

## **Odes of Solomon, the LXX Odes and worship: some points of orientation**

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### **Abstract**

The LXX Odes or the so-called Biblical odes are often overlooked in LXX studies. It is easy to confuse the LXX Odes with the pseudepigraphal Odes of Solomon. Both are collections of hymns that illuminates the early Christian reception of hymns and prayers. A distinction needs to be drawn between these collections. The LXX Odes consists of 14 songs and prayers which were transmitted by the Greek (Eastern) Church. It was from its inception used in liturgy. This article offers some remarks for orientation in the LXX Odes, but also explores whether the Odes can shed some light on early Christian worship and how it applies to our modern setting. It is the aim of this article to investigate the value of the Biblical Odes, particularly Ode 2, the Song of Moses, for our understanding of worship.

### **Keywords**

*LXX Odes; Odes of Solomon; worship; Song of Moses; reception*

### **Introduction**

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has prodded the church to adapt and change in many ways. One specific way is that church services have gone online. These services often focus on the sermon without any liturgy, or little liturgy. This brings to mind what role liturgy or worship has in the church in general and, as a matter of historical and theological interest, the role it played in the early church. Both the Odes of Solomon and the LXX Odes are known to have been used for liturgical purposes. However,

these are two distinct collections, and it is quite easy to confuse the Odes of Solomon with the LXX Odes.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, this article will offer as a point of navigation clarification on what the Odes of Solomon are and what the LXX Odes are. The article will commence with a workable definition for worship, define what the Odes of Solomon and the LXX Odes are, and proceed to focus on the liturgical value of the LXX Odes particularly by tracing the reception of Ode 2, the Song of Moses. Some concluding remarks will follow on the value of the Odes for worship today.

## Early Christian worship and the Odes

The pendulum in recent early Christian worship research has shifted away from using the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, pagan religion, and the Mediterranean mystery cults as sources for early Christian rituals, towards a consensus that early Christian worship is deeply rooted in Second Temple Judaism (Löhr 2014:157). It goes without saying that both Judaism and early Christianity were influenced by the Roman world in which they were entrenched, particularly as regards to language, religious practises, and culture (Bradshaw 2002:22). To complicate the matter, from an ancient perspective, life in the Roman world – including birth, death, marriage, the domestic sphere, civil and wider political life, work, the military, socialising, entertainment, arts as well as music – was imbued with religious significance and associations. Christian congregations did not fashion something new with worship, but rather applied it in their own distinct ways (Clemens 2014:178).

Many Christians regarded not only the contents but also the hymnic forms of performances as typically pagan (Clemens 2014:193). Larry Hurtado (1999:3) draws attention to the frequent complaint lodged against

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1 The confusion between the Odes of Solomon and the Biblical Odes are even seen in the works of established scholars as Miller (2006:1) points out. Mogens Muller in *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint* (Muller 1996) incorrectly asserts the Odes of Solomon come after the Psalms, when it in fact they follow the book of Sirach, while the Biblical Odes follow the Psalms in Rahlfs. Also R. Timothy McLay's *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (McLay 2003:110–113) confuses the Biblical Odes with the pseudepigraphic Odes of Solomon.

Christians in the first three centuries, namely of their unwillingness to worship traditional gods. In Pliny, *Epistles* 10.96.7 Christians on trial were demanded to perform cultic gestures, such as calling upon the gods, offering incense to the image of the emperor and ritually cursing Jesus.

They maintained moreover that this was the whole of their guilt or error; that they were accustomed on a certain day to come together before light to sing a hymn to Christ as to a god with each other in turn [*carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem*] and to bind themselves by oath – not for any wicked deed – but not to commit thefts or robberies or adulteries, or to break a promise or to deny a deposit when called upon for it. When these things were completed, it was their custom to depart and again to come together to take food, common, however, and harmless. But they had ceased to do it after my edict, because following your mandates I had forbidden associations. (Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 10.96.7 in Granger 2010:148–50)

The evidence is weak but sufficient enough to suggest that from its inception early Christian gatherings comprised of hymn singing (Löhr 2014:172). Both Mark 14:26 and Matthew 26:30 mention at the end of the Last Supper account that Jesus and the disciples proceeded to Mount Olives “singing hymns.” In Colossians 3:16 (ψαλμοῖς ὕμνοις) and Ephesians 5:19 (ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς), ὕμνος (hymns) is used explicitly. Descriptions such as ᾠδῆ (odes), ψαλμός (psalms) and ὕμνος (hymns) all refer to worship practices but cannot be categorically used to indicate certain practises as they are used interchangeably. According to Clemens (2014:184), Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19’s use of ὕμνος refer to private spiritual exercises, to a silent virtue or even functions as a metaphor for a virtuous character (Clemens 2014:184). Clemens (2014:182) refers to the *Apostolic Constitutions* (3:7:7) lists of virtues for widows, which include among other things singing – ψαλλεῖν. The text quotes Ephesians 5:19 which mentions ᾠδῆ and ὕμνος, urging the widow to engage in this kind of hymn-singing incessantly. The emphasis is on the reciting of the Psalms or similar texts. In Colossians 3:16, this “singing” is done in one’s heart – ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ/ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις. “In the heart(s)” is generally interpreted as an indication that this singing expresses one’s inner disposition and true intentions (Clemens 2014:183). Here we should reiterate again that worship language used in New

Testament writings sheds light on the ethos or the Christian way of life, though without unveiling liturgical practice and performance (McGowan 2014:7). Singing formed an important feature of early Christian worship including in earlier Jewish liturgical practices (Knust & Wasserman 2014:343). There is almost no information concerning early Christian musical practices, leaving literary sources as the only resort to try and shed some light on the matter (Alikin 2010:213).<sup>2</sup> One important factor that complicates the historical tracing of early Christian worship is the fact that there should be a distinction understood between literary production and hymnody as a religious practice (Löhr 2014:171).

In the first centuries after Constantine, Christian congregations replaced the hymnic and poetic elements of Greek and Roman banquets with prose texts which were improvised or at least chosen by the leaders of the group (Clemens 2014:191). The opposition to Greek and Roman traditions does however not entail that early Christians did not sing, perform, recite or compose poetry or music (Clemens 2014:193). Tertullian's claims that the Christian husband and wife sing psalms and hymns – privately (*Sonant inter duos psalmi et hymni, et mutuo prouocant, quis melius domino suo cantet; Ad Uxorem* 2.8 CCL 1.394.). Clement of Alexandria, in *Stromateis* 7.7.35.6, praises the spiritually advanced person who sings hymns during his work as a farmer or sailor (γεωργοῦμεν αἰνοῦντες, πλέομεν ὑμνοῦντες). He emphasizes that this spiritually advanced person does not restrict singing to special places, appointed times or certain ritual contexts. This implies that worship in the Christian life is something that is ongoing.<sup>3</sup>

What becomes clear from this discussion is that “hymn” is an umbrella term which covers a variety of texts and sub-genres. One could add that the word “worship” is actually misleading, as the early Christians of the first four centuries did not have a concept of worship as a distinct human activity that linked practices and ritual forms (McGowan 2014:7). For the purposes of this article then, it is clear that worship entailed more practises, such as

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2 It is impossible to ascertain what instruments were used. Moreover, whether early Christians made use of set hymns for communal singing or if they preferred spontaneity, or whether they preferred individual performance, or (when required) compositions for solo performances (Löhr 2014:172).

3 Cf. Romans 12:1; Colossians 2:16.

contemplative methods, prayer, and recital that would not necessarily be part of a modern idea of worship that focuses largely on the music.

## The Odes of Solomon

The Odes of Solomon are a collection of 42 early Christian hymns written with the purpose of being sung or chanted in liturgical settings (Aune 2006:322).<sup>4</sup> The Odes of Solomon came into focus with the British Museum's purchasing in 1785 of *Codex Askewianus*, a Coptic manuscript that came to be known as *Pistis Sophia* (Błaszczak 1985:1). Before *Pistis Sophia*, the only mention of the Odes was in two Syriac manuscripts, the 6th century *Synopsis Sanctae Scripturae* and the stichometry of Nicephorus (9th century). A Latin citation from Ode 19:7–7a was found in Lactantius's *divinae institutiones* 4.12. (Nicklas 2013:165). Ode 11 was discovered amongst the Bodmer Papyri collection dating in the 3rd century. We know that Syriac psalms were already being translated into Greek in the late fourth century C.E. (Brock 2008:666).

The Odes of Solomon consistently follows the Psalms of Solomon in canonical lists.<sup>5</sup> It was originally written in Syriac<sup>6</sup> and bears a remarkable coherence,<sup>7</sup> which has given rise to the notion that it is the work of a single author.<sup>8</sup> As tempting as it may be, it seems more plausible that the Odes originated in one Christian religious community (Charlesworth 1985:727). Although there is no literary dependence, the Odes share parallels with the Epistle of Ignatius, aiding the hypothesis of an early dating (Lattke & Attridge 2009:13). There is also striking parallels with the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly the *Hodayoth*, to such an extent that Charlesworth (1985:727)

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4 Of the 42 hymns, only 41 have been recovered. The Song of Moses, Ode 2 is not existent in the Syriac version.

5 The Odes are probably named after Solomon on account of always being associated with the Psalms of Solomon in canonical lists (Nicklas 2013:166).

6 There exists debate concerning whether the Odes was first written in Greek or Syriac. It's more likely that the Odes were originally composed in Syriac and constitute the earliest extant Syriac literature (Aune 2006:322). J.A. Emerton compares the Greek Ode VI dating from the third century C.E. from the Bodmer collection with the Syriac and decisively tips the debate of the Odes' original language in favour of Syriac.

7 There has been consensus on the unity of the Odes since 1914 (Charlesworth 1985:727).

8 E.g. Aune 2006:322.

mentions the Odists might at one time have been a member of that community. The Odes shares a conceptual relationship with the Gospel of John.<sup>9</sup> The commonality points to the possibility of the Odes deriving from the same region, Antioch or somewhere near where the Gospel of John was composed (Charlesworth 1985:727). Of course, the Odes have a generic tone, as is the case with almost all psalms and hymns, which makes this tentative (Charlesworth 1985:727).

Aune (2006:324) suggests that the most likely reconstructed community of the text is a community that has experienced the hostility and rejection of synagogue Judaism, as a result of the *Birkat haMinim* by Rabbinic authorities at Yavneh toward the end of the first and beginning of the second century CE (Aune 2006:324). The author indicates an awareness of being part of the “the Way” as Paul described early Jesus followers (Charlesworth 1985:727). The author represents a Christian community which regarded itself as an oppressed minority group, as seen in the frequent references to persecution and opposition, as well as the ethical or soteriological dualism which pervades the Odes (Aune 2006:323–324). The Odes of Solomon are commonly dated around the end of the first century and the beginning of the second century C.E.<sup>10</sup> It stems from a period where the delineation and boundaries between Rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity is still blurred (Novak 2012:528). The text was compiled in the early Christian era and circulated among early Christians and Christians in later times (Lattke & Attridge 2009:13). Initially, the assumption was made that the Odes were “Gnostic”<sup>11</sup> on account of allegorical readings in the *Pistis Sophia*. It is however anachronistic to read the Odes as such. Rather, it is clear

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9 The debates fluctuate between the Odes being central in understanding the Gospel of John and it not even being mentioned in most recent Gospel of John commentaries. After Harnack’s proclamation that the Odes were “geradezu epochemachend” scholars such as Bert, Bauer, Odeberg and Bultmann followed. However, in a rejection of Harnack’s redaction hypothesis, as well as suppositions that the Odes are Gnostic, the Odes have been ignored by Johannine scholars such as Menoud, Strathmann, Morris, Wilkens, Wiles, Wilkenhauser, van den Bussche, Marsh, Sanders, Dodd, Barrett, and Brown (Charlesworth & Culpepper 1973:299).

10 However, Lattke & Attridge (2009:14) caution not to date the Odes too close to the turn of the first century C.E. as the Odes have been shaped by the authentic Pauline epistles, Synoptic gospels – especially Matthew and perhaps even by Revelation.

11 “Gnostic” is a problematic term that has been used often in a manner that rather deters from understanding a text instead of illuminating it.

that the Odes shed light on the first attempts of Christians to articulate the unparalleled experience of the advent of the Messiah (Charlesworth 1985:727).<sup>12</sup> The links between the Gospel of John and the Odes remains uncharted territory and a sound knowledge of Syriac is required.

## The LXX Odes

The LXX Odes, or the so-called biblical Odes, must not be confused with the Odes of Solomon. Early Christians used songs apart from the Psalms, such as e.g., the Song of Moses and the Magnificat. These songs formed a collection of 14 songs that were added to the Songs of David, known as Odes (Schneider 1949b:28). The earliest witness of the Odes is found in the fifth century C.E. majuscule *Codex Alexandrinus* where 14 songs appear. In some manuscripts, the Odes vary between 9–14 songs; for example Nicetas only mentions 9 LXX Odes in his Psalms commentary, understanding the Odes to be part of the Psalms-Odes book (Knust & Wasserman 2014:351). The Odes are always positioned after the Psalter, and it is rarely seen as a book on its own. It is not known who compiled the collection, nor when the collection was composed (Schneider 1949b:28). The Odes circulated independently, already before being drawn on by the Alexandrinus compiler.

The contents of the Biblical Odes stem predominantly from the current scriptural canon. Only the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young men are considered to be apocryphal (Miller 2006:1). Among these 14 Odes are the Exod 15:1–19 version of the Song of Moses (Ode 1), the Song of Moses (Deut 32:1–43) (Ode 2); Prayer of Hannah (1 Kgdms 2:1–10) (Ode 3); Prayer of Habakkuk (Hab 3:2–19) (Ode 4); Prayer of Isaiah (Isa 26:9–20) (Ode 5); Prayer of Jonah (Jonah 2:1–10) (Ode 6); Prayer of Azariah (Dan 3:26–45) (Ode 7); Hymn of the Three Young men (Dan 3:52–88) (Ode 8); Prayer of Mary (Luke 1:46–55) (*Magnificat*) and the Prayer of Zechariah (Lk 2:68–79) (*Benedictus*) (Ode 9); Isaiah's Song (Isa 5:1–9) (Ode 10); Prayer of Hezekiah (Isa 38:10–20) (Ode 11); Prayer of Manasseh (Cf. 2 Chr 33:12–13, 18–19; 4 Kgdms 21:29–32) (Ode 12); Prayer of Simeon (*Nunc dimittis*)

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12 David Aune (2006:320) even mentions that the Odes present a distinctive aspect of early Christian prophecy.

(Lk 2:29–32) (Ode 13); the morning hymn (Cf. Pss 118:12; 144:2; Lk 2:14) (Ode 14). Strictly speaking, only three of these are called ὕμνῳ, with most of them being prayers (ten times Προσευχῇ) and two more being labelled as ὕμνος.

The Odes were from its inception used in a liturgical function (Miller 2006:2). It is highly possible that (a number of) these Odes were sung in early Christian gatherings (Alikin 2010:217). The liturgical setting of the Odes had a double impact: whereas some of the readings possibly reflect liturgical adaptation, public performance could also set limits on how much these texts could change (Knust & Wasserman 2014:341). Accordingly, the oral and liturgical character of the Odes makes them an important historical source (Knust & Wasserman 2014:347).

In churches with long standing liturgical traditions (e.g., Roman Catholic, Anglican Communion, Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox traditions), the Odes formed part of worship services (Miller 2006:11). In the Eastern Orthodox church, the Odes are particularly used, with a central segment of Odes 1–6, 9–11 and 13 of Orthodox worship called *canon* with matins; Ode 12 is used with daily Vespers, thus in theory most of the Odes are recited daily in Orthodox worship (Miller 2006:11). They bear witness to the liturgical activities of the earliest Christians and the transmission of the Bible as it was sung, read, and employed in a number of settings (Knust & Wasserman 2014:341).

## The text and reception

### The reception of Ode 2 (Song of Moses)

Henry Barclay Swete did not make much of the differences between the Alexandrinus Odes and the similar songs in their biblical contexts (Knust & Wasserman 2014:349). But there are differences:



Table 1: Comparison between Odes and Deuteronomy 32:1–43<sup>LXX</sup>

	<b>Deut 32:1–43LXX</b>	<b>Ode 2</b>
Deut 32:26LXX	Καταπαύσω	Παύσω
Deut 32:41LXX	μισοῦσίν με	μισοῦσιν
Deut 32:43LXX	αὐτοῦς	αὐτῷ
Deut 32:43LXX	ἐχθροῖς αὐτοῦ	ἐχθροῖς

These variants are not easily explained on the basis of simple transcription error but must have involved the presence of divergent textual traditions (Knust & Wasserman 2014:350). Heinrich Schneider (1949a, 1949b, 1949c), supported by James A. Miller (2006), has proven that the slight differences in the *Alexandrinus* Odes point to the collection of Odes having been copied from a distinct exemplar, already circulating before that the majuscule of *Alexandrinus* was copied (Knust & Wasserman 2014:349). Accordingly, it appears that more collections of Odes were circulating at the time. This could be indicative of why some popular prayers such as the Song of Deborah, Judith's song of praise, or even the Lord's Prayer, are not part of this collection.

Table 2: Ode 2; The Song of Moses in Greek witnesses (5th–10th Century C.E.)

<b>Codex Alexandrinus (A)</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>Hesychglosse Marc. 535</b> Venice, 5 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>Codex Veronensis (R)</b>	<b>Codex Turicensis (T)</b>	<b>Manuscript 55</b> Rome, 10 <sup>th</sup> century (Theodotion)
Ex. 15:1–19	Ex15:1–19	Ex15:1–19	–	Ex15:1–19
Deut. 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43	Deut 32:1–43	–	Deut 32:1–43

The Song of Moses forms part of the 14 Odes in *Codex Alexandrinus* (A). It is again featured a century later in the Greek Latin Psalter *Codex Veronensis* (R) which only contains 8 odes. It is omitted in *Codex Turicensis* (T) which also contains the Psalms and Odes. However, the manuscript does contain several lacunae. Manuscript 55 from the 10th century C.E.

aligns very closely to the same order of the 14 Odes according to the list of the Greek (Eastern) church.

## Ode 2 (Song of Moses) with Philo and Josephus

4 Maccabees 18:18 already sheds light on the use of the Song of Moses; it was used as a Psalm in the temple and was sung in six parts (Schneider 1949b:31). Deuteronomy, and specifically, the Song of Moses, was a popular liturgical text in the Second Temple period. The Song of Moses became a standardized text for worship and study, as evidenced by the many Deuteronomic manuscripts that were found at Qumran (Crawford 2005:130). What is more, Philo cites the Song of Moses: in *Quod deterius potiori* 30, *Legum allegor.* III 34, Philo refers to the Song of Moses as the greatest song (μεγάλη ᾠδή), and with reference to the Moses Sea Song (Ex 15) says the Song of Moses is the greater song of Moses (Schneider 1949b:31). It is possible that in a particular circle the Odes were used at feasts, especially in light of Philo's description of a contemplative community, namely the Therapeutae, who spend the whole day studying the Scriptures, have vigils, and sing hymns on festival days (Schneider 1949b:32).

There are nine times in which Philo explicitly mentions ᾠδή and then refers to the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32 (Ode 2). This is seen in Leg. 3.105 (Deut 32:34 (ὡς ἐν μεγάλῃ φησὶν ᾠδῇ)); Det. 114 (Deut 32:13 (ἐν ᾠδῇ μεγάλῃ φησὶν)); Post. 121 (Deut 32:15 (ἐν ᾠδῇ μείζονι λέγων οὕτως)); Post. 167 (Deut 32:39 (ἐν ᾠδῇ μείζονι λέγεται ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ)); Plant. 59 (Deut 32:7 (ἐν ᾠδῇ τῇ μείζονι λέγεται)); (Sobr. 10 (Deut 32:5) ἐν ᾠδῇ μέντοι μείζονι); Mut. 182 (Deut 32:4 (λέγει γὰρ Μωυσῆς ἐν ᾠδῇ τῇ μείζονι)) and Somn. 2.191 (Deut 32:32 (ἐν ᾠδῇ τῇ μείζονι)). The Song of Moses (Deut 32) is not cited in Josephus, although Josephus does cite the Exodus 15:1–19 Moses song in *Ant.* 2.2.16.4.

## Ode 2 and the Apostolic Fathers

In the Apostolic Fathers, Ode 2 (Deut 32:15) is seen in *1 Clem* 3.1. and Deut 32:8–9 in *1 Clem* 29.2. Ode 2 (Deut 32:10) is also in *Barn* 19.9. Tertullian writes that Melito of Sardis preaches on Easter from Exodus and used the victory hymn of Moses. Origen was also aware of the Odes. He enumerates a collection of Odes in a homily on the Song of Songs as a prologue (Miller 2006:32). The Song of Moses is also seen in Origen: *De Principiis*, 1.5

(“On Rational Natures”) refers to Deuteronomy 32:9 and Deuteronomy 32:8; *De Principiis*, 4.1.4 explicitly mentions  $\phi\delta\eta$  and refers to the song of Deuteronomy as well as Deut 32:21, and *De Principiis*, 4.1.23 refers to Deut 32:22. *Against Celsus* 2.24 (Deut 32:39); 2.78 (Deut 32:21); 3.73 (Deut 32:21); 4.8 (Deut 32:8,9); 5.29 (Deut 32:8,9) and 7.21 (Deut 32:30). Also, Deut 32:8 is cited in Origen’s commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Book 9. It is interesting that especially Deut 32:8, 9 is quite frequently cited in Origen’s apologetical work *Against Celsus* and once in 1 Clement. However, as regards the reception of the Ode in Origen, much more investigation is needed.

### Some remarks on the Ode 2 (the Song of Moses)

The Song of Moses was well known and sung in early Christian circles. It is in the performance of the song that it would have become fully realised even if it was also written down (Knust & Wasserman 2014:356). The fact that the Odes were a collection that already circulated independently before being taken up in *Codex Alexandrinus*, indicates the importance it had and also cements the Song of Moses as one of the oldest odes in circulation. It would have been used in a variety of ways including gatherings and perhaps even personal settings as well. With the quest to define worship, it becomes clear that it entails more than some modern notions of worship as merely singing, since it includes prayer, spiritual exercises, and contemplation. But what is more, the liturgical singing of Song of Moses might have even helped to stabilize the song text. It is clear that the words of the Song of Moses have been resistant to textual change (Knust & Wasserman 2014:357). The placement of the Odes within manuscripts were of secondary concern, but the words mattered. The songs became essential to Christian worship spanning beyond Greek speaking contexts continuing to sing the songs in Greek. Accordingly, the songs were preserved, even if the words were not understood. In this manner, the Odes also contributes to our understanding of theology of the LXX. It offers a view on early Christian worship. Early Christians derived meaning in the recital and repetition of the Odes. In this regard, the LXX Odes offer a rich avenue of research that still needs to be conducted.

Returning to our own day, online worship has created the need to rethink the theology of worship music. Apart from the troubles with copyright and

difficulties of online worship, it has become clear that the wording of music is often not based on the Bible and flooded with ideologies that should be reassessed. In distinction from this, the LXX Odes remained true to its roots in the canon; moreover, it is noteworthy that within the ancient Christian tradition there is an understanding of worship as something that is perpetual. In light of the pandemic and online church services, perhaps an encounter with early Christian worship edges churches on to rediscover a variety of ways to worship, such as prayer disciplines and the reading aloud of passages in private homes. The Odes may help us in broadening our conceptions of worship, owing to the fact that since the applications of it might vary, the words of the song remained the same.

To add a side remark, the Song of Moses contains various depictions of God. The metaphor of God as parent features prominently in the Song. God is introduced as a Father in Deut 32:6 and as a mother with the eagle metaphor in Deuteronomy 32:11; there is also the phrase “God who birthed you” in Deuteronomy 32:18. This is also supported with the suckling image found in Deuteronomy 32:13–14. Depictions of God as warrior Deuteronomy 32:22–25, 40–42 and God as shepherd are also present in the text. This also bring me to wonder if modern services really reflect the ancient variety in its way of presenting God – in particular God as mother – and the variety in teaching different ways to worship, i.e. spiritual practices, prayer to name but a few. The repetition of its use also points to the Song becoming a way of being or a lifestyle, a symbol of the ethos of a Christian community.

## Conclusion

Encountering the Odes of Solomon can initially be quite confusing. That being said, when the distinction is made between the Syriac Odes of Solomon and the LXX Odes, it offers an invaluable source for understanding early Christian worship. This article focussed on the reception of the Song of Moses. It is clear from the reception history that the Song of Moses was one of the oldest Odes in circulation within early Hellenistic Judaism. What is more, it was already deemed important in early Christian liturgies as seen in its reception by the time of 1 Clement. Christian hymns found their origin in Judaism but developed their own Christian character (Schneider

1949c:491). The Odes may not be a direct outcome of early Christian communal worship, but they may very well echo the liturgical language of their time and milieu (Löhr 2014:169). The song of Moses is a liturgical text that is intended to be reused in different contexts. A song is meant to be remembered, sung, and used over and over again, thus becoming part of a way of life.

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