

interpretations are, in detail, correct, for I am not competent to make a judgment on that question. But I do think that the importance of Ezekiel in Dura, and the details, if correctly discerned, of various kinds of traditional mystical speculation, which Goodenough finds on the walls of Dura synagogue, are both wholly congruent to what we know of Babylonian Judaism before circa 220 A.D.²⁴¹⁰

- E-275** Often criticized for his interpretations, Goodenough showed ambivalence in his writings about the terms “initiation” and “mystery,” speaking in his early writings in ways that at least sometimes seemed to imply a literal sense, while in his last writings leaning toward a figurative one.²⁴¹¹ Despite the comprehensiveness of Goodenough’s arguments, the possibility of a literal mystery involving special rites is currently seen as doubtful by all but a small minority of scholars.

The discussion of Fletcher-Louis about how the Qumran community merged both realized and future eschatology in their liturgical concept of an “angelomorphic priesthood” seems relevant to Goodenough’s speculations about Jewish worship at Dura Europos.²⁴¹² At Qumran, Fletcher-Louis envisages the possibility of:

... a liturgical or cultic context for... apotheosis that could, in theory, be entirely compatible with... a real mystical or visionary experience... [I]t is... likely, given the cosmological significance attached to the cult, that the regular, even *routinized*, worship of a Jewish community which *considers itself* not heterodox but orthodox, would foster the belief in personal experiences of mystical transcendence and apotheosis.²⁴¹³

After a thorough analysis of their liturgical texts, he concludes that the Qumran community:

... believed that (1) *in its original, true and redeemed state humanity is divine (and/or angelic)*. They also believed that (2) the attainment now, for the redeemed, of this true humanity was *conceptually and experientially grounded in their “temple” worship in which ordinary space and time, and therefore human ontology, are transcended. They take for granted a cultic mythology which means that those who enter the worship of the community experience a transfer from earth to heaven, from humanity to divinity and from mortality to immortality...* [T]his theological anthropology at Qumran was inherited from older, priestly, tradition which the sectarians carried with them into the wilderness. There is little evidence in the texts that this anthropology is a peculiar product of Qumran sectarianism... Before his Fall Adam was ontologically coterminous with God’s own Glory. His originally divine humanity is recovered when (the true) Israel worships her god in a pure cult—a restored cosmos in miniature. And, so, by the same token she, especially her priesthood, recovers the previously lost Glory of God in the same context. In worship, the boundary between heaven and earth is dissolved and the Qumran community are taken up into the life of that which they worship.²⁴¹⁴

Also supporting Fletcher-Louis’ arguments is the fact that “the stories of Genesis that were popular and utilized at Qumran constitute only a small portion of the biblical book... The heavy emphasis of most of the texts, almost regardless of type, is on the material from the Creation and the Garden of Eden, Enoch, the Watchers, and the Flood through the covenant with Abraham and the *Akedah*.”²⁴¹⁵

- E-276** This three-part scheme is reflected in temples throughout the ancient world. It was also symbolized in the gathering of Israel at Sinai in three groups: “the masses at the foot of the mountain, where they viewed God’s ‘Presence’ from afar; the Seventy part way up; and Moses at the very top, where he entered directly into God’s Presence.”²⁴¹⁶ Seaich describes this as:²⁴¹⁷

... the arrangement in the Temple, as well, with the mass of pilgrims assembled in the Forecourt, the Aaronic priests sacrificing in the Holy Place, and the High Priest entering the Holy of Holies each year to expiate for Israel’s sins. Philo accordingly thought of this recreated “Sinai experience” as a three-part “journey” along the “Royal Road” leading to God, but with unequal attainments having been

2410 *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162, 169, 173-174, 186-187.

2411 R. S. Eccles, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 64-65. Goodenough showed the same ambivalence toward religion in general.

Sandmel described him as “a deeply religious man... at war with organized religion... [H]e had a quarrel with organized religion but not with God” (S. Sandmel, *Appreciation*, pp. 4-5).

2412 C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*, pp. 150ff.

2413 *Ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

2414 *Ibid.*, p. 476.

2415 M. J. Bernstein, *Contours*, p. 81.

2416 J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1995*, p. 660; cf. pp. 568-577, 661, 807-809.

2417 J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1995*, pp. 807-809; cf. J. Jeremias, *Sermon*, p. 6; Matthew 6:19-7:27; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.