

tuagint reading, “little lower than the angels (βραχὺ τι παρ’ ἄγγέλους),”¹²⁴ provides no such impetus. For this reason, Van Den Broek concludes that the concept of Autogenes “was not conceived by the [Greek] composer of the original Apocryphon, but that this writer made use of an originally independent Jewish myth of the heavenly Anthropos.”¹²⁵

As in *Eugnostos* and *Soph. Jes. Chr.*, God’s Son (Autogenes) generates his own Son, referred to as the “perfect Man, the first revelation, and the truth”; he is given the name “Adamas.”¹²⁶ This act takes place both by the will of Autogenes and by the will of the Father.¹²⁷ Immediately after appearing, Adamas glorifies the Father, the Mother, and the Son; he proceeds to bring forth numerous creatures, which also “glorify the invisible Spirit.”¹²⁸

By way of contrast, *Ap. John* next recounts the generation of Yaldabaoth, which results from Sophia’s desire “to bring forth a likeness out of herself without the consent of the Spirit, ... and without her consort, and without his consideration”¹²⁹ (unlike in *Orig. World*, where his generation appears to be unintentional on the part of Sophia). As in *Orig. World*, Yaldabaoth creates numerous powers and authorities – not to glorify the true God, but to attend his own self – and again, he ignorantly and arrogantly believes himself to be the only God.¹³⁰

To correct Yaldabaoth’s arrogance, the Mother-Father (appearing here in the masculine) “revealed his likeness in a human form.”¹³¹ Upon seeing it, Yaldabaoth declares to the authorities, “Come, let us create a man according to the image of God and according to our likeness, that his image may become a light for us.”¹³² Then (apparently without the nefarious purpose assigned to the act in *Orig. World*), “he created a being according to the likeness of the first, perfect Man” and named the being “Adam.”¹³³ The text later makes plain that this creation involves not just the human mind or soul, but the “natural and perceptible body.”¹³⁴

¹²⁴ Psalm 8:6, LXX 2:6.

¹²⁵ Van Den Broek, “Autogenes and Adamas,” 23.

¹²⁶ *Ap. John*, NHC II 8.32–35; *NHLE*, 109.

¹²⁷ *Ap. John*, NHC II 8.30–31; *NHLE*, 109.

¹²⁸ *Ap. John*, NHC II 9.5–24; *NHLE*, 109–110.

¹²⁹ *Ap. John*, NHC II 9.28–31; *NHLE*, 110.

¹³⁰ *Ap. John*, NHC II 10.19–11.22; *NHLE*, 110–111.

¹³¹ *Ap. John*, NHC II 14.23–24; *NHLE*, 113. In BG 47.20–48.2, it is the supreme God himself who reveals his image in human form.

¹³² *Ap. John*, NHC II 15.2–4; *NHLE*, 113.

¹³³ *Ap. John*, NHC II 15.9–12; *NHLE*, 113.

¹³⁴ *Ap. John*, NHC II 19.30–32, 20.13–14; *NHLE*, 116.

The “first, perfect Man” who appears here in human form and who functions as the archetype of humanity is likely Adamas (and not Autogenes/Christ): first, the phrases “perfect Man” and “first revelation” have already been used in *Ap. John* to describe Adamas; second, the name Adamas indicates that this being is related in a unique way to Adam.¹³⁵ No doubt this is a development of the tradition as it appears in *Orig. World*, in which the *highest* manifestation of God (Immortal Man/Christ) fulfills these roles. Such a development would have been intended to place even more distance between God and the corporeal world. Of course, no such distance is needed for one who thinks of God as creator. Hence (as discussed in Chapter 5) Philo’s Logos can function as the highest manifestation of God *and* as the archetype of humanity. Of course, the anthropomorphites would assign both of these functions to Christ.

6. The Teachings of Silvanus

Malcolm Peel and Jan Zandee characterize *The Teachings of Silvanus*¹³⁶ as “a rare specimen of Hellenistic Christian wisdom literature,” displaying a “remarkable synthesis of biblical, late Jewish, Middle Platonic and late Stoic concepts.”¹³⁷ The attribution ‘Silvanus’ probably refers to a New Testament figure, either the fellow traveler of Paul (Acts 15:22–40; 16:19–29) or the *amanuensis* named in 1 Peter 5:12. Based on the author’s knowledge of the tradition regarding Christ’s descent into Hell, Alexandrian Logos and Wisdom Christology (as well as the thinking of later Stoicism and Middle Platonism), Peel and Zandee date *Teach. Silv.* to the late second or early third century.¹³⁸

The first part of the treatise addresses the usual concerns of wisdom literature – guarding oneself against the passions and base impulses, and allowing reason and wisdom to be one’s guides (NHC VII 84.15–98.20). The second part (NHC VII 98.20–118.7) focuses on the salvation won for the soul by Christ. It begins:

¹³⁵ In this I agree with Van Den Broek, “Autogenes and Adamas,” 23.

¹³⁶ The text of *Teach. Silv.* is preserved in NHC VII 84.15–118.7; ET: Malcolm L. Peel and Jan Zandee, *NHLE*, 381–395.

¹³⁷ Peel and Zandee, “Introduction” in *NHLE*, 379.

¹³⁸ Peel and Zandee, “Introduction” in *NHLE*, 380–381. They identify the probable provenance as Alexandria. However, Zandee, “‘The Teachings of Silvanus’ (NHC VII,4) and Jewish-Christianity,” *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions: Presented to Gilles Quispel on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. R. Van Den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), 566, argues for a Palestinian provenance, noting that *Teach. Silv.*, NHC VII 113.6–7 characterizes Christ as “Light of the Eternal Light,” a phrase similar to the Creed of Caesarea’s “light from light.”