
THEODOTUS

INTRODUCTION

Theodotus, about whom very little is known, composed a poem entitled, 'On the Jews'; of this poem, some eight fragments survive, all quoted by Eusebius in a single chapter of his *Praeparatio Evangelica*.

The Greek text for the excerpt of *Praeparatio Evangelica* is from, "*Eusebius: Eusebii Caesariensis Opera*," Volume 1-2. Dindorf, Ludwig, editor. Leipzig: Teubner, 1867; the English presented text is based on the translation by Edwin H. Gifford (1903).

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

Over the years, a number of scholars have suggested that Theodotus was a Samaritan author but others maintain that he was a (mainstream) Jew.

The surviving fragments have been preserved because of the work of Alexander Polyhistor, a Greek historian who flourished in the 1st Century BCE.

FRAGMENTS 1–8

EUSEBIUS, PRAEPARATIO EVANGELICA, 9.22.1–11

κβ'. ΘΕΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΙΑΚΩΒ

¹ Τὰ δὲ Σίκιμά φησι Θεόδοτος ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων ἀπὸ Σικιμίου τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ λαβεῖν τὴν ὀνομασίαν· τοῦτον γὰρ καὶ κτίσαι τὴν πόλιν· κεῖσθαι δ' αὐτὴν φησιν ἐν τῇ περὶ Ἰουδαίων οὕτως,

ἢ δ' ἄρ' ἦν ἀγαθὴ τε καὶ αἰγινόμος καὶ ὑδρηλὴ, οὐδὲ μὲν ἔσκεν ὁδὸς δολιχὴ πόλιν εἰσαφικέσθαι ἀγρόθεν· οὐδέ ποτε δρία λαχνήεντα πονεῦσιν. ἐξ αὐτῆς δὲ μάλ' ἄγχι δύο οὖρεα φαίνεται ἐρυμνὰ, ποιῆς τε πλήθοντα καὶ ὕλης· τῶν δὲ μεσηγὺ ἀτραπιτὸς τέτμηται, ἀραιή, [αὐλῶπις·] ἐν δ' ἐτέρωθι ἡ διερὴ Σικίμων καταφαίνεται, ἱερὸν ἄστν, νέρθεν ὑπὸ ρίζῃ δεδμημένον, ἀμφὶ δὲ τεῖχος λισσὸν ὑπώρειαν, ὑπὸ δ' ἔδραμεν αἰπύθεν ἔρκος.

² ὕστερον δέ φησιν αὐτὴν ὑπὸ Ἑβραίων κατασχεθῆναι, δυναστεύοντος Ἑμμῶρ· τὸν γὰρ Ἑμμῶρ υἱὸν γεννῆσαι Συχέμ· φησὶ δὲ

ἐνθὲνδε, ξένε, ποιμενόθι πόλιν ἦλυθ' Ἰακῶβ εὐρεῖαν Σικίμων· ἐπὶ δ' ἀνδράσι τοῖσιν ἔτησιν ἀρχὸς Ἑμῶρ σὺν παιδὶ Συχέμ, μάλ' ἀτειρέε φῶτε.

³ εἶτα περὶ Ἰακῶβ καὶ τὴν εἰς Μεσοποταμίαν αὐτοῦ παρουσίαν, καὶ τὸν τῶν δύο γυναικῶν γάμον, καὶ τὴν τῶν τέκνων γένεσιν, καὶ τὴν παρουσίαν τὴν ἐκ

XXII. THEODOTUS CONCERNING JACOB

¹ Now Theodotus says in his work, About the Jews, that Sikima took its name from Sikimius son of Emmor; for, he was also the founder of the city; and, in his book, About the Jews, he describes its situation as follows:

“Rich was the land, well-watered, browsed by goats, nor far from field to city was the road. No leafy copse the weary wanderer found; yet from it two strong mountains close at hand, with grass and forest trees abounding, rise. Midway a narrow path runs up the vale, beneath whose farther slope the sacred town of Sikima mid sparkling streams is seen deep down the mountain’s side, around whose base even from the summit runs the well-built wall.”

² Afterwards, he says, it was subdued by the Hebrews, when Emmor was the ruler; for, Emmor begat a son Sychem. He speaks thus:

“Thence Jacob from the wandering shepherd-life Sought Shechem’s spacious streets, where o’er his tribe Emmor with Sychem ruled, a stubborn pair.”

³ Then concerning Jacob and his arrival in Mesopotamia, and the marriage of his two wives, and the birth of his children, and his coming from Mesopotamia to Shechem, he says:

Μεσοποταμίας ἐπὶ τὰ Σίκιμα, εἰς δ' Ἰακώβ Συρίην κτηνοτρόφον ἵκτο, καὶ εὐρὺ ρεῖθρον Εὐφρήταο λίπεν ποταμοῦ κελάδοντος· ἤλυθε γὰρ κάκειθι λιπὼν δριμεῖαν ἐνιπὴν αὐτοκασιγνήτοιο πρόφρων ὑπέδεκτο δόμονδε Λάβαν, ὃς οἱ ἔην μὲν ἀνεψιός, ἀλλὰ τὸτ' οἷος ἦνασεν Συρίης, νειηγενὲς αἶμα λελογχώς. τῷ δὲ γάμον κούρης μὲν ὑπέσχετο καὶ κατένευσεν ὀπλοτάτης· οὐ μὴν τελέθειν ἐπεμαίετο ἀμπαν, ἀλλὰ δόλον τολύπευσε, καὶ εἰς λέχος ἀνέρι πέμπε Λεῖαν, ἣ οἱ ἔην προγενεστέρη. οὐδέ μιν ἔμπης ἔλλαθεν, ἀλλ' ἐνόησε κακορραφίην, καὶ ἔδεκτο παῖδ' ἑτέρεν, ἀμφοῖν δ' ἐμίγη σὺν ὁμαίμοσιν ἧ σι. τῷ δ' υἱεῖς ἐγένοντο νόῳ πεπνυμένοι αἰνῶς ἑνδεκα, καὶ κόρη Δεῖνα περικαλλὲς ἔχουσα εἶδος, ἐπίτρεπτον δὲ δέμας καὶ ἀμύμονα θυμόν.

⁴ ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ Εὐφράτου φησὶ τὸν Ἰακώβ ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὰ Σίκιμα πρὸς Ἐμμώρ· τὸν δ' ὑποδέξασθαι αὐτὸν, καὶ μέρος τι τῆς χώρας δοῦναι. καὶ αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν Ἰακώβ γεωμορεῖν, τοὺς δὲ υἱοὺς αὐτοῦ ἑνδεκα τὸν ἀριθμὸν ὄντας ποιμαίνειν, τὴν δὲ θυγατέρα Δεῖναν καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἐριουργεῖν· καὶ τὴν Δεῖναν παρθένον θένον οὔσαν εἰς τὰ Σίκιμα ἐλθεῖν πανηγύρεως οὔσης βουλομένην θεάσασθαι τὴν πόλιν· Συχέμ δὲ τὸν τοῦ Ἐμμώρ υἱὸν ἰδόντα ἐρασθῆναι αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀρπάσαντα ὡς ἑαυτὸν διακομίσαι καὶ φθεῖραι αὐτήν.

⁵ αὐθις δὲ σὺν τῷ πατρὶ ἐλθόντα πρὸς τὸν Ἰακώβ αἰτεῖν αὐτὴν πρὸς γάμου κοινωνίαν· τὸν δὲ οὐ φάναι δώσειν, πρὶν ἂν ἦ πάντας τοὺς οἰκοῦντας τὰ Σίκιμα περιτεμνομένους

“To Syria rich in cattle Jacob came from broad Euphrates; loud-resounding stream, to shun his twin-born brother’s bitter wrath. Him Laban gladly welcomed to his home, Laban his mother’s brother, who alone over Syria ruled, his sons as yet new-born. He then his youngest daughter for a wife to Jacob promised but was loth to give. Contriving thus a crafty wile, he sends Leah, the elder, to the marriage-bed. Such fraud could not escape the husband’s eye, but for the other daughter seven more years he served, and both his cousins took to wife. Eleven sons he fathered both wise and brave, and one fair daughter, Dinah, whose bright face and faultless form a noble soul expressed.”

⁴ From the Euphrates Jacob, it is said, came to Shechem to Emmor; and he welcomed him, and gave him a part of his country. So, Jacob himself was a landholder but his sons, eleven in number, were shepherds, and his daughter Dinah and his wives wrought wool. And Dinah, while still a virgin, came to Shechem when there was a great festival, wishing to see the city; and Sychem the son of Emmor saw her and loved her, and seized and carried her off to his own home, and ravished her.

⁵ But, after, he came with his father to Jacob, to ask her to be his partner in marriage; but he said he would not give her, until all the inhabitants of Shechem were circumcised and followed

Ἰουδαῖσαι· τὸν δὲ Ἐμμὼρ φάναι πείσειν αὐτούς· φησὶ δὲ περὶ τοῦ δεῖν περιτέμνεσθαι τέμνεσθαι αὐτούς ὁ Ἰακώβ

⁶ οὐ γὰρ δὴ θεμιτόν γε τόδ' Ἑβραίοισι τέτυκται, γαμβρούς ἄλλοθεν εἰς γε νυοὺς ἀγέμεν ποτὶ δῶμα, ἀλλ' ὅστις γενεῆς ἐξεύχεται εἶναι ὁμοίης.

⁷ εἴτα ὑποβὰς περὶ τῆς περιτομῆς,

ὅς ποθ' ἔης πάτρης ἐξήγαγε δῖον Ἀβραάμ, αὐτὸς ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν κέλετ' ἀνέρα παντὶ σὺν οἴκῳ σὰρκ' ἀποσυλῆσαι πόσθης ἅπο, καὶ ῥ' ἐτέλεσεν· ἀστεμφές δὲ τέτυκται, ἐπεὶ θεὸς αὐτὸς ἔειπε.

⁸ ποσευθέτος οὖν εἰς τὴν πόλιν τοῦ Ἐμμὼρ καὶ τοὺς ὑποτασσομένους παρακαλοῦντος περιτέμνεσθαι, ἓνα τῶν Ἰακώβ υἱῶν τὸ ὄνομα Συμεῶνα διαγνῶναι τόν τε Ἐμμὼρ καὶ τὸν Συχέμ ἀνελεῖν, τὴν ὕβριν τῆς ἀδελφῆς μὴ βουληθέντα πολιτικῶς ἐνεγκεῖν· ταῦτα δὲ διαγνόντα Λευὶν τῷ ἀδελφῷ κοινώσασθαι· λαβόντα δ' αὐτὸν συγκάταινον ἐπὶ τὴν πρᾶξιν παρορμῆσαιμ λόγιον προφερόμενον τὸν θεὸν ἀνελεῖν φάμενον τοῖς Ἀβραάμ ἀπογόνους δέκα ἔθνη δώσειν.

⁹ φησὶ δὲ οὕτως ὁ Συμεὼν πρὸς τὸν Λευὶν

εὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ μῦθόν γε πεπυσμένος εἰμὶ θεοῖο· δώσειν γάρ ποτ' ἔφησε δέκ' ἔθνεα παισὶν Ἀβραάμ.

τὸν δὲ θεὸν αὐτοῖς τοῦτον τὸν νοῦν ἐμβαλεῖν, διὰ τὸ τοὺς ἐν Σικίμοις ἀσεβεῖς εἶναι. φησὶ δέ

βλάπτε θεὸς Σικίμων οἰκήτορας, οὐ γὰρ ἔτιον εἰς αὐτοὺς ὅστις κε μόλῃ κακός, οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλός· οὐδὲ δίκας ἐδίκαζον

the customs of the Jews; and Emmor said he would persuade them. On the need of their being circumcised, Jacob says:

⁶ “It is forbidden by our Hebrew laws to bring a bridegroom to our daughters’ home, save one who boasts to come of kindred race.”

⁷ Then a little lower down about circumcision:

“The God, who Abraham from his home had called, bade him from heaven to set the blood-stained seal on flesh of every male; and it was done. And changeless still the law that God decreed.”

⁸ When Emmor, therefore, was gone into the city, and was exhorting his subjects to be circumcised, one of Jacob’s sons, whose name was Symeon, being unwilling to bear his sister’s disgrace in a politic manner, determined to slay Emmor and Sychem; and this determination he communicated to his brother Levi, and took him as an accomplice and set forth to do the deed, alleging an oracle, that God said he would give ten nations to Abraham’s descendants to destroy.

⁹ And this is how Symeon speaks to Levi:

“For, well have I remembered God’s own word, to give ten nations over to Abraham’s sons.”

But God had put this thought into their mind, because the inhabitants of Shechem were impious.

“The Shechemites who spared no guest that came, nor bad nor good regarded, God would smite. No law nor justice in

ἀνὰ πτόλιν οὐδὲ θέμιστας· λοίγια δ' ὠρώρει τοῖσιν μεμελημένα ἔργα.

¹⁰ τὸν οὖν Λευὶν καὶ τὸν Συμεῶνα εἰς τὴν πόλιν καθωπλισμένους ἐλθεῖν, καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τοὺς ἐντ' χάνοντας ἀναιρεῖν, ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἑμμῶρ καὶ τὸν Συχέμ φονεῦσαι.

¹¹ λέγει δὲ περὶ τῆς ἀναιρέσεως αὐτῶν οὕτως

ὥς τότε δὴ Συμεὼν μὲν μῶρ ὤρουσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν, πληξέ τέ οἱ κεφαλὴν, δειρὴν δ' ἔλεν ἐν χερὶ λαιῇ, λεῖψε δ' ἔτι σπαίρουσαν, ἐπεὶ πόνος ἄλλος ὀρώρει. τόφρα δὲ καὶ Λευὶν μένος ἄσχετος ἔλλαβε χαίτης γούνων ἀπτόμενον Συχέμ, ἄσπετα μαργήναντα. ἤλασε δὲ κληῖδα μέσην· δῦ δὲ ξίφος ὁζὺ σπλάγχνα διὰ στέρνων, λίπε δὲ ψυχὴ δέμας εὐθύς.

πυθομένους δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἑτέρους ἀδελφοὺς τὴν πρᾶξιν αὐτῶν ἐπιβοηθῆσαι, καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐκπορθῆσαι, καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἀναρρυσασμένους μετὰ τῶν αἰχμαλώτων εἰς τὴν πατρίαν ἔπαυλιν διακομίσαι.

their state was found but all their thoughts were set on deeds of death.”

¹⁰ Levi, therefore, and Symeon came armed into their city, and they first killed those who came in their way and then they murdered both Emmor and Sychem.

¹¹ And of their slaying them he speaks thus:

“So fiercely then on Emmor, Symeon rushed and hit his head; and, in his left hand, seized his throat, quickly leaving him gasping; for, other men appeared. Levi, meanwhile, seized Sychem, fiercely raging, by the hair and forced him to the earth; vainly he clasped the victor’s knees, who drove his keen sword deep between neck and shoulder, and swiftly from his breast the spirit fled.”

And when the other brethren heard of their deed, they came to their aid, and sacked the city, and rescuing their sister carried her back with the captives to their father’s abode.