In addition to the words of Paul, he cites Old Testament fasters:

Moses, through long perseverance in fasting and prayer [Deut. 9:9], received the law and heard the words of God, 'as a man is wont to speak to a friend' [Ex. 33:11], says the Scripture. Elijah was deemed worthy of the vision of God

43 For an extensive discussion of the text, see P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 190–232, 354–60.

44 Basil, *Longer Rules*, preface; trans. Wagner, 229.

45 For a similar modeling of self-accusation for lay Christians, see D. Krueger, "Romanos the Melodist and the Christian Self in Early Byzantium," in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London, 2006*, vol. 1, *Plenary Papers*, ed. E. Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2006), 247–66.

46 For Christian teaching on fasting in late antiquity, see T. Shaw, *The Burden of the Flesh: Fasting and Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, 1998).

47 *Longer Rules* Q16; trans. Wagner, 270.

when he also had practiced abstinence [ἐγκράτεια] in like degree [1 Kgs. 19:8]. And what of Daniel? How did he attain to the contemplation of marvels? Was it not after a twenty-day fast [Dan. 10:3]? And how did the three children overcome the power of the fire? Was it not through abstinence [Dan. 1:8–16]?

Basil reinterprets Daniel's and his companions' refusal to eat foods prohibited to Jews as ascetic dietary practice. The association of these biblical figures with fasting endured in Byzantium. Indeed, the twelfth-century typikon of the Monastery of St. John the Forerunner of Phoberos requires fasting in the period after Pentecost: "For both Moses [Ex. 34:28] and Elijah fasted for forty days and for three weeks Daniel 'ate no pleasant bread, and no flesh or wine entered into my mouth [Dan. 10:2–3].'"<sup>48</sup> Note, however, that Basil's catalogue of biblical examples slips effortlessly from one testament to the other, suggesting that in his search for precursors to the monastic life, Basil saw a continuity of biblical forms of life. "As for John [the Baptist]," he continues, "his whole plan of life was based on the practice of continency [ἐγκράτεια] [Matt. 3:4]." And to top it all off, Basil reminds his audience, "Even the Lord Himself inaugurated His public manifestation with the practice of this virtue."<sup>49</sup> The ascetic virtues practiced in the New Testament replicated those already exhibited in the Old.

Basil's search for Old Testament models extends to costume as well. Considering the ζώνη, the belt or cincture tied about the waist that was part of the monastic garb, Basil argues, "The saints long before us have demonstrated the necessity of the ζώνη. John bound his loins with a leather girdle [ζώνη], as did Elijah before him." Indeed, 2 Kings (1:8) describes Elijah as "a hairy man with a girdle of leather about his loins." Basil's list of exemplars oscillates between Old Testament and New Testament figures, from John the Baptist to Elijah, to Peter, Paul, and Job, ending with the apostles themselves, whose use of girdles is proved "by the fact that they were forbidden to carry money in their girdles [see Matt. 10:9]."<sup>50</sup> In virtues, dress, and diet, Basil presents monasticism as a biblical form of life.<sup>51</sup>

48 Phoberos 28; trans. R. Jordan in *BMFD*, 3:917.

49 *Longer Rules*, Q16; trans. Wagner, 269–70 modified. On Jesus' asceticism in patristic literature, see D. B. Martin, *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville, 2006), 91–102.

50 *Longer Rules* Q23; trans. Wagner, 284–85.

51 For an assessment of Basil's impact on subsequent monasticism, see *BMFD*, 1:21–32.

The appeal to Old Testament figures as positive models for monastic comportment in moral and practical discourse contrasts with the use of Old Testament narratives in spiritual exegesis. In the latter, distinctions between the Old Testament and the New come to the fore, such that the narratives of ancient Israel represent fleshly prefigurations of heavenly and immaterial realities. Already in the third century, Origen of Alexandria had distinguished two modes of Christian biblical exegesis beyond the literal sense of the text. The first was moral, whereby most Christians derived basic edification and moral instruction. The other was spiritual, and involved searching after the higher (or deeper) and allegorical meanings embedded in the text. Significantly, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzos included the relevant sections of Origen's treatise *On First Principles* (namely, book 4, chapters 1–3) in the *Philokalia*, their anthology of works beneficial to the monastic life. Even after the condemnation of parts of Origen's theology in the sixth century, these chapters of Origen continued to be read by Byzantine monastics and to inform monastic exegesis.<sup>52</sup>

Monastic spiritual interpretation of Scripture stressed the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the person of Jesus Christ and the supersession of Christianity over the religion of Israel. While the *Apophthegmata's* and Basil's invocations of biblical figures to illustrate monastic virtues and modes of life valorized the Old Testament holy men, this spiritual exegesis regarded Old Testament narratives as mere shadows of hidden truths. The fourth-century *Spiritual Homilies* attributed to Makarios the Egyptian, but likely composed in Syria, provide a good and popular example of this discourse.<sup>53</sup> A number of these homilies invoke the story of Moses at Sinai. Recalling Moses' ascent, forty-day fast, communion with God, and his descent from Mount Sinai with his face aglow, the homilist writes, "All this, which happened to him, was a figure of something else. For that glory now shines splendidly from within the hearts of Christians."<sup>54</sup> The glowing face of Moses on his descent from Sinai (Ex. 35:29–35) offers a prefiguration

52 Origen, *Traité des principes*, ed. H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti, vol. 3, SC 268 (Paris 1980) contains both the *Philokalia* text and Rufinus's Latin translation. English trans. K. Froehlich, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* (Philadelphia, 1984), 48–78.

53 *Die 50 Geistlichen Homilien des Makarios*, ed. H. Dörries, E. Klostermann, and M. Kroeger (Berlin, 1964); trans. G. A. Maloney in pseudo-Makarios, *Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter* (New York, 1992). For a summary of arguments on the provenance of these texts, see *ibid.*, 6–7.

54 *Spiritual Homilies* 12.14; trans. Maloney, 102.

of the bodily resurrection to come and of the interior life of Christian holy men in the present.

[B]lessed Moses provided us with a certain type through the glory of the Spirit which covered his countenance upon which no one could look with steadfast gaze. This type anticipates how in the resurrection of the just the bodies of the saints will be glorified with a glory which even now the souls of the saintly and faithful people are deemed worthy to possess within, in the indwelling of the inner man.<sup>55</sup>

To be sure, the Macarian homilies also recall Old Testament narratives to present examples of virtue: the ninth homily invokes episodes in the stories of Joseph, David, Moses, Abraham, and Noah to illustrate the virtue of perseverance in the endurance of difficulties.<sup>56</sup> But the homilist's general practice is to treat the Old Testament figures as a series of types for a superior and spiritualized monastic life. "The ancient law is a shadow of the New Covenant. The shadow manifests in advance the truth, but it does not possess a service of the Spirit. Moses, having been clothed in the flesh, was unable to enter into the heart and take away the sordid garments of darkness. . . . Circumcision, in the shadow of the Law, shows the coming of the true Circumcision of the heart. The baptism of the Law is a shadow of true things to come."<sup>57</sup> Allegorical readings of the Old Testament provided an instrument for Christian monastic theological exploration, and in the process offered ways of understanding monks' aspirations and expectations of salvation. Theological speculation grounded itself in Old Testament narrative even as it claimed to transcend it.

Following in the tradition of the Macarian homilies, Maximos the Confessor frequently allegorized familiar Old Testament episodes to illustrate the flight of the monk's mind from the realm of matter in the contemplation of the divine. Many of these allegories appear in works composed in complex prose, and their allusions to Scripture are often obscure, suggesting that they were inaccessible to uneducated monks. Nevertheless they typify the use of allegory in charting a path for monastic theology. The mantle that Elijah gave to Elisha, which he had

55 *Spiritual Homilies* 6.10; trans. Maloney, 74. On the glowing face of Moses see M. Plested, *The Macarian Legacy: The Place of Macarius-Symeon in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Oxford, 2004), 34, 56.

56 *Spiritual Homilies* 9.2–6; trans. Maloney, 84–85. For a later instance of the use of Old Testament exempla to encourage the patient endurance of trials see Barsanouphios and John of Gaza, *Correspondence*, ed. L. Regnault and P. Lemerle (Solesmes, 1972), letter 31.

57 *Spiritual Homilies* 32.4; trans. Maloney, 194.

previously used to strike the Jordan and cross on dry land and which his disciple would use subsequently in the same way (2 Kings 2:6–14), “accomplished by way of a figure” the “mortification of the flesh in which the magnificence of the good moral order is firmly grounded.” The mantle serves as an “ally of the spirit in the struggle against any enemy force and as a blow against the unstable and flowing nature figured by the Jordan so that the disciple be not held back from crossing over to the Holy Land by being swamped in the mud and slipperiness of the craving for matter.”<sup>58</sup> In a similar vein, Moses’s pitching the tent of meeting outside the Israelite camp, where “every one who sought the Lord would go” (Ex. 33:7), indicates that Moses began to adore God only after having “installed his free will and his understanding outside the visible.” “Having entered the darkness, the formless and immaterial place of knowledge, he remains there to accomplish the most sacred rite. Darkness is a formless, immaterial, and incorporeal state which bears the exemplary knowledge of beings. The one who enters into this state as another Moses understands things invisible to his moral nature.”<sup>59</sup> As these examples demonstrate, Maximus’s allegories turn on small details in the biblical narratives.<sup>60</sup> Since Maximus neither quotes nor paraphrases the stories, they must have been familiar in their written form to his intended monastic audience, either because they were read regularly enough in short pericopes during the Divine Liturgy or, more likely, during Vespers, or read as devotional readings at other times. It is possible that these allegories developed from discussions in monastic Bible study.

Episodes in the Old Testament continued to offer points of departure for theological reflection in the middle Byzantine period, most notably for Symeon the New Theologian. In the first of his *Ethical Discourses* an extended reading of Genesis’s account of creation and the fall of Adam frames a distinctly monastic account of salvation in Christ and the kingdom of heaven.<sup>61</sup> The second *Ethical Discourse* similarly allegorizes episodes from early human history

58 Maximus the Confessor, *Commentary on the Our Father*, lines 361–71; ed. P. van Deun, *Maximi confessoris opuscula exegetica duo*, CCSG 23 (Turnhout, 1991), 27–73; trans. Berthold, 108–9.

59 Maximus, *Chapters on Knowledge (Capita theologica et oecumenica)* 1.84–85 (ed. PG 90:1084–1173); trans. Berthold, 144. For additional allegories in the *Chapters on Knowledge* see 2.13–16 (Moses and Elijah); 2.26 (Abraham); 2.31 (Joshua); 2.50–53 (David, Saul, and Samuel); 2.74 (Elijah).

60 For an example of extensive Old Testament allegories in his more esoteric texts, see Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 10; trans. A. Louth, in *Maximus the Confessor* (London, 1996), 94–154.

61 Symeon the New Theologian, *Ethical Discourses* 1.1–2. Edition: *Traité théologiques et éthiques*, ed. J. Darrouzès, SC 122 (Paris, 1966); trans. A. Golitzin in Symeon the New Theologian, *On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses*, 3 vols. (Crestwood, NY, 1995–97), 1:21–31.

as prefigurations of Christ. Concerning God's taking Adam's rib, Symeon reasons, "Just as the portion was taken from the whole body of Adam and built up into a woman, so, in turn, the same portion set aside from the woman should be built up into a man and become the new Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>62</sup> Noah's ark, carrying those to be saved from the flood, figures as "a type of the Theotokos and 'Noah' of Christ."<sup>63</sup> To some extent, Symeon deploys commonplace typological readings of biblical history, but always with an eye to monastic instruction. Symeon could use the same story in diverse ways. For example, he was fond of the translation to heaven of Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11), and invoked them in tandem variously to reproach his monks for their unworthiness,<sup>64</sup> to illustrate how these events were mere types of salvation,<sup>65</sup> to stress "that our minds are completely dependent on someone to lift them up to heaven,"<sup>66</sup> and to show that even after the Fall, God honored those who pleased him.<sup>67</sup> This flexibility attests not only the range of theological interpretations that Old Testament narratives afforded to monks but also the degree to which Scripture had been assimilated into the monastic imaginary.

### *Hearing and Speaking Old Testament Texts*

Quite apart from the invocation of exemplars and the exegesis of Scripture, some texts of the Old Testament themselves resounded in the monastic life. Monks with access to complete books of the Bible might read them aloud for themselves and others, but much more prevalent was the ritual reading of scriptural passages in the course of worship. In this context, the Bible was less a library of ancient books and more a source of liturgical lections employed to shape the rhythms of the liturgical year. Indeed, to a large extent the Bible was a liturgical text in Byzantium. Since the primary tendency of emerging lectionaries was to follow the narrative of the Gospels, the lectionary usually fragmented the Old Testament

62 Symeon the New Theologian, *Ethical Discourses* 2.2; trans. Golitzin, 1:91.

63 Symeon the New Theologian, *Ethical Discourses* 2.4; trans. Golitzin, 1:99. That is, the Theotokos is the "Noah" of Christ, bearing him to safety.

64 Symeon the New Theologian, *Catecheses* 5.449–53. Edition: *Catéchèses*, ed. B. Krivochéine, SC 96 (Paris, 1963); trans. C. J. de Catanzaro in Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (New York, 1980), 102.

65 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 51.66, 104. Edition: *Hymnes*, ed. J. Koder, SC 156, 174, 196 (Paris, 1969–73).

66 Symeon the New Theologian, *Theological Discourses* 1.408–15 (ed. J. Darrouzès); trans. P. McGuckin in Symeon the New Theologian, *The Practical and Theological Chapters and the Three Theological Discourses* (Kalamazoo, 1982), 121.

67 Symeon the New Theologian, *Ethical Discourses* 1.2.106; trans. Golitzin, 1:30.

narratives to offer correspondence and counterpoint to the story of the life of Christ. Thus, not only did the Bible give shape to the liturgical calendar, but the liturgy and the liturgical calendar reshaped the meanings of the biblical texts.

Until the seventh century, selections from the Old Testament were read during the first portion of the synaxis or Divine Liturgy. After the seventh century, Old Testament lections were appointed only for the Vespers service, the Mass of the Presanctified Gifts during Lent, and vigils of major feasts. The service book known as the *Prophetologion* contained these readings as well as other texts proper to each day.<sup>68</sup> On the one hand, this meant that after the seventh century, Byzantine monks who observed the monastic hours heard much more of the Old Testament than lay Christians attending only the Divine Liturgy and the occasional vigil. On the other hand, monks ordinarily heard only those passages that were in the lectionary and in a context where they were keyed to New Testament passages, and where for the most part their selection had been determined by the sequence of the Gospel narratives.<sup>69</sup>

One book of the Old Testament was recited regularly and—usually in the course of a week—in its entirety. The Psalter served as the soundtrack of Byzantine monasticism from its very origins. Monks chanted the psalms at seven appointed times of the day. As a saying attributed in the *Apophthegmata patrum* to Epiphanius of Cyprus illustrates, David featured not only as the author of the Psalms but as an example of how to pray them. “David the prophet prayed late at night; waking in the middle of the night he made entreaties before dawn; at the dawn he stood [before the Lord]; at the morning hour [πρωΐας] he interceded; in the evening and at midday he made supplication; and this is why he said, “Seven times a day have I praised you [Ps. 118:164 (LXX 119)].”<sup>70</sup> The Psalter stood at the center of monastic prayer life.

According to Athanasios of Alexandria in his *Letter to Marcellinus*, the Psalter holds the very heart of Scripture, containing in one book a précis of sacred

68 J. Mateos, *La célébration de la parole dans la liturgie Byzantine* (Rome, 1971), 131–33. The tenth-century typikon of the Monastery of the Black Mountain seeks to prevent readings from the Prophetologion outside of Vespers: Black Mountain 92; *BMFD*, 1:416. For more developed discussion of the Prophetologion see James Miller’s contribution here, Chapter 3.

69 *Prophetologium*, ed. C. Høeg, G. Zuntz, and G. Engberg, 2 vols. (Copenhagen, 1970–81).

70 *AP* Epiphanius 7; my translation. On the Egyptian monastic office in the fourth century, see Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours* (n. 35 above), 57–73. And see also *AP* Epiphanius 3 and its parallel in the *Systematic Collection*, ed. Guy 12.6. For a broader overview see R. Taft, “Christian Liturgical Psalmody: Origins, Development, Decomposition, Collapse,” in *Psalms in Community: Jewish and Christian Textual, Liturgical, and Artistic Traditions*, ed. H. W. Attridge and M. E. Fassler (Atlanta, 2003), 7–32.

history and divine instruction. “[The Book of Psalms] chants those things in modulated voice that have been said in the other books in the form of detailed narrative. . . . It also legislates. . . . It narrates at times about the journeying of Israel, and prophecies concerning the Savior.”<sup>71</sup> Revoicing the words of David, the Psalms teach one how to pray. Athanasios explains that in chanting the Psalms one recognizes the words as his own, and the one who hears the psalms “is deeply moved, as though he himself were speaking.” Although Marcellinus, the ostensive recipient of the letter, was most likely a layman, the letter reflects Athanasios’s familiarity with desert asceticism. Indeed the letter was subsequently popular among monastics for explaining what was happening in the performance of psalmody.<sup>72</sup> In chanting the Psalms, a monk conforms his voice and his thoughts to the patterns of the Bible. When one sets aside the exclusively prophetic content, “he who recites the Psalms is uttering the rest as his own words, and sings them as if they were written concerning him.”<sup>73</sup> Since all the monks were reciting the same Psalms (eventually in the same order and at the same times of the day), the result was not individuality, where each monk might come to think of himself as different, but rather identity: the monk identified himself with and as the speaker of the Psalms. In the monastic office, the monks assumed biblical identities through liturgical performance. The monk became Scripture’s mouthpiece, and the Psalms scripted the monk’s interior self-reflection and outward self-presentation.

Athanasios also recommended psalms for recitation in specific situations, such as when one wished to express praise, offer thanksgiving, arouse shame, or confess sins.<sup>74</sup> This practice of reciting psalms especially in times of distress endured throughout Byzantine monasticism, as evidenced by a number of tenth- to thirteenth-century psalters that include supplementary texts recommending

71 Athanasios, *Letter to Marcellinus* 9 (text: PG 27:12–45); trans. Gregg (n. 1 above), 107.

72 A complete study of the reception of the *Letter to Marcellinus* in Byzantine monasticism would be useful. The earliest copy appears in the fifth-century Bible manuscript *Codex Alexandrinus*, where it serves as an introduction to the Book of Psalms. The text, or parts of it, preface a number of psalters of monastic provenance; excerpts from the *Letter* appear in monastic catenae (anthologies of patristic commentary) of Psalms from the sixth century on (the earliest being a Syriac translation). For some of the manuscripts and codicology, see M. J. Rondeau, “L’Épître à Marcellinus sur les Psaumes,” *VChr* 22 (1968): 176–80.

73 Athanasios, *Letter to Marcellinus* 11; trans. Gregg, 109–10. See also P. R. Kolbet, “Athanasios, the Psalms, and the Reformation of the Self,” *HTR* 99 (2006): 85–101; J. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (Leiden, 2004), 332–36; D. Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford, 1995), 194–96.

74 For example, Athanasios, *Letter to Marcellinus* 14, 21.

psalms to recite when attacked by thoughts of despondency or lust, when remembering injuries done to one, or when held captive by an evil thought, and so forth.<sup>75</sup> A teaching related by John Moschos in *The Spiritual Meadow*, written early in the seventh century, encapsulates the power of the psalms both to attract and to ward off demons.

[T]here is nothing which troubles, incites, irritates, wounds, destroys, distresses and excites the demons and the supremely evil Satan himself against us, as the constant study of the Psalms. The entire holy Scripture is beneficial to us and not a little offensive to the demons, but none of it distresses them more than the psalter. . . . For when we meditate on the psalms, on the one hand, we are praying on our own account, while, on the other hand, we are bringing down curses on the demons.<sup>76</sup>

For this reason, monks also recited the psalms while performing manual labor. Moschos relates a cautionary tale about a monk who failed to pay attention to the proper texts of the psalms he recited while plaiting baskets; while his mind wandered, a demon entered his cell in the form of a dancing Saracen boy.<sup>77</sup> Basil of Caesarea encouraged prayer and psalmody during work, a recommendation repeated in the eleventh-century typikon of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Petritzonitissa at Bačkovo, which states that while monks “work with their hands they should offer up psalms with their mouth.”<sup>78</sup>

The use of biblical verses to combat demons offers another, more peculiar example of the efficacy of Scripture in formative spiritual practice. In his *Antirrheticus*, or *Talking Back*, Evagrius Pontikos (died 399) anthologized biblical sentences for a monk to use to answer the demonic thoughts that attacked him: gluttony, lust, greed, sadness, anger, boredom, vainglory, and pride.<sup>79</sup> For the

75 For the text and the manuscripts that contain it, see G. Parpulov, “Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004), 268–69, and his chapter in this volume.

76 John Moschos, *The Spiritual Meadow* 152 (PG 87:3018–20); trans. J. Wortley, in John Moschos, *The Spiritual Meadow* (Kalamazoo, 1992), 125–26.

77 John Moschos, *The Spiritual Meadow* 160 (PG 87:3028).

78 Basil, *Longer Rules* 37; Pakourianos, 14; trans. R. Jordan, *BMFD*, 2:538.

79 The critical edition of the Syriac version of the text appears in W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus*, AbhGött, Philol.-hist.Kl., Neue Folge 13.2 (Berlin, 1912), 472–544. For a partial translation see M. O’Laughlin, “Evagrius Ponticus: *Antirrheticus* (Selections),” in *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook*, ed. V. L. Wimbush (Minneapolis, 1990), 243–62. See D. Brakke, “Making Public the Monastic Life: Reading the Self in Evagrius Ponticus’ *Talking Back*,” in *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, ed. D. Brakke, M. L. Satlow, and S. Weitzman (Bloomington, 2005),

struggle against each of these vices, Evagrius assembled a list of verses, “words required to confute the enemies.”<sup>80</sup> Evagrius explains that these words “cannot be found quickly enough in the hour of conflict, because they are scattered through the Scriptures. . . . Therefore I [Evagrius] have carefully chosen [certain] words from the holy Scriptures, so that equipped with them, we can drive the Philistines out forcefully as we stand to the battle.”<sup>81</sup> (We note the use of typology here in the monks’ reenactment of David’s battle against the Philistines.) For each of the eight evil thoughts Evagrius prescribes different verses, usually in their canonical order in the two testaments of the Bible, and keyed to particular situations. In the section on anger, Evagrius writes: “For the anger that rises up against a brother and makes one’s mind unsettled at the time of prayer—‘Every sincere soul is blessed, but the passionate soul is ugly.’”<sup>82</sup> The quotation is Proverbs 11:25 (LXX), although, like all Evagrius’s selected verses, it is given without citation or context. In the section on greed, in the instance where the demons counsel the monk to get one of his “relatives or some rich person to send money,” Evagrius suggests a verse from Genesis: “I stretch out my hand to the most high God, who made heaven and earth, that I will not take anything from all that is yours (Gen. 14:22–23).”<sup>83</sup> Removing the verse far from its narrative context, Evagrius makes no reference to its place in the story of Abraham’s visit to the king of Sodom. Fragmented into useful bits, the Old Testament provided part of the arsenal for spiritual warfare. And although Evagrius’s text ceased to be copied among Greek monks after the sixth century, he does provide early witness to a style of monastic rhetoric in which a monk’s speech was heavily seasoned with biblical tags and quotations.

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For Byzantine monks, the Old Testament was familiar in the deepest sense: on monks’ tongues and in the air. Byzantine monasticism sang, taught, interpreted, embodied, and reenacted Scripture. Monastic teachers employed Old Testament heroes in moral instruction; hagiographers structured monastic biographies along the lines of Old Testament narratives; monastic theologians allegorized

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222–33; D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 48–77; M. O’Laughlin, “The Bible, the Demons, and the Desert: Evaluating the *Antirrheticus* of Evagrius Ponticus,” *Studia Monastica* 34 (1992): 201–15; G. Bunge, “Evagrius Pontikos: Der Prolog des *Antirrheticos*,” *Studia Monastica* 29 (1997): 77–105.

80 Evagrius Pontikos, *Antirrheticos*, prologue; trans. O’Laughlin, 246.

81 Evagrius Pontikos, *Antirrheticos*, prologue; trans. O’Laughlin, 246–47.

82 Evagrius Pontikos, *Antirrheticos*, Anger 17; trans. O’Laughlin, 258.

83 Evagrius Pontikos, *Antirrheticos*, Greed 1; trans. O’Laughlin, 248.

Old Testament texts in spiritual exegesis; and key Old Testament readings were regularly repeated in monastic worship and prayer. Indeed, the monastic Bible consisted not so much in a canon of texts as in a canon of gestures toward those texts. All these uses converged to infuse monasticism with a biblical character, a form of life always in dialogue with Scripture, even as it reformed this Scripture in its own image.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
AbhGött, Philol.-hist.Kl.	Akademie der Wissenschaften, Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, Abhandlungen
<i>ACO</i>	<i>Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum</i> , ed. E. Schwartz and J. Straub (Berlin, 1914–)
<i>AnnalesESC</i>	<i>Annales: Économies, sociétés, civilisations</i>
<i>AnzWien</i>	<i>Anzeiger der [Österreichischen] Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien</i> , Philosophisch-historische Klasse
<i>AP</i>	<i>Apophthegmata patrum</i>
<i>ArtB</i>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
BBTT	Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations
<i>BBulg</i>	<i>Byzantinobulgarica</i>
<i>BHG</i>	<i>Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca</i> , 3rd ed., ed. F. Halkin, SubsHag 47 (Brussels, 1957; repr. 1969)
<i>BMFD</i>	<i>Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' "Typika" and Testaments</i> , ed. J. Thomas and A. C. Hero (Washington, DC, 2000)
<i>BMGS</i>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<i>BollGrott</i>	<i>Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CabArch</i>	<i>Cahiers archéologiques</i>
CCSG	Corpus christianorum, Series graeca
CFHB	Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae

CPG	<i>Clavis patrum graecorum</i> , ed. M. Geerard and F. Glorie (Turnhout, 1974–87)
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
CTb	<i>Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes</i> , ed. Th. Mommsen and P. M. Meyer (Berlin, 1905)
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DSp	<i>Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique</i>
ΔΧΑΕ	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἐταιρείας
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Ἐκκ.Φάρ.	Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Φάρος
EP	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd ed. (Leiden–London, 1960–)
FM	<i>Fontes minores</i>
GBA	<i>Gazette des beaux-arts</i>
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IM	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
JECbrSt	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i> [note: before 1969, JÖBG]
JÖBG	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft</i> [note: after 1968, JÖB]
JSAH	<i>Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
JWarb	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
Lampe	G. W. H. Lampe, ed., <i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> (Oxford, 1961)
LXX	Septuagint
Mansi	J. D. Mansi, <i>Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio</i> (Paris–Leipzig, 1901–27)
MedSt	<i>Mediaeval Studies</i> , Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
MGH, Auct. Ant.	Monumenta Germaniae historica, Auctores antiquissimi
MGH Poetae	Monumenta Germaniae historica, Poetae latini medii aevi
NachrGött	<i>Nachrichten von der Akademie [Gesellschaft] der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen</i> , Philologisch-historische Klasse
NETS	<i>A New English Translation of the Septuagint</i>

<i>OCA</i>	<i>Orientalia christiana analecta</i>
<i>OCF</i>	<i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i>
<i>ODB</i>	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , ed. A. Kazhdan et al. (New York–Oxford, 1991)
<i>OHBS</i>	E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack, eds., <i>Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies</i> (Oxford, 2008)
<i>PG</i>	Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1857–66)
<i>PW</i>	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft</i> , ed. G. Wissowa (Leipzig, 1893–)
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>RBK</i>	<i>Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst</i> , ed. K. Wessel (Stuttgart, 1963–)
<i>REB</i>	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
<i>RESEE</i>	<i>Revue des études sud-est européennes</i>
<i>RSBN</i>	<i>Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici</i>
<i>RSV</i>	Revised Standard Version
<i>SC</i>	Sources chrétiennes
<i>Settimane</i>	<i>Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo</i>
<i>StP</i>	<i>Studia patristica</i>
<i>SubsHag</i>	Subsidia hagiographica
<i>TLG</i>	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
<i>TM</i>	<i>Travaux et mémoires</i>
<i>TU</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur (Leipzig–Berlin, 1882–)
<i>VChr</i>	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
<i>VizVrem</i>	<i>Vizantiiskii vremennik</i>
<i>WByzSt</i>	Wiener byzantinistische Studien
<i>ZhMNP</i>	<i>Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia</i>
<i>ZRVI</i>	<i>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta, Srpska akademija nauka</i>



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