

## Ποτήριον ἔνχειρὶ κυρίου: Philo and the Rabbis on the Powers of God and the Mixture in the Cup\*

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The striking similarity between Philo's idea of the two main divine 'powers' and the Rabbinic theory of the 'measures' of justice and mercy has occupied scholars for over a century. Research has focused on the principal aspect of this similarity: the conception, common to both Philo and the Rabbis, that the divine names — the Tetragrammaton and Elohim — represent the different divine powers.<sup>1</sup> The present study, however, will deal with another aspect common to both systems: the perception that the two powers are mingled and mixed. Such a perception may play the role of neutralizing the potential dualism hidden in every system based on two divine phases,<sup>2</sup> and it is not limited to Philo and the rabbis.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a survey see: N.A. Dahl and A.F. Segal, 'Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God', *JSJ* 9, 1978, 1-3. The problem which has occupied scholars — the opposite ways in which Philo and the Rabbis portray the correlation between the divine names and powers — is secondary to the general agreement between the two systems, and since it is not essential to the present study it will not be dealt with here. It should further be noted that an early Biblical tradition already shows a systematic approach to the divine names as representing the different phases of Divinity, see: I. Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1995, 124-48.

<sup>2</sup> Echoes of dualistic conceptions can also be found in Rabbinic literature on the measures of God. It should be noted that this study is focused on two specific passages and it is not intended as a full description of the different rabbinic approaches to the issue, nor is it an exhaustive discussion of Philo's theory on the subject.

<sup>3</sup> Among the non-Jewish writers of late antiquity, it is worth mentioning Ephrem the Syrian who used the opposition between mercy and justice as a basic principle of his religious thought (see: J. Martikainen, 'Gerechtigkeit und Güte Gottes bei Ephraem dem Syrer', *Symposium Syriacum* III, ed. R. Lavenant, Roma 1983, 281-5). Ephrem systematically emphasizes the admixture of the two measures by means of various metaphors, among which the following from his *Hymns on the Church* (E. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen De Ecclesia* V, Louvain 1960 [CSCO 198], 21) is of particular interest for our study:

Praise to your Will - that both, into each other, תודי לצביך - דתרתין חדא בחדא

However, the Philonic and Rabbinic texts discussed herein show not merely a conceptual similarity, but also a similar thematic structure and possibly a real textual link.

### I. Philo

In his *On the Unchangeable Nature of God* which deals with the story of the Flood, Philo devotes a number of paragraphs to a discussion of the admixture of the divine powers,<sup>4</sup> which can be subdivided into two well-defined sections. While the second section<sup>5</sup> is a Greek philosophical treatment of the problem of unity and multiplicity, the first reflects no Greek quality whatsoever and appears to be based on 'Jewish' elements — Biblical and post-Biblical — such as are also found in the midrashim of the Rabbis dealing with the measures of God.

In the first section, the discussion of the divine powers springs from the story of Noah's rescue. According to Philo, God saves Noah from the Flood in order to mingle His mercy with the harsh judgment meted out to the sinful (ἵνα τὸν σωτήριον ἔλεον ἀνακεράσῃται τῆ... κρίσει).<sup>6</sup> Had the Lord judged humanity without mercy, He would have brought about its final destruction because no-one on earth does not sometimes sin;<sup>7</sup> in order to preserve the human race, therefore, He tempers (ἀνακίρνησιν) His justice with mercy.<sup>8</sup> In an eloquent passage Philo himself mixes justice and mercy on a linguistic level as well: καὶ οὐ μόνον δικάσας ἔλεει, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐλεήσας δικάζει. From what follows it is clear that the implication of this passage is that mercy, though mixed with justice, precedes it in time. Thus, mercy is God's first response to human sin.

In his usual manner, Philo uses Scripture to support the argument, but it is quite unusual that all three prooftexts here should be from the Psalms:<sup>9</sup>

glorious springs - mixed, those of relief

מַעְיָנָה שְׂבִיחָא - מוֹג דְּעוֹדְרָנָא

merciful is your justice

מִבְּנָה הִיא כְּאֵנוּחַךְ

just is your mercy

כְּאֵנָה הִיא מִיְבוּחַךְ

The image of the two springs is also found in the dualistic treatise of the 'two spirits' in the Manual of Discipline (3,19). Only there, of course, no mention is made of any mixture.

<sup>4</sup> *Quod Deus Immutabilis Sit*, 73-85 (F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *Philo III*, London 1968, 47-53).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 77-84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 74.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 86.

<sup>9</sup> See: D. Winston and J. Dillon, *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria*, Scholars Press, Chico 1983, 312 n. 3. Dahl and Segal (n. 1), 10 claim that this unusual combination indicates Philo's use here of an early Midrashic source.

1) The proof-text for the initial argument<sup>10</sup> is 'Of mercy and judgment will I sing unto You [O Lord]'.<sup>11</sup> 'Mercy and judgment' is understood here as a conjunction: I will sing the praise of that which is both mercy and justice.<sup>12</sup>

2) At the end of the first section<sup>13</sup> Philo quotes an intriguing verse (the precise meaning of which will be dealt with presently):<sup>14</sup> 'A cup is in the hand of the Lord, of wine unmingled,<sup>15</sup> being [the cup] full of mixture'<sup>16</sup> (ποτήριον ἐν χειρὶ κυρίου οἴνου ἀκράτου πλήρες κεράσματος).

3) The paradoxical statement 'wine unmingled in a cup full of mixture' serves as a departure for the second section. Philo presents the verse as a false paradox: what appears to be multiple or mixed, from the human vantage point, is an unmingled unity from that of God. This distinction between the different vantage points is supported<sup>17</sup> by the third verse: 'one spoke the Lord, two is what I heard'.<sup>18</sup> Philo identifies the 'one' and the 'two' with the concepts of the previous verse: τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἅπαξ ἔοικε τῷ ἀκράτῳ... τὸ δὲ δις — τῷ κεκραμένῳ.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>10</sup> End of 74.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 101:2, as cited by Philo (= LXX). MT completes: אָזְמִירָהּ לְךָ ה' אֱמִירָהּ and therefore demands different punctuation: 'I will sing of mercy and justice — unto You, O Lord, will I sing'.

<sup>12</sup> In the Talmud this phrase is interpreted as disjunctive: 'If You deal mercifully with me, I will sing — and if You deal justly I will sing'. Do these different readings depend on the difference in text and punctuation mentioned above?

<sup>13</sup> At the beginning of 77; later I will claim that the verse belongs to the previous paragraph as well.

<sup>14</sup> According to the LXX to Ps. 75(74): 9. For the Hebrew text and its possible interpretation see below.

<sup>15</sup> The Hebrew יין חָמֵר is unclear, though apparently it means 'foaming wine', cf. מִיּוֹי ויחמר (Ps. 46:3). Similarly the Aramaic חֲמִירָא and the Arabic *hamir* = yeast that ferments the dough or wine, see L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament* I, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1967, 316-7. יין חָמֵר can thus be interpreted as new and concentrated wine still in the process of fermenting. This may also be what is meant by the Targum: חָמֵר עֲשִׂין. It would appear that the Greek οἶνος ἀκράτος — unmixed wine — is based on the same meaning. LXX gives οἶνος ἀκράτος also for יין חָמֵר in Jer. 25:15. It is possible therefore that the Greek rendering emerges from the textual variant חָמֵר/חֲמֵר. However, it might also be the case that the translators *interpreted* both verses in a similar manner, since the foaming wine is a 'wine of wrath' or seems hot or poisonous (see n. 26 below).

<sup>16</sup> The Hebrew מִלֵּא מִסֶּךָ כֹּסִי, i.e., the wine, not the cup, is full of mixture (כֹּסִי is everywhere feminine in the Hebrew Bible). For מִסֶּךָ as mixture see: Koehler and Baumgartner (n. 15), II, 572.

<sup>17</sup> Philo, op. cit., 82-4.

<sup>18</sup> Ps. 62:12. Both the Hebrew text and the Greek read: 'One spoke *God*'.

<sup>19</sup> Philo, op. cit., 82.

But there is another important reason for this reference. It enables Philo to translate the Biblical expression into the terms of his own philosophical language, for ‘one’ and ‘two’ resemble the monad and dyad of middle Platonism:<sup>20</sup> μονάδας μὲν οὖν ἀκράτους ὁ θεὸς λαλεῖ... ἀκούομεν δ’ ἡμεῖς δυάδι...<sup>21</sup>

The second proof-text — ‘A cup is in the hand of the Lord’ etc. — which, as we have said, serves as a point of departure for the discussion that follows is also strongly connected to that which precedes it. This is already apparent in the conjunctive διὰ τοῦτο but it is made especially clear by its content: this verse is about divine judgment and uses the imagery of mixing, the exact components of Philo’s construction in the previous section. It is hard therefore to assume that this verse has been cited here merely to illustrate the paradox of the ‘pure-mixed’; it would seem, then, that the mixing of wine in the verse is also a metaphor for the mixing and mingling of divine powers discussed in the previous section. When we examine the Biblical context, this becomes more evident still. The Septuagint to Ps. 75(74):8-9 reads:

8. ὅτι ὁ θεὸς κριτῆς ἐστίν, τοῦτον ταπεινοὶ καὶ τοῦτον ὑψοί.  
 9. ὅτι ποτήριον ἐν χειρὶ κυρίου, οἴνου ἀκράτου πλήρες κεράσματος.  
 καὶ ἔκλιθεν ἐκ τούτου εἰς τοῦτο, πλὴν ὁ τρυγίας αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔξεκνωθή  
 πίνονται πάντες οἱ ἀμαρτωλοὶ τῆς γῆς.

The Greek version appears to be an elaboration of the Hebrew text:

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| For God is judge,                            | .8 כי אלהים שופט, |
| He puts one man down, and raises up another. | זה ישפיל וזה ירים |
| For a cup is in the hand of God,             | .9 כי כוס ביד ה', |
| and foaming wine, full of mixture.           | ויין קמר מלא קסך. |
| And He poured out from that,                 | ויגר מזה,         |
| only its dregs, all the wicked of the earth  | אך שמריה יקצו,    |
| will drain them, and drink them              | ישתו כל רשעי ארץ  |

Drinking the cup as an image for divine judgment is quite common in the Bible.<sup>22</sup> That this is also the context here is made explicit in v. 8: ‘For the Lord is a Judge’. Verse 9 describes God making the wicked drink from the cup in His hand, which is full of ‘foaming wine’. The Psalmist also says that the wicked will drink the cup to the lees, that is, they will suffer their severe punishment to the end.<sup>23</sup> The difficulty lies in the third line — ויגר מזה — which is completely

<sup>20</sup> See J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1977, cf. index, s.v. ‘One’, ‘Dyad’.

<sup>21</sup> Philo, op. cit., 83.

<sup>22</sup> See: *Encyclopedia Biblica* IV, s.v. כוס, 50-51 (Hebrew); *TDNT* VI, s.v. ποτήριον, 148-53.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Is. 51:17; Ez. 24:34.

obscure. We shall not deal here with possible interpretations of this Hebrew phrase, but rather try to understand the Greek rendering (apparently the same text Philo had).

According to the Greek text the meaning is: '[...] and He poured *from this one to that one* but the lees were not poured out'.<sup>24</sup> What is new here is that the verse depicts a *scene of wine mixing*. The Lord has *two vessels*;<sup>25</sup> from one He pours the unmingled wine into the cup filled with the mixture, taking proper care not to spill out the lees with the wine. The wicked drink the mingled wine from the cup (but not the lees). This description is in stark contrast to the picture presented by the Hebrew text here, and to the general theme of drinking the cup found elsewhere in the Bible. An obvious parallel is Jer. 25:15-16, which is quite similar to Psalm 75:9, and here again the Greek uses ἀκράτος as an adjective for the drink:

[...] Take from My hand this cup of wine of wrath<sup>26</sup> and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. Let them drink and retch and act crazy...<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The Hebrew text reads יִקָּצוּ and connects it to what follows: 'All the wicked of the earth will drain them'. The Greek, which connects the word to what precedes it, is apparently based on a different reading: יִקָּצוּ (in *Nif<sup>c</sup>al*) = will be extracted, i.e.: the lees will be left as sediment in the cup, and will not be poured out with the wine.

<sup>25</sup> In the context of wine mixing some Talmudic sources mention a vessel called דיפלי-פוטירין (= \*διπλοποτήριον), i.e. a double cup. I have not found the word in the Greek lexica, but it seems to be well attested in the Palestinian Jewish literature. See S. Krauss, *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*, Berlin 1899, 210 (Krauss also refers to a variant reading found in some manuscripts — פיילי פוטירין [φιάλλη ποτήριον] — which appears to be secondary in the Talmudic sources). The exact meaning of this expression is uncertain but apparently it denotes a kind of a double cup made for wine mixing. It is important to mention that in one context the cup of judgment (in Ps. 11:6) is also called דיפלי-פוטירין (*PT* Pes. 1:10 [37c] and parallels), and that in this context the 'cup' is understood as containing two different elements, opposing each other by their nature ('Blazing coals and sulphur' and 'Scorching wind'). May we, therefore, assume that the Greek translator of the Psalms also had in mind a דיפלי-פוטירין as he rendered 'He pours from this one to that one'?

<sup>26</sup> Hebrew: כּוּס הַיַּיִן הַחֶמֶק. Another possible meaning for חֶמֶק is 'poison', i.e. poisonously concentrated wine. Cf. חֶמֶת חַיִּינִים יָיִם ('Their wine is the venom of serpents', Dt. 32:33). The Syriac חמתא connects heat, wrath and poison (possibly derived from the hot and poisonous breath of the serpent; note also the Arabic *huma* and the Assyrian *imtu* with close meanings). The Hebrew חמה is also frequently connected in the Bible with heat or flaming breath. For ἀκράτος in LXX here see n. 15 above.

<sup>27</sup> Translation according to new JPS version.

LXX: Λαβὲ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ ἀκράτου ἐκ χειρός μου... καὶ πίνονται καὶ ἔξεμούνται καὶ μανήσονται...

The nature of the drink is revealed by its description as  $\text{מִיָּיִן}$  as well as from the effects of drinking it. It is emphasized elsewhere that the drink in the cup is sharp and intoxicating (even poisonous): 'You who from the Lord's hand have drunk the *cup of His wrath*,<sup>28</sup> you who have drained to the dregs the bowl, *the cup of reeling*<sup>29</sup> (Is. 51:17). οἶνος ἀκράτος in the Greek has the same meaning: it is well known that in antiquity wine was drunk diluted, and undiluted heavy wine was considered too intoxicating and too sharp to drink.<sup>30</sup>

In light of this comparison, the description of the mixing of the cup in the Greek version of Ps. 75:9 appears strikingly innovative: the judge gives the accused a cup of well-mingled wine! The symbolic meaning here is interesting. The drink symbolizes judgment; according to the Greek, God uses two different kinds of drink: the undiluted wine and the liquid (perhaps water) which is used to dilute the wine. The mingling of the wine thus symbolizes the moderation of harsh judgment, and accordingly, the two liquids may symbolize the measures of justice and mercy. A further look at this allegory suggests that in the process of divine judgment, mercy precedes justice, since God pours the concentrated wine (i.e. justice) into the cup with the mixture (i.e. mercy), and not vice versa.

It is an open question whether the Greek translator himself intended to load the text with so much allegorical significance. However, this verse may easily serve as a basis for the theory of the mingling of divine powers, like that of Philo.<sup>31</sup> No wonder, then, that Philo cites this verse as a conclusion for the first section of his discussion of divine powers, since his entire theory is encapsulated in it.<sup>32</sup> This verse, therefore, functions well as a pivot between the first section in

<sup>28</sup> Hebrew: כוס חמרו, see n. 26 above.

<sup>29</sup> Hebrew: קבעה כוס התרעלה. Medieval (and modern) Hebrew uses רעל 'poison'. This usage is based, apparently, on the parallelism: תרעלה = חמה (= poison), since, like חמה, רעל, and תרעלה are used in the Bible as a description of the fatal drink in the cup of judgment.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. the discussion on the habits of drinking and mixing and on the effects of drinking unmixed wine in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (X, 426ff.). For a short survey see: C. Daremberg and M.E. Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines* V, 921. On wine mixing in the Talmud see I. Löw, *Die Flora der Juden* I, Leipzig 1926, 137-8.

<sup>31</sup> Actually, it is possible that the same idea appears already in Biblical literature. See Knohl (n. 1), 168-80, who claims that the use of the combination 'The Lord God' in the writings of the 'School of Holiness' is deliberately intended to mix together the divine powers symbolized by the different names. This idea that the combination of the divine names reflects the mixing of the powers occurs both in Philo (*Quaest. Gen.*, 2,16) and in the Midrash (see section 2 below).

<sup>32</sup> For this reason Philo uses the terminology of mixing throughout the passage.

which the Jewish elements of the theory are discussed, and the second section wherein Philo deals with the Platonic issue of unity and multiplicity.

Winston, in his elegant essay on the Logos of Philo, states that the source of Philo's theory of the two divine powers is mainly Greek, not Jewish, and that it is an Alexandrian development of the Platonic idea of unity and multiplicity.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, he stresses the importance Philo attributes to the consonance of the Greek ideas with the Jewish theory of the two measures.<sup>34</sup> In the case under discussion, we see that Philo himself presents the two systems side by side, strongly joined together by a single scriptural link. This shows the importance of the idea of mixing for Philo, as it is this concept which makes the two different systems parallel: without the idea of mixing, there would be no link between a system of two separate measures and the one-many theory.

The two-sided character of Philo's presentation of the subject becomes apparent when we consider the different reasons given in the two sections for the mixing of the powers. In the first, the reason is existential: were it not for the mixing of justice and mercy, the human race would be utterly destroyed.<sup>35</sup> This is a common argument in Jewish sources, much like the one given in the Midrash we shall see below. In the second section, the reason is epistemological, characteristic of middle Platonic philosophy: man, limited as he is, is unable to grasp the true categories in all their purity — just as he cannot look directly into the undiluted<sup>36</sup> flame of the sun. Thus, that which is one in itself appears to us as a multiplicity. This divergence greatly changes the meaning ascribed to the act of mixing in the two systems. While in the first, mixing is a 'one-way' dilution — mercy mitigates justice — in the second it is completely reciprocal: being mixed, the two powers obscure one another to avoid observation in all their unendurable potency.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the priority of mercy over justice — the final point of the first section — has no echo in the second.

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<sup>33</sup> David Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria*, Hebrew Union College Press, Cincinnati 1985, 18-9.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> Paragraph 75. This argument may also be based on an interpretation of Ps. 75; see below.

<sup>36</sup> ἀκράτων; paragraph 78.

<sup>37</sup> See: A. Mosès, 'De Gigantibus, Quod Deus Sit Immutabilis', edd. R. Arnaldez et al., *Les Œuvres de Philon D'Alexandrie VII-VIII*, Paris 1963, 100 n. 5



## II. Midrash

[...] *In the day the Lord God made earth and heaven* (Gen. 2:4)

*The Lord God* — It is like a king who had fine<sup>38</sup> [glass] cups.<sup>39</sup> Said the king: If I put hot water in them — they will break, and if cold water, they will crack! What did the king do? He mixed hot water with the cold, and poured it therein, and they did endure.

Thus said the Holy One: If I create the world solely with the measure of mercy, sins will increase; if [solely] with the measure of justice the world will cease to be. Therefore, I create it with the measures both of justice and of mercy, and [thus] may it endure! — *The Lord God*.<sup>40</sup>

The anchor in Scripture for the Midrash is the combination of the divine names — ‘The Lord God’ — grasped as representing the mixture of the two measures in the act of creation.<sup>41</sup> This Midrash has already been cited by some scholars as evidence that the principle of combining the measures exists also among the Rabbis.<sup>42</sup> But the connection between this Midrash and the Philonic text, I believe, is deeper and more substantial. Apart from exemplifying a common principle, the two texts resemble each other in their literal form and components, and may also share a common origin.

The two texts not only use the same argumentation — ‘with the measure of judgment alone the world will cease to be’ — but they also use the same motif. This motif of the mixing of drinks is central to Philo’s representation and its essential role in the Midrash is self-evident. Having analyzed the Septuagint tradition of Ps. 75, we face an inevitable question: might not the Rabbinic Midrash, like Philo’s, also have emerged from an interpretation of Ps. 75:9? ‘A king who had a cup’ is almost the same as ‘A cup is in the Hand of the Lord’, and מלא חסך יין חמר is naturally understood, despite its vagueness, as a description of mixing — especially if a reading (or interpretation) like that of the Septuagint was known to the Rabbis.<sup>43</sup> The correspondence between the two parables, that in the

<sup>38</sup> Hebrew: רקים. One should read רקים (from the root ק”ק) = fine, thin. The reading רקים (= empty) is meaningless in the context.

<sup>39</sup> R. Nathan of Rome quotes in his *Aruch*: ‘A king who had two fine (glass) cups’ (A. Kohut ed., *Aruch Completum* VII, 207; see below, n. 43).

<sup>40</sup> *Ber. Rab.* 12,15 (J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*<sup>2</sup>, Jerusalem 1965, 112-3).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. n. 31.

<sup>42</sup> M. Stein, *Philon Ha-Alexandroni*, Warsaw 1937, 226 (Hebrew); Dahl and Segal (n. 1), 10 n. 35; Winston and Dillon (n. 9), 316.

<sup>43</sup> It is worth recalling here the reading of the *Aruch*: ‘A king who had two fine (glass) cups’. In the parable as it appears in the Midrash there is no significance to the number of cups, only to the fact that they are made of fine glass. If indeed the origin of the Midrash is an interpretation of Ps. 75 similar to that in the Septuagint, then the source of the two cups in the text cited by the *Aruch* becomes understandable:



Scripture and that in the Midrash, is nearly complete: in both, the mixing of drinks of opposite qualities in the cup which is in the king's hand symbolizes the mixing of the measures of divine judgment, justice and mercy.

It appears to me that the resemblance between the Midrash and the Psalm is too great to be merely coincidental. Moreover, reading the Psalm 'Midrashically' one can recognize a structural congruence in these sources. By juxtaposing the two, we can see that the main components of the Midrash appear in the Psalm, whether explicitly or implicitly.

*Bereshit Rabba**Psalm 75*

with the measure of justice —  
the world will cease to be.

[If] I judge strictly —  
the earth and all its inhabitants will be  
dissolved. (vv. 3-4)<sup>44</sup>

If I create the world  
with the measure of mercy —  
sins will increase

I establish its pillars...  
I say to the lawless ones:<sup>45</sup> Do not sin,  
and to the wicked: do not lift a horn. (v. 5)

A king who had cups...  
He mixed hot water with the cold...

For a cup is the hand of the Lord,  
and foaming wine, full of mixture.<sup>46</sup>

This interesting parallel supports the possibility that the connection between the Midrash and the interpretation reflected in the Septuagint is not limited to the use of common motifs, but that in fact, the Midrash, like Philo, evolved from a similar interpretation of the same verse. A further argument may also support this. The parable in the Midrash implies a harmonic system of complementary measures,<sup>47</sup> whereas elsewhere in Rabbinic literature we find a contrast and ten-

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two vessels are necessary for wine mixing (cf. the Septuagint: 'He poured from this one to that one'). This may then be an example of a phenomenon discussed by Menahem Kister: Aggadic fragments that wander from one context to another sometimes preserve original elements, which become insignificant in the new context ('Metamorphoses of Aggadic Traditions', *Tarbiz* 60, 1991, 179-224 [Hebrew]).

44 This suggested 'Midrashic' reading, in its disregard for traditional verse division (a frequent practice in Midrash), makes the sentence conditional.

45 The Hebrew היללים is frequently parallel to רשעים. The LXX renders here: παράνομοι.

46 If we read the verse as it appears in the Greek version, the parallel becomes much tighter: 'He poured from this one to that one' = 'He mixed hot water with the cold'.

47 The passage in *Pesikta Rabbati* 40 (M. Friedmann ed., Vienna 1880, 167a) appears as an elaboration of our Midrash.

sion between the two measures.<sup>48</sup> Possibly the uniqueness of our Midrash results from its connection with Ps. 75, which, in accordance with the reading suggested here, expresses the necessity for a complementarity of justice and mercy. In particular, the imagery of mixing leads inevitably to the idea of homogenous mingling of the two measures.

It should be noted here that the resemblance between the Midrash and the Psalm is not complete, and the differences become more conspicuous against the background of their common structure:

1) The Lord mixes wine — the king mixes cold and hot water.

2) The dilution of the wine is meant to protect the drinker — the mixing of cold and hot water is meant to protect the cup.

These differences are interdependent, I believe, and result from a difference in context. That of the Psalm is judgment; that of the Midrash is creation. In the former, the purpose of mixing is to mitigate judgment, while in the latter, it is to sustain the world. In its new context, the parable undergoes a process of adaptation.<sup>49</sup> The focus changes from the drinker to the cup, which now symbolizes the world; thus, the cups are described as fragile and liable to be damaged by the drink that is poured into them. Accordingly, the drink has also to change, since unmixed wine is no more damaging to a fine glass cup than mixed wine. Therefore, the metaphor for the measures here is hot and cold water that may damage these cups. The result is not very far from the original, in as much as *יין חמר* may easily be interpreted as 'hot wine',<sup>50</sup> and the liquid used to dilute it is, then, 'cold'.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Here, too, a discordant representation of the measures would fit better the Biblical context, where the expanded name, 'the Lord God', is used in the second story of creation (Gen. 2:4-3:24), while the name used in the first (Gen. 1:1-2:3) is 'God' alone. A possible Midrash to account for this different usage might therefore have been: 'In the beginning God created the world with the measure of justice; when He saw that the world would not endure thus, He added the measure of mercy' (cf. Rashi to Gen. 1:1).

<sup>49</sup> For some fine examples and an analysis of this phenomenon, see Kister (n. 43).

<sup>50</sup> See n. 15 above: *חמר* = foaming, i.e. seething. For this image compare, for example, Ps. 46:4 (*חמר*) with Job 41:23 (*רחח*). Similarly, the root *חמר* is used in Mishnaic Hebrew: *חומר את בני מעי* = 'It burns his entrails' (Mishnah, San. 7:2). The same meaning can be found in the Targum of Job: *מעו חמר* (for the Hebrew *מעו רחח*, Job 30:27). *יין חמה* in Jer. 25:15 may also play a role in this Midrashic process since it can be understood as if it ascribes a quality of heat to the wine (see n. 26 above).

<sup>51</sup> Note also that according to the Midrash the cup of judgment in Ps. 11:6 is *פוסידין דיפלי* which contains hot and cold elements (see n. 25 above).

The place of Jewish sources in the philosophy and hermeneutics of Philo is a complex issue. It is my hope, nevertheless, that in this brief study I have been able to shed some light on at least one facet of this difficult problem. The passage in *On the Unchangeable Nature of God* exemplifies the way Philo uses his two different sources to compose an integrated construction. The similarities between Philo's discussion and the Midrash in *Bereshit Rabba* suggest that both may have been based on an earlier interpretation of Ps. 75:9, already reflected in the Septuagint. This interpretive tradition provided Philo and the Rabbis with a Biblical basis for the idea of the mixing of the powers, and it is from this tradition that both drew the beautiful guiding image of mingling drinks in the cup.

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