THE TESTAMENT OF JOB AND ITS FUNCTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY[1]

Ergo Naab
University of Tartu, School of Theology and Religious Studies

Abstract: The article examines the common motifs of the Testament of Job and New Testament literature. The research question is: what literary and theological motifs have encouraged the use of the work in a Christian context? The aim is to research the Testament of Job and its function from the perspective of early Christian eschatology, Christology, demonology and philanthropy.

Keywords: Testament of Job, reception history, New Testament, eschatology, Christology, philanthropy, demonology

INTRODUCTION

Ancient Jewish and Christian pseudepigraphic[2] literature was witness to prolific writing activity that appeared in the intertestamental area. These writings have several common characteristics: they have Jewish or Christian origin, are attributed to some model-person from the history of Israel, usually consist of a certain divine message, and are based on the ideas and

[1] This work was supported by the Estonian Research Council grant (PRG938).

[2] The other smaller part is apocryphal literature but, as Montague R. James already explained long ago, the application of the word apocrypha to the appendix to the Old Testament which is in our Bibles is a relatively new departure, a result of the reformers of the sixteenth century, and it is not consistent with the original sense of the word. There is, then, some confusion here and the existence of that confusion has led scholars to use the word pseudepigraphic when they wish to describe a book as distinct from those contained in our "Apocrypha" (James 1924: xiv). There certainly were believers among first-century Jews and Christians who considered the pseudepigraphic writings to be inspired and sometimes even the infallible words of God. That is why there are allusions and direct quotations from pseudepigraphic creation in New Testament writings. For instance, Christian Jews made extensive use of the Enochic tradition to support their Christological claims.

narratives from the Hebrew Bible. Many pseudepigraphs are apocalyptic in nature.

One type of pseudepigraphs are known as "Testaments." The Testament genre is based on a style that is already somewhat present in the Old Testament (Gen 49), but it is further developed in the intertestamental literature.[3] The Testament genre itself is diffuse and the only definite common denominator is one well-known model character who, in the face of death, wants to convey a final message to their relatives. Typically, the character explains their situation to the relatives and gives doctrinal admonitions that may involve issues of law, blessings, or curses. The character's words are often illustrated by apocalyptic visions of the future revealed to them as a seer. The latter is a key feature, especially in apocalyptic testaments.[4]

As we come to the Testament of Job (*TJob*), written between 100 BCE – 100 CE, the Jewish background of the text is widely accepted,[5] but the Christian redaction is regarded as probable.[6] The text of *TJob* has quite a sharp monotheistic viewpoint and it certainly reflects the diversity of Hellenistic Jewish thought. The theme of *TJob* is based on the characters in the canonical Book of Job: Job, Job's wife, Satan, three friends/kings, Job's daughters. The work is divided into four literary sub-sections: Job's relationship with the angel (*TJob* 2–5), Satan (*TJob* 6–26), the three kings (*TJob* 27–43), and the three daughters (*TJob* 44–53). Most of the text

[3] A certain "farewell" style was a widely used literary technique which appeared in early Judaism (Tob and 1Enoch) as well as in the New Testament literature (Acts 20:17–38; 1 Tim 4:1–16).

[4] The apocalyptic Testaments are: the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (2nd century BCE), the Testament of Abraham (1–2 CE) and the Testament of Moses (1 BCE). Other known Testaments are: the Testament of Job (1st century BCE – 1st century CE), the Testament of the three patriarchs: the Testament of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (2–3 CE), the Testament of Solomon (1–3 CE), the Testament of Adam (2–5 CE).

[5] The Midrashic parallels sufficiently prove that the work is one of the most remarkable productions of the pre-Christian era, explicable only when viewed in the light of ancient Ḥasidean practice (JE 1901–1906: s. v. Testament of Job).

[6] Several Jewish pseudepigrapha contain Christian redactions and interpolations. Yet, the changes they have made are very difficult or even impossible to follow because redactors not only wanted to modify text in harmony with Christian faith, but they used ideas, motifs and words in common with Judaism and Christianity. For this reason, in most cases it is hard or even impossible to determine the origin of a certain paragraph or the entire writing. From the Christian groups, the Montanists are the most likely Christian redactors who thought to rework it in the second century CE (Spittler 1983: 834).

includes the first three sections, which is Job's report in the first person about his accident and the cause of his suffering.

Although it is not possible to determine the origin of the *TJob* without speculating, there exists the assumption that the surviving Coptic manuscript from the fifth century is indeed one of the first translations of the *TJob* (Davila 2004: 197–198). The Coptic version of it is one of the earliest proofs of the Christian reception and use of the piece. But all surviving manuscripts[7] prove that the *TJob* was used in Egyptian and Byzantine (Greek and Slavonic) communities. These Christians would have perceived this work as a unified literary creation and probably enjoyed it as an entertaining and edifying story as much as the early Christians did (Haralambakis 2012: 27).

Maria Haralambakis, comparing the *TJob* with hagiographic literature, developed the argument that the *TJob* came to be perceived as similar to a saint's life (Haralambakis 2012: 153). The reception history in later Christianity supports the hypothesis that the *TJob* was also useful for early Christianity. There are motifs and terms in the *TJob* which are similar to those in the New Testament (NT). According to Haralambakis, comparative research between the *TJob* and the NT has not received much attention in scholarly work. The purpose of my paper is to address this oversight. The research question is: What motifs made *TJob* attractive and useful to Christian communities? The aim of my paper is to substantiate a Christian reception of the *TJob* and explore thematic points of contact between the *TJob* and the NT.

One of the most recent scholars of *TJob*, Patric Gray, has suggested that thematic points of contact between the *TJob* and the NT (he was focusing the letter of James) can be grouped under three headings: 'the virtue of endurance, the importance of care for the poor, and the superiority of the heavenly world' (Gray 2004: 406–424). These three aspects are useful in a comparative study of the *TJob* and the NT. I will look at six motifs of the *TJob* that could predispose the early Christian reception of

[7] Manuscripts are: P (Paris) 11th century CE; P2, which is largely a copy of P; S (Sicily) 1307–1308 CE unstable in orthography; V (Vatican) 13th century CE; two versions of the Church Slavonic text from the 19th century: one (incomplete) in Belgrade and the other in Moscow; fragmentary Coptic manuscript (in Cologne) from 5th century. (Scott 2006: s. v. Manuscripts).

it. My method is comparative study, approaching the *TJob* through the lens of early Christian theology. Firstly, there is a common eschatological framework behind the *TJob* and the NT, meaning that some apocalyptical aspects of the *TJob* could have direct parallels in early Christian resurrection narratives. Secondly, I will look at the *TJob* from a Christological viewpoint: there is an exaltation motif and also a suffering motif in the *TJob*. Thirdly, I show that the NT demonological doctrine is related to the *TJob* as both pieces could be based on a similar prototype of Satan. Finally, I consider philanthropically important aspects of the *TJob* and functional perspectives of the Christian reception.

ESCHATOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In considering the similarity of the eschatological motifs in the *TJob* and early Christianity, it is appropriate to discuss apocalypticism in eschatology. Apocalyptical ideas and apocalyptic literature were popular at the beginning of Christian era, but the fact that they did not form a majority genre in Christian literature is also reflected in the New Testament canon. Before examining how the *TJob* positions itself in relation to apocalypticism, a general definition of apocalypse is required. The literary genre "apocalypse" was not clearly recognized and defined in antiquity and has not been precisely delineated in modern scholarship. Nevertheless, not every type of writing which expresses apocalyptic eschatology can be classified as an apocalypse. According to a certain framework[8], John J. Collins formulated a comprehensive definition of the apocalyptic genre:

> "Apocalypse" is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world" (Collins 1979a: 5–6).

[8] The master-paradigm of apocalyptic writings may be divided into two main sections: the framework of the revelation and its content. The framework in turn involves both the manner in which the revelation is conveyed and the concluding elements. The content embraces historical and eschatological events on a temporal axis and otherworldly beings and places on a spatial axis (Collins 1979a: 7).

With regard to the *TJob*, two aspects could fit this definition, although one more than the other. Firstly, the revelation mediated: the dominant conception of revelation and mediation is apparent in the *TJob*. An interpreting angel, also called a "light" (*TJob* 4:1; 3:1), figures in *TJob* 2–5 in a manner characteristic of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic parts (Spittler 1983: 835). Job's daughters speak in ecstasy the language of angels (*TJob* 48:3), the archons (49:2), and the cherubim (50:2). Job has heavenly visions in which he gains insight into heavenly realities (33), which enable him to endure his earthly trials. But there is no revelation of transcendent reality nor imaginings of eschatological salvation that involve the spatial supernatural world. These traditional apocalyptic features are apparent only very slightly.

Secondly, several apocalyptic ideas are represented in minor ways in concepts which, in some way or other, also correlate with eschatological conceptions in the NT. One of the most apparent motifs is resurrection to the upper world. Among the rewards promised Job by the angel is participation in the resurrection: "And you shall be raised up in the resurrection" (*TJob* 4:9).[9] It is represented in the text as winning a crown. In addition, Job's children, who died when their house collapsed (39:8), needed no burial and they were taken/resurrected directly to heaven by their creator (39:8–40:3). But at same time, the *TJob* ends with a description of Job's soul being carried off in a chariot (52:10) and his body is buried a few days later (53:5–7).

Distinctive emphasis is given in the *TJob* to a cosmological dualism that inculcates a certain otherworldliness. This motif most clearly appears in Job's psalm of affirmation in which he asserts that his throne is in the upper world (*TJob* 33:3). The conception of the upper world in the *TJob* is typical in Jewish as well as in Christian thought. Also, the concept of eschatological eons is represented: Job asserts that this world and its kingdoms pass away (*TJob* 33:4, 8), which infuriates the friendly kings who came to help (*TJob* 34:4).

In light of the definition of apocalypse, the *TJob* cannot be considered an apocalyptic work but rather closely related to apocalyptic literature. John J. Collins has stated that the *TJob* represents one type of apocalyptic eschatology, namely that of the purely "personal" apocalypses

[9] The Old Greek version of the Book of Job (OG Job) consists of an additional reference to Job's resurrection not found in the Book of Job (OG Job 42:17). Here and afterwards all references to TJob are from the translation of Russell P. Spittler (1983).

(just as some of the Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs and the Testament of Moses represent another type of "historical" apocalypses). The *TJob* "doesn't show so much concern for the eschatology of the Jewish people, it is informed by an apocalyptic eschatology instead (similar to 3 Baruch)" (Collins, 1979b: 46). It seems appropriate to define the *TJob* as a "personal" apocalyptic eschatology because the focus remains on the figure of Job and not on the end of the world. There are no foreboding promises of cosmic doom, no sense of eschatological imminence, no concern for the end of the age and no disconnect from the present world.

This discourse brings the *TJob* in some respect a bit closer to the NT writings, where the concepts of revelation and mediation are also apparent. There are mediatory angels in the apocalyptic parts of the NT who are also mentioned as units of the ancient metaphysical world picture, but the main mediators are Jesus and his apostles, as in the "personal" apocalyptic eschatology genre of the *TJob*. Apostle Paul used a similar conception of angelic language in his "song of songs" (1 Cor 13:1) and description of his upper world experience as the daughters of Job (2 Cor 12:2; similar experience is mentioned in the 1 Cor 12 in a polemic way). In considering Apostle Paul's thoughts on eschatology, although he made much of the end of the age and Parousia of Jesus Christ, he did not heavily base his thinking on the apocalyptic doctrine about two different ages. He also rejected speculations about dating or timing the cosmic end and the coming of new eon, and emanated instead from the person Christ, his suffering, death and resurrection. Christocentric "personal" apocalyptic eschatology dominates Paul's writings as well as in the *TJob*.

CHRISTOLOGICAL MOTIFS

At first glance, it might seem artificial to search for Christological traits in the *TJob*. However, behind the *TJob* there is the same textual tradition of the "throne motif" or exaltation motif of the king based on Ps 110, and on which the first Christians based their methods of textual interpretation. The key to interpreting the Hebrew Bible and other sacred writings Christologically is to study them from the perspective of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Whereby Jesus' suffering and cross is viewed retrospectively from the resurrection point of view and the main motif of the Christological interpretation is centred on the exaltation of

Christ. Technically, the exaltation is about enthronization, which is a metaphor of his royal estate of the realm.

1. The motif of the throne

In the *TJob*, Job is portrayed as the king of Egypt.[10] The same way, his three "friends" (as they are known from the Book of Job) are actually kings who came to meet Job after they heard what happened to him. They did not come alone, but they had the entire royal army to escort them. This scene about kings and armies places the *TJob* into the context of a sovereign setting. The word "throne" is mentioned in the text where Job acclaims his position in the higher heaven (*TJob* 33:3–9):

> Quiet! Now I will show you my throne with the splendor of its majesty, which is among the holy ones. My throne is in the upper world [ἐμοῦ ὁ θρόνος ἐν τῷ ὑπερκοσμίῳ ἐστίν], and its splendor and majesty come from the right hand of the Father. The whole world shall pass away and its splendor shall fade. /…/ these kings will pass away and rulers come and go; /…/ But my kingdom is forever and ever, and its splendor and majesty are in the chariots of the Father.[11]

Although a sort of boasting style is inherent to Job, this kind of acclamation is unique in the whole of the *TJob*. It clearly ties all the work with the tradition and reception of Ps 110: "The Lord says to my lord, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool"."[12] This introduction is a calling from Yahweh to king and the court poet is referring to the king as his lord.[13] The background of the Ps 110 is sovereign enthronization. The reception of Ps 110 unites the Jewish and the NT context. First, it is one of the most prominent and used texts in the early Christian tradition onto which the basic messianic interpretation about Jesus of Nazareth was

[10] Haralambakis concludes that the portrayal of Job as a king does not play a dominant role in the embedded story and he could have been another kind of important and wealthy figure (2012: 138). I agree that the story itself does not require that Job is a king, but in messianic or in Christian reception it may have been an important indication for contextualizing the whole story.

[11] The sources of the Greek text are Scott 2006.

[12] Here and afterwards: NRSV 1989.

[13] According to royal etiquette, the court poet calls the king his master (Ps 110:1; see also 1 Sam 24:11; 2 Sam 15:21). This introductory formula for prophetic revelation is an invitation from Yahweh to the king to sit beside Yahweh in a place of honour.

laid. All texts in the NT which present an exalted Christ sitting or situating 'in the right hand of God' are directly or indirectly related to Ps 110:1.

The reception of Ps 110 also appears in Jewish mysticism. One of the earliest forms of it was known as throne-mysticism, which later emerged as Merkabah mysticism. Influences of Merkabah mysticism appear in a wide range of Jewish pseudepigraphal writings (Eskola 2001: 160–162).[14] One cannot deny that among the first Christians the argumentation and thought regarding Yahweh's throne and the position of Jesus on it was influenced by that very Merkabah tradition. Nevertheless, the basic texts for Christian interpretation of Jesus seem to have been Psalms, especially royal ones. Perhaps this is the reason why mysticism did not become the fundamental-theological argumentation and starting-point for the NT writings.

The *TJob* and the NT writings most certainly have common traits in the reception of Ps 110. The exaltation motif, which is the principal doctrinal element in Christian thought, makes it quite convenient for using the *TJob* in the Christian reception. In addition, the restoration of Job in the end of the *TJob* is comparable (although mostly metaphorically) to the resurrection of Christ; in the end both men are exalted to the heavenly throne. Probably there are no Christian redactions at this part of the *TJob*, but rather some religion-historical implications in the background.

2. Motif about the righteous sufferer

It seems to be quite explicit that the main topic in the *TJob* is a sort of pedagogical approach to righteous life. There is probably some wisdom tradition in it that is centred on the question of endurance.[15] The central theme of endurance is presented with three Greek words: ὑπομονή, καρτερία, μακροθῡμία. These words are synonymic in nature but express three different aspects of patience or endurance in the *TJob*. The word ὑπομονή is used when Job has to stand firm against Satan and the semantic field of the word is related with battle in war. The term καρτερία appears mostly in the context of fighting between combatants in the arena. This

[14] Amongst the apocalyptic writings it is worth mentioning the Book of Enoch (40 BCE – 70 CE). The exaltation motif exists in the first book of Enoch, where "son of man" is exalted by God to sit on his throne (1 Enoch 45:1, 3; 51:3; 52:1–7; 55:4; 61:8; 69:27, 29).

[15] Whether or not the use of the label "wisdom" is appropriate, a generic identification of the TJob should include some indication of its aim to communicate certain life lessons (Haralambakis 2012: 108).

word means inexhaustibility, strength of character and even stubbornness, which shows how Job takes hits and beatings from Satan; it specifies ὑπομονή where it should be shown how to be patient in this battle. The word μακροθῡμία also marks patience, forbearance or longsuffering.[16]

As Jonathan R. Trotter mentioned, what makes the *TJob* different from the Book of Job is the fact that Job knows the purpose of his suffering (Trotter 2016: 1300). The angel has revealed to him that he will be rewarded: "But if you are patient (ὑπομείνῃς), I will make your name renowned in all generations of the earth until the end of the age. And I will return you again to your goods. It will be repaid to you doubly /…/ And you shall be raised up in the resurrection" (*TJob* 5:6–9). He will get earthly rewards, fame (53:8), twice the amount of his possessions (44:5), and heavenly reward, resurrection (52:8–10). Job is concerned and motivated by the heavenly reward of resurrection, which is also represented in the text as winning a crown: "For you will be like a sparring athlete, both enduring pains and winning the crown" (5:10). Such determination and awareness of the forthcoming heavenly reward, as a motive, is very close to the NT understanding.[17]

Friedrich Spitta maintained that the NT concept of Jesus as sufferer is based on the textual tradition and reception of Job (Spitta 1907: 165). Also, the early Church fathers compared Job and Jesus in this respect and the suffering theme is expressed in the Christian art of the early Middle Ages (Spittler 1983: 836). However, the special meaning of Job as a "long-sufferer" is attributed to the Eastern Church tradition and that is why there exists one translation of the *TJob* in the Church-Slavonic language (Haralambakis 2012: 183). However, there is an implicit parallel between Job's endurance and Jesus' endurance already in the NT. The only writing that cites Job in the NT is the letter of James:

> Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance [τοὺς ὑπομείναντας]. You have heard of the endurance [τὴν ὑπομονὴν] of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful" (Jas 5:11).

[16] The μακροθῡμία is used also for God's tolerance in the LXX.

[17] For similar depictions of the crown as a reward in the NT literature, see 1 Cor 9:25; 2 Tim 4:8; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10 (Haas 1989: 127, 143–144).

But there is also a mentioned Jesus' endurance as an example in the 2 Thess: "May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness [τὴν ὑπομονὴν] of Christ" (3:5). Here, of course, the parallel between Job and Jesus is implicit.

DEMONOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The *TJob* expresses quite elaborate demonology and, as Spittler said, the highly developed doctrine of Satan marks the *TJob* (Spittler 1983: 834). Satan (*TJob* 6:4) is variously identified as the devil (3:3) and the enemy (47:10). He is neither human (23:2; 42:2) nor of flesh, but a spirit (27:2) who is also responsible for inspiring Elihu (41:5–6). Human nature and everything that is related to it is subject to the deception of the devil (3:3), exemplified in the various disguises assumed by Satan in his opposition to Job. Job's wife, his servants, and Job himself are the objects of Satan's attacks.

It is appropriate to look at the work from the perspective of theories of theodicy. Theodicy as a philosophical-theological teaching is concerned with finding a solution to the connection between God's goodness and the evil that actually occurs in the world. Reflections about sacred writings in late Second Temple Judaism started to prefer Satan as the source of evil. Although they grasped that God is also related to it, evil never disappeared entirely. In the *TJob*, the cause of evil is strictly attributed to Satan. Evil is presented as something one can be against and something that can be resisted. Satan is subjected to God (as in the Book of Job), but in addition he is subjected to those who have fortitude and endurance in sufferings. The topics of evil and suffering are well developed, and the figure of the enemy is specified, as in the NT writings where resistance to evil is assumed to be persistently active. The battlefield and the form of the enemy are quite clearly defined and a passive attitude toward evil is not accepted: the Gospels compare Satan to a "mighty man" who must be "bound" in order to "rob his house" (Mark 3:27); Jesus' disciples have the authority to stand against "snakes and scorpions" (a metaphor for evil spirits) and authority over all the power of the "enemy" (Luke 10:19); evil spirits are subjected to (Mark 5:6–9) and they submit to supplication (Mark 1:24; 3:11). Jesus' proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God means a proclamation of war against the Kingdom of Satan.

Satan is a well-known religion-historical figure in Christianity, but he

is not very clearly represented in the NT writings and there is no clear allusion to the basis of this demonology. Still, for example, Apostle Paul seems to know exactly how his addressees imagine this figure: Satan is evil spirit (Eph 6), whose intentions are well known (2 Cor 2:11) and who disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14). The following table illustrates the similarities between the traditions.

New Testament	**Testament of Job**
Jesus defeats devil by the Word of God (Matt 4:1–11).	Job defeats Satan by patience (27:1–7).
Devil is evil spirit (Eph 6:11–12).	Satan is spirit not flesh (27:3).
Satan disguises himself behind the false apostles and deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ and angel of light (2 Cor 11:14).	Satan disguises himself as: beggar, bread seller, king of Persia, he wants himself worshiped as God. He speaks through Job's wife Sitidos and Elihu.

It is not entirely clear where such an image of Satan comes from and what influences are contained here. Do these two representations (in the *TJob* and in the NT) have one common source? It is not certain whether the role of the LXX translation of the Book of Job could be attributed as the basis of the demonology reception, but it could be a benchmark in this historical influence process. The imagination of Satan or the devil in the NT surely also assumes its own rhetorical developments, as is probably the case of 1 Pet 5:8. The origins of demonology may have been in an oral tradition that made its way to the writings, but these Pauline texts at least could have very well been influenced directly by the reception of the *TJob*. The main ideas about Satan that exist in the *TJob* are represented in the NT as well.

There are some other texts that contain similar conceptions about demonology which could have an interconnected background. For example, the story about Jesus' temptation in the desert where Satan tries to subject Jesus under his authority and dominion (Matt 4:1–11). This short pericope itself has all the elements of pronouncement stories.[18] There are

[18] The term "pronouncement story" comes from Vincent Taylor (1960: 63–87). New Testament scholars often also use other terms for the sayings of Jesus: Rudolf Bultmann uses term apophthegma (ἀπόφθεγμα—a terse pointed saying) and defined it as a "saying in a brief context"; Martin Dibelius calls them "paradigm[s]" (LBD 2016: s. v. Apophthegm).

two main parts of a pronouncement story: the pronouncement and its setting, i.e., the response and the situation provoking that response (Tannehill 1981a: 1). The story about temptation is a brief narrative focused on a tripartite memorable saying associated with a prominent figure. Jesus' tripartite pronouncement "It is written" represents the climax of the story and demonstrates how to stand against Satan by the Word of God.[19]

A similar kind of text is presented in the *TJob* where Job triumphs over Satan by defeating him through patience. It is arguable whether it could be defined as pronouncement story at all because it is more like a conclusion to the bigger story about the battle between Job and Satan. Nevertheless, as a conclusion it has its own elements in the paragraph and all the information that is needed to make a loud pronouncement by Job:

> Then Satan, ashamed, left me for three years. Now then, my children, you also must be patient in everything that happens to you. For patience is better than anything (*TJob* 27:7).

According to the form criticism method the synoptic gospels have gathered many similar formal text items, which the authors of the gospels have used as building blocks to create the narrative of their work. Jesus' statements in these pericopes are often a rhetorical climax. There are strong suggestions that the authors of the synoptic pronouncement stories drew their inspiration from intertestamental literature (VanderKam 1981: 64–72). It is not clear to what extent the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert may have been influenced by the figure of Job, from the Book of Job

Many scholars note a Hellenistic parallel in chreia (χρεία), a pithy saying or action that makes a useful point, is attributed to some character, and is set in a concise narrative framework (LBD 2016: s. v. Chreia). Vernon Robbins, among others, calls them "anecdotes." Scholars vary on how much these terms are interchangeable: Duane Watson is careful to differentiate between chreia and pronouncement story, while Vernon Robbins views them as the same. Despite the various terms and nuances, there is a general consensus that "apophthegma", "chreia", and "pronouncement story" are interchangeable. Watson, in order to be more precise in defining the terms, also concedes that "a chreia and a pronouncement are often the same, the latter being an expanded version of the former" (LBD 2016: s. v. Apophthegm).

[19] As a pronouncement story it should probably fit in the category of objection stories which, as Tannehill suggests, presents an objection as a challenge to Jesus and his authority: "The objection stories and the testing inquiries highlight the ability of Jesus to meet such challenges. The powerful wisdom and authority of Jesus stand out as they are put to the test. Thus, these stories are also indirect praise of Jesus" (Tannehill 1981b: 111).

or even by the *TJob* itself, but the substantial similarity is quite recognizable. The details of the two stories are different, but the main pedagogical wisdom, in the case of both Job and Jesus, is the ability to force the tempter to withdraw. The similarity of the two stories lies in the wisdom that Satan can be defeated by endurance. However, it is not impossible that the early Christian church created its own temptation narrative for theological reasons, based on the reception of Job or a similar Haggadah tradition of Judaism, which idealizes exodus, Israel's triumphant departure from Egyptian slavery.

EXEMPLIFIED PHILANTHROPY

Most of the attention paid to the portrayal of Job has focused on his noble and philanthropic character. As Trotter has noticed, the Book of Job mentions the unparalleled righteousness of Job in the eyes of Yahweh but never mentions that this was due to his charitable deeds in the narrative framework of the book.[20] In this way, the *TJob* provides a narrative basis for the claims made by Job in his discourses in the Book of Job, substantiating his case for his own righteousness against the accusations of his friends to the contrary (cf. Job 22:6–10) (Trotter 2016: 1310). My argument here is that while both the *TJob* and the NT have common roots and take their main ideas on philanthropy from Old Testament (OT) writings, the philanthropy in the *TJob* is more elaborated and closer to conceptions found in the NT. The texts of philanthropy seem to be more closely related to the NT context, which may have made the *TJob* closer to the Christian church in general.

Job is presented as a model philanthropist in *TJob*. He is a generous and helpful person. The *TJob* celebrates Job's exemplary care for the poor, an earthbound enterprise (*TJob* 9–15) to which he also returns following his recovery (*TJob* 44:2–5). Philanthropy functions as an important attribute of righteousness and it is the major reason for Job's restoration and why Job gets back doubly all that he has lost (*TJob* 44). Job's final exhortation is also focused on philanthropy: "Above all, do not forget the Lord. Do good to the poor. Do not overlook the helpless" (*TJob* 45:1–3).

[20] However, within the discourses Job does mention his charitable deeds, the OG version of which (OG Job 29–31) is expanded very extensively in TJob 9–15, 44 (Trotter 2016: 1310).

The philanthropist motif in the *TJob* and the portrayal of Job as a generous and helpful person fits very well into the early Christian context and it may have been partially responsible for the success of the *TJob* in later Byzantine Christian contexts.[21]

Philanthropy is the common practice in Hebrew Bible. The NT conception of philanthropy comes from Jewish thought, but the NT concretizes these ideas further. There may be different traditions about the view of wealth and poverty in the OT, but the main message is that wealth is always the blessing of Yahweh, while poverty is sometimes portrayed as damnation (Deut 28). In any case, helping the poor is always right thing to do because the one who helps the poor executes the work of Yahweh (Deut 14:29), who himself is the real helper of orphans and the poor (Ps 10:14). Yahweh compensates the expenses of those who act philanthropically (Prov 19:17).

There is a hypothesis about the multifarious tradition of *ṣaddik*, namely the righteous person who is consistent with Jewish religious norms and who is not always rich. There is a theory that just this kind of individual is behind the concept of the saint-poor in the NT. The Hebrew prophets are seen as those who "went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy" (Heb 11:37–39). In the Gospel of Luke, the blessing and the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor (Luke 5:20) and into a banquet should be invited "the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind who have nothing to pay" (Luke 14:13), and the one who does that will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous (Luke 14:14). The first imperative for Apostle Paul was that he should remember the poor, which he was eager to do later (Gal 2:10). Doing good deeds (charity) is almost a mandatory Christian practice that must be visible to the public because they are created for good deeds (Eph 2:10) and it is especially applied to women (1Tim 2:10), widows (1Tim 5:10) and Church leaders (Titus 2:7).

Philanthropic texts are often socially critical because they are directly related to the categories of wealth and poverty, honour and shame, power and slavery. The only author who mentions Job in the NT, James, says in his social-critical exhortation: "Has not God chosen the poor in the world

[21] The portrayal of Job as a philanthropist could also have formed the basis of the perception of Job as a saint (Haralambakis 2012: 138).

to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom?" (Jas 2:5). Job, being both king and rich, is also supremely, boastfully, altruistic in the *TJob*. The passages about philanthropy are directly and socially related to the categories of honour and shame in the *TJob*. These texts form the teachings of Job and are an important part of his exemplary character, just as the teachings of Jesus are an important part of his character.

FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Despite the lack of knowledge about the original context of the *TJob*, we can question the original function of the writing. The author of the *TJob* used an attractive prose narrative to captivate and maintain the attention of the audience. The *TJob* encourages its readers to orient themselves toward the attainment of heavenly splendour and reward through a particular understanding of reality exemplified in the story of the life of Job (Trotter 2016: 1312). The work is written or compiled as religious devotional/edifying literature to communicate spiritual wisdom.

The *TJob* may have been used for apologetic purposes because the narrative functions according to monotheistic ideology. As Irving Jacobs said, "The *Testament of Job* depicts its hero as a missionary who, like Abraham, employed his philanthropy to attract new adherents to the worship of the true God" (1970: 4). Based on an analogy with Acts 14:15 and 17:24, it was argued that content such as Job's queries regarding the nature of the true God and the exhortation to charity were important ingredients of the missionary sermon (Rahnenführer 1971: 90). In addition, it should be noted that Job is defined as non-Jewish, so he remains as a role model, especially in non-Jewish circles.[22] The *TJob* is certainly different from the kind of writings usually classified under the heading Hellenistic Jewish missionary literature, apologetic writings that were addressed to the educated upper classes. The *TJob* may have belonged to a category of legendary conversion stories that appealed to the masses instead, the kind of

[22] The author of TJob implies that the charity of Job began immediately after his visit from the angel, a visit which resulted in his conversion from worshipping Satan to worshiping the true God of Israel. Trotter has compared Job's conversion with Cornelius in the NT. While not explicitly connected with his conversion to Judaism, in the Book of Acts Cornelius is described as a convert to Judaism through drawing attention to his piety as expressed through his almsgiving and devotion to prayer (Acts 10:2) (Trotter 2016: 1310).

conversion stories that filled the needs of Jews in the diaspora and were later useful for early Christians in their mission. As missionary literature, which can be understood as a sub-category of edifying devotional literature, its aim was to stimulate the audience to change their views.

It is also hypothesized that the original context of the *TJob* was martyr literature and the portrayal of Job as a martyr is at the heart of the significance of its narrative. The *TJob* is written in conformity with a basic literary scheme found in other early writings and it contains a number of the main literary features of early Jewish and Christian *martyria* (Jacobs 1970: 1).[23] Objections against the identification of the *TJob* as a martyr-text contend that Job does not die a martyr's death. Nevertheless, the similarities between Job and martyrs have been picked up later in the reception history where the Slavonic codices group the *TJob* together with several Christian martyr texts (Haralambakis 2012: 149). Editors of the Coptic manuscript mention the portrayal of Job as a martyr and point to the emphasis on charity in *TJob* as a possible reason for the appeal of this text in an early Christian context. They suggest that the portrayal of Job as a pious person who voluntarily takes suffering upon himself in zeal for the Lord could have been used as a model for Christians following Jesus (Haralambakis 2012: 151).

Maria Haralambakis indicates that in the Byzantine context (Greek and Slavonic) the *TJob* came to be perceived as a kind of saint's life. Her suggestion is an example of a way in which the *TJob*, a multivalent composition with the potential to be used in various ways, was read during its reception history. Nevertheless, she has shown that this suggestion does not yet apply to the context of Christian Egypt in late antiquity, because the collection of compositions in the Coptic codex does not include hagiography, nor does the Coptic *TJob* have an expanded title such as the ones similar to saints' lives in some of the Greek and Slavonic manuscripts (Haralambakis 2012: 150). However, the *TJob* has the potential to be perceived as a story similar to a saint's life because legends about the figure of Job seem to have been adaptable to the needs and interests of various ages, thus explaining the wide-ranging appeal. The *TJob* combines aspects of missionary text with martyr literature, providing the exemplary figure of

[23] One of the most known martyrdom texts is Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas (dated to the end of 2nd century or beginning of 3rd century CE).

Job as a saint. Such literature was suitable for use in the Christian church's mission and social settings.

However, in considering the original purpose of the *TJob*, discussions of function (*Sitz im Leben*) should also include a definition of the genre. As mentioned before, the *TJob* can be considered a work closely related to apocalyptic literature, a kind of "personal" apocalyptic eschatology genre. Therefore, we should also consider how to define the function of the apocalyptic genre. Some scholars have proposed the following definition of the function of "apocalyptic" literature:

> [Apocalyptic writings are] intended to interpret present, earthly circumstances in light of the supernatural world and of the future, and to influence both the understanding and the behavior of the audience by means of divine authority (A. Y. Collins 1986: 7).[24]

As *TJob* is not directly related to apocalyptic genre, this definition can only be imposed partially. This generalized apocalyptic function may be based on the implied function of the *TJob* that includes endurance and encouragement.[25] Since one of the aims of apocalyptic literature is to encourage the sufferers in a critical social context, the other aim is often a monotheistic social critique of those in power.

The categories of wealth and poverty, honour and shame, power and social exclusion are stretched as broadly as possible in the *TJob*. Job, as a rich king who loses his wealth and health, forms a socially critical chiasm that can set a sacred example for sociological exhortations. Job does not give up his God and altruism in the midst of crisis. It is difficult not to notice the similarity between Job and Jesus and the metaphorical nature of "personal" apocalyptic eschatology: the most exalted is simultaneously the lowest.[26] Whilst apocalypticism generally is a genre of crisis, it also functions for exhortation and countenance. One should not

[24] David Hellholm has proposed an even more specific formulation: "[Apocalyptic writings are] intended for a group in crisis with the purpose of exhortation and/or consolation by means of divine authority" (Hellholm 1986: 27).

[25] Although we cannot conclude that Job's overcoming of Satan through endurance in TJob 2–27 is the basic message of TJob (Collins 1974: 41), one of the main purposes of the work is to encourage its audience toward endurance (Kugler 2001: 202).

[26] Martin Hengel has aptly stated that the negative (anti)culmination of Jesus' crucifixion and his exaltation to the right hand of God constitute a spatial chiasm, the meaning of which can no longer be expressed in a more contrasting way (Hengel 1995: 121).

underestimate the social-critical perspectives of the *TJob*, which early Christians could easily use in their socially critical contexts. It could be used metaphorically through Job's "personal" apocalyptic eschatology.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the article was to examine the *TJob* from the perspective of early Christian theology. The evidence shows that the *TJob* was quite useful for early Christian communities. This article discussed six aspects of the *TJob* that could predispose Christian reception of it.

The eschatological ideas constitute a common background framework and combine apocalyptical aspects with the figure of Job. The whole narrative can be identified as a "personal" apocalyptic eschatology. The distinctive emphasis is given to a cosmological dualism that inculcates a certain otherworldliness and conception of resurrection to upper world in the *TJob* constitutes common ground with the Christian thought world.

From a Christological point of view, the motifs of exaltation and suffering are apparent. The exaltation motif has roots in Jewish mysticism, but the common ground is found in the reception of Ps 110 which unites the Jewish and Christian context. This common ground may explain the use of the *TJob* in the Christian reception.

There is pedagogical wisdom for righteous life in the *TJob*. The central themes of endurance and different aspects of patience are presented as the main topics. It certainly invites an implicit parallel between the endurance of Job and Jesus. Job's endurance is even mentioned in the book of James as an example, which could be seen as earliest proof of the tradition of hagiography that flourished later in reception history.

The demonological doctrine of the NT could be based on a similar prototype of Satan found in the *TJob*. Most significant is the similar understanding of theodicy: Satan is presented as someone to resist in the *TJob* as well as in NT. There exists the possibility that the temptation story of Jesus has common roots with the *TJob* because the authors of the synoptic gospels drew their inspiration from the intertestamental writings, pronouncement stories and thoughts circulated in oral tradition.

The exemplary aspects of philanthropy are given significant attention in the *TJob*. Philanthropy or charity is a common practice in the Hebrew Bible and the NT philanthropy comes explicitly from Jewish thought. Therefore,

philanthropy is also the prerogative of the apostolic tradition and it may be fruitful to read the *TJob* from a Christian perspective in this matter.

Functional perspectives of the *TJob* may have predisposed its multifunctional use in different contexts. It was well suited to be used as edifying, missionary or martyr-literature by Jewish communities, as well as among Christians. As a description of saint's life, it would have belonged to a category of legendary conversion stories appealing to the masses to fill the needs of Jews in the diaspora and later for Christians in their mission. Whilst the *TJob* should be considered as a work closely related to apocalyptic literature, its social-critical outputs were useful in early Christian social contexts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Collins, Adela. Y. 1986. "Introduction". *Semeia*, 36: 1–11.

Collins, John. J. 1974. "Structure and Meaning in the Testament of Job". *SBL Seminar Papers*. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 35–52.

Collins, John. J. 1979a. "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre". *Semeia*, 14: 1–20.

Collins, John. J. 1979b. "The Jewish Apocalypses". *Semeia*, 14: 21–60.

Davila, James. 2004. *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian or Other?* Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 105. Leiden: Brill.

Eskola, Timo. 2001. *Messiah and the Throne: Jewish Merkabah Mysticism and Early Christian Exaltation Discourse*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Reihe 2, 142. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Gray, Patric. 2004. "Points and Lines: Thematic Parallelism in the Letter of James and the Testament of Job". *The New Testament Studies*, 50: 406–424.

Haas, Cees. 1989. "Job's Perseverance in the Testament of Job". *Studies in the Testament of Job*, edd. Michael A. Knibb and Pieter W. van der Horst: 117–154. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haralambakis, Maria. 2012. *The Testament of Job: Text, Narrative and Reception History*. Library of Second Temple Studies, 80. London, New York: Bloomsbury.

Hellholm, David. 1986. "The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypse of John". *Semeia*, 36: 13–64.

Hengel, Martin. 1995. *Studies in Early Christology*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

Jacobs, Irving. 1970. "Literary Motifs in the Testament of Job". *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 21: 1–10.

James, Montague R. ed. 1924. *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kugler, Robert A. 2001 "Testaments". *Justification and Variegated Nomism I*, edd. D.A. Carson et al.: 189–214. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Reihe 2, 140. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

LBD 2016. *The Lexham Bible Dictionary,* ed. John. D. Barry. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

NRSV 1989. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Rahnenführer, Dankwart. 1971. "Das Testament Hiobs und Neue Testament". *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 62: 68–93.

Scott, Ian W., ed. 2006. "Testament of Job". *The Online Critical Pseudepigrapha*, edd. Ken M. Penner, David M. Miller, and Ian W. Scott. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, Online: http://www.purl.org/net/ocp/TJob.

Spitta, Friedrich. 1907. "Das Testament Hiobs und das Neue Testament". *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums*, 3/2: 139–206. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Spittler, Russell. P. 1983. "Testament of Job: A New Translation and Introduction". *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments,* ed. James H. Charlesworth: 829–868. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company.

Tannehill, Robert. C. 1981a. "Introduction: The Pronouncement Story and Its Types". *Semeia* 20: 1–14.

Tannehill, Robert. C. 1981b. "Varieties of Synoptic Pronouncement Stories". *Semeia* 20: 101–120.

Taylor, Vincent. 1960. *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition*. London: Macmillan.

Toy, Crawford H., and Kaufmann Kohler. 1906. "The Testament of Job". *Jewish Encyclopedia, http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8694-job-testament-of.*

Trotter, Jonathan R. 2016. "The Role of Charity in the *Testament of Job*". *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, edd. Joel Baden et al.: 1298–1313. Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 175. Leiden: Brill.

VanderKam, James C. 1981. "Intertestamental Pronouncement Stories". *Semeia*, 20: 75–82.