

INTRODUCTION

This volume honors Michael E. Stone on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday. It is presented in recognition of his luminous contribution to the research and teaching of post-biblical Judaism and early Christianity as well in gratitude for the years of guidance and friendship which so many of us have enjoyed. It is also an opportunity to say thank you to those dearest to Michael—to Nira, his “helper and partner,” their children Aurit and Dan, and now their grandchildren Paz, Moran and Yarden—for allowing us to feel part of the Stone family in so many different ways.

Michael Edward Stone was born in Leeds, UK on October 22, 1938, and was raised in Sydney, Australia, receiving his B.A. in Semitics and Classics from the University of Melbourne in 1960. In that year, out of both deep personal conviction and strong family commitment, Michael came to Israel and began his lifelong relationship with Jerusalem and the Hebrew University. He then traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts and in 1965 completed his Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, under the direction of Frank Moore Cross.

In 1966, following a one-year appointment at the University of California at Santa Barbara, Michael returned to Jerusalem and took up a permanent faculty position at the Hebrew University, where he is today the Gail Levin de Nur Professor of Religious Studies as well as Professor of Armenian Studies. During almost forty years of service at the Hebrew University, Michael has at various times chaired three different departments, served on countless faculty and university committees, directed scores of theses and dissertations and left his mark on several highly distinct areas of research and teaching. Two particular contributions demand special attention. Michael single-handedly pioneered the study of Armenian language, literature and history; he has made Jerusalem (largely through his own scholarship and industry) one of the important centers of Armenian studies in today’s academic world. Furthermore, he has accomplished this through intensive, warm relations with the Armenian communities in Jerusalem and throughout the world. No less inspired was the drive and vision

with which Michael founded the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1995. In so doing, he realized a longstanding dream to integrate the study of the Scrolls with that of the vast body of Second Temple literature and to make the Hebrew University of Jerusalem the home for this new integrative and interdisciplinary research. Michael served as the Orion Center's Director during its first three years and continues to chair its Academic Committee and to play an active role in the life of the Center.

Michael's influence on the academic study of early Judaism and Christianity, however, extends far beyond the lecture halls and seminar rooms of Givat Ram and Mount Scopus. Indeed, he has proven himself an energetic and enthusiastic teacher and researcher within the context of at least a half-dozen leading universities and institutes worldwide. During the late 1970s and early 1980s Michael was a long-term visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He also has enjoyed visiting professorships at the University of Melbourne, Harvard Divinity School, Yale University, Leiden University, and served as the Distinguished National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Visiting Professor at the University of Richmond. Michael has been a frequent Fellow-in-Residence at the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) and most recently was honored as a Kluge Distinguished Visiting Senior Fellow at the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.). He directed, together with Gary A. Anderson, a NEH Summer Seminar on "Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Tradition," which convened both at the University of Virginia (1993) and at the Hebrew University (1996).

Michael's "extramural" academic activities have been no less extensive. He played an instrumental role in the formative period of the Pseudepigrapha Group of the Society of Biblical Literature, serving for a decade (1972–1982) on its steering committee and on the editorial board of the SBL Pseudepigrapha Series. This was truly a renaissance period in the study of post-biblical literature, one of whose most important and influential expressions has been Michael's volume *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (1984) for the Compendia project. In more recent years, he has served on the editorial boards of both the *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* and *Dead Sea Discoveries*. While for many of us this might seem a more than adequate level of scholarly cooperation, we should remember that the far greater part of Michael's organizational efforts over the

last two decades has been devoted to the creation of an international framework for Armenian Studies—an aspect of his activity which demands proper and fitting treatment in another context.

When we think of Michael's scholarly contribution, our first thoughts are undoubtedly of a record of publication which is dazzling in both its depth and breadth. By latest count, there stand on the shelves or are currently in press no fewer than fifty volumes which Michael has either authored or edited, in addition to more than two hundred and fifty published articles and reviews. Lest anyone fear that the pace has slackened at all, Michael's most recent bibliography indicates three monographs in preparation and fifteen articles in press at the moment. To even begin to do justice to Michael's contribution to the study of the vast body of Second Temple period literature and its subsequent Jewish and Christian transmission, as well as to the history of religious experience, praxis, and thought, would require a full-length essay in its own right. In the present context, only a few titles, representative of his lifelong interests and collaborative efforts, will have to suffice.

Michael Stone launched his academic career with his dissertation on *Features of the Eschatology of IV Ezra* (Harvard University 1965 [1989]). He continued to pursue this research into the 1980s with a series of groundbreaking studies on the structure, meaning, and transmission history of that text as well as examinations of the pivotal nature of Ezra's conversion experience. These studies came to ultimate fruition in his authoritative commentary, *Fourth Ezra*, for the Hermeneia series (1990).

It is possible, in overview, to speak of at least four distinct and significant bodies of research which Michael has advanced. The first found its expression in a series of formative articles on the nature of apocalyptic thought and literature of the Second Temple period, ranging from the fourth/third century origins of the Enoch books through the visions composed in the wake of the Destruction. A second critical area has been the investigation of both the early Jewish sources for and the later transmission history of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, particularly those of Levi and Naphtali. Third, especially during the last decade, we have witnessed the mapping of the vast literature of Adam and Eve—the history of the “protoplasts”—in the widest possible range of sources and languages extending far

beyond antiquity into the Western Middle Ages as well as the churches of Byzantium. Finally, a major area of his scholarly interest always has been the tracing of the contours of Jewish and Christian apocryphal literatures within the Armenian tradition. As indicated earlier, to even venture to survey Michael's scholarship in the field of Armenian studies lies far beyond the scope of this volume, although mention should be made, nevertheless, of his monumental *Album of Armenian Paleography* published in 2002. Perhaps the ultimate recognition for these academic and scholarly contributions came in 2001, when Michael received the first annual Landau Prize for lifetime achievement in research in the Humanities.

Indeed, in the face of these manifold professional milestones and personal achievements—teaching posts, research appointments, scholarly affiliations and a list of publications that makes one's knees weak—it may seem paradoxical to look elsewhere to detect Michael's greatest contribution to the study of religion in the ancient world. Yet, not a few of us regard Michael's creation of intense, rewarding interpersonal frameworks of scholarship to be his true *magnum opus*. Despite the innumerable hours which he has spent poring over texts in the privacy of his study and the corresponding time invested in the task of writing which makes that private investigation accessible, Michael ultimately views scholarship as a powerfully social process. Though sometimes perceived as the “lonely knight of (philological) faith,” Michael's deepest enjoyment has always been the collaborative study of texts and problems—the ideal of *hevruta*.

An overview of Michael's scholarly career quickly reveals the central importance of friendship and cooperative investigation. During the years of his appointment at the University of Pennsylvania, Michael joined forces and shared students with Bob Kraft, playing a key role in the direction of doctoral candidates as well as participating actively in the “Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins.” While involved closely with the working group on the Pseudepigrapha of the SBL, Michael coauthored, with George Nickelsburg, the anthology *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism* (1982)—a volume that still figures prominently in the teaching of the field. During this same period, Michael was also forging strong academic and personal relations with scholars of another city: Leiden in the Netherlands. There, Michael has worked closely with colleagues such as Marinus de Jonge, Jaap Mansfeld, Luk van Rompay and David Runia—as well as, on matters Armenian, with Jos Weitenberg.

This combination of study and friendship was best defined, perhaps, by the long partnership between Michael and the late Jonas C. Greenfield which spanned over two decades, ending sadly with Jonas' sudden death in 1995. The Greenfield-Stone collaboration produced nearly a dozen joint publications, culminating in their DJD edition of the *Aramaic Levi Document* and the proximate publication of the full textual edition with translation and commentary.

It is not only with his senior colleagues and contemporaries that Michael has sought and encouraged collaborative research: a long line of students, both from Jerusalem and abroad, have been initiated into the finer points and demands of scholarship through joint publication. A number of examples will have to suffice: together with Esther Eshel, Michael has written on a number of Qumran texts and brought to culmination the edition of *Aramaic Levi*; with Esther Chazon, Michael has co-authored the DJD edition of *4QTime of Righteousness* and co-edited two volumes of the proceedings of the Orion Center's annual symposia: *Biblical Perspectives* (1998) and *Pseudepigraphical Perspectives* (1999). With Gary Anderson, he co-authored two editions (1994, 1999) of *A Synopsis of the Primary Adam Literature* and with Ted Bergren, he co-edited the award winning *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible* (1999 Biblical Archeology Society Prize).

Indeed, there has been no more striking or longstanding expression of Michael's commitment to the social context of scholarship than the "Thursday night seminar" graciously hosted by the Stones in their home for more than thirty years. The pinnacle of Michael's academic training of graduate students from Israel and all over the globe, the seminar has provided a nurturing environment and an intellectually challenging forum for students and scholars to share their work and exchange ideas. More than three hundred students and invited guests have attended the seminar: a bi-monthly, three-hour oasis where virtually every text, language, and tradition from the ancient world is fair ground for investigation and discussion. The working atmosphere of the seminar also has found its way into a number of publications. Notable in this regard was the appearance of the seminar's long term research project on literature and traditions associated with the prophet Ezekiel in the volume *The Apocryphal Ezekiel*, jointly edited by Michael, Ben Wright and David Satran, with contributions from an additional seven members of the seminar. Several years ago, scores of Thursday night veterans gathered at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature held in Boston (1999) in order to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the seminar and to pay tribute to Michael.

In a very real sense, the “Thursday night seminar” finds its natural extension in this volume, which offers twenty-five diverse investigations by many of Michael’s closest colleagues, co-authors, and doctoral students, both past and present. The articles are organized under four generic headings—*Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, *Philo of Alexandria*, and *Early Christian Literature*—though many of the pieces overlap two or even three of these categories. We hope that the range of texts, periods, and disciplines represented in the volume is in itself at least a partial reflection of the breadth and interdisciplinary character of Michael’s own scholarship. Certainly the international character of Michael’s academic career and scholarly influence are evidenced by the contributors, and the editors have chosen to preserve the flavor of their manifold and varied voices and styles. Ultimately, the volume is an attempt to continue our conversation with Michael in the spirit of the intellectual openness and generosity that has always defined his own efforts. Inspired by his own seminal article on “Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature” (1976), we have entitled this Festschrift: “*Things Revealed*”: *Studies in Early Jewish and Christian Literature in Honor of Michael E. Stone*.

There are, of course, still other sides of Michael which do not easily submit to a review of this sort and are generally less well known. One thinks of his enormous love of literature, especially English poetry, as well as his own contributions to that genre. So too, despite his unrepentantly “textual” persona, Michael has always led a somewhat covert “archeological” existence. For example, while his intensive work on the “Rock Inscriptions and Graffiti Project” is well-known and has issued in numerous publications, few are aware of Michael’s love of the deep desert and its beauty—see his soon-to-be-published *Sinai Diary*! Similarly, not a few of his articles on the Armenian presence in the Holy Land have a very substantial fieldwork dimension. Most recently, one thinks of Michael’s close cooperation with David Amit on the publication of the spectacular discovery of the medieval Jewish cemetery in Eghegis, in the Vayots Dzor region of Armenia.

Finally, there is for us all—colleagues, students, friends—the model of Michael as not only scholar and teacher but equally *paterfamilias*. Nira, Aurit and Danny have always been Michael’s true “collaborators” in his career and his achievements. (Nira and Michael are, of course academic partners in the very real sense: the joint fruits

of Michael's textual acumen and Nira's visual expertise are about to appear in dual monographs from the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.) Moreover, the Stone home and household has always been the active scene and encompassing context of Michael's research and teaching. In an age where lifestyles are increasingly centrifugal and the center often does not hold, Michael and his family have been an exemplum of integrity.

In short, it is in deepest gratitude and with the desire that we be graced with his scholarship and friendship in the decades to come—*עד מאה ועשרים*—that we offer Michael this volume.

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