

behave foolishly, his complete captivation by Psyche makes him act against his better judgement (5.6.4–5, 5.13.4ff.). He no longer delights in tears<sup>34</sup> but is softened by them (5.6), he attempts to prevent rather than cause misery at 5.5.3 and 5.12.5, and at 5.24.5 he censures Psyche rather than behaving in a way that brings censure on himself.<sup>35</sup> Finally, Cupid's arrows, customarily used to 'kill' with love, are the means by which Psyche is revived at 6.21.3.

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<sup>34</sup> As at Virg. *Ecl.* 10.29; Prop. 1.12.16; Tib. 1.10.55ff.

<sup>35</sup> As at *A.P.* 5.57, 179, 212; Tib. 1.6.3–4, 2.6.15ff.; Ovid, *Am.* 2.9.1ff.

### MISOR IN PHILO OF BYBLOS

In his recounting of the theology of the Phoenicians, Philo reports the birth of Misor and Suduk: ἀπὸ τούτων γενέσθαι Μισωρ καὶ Σνδυκ, τουτέστιν εὐλυτον καὶ δίκαιον.<sup>1</sup> 'From them came Misor and Suduk, that is to say "Straight and Just"' (so Gifford).<sup>2</sup> But as Gifford himself notes, 'εὐλυτος however means "agile" rather than "straight"'.<sup>3</sup> Baumgarten tries to deal with the difficulty:

The translation of Sydyk is perfect, but that of Misor is not apt. . . . When associated with צֶדֶק in Hebrew or Phoenician מִישָׁר is equivalent, and should have been rendered by a synonym of δίκαιον. Philo has a translation that is circuitous at best: when legal problems are straightforward (a possible sense of מִישָׁר) they are easily solved (εὐ-λυω) and justice results.<sup>4</sup>

This is not credible. An alternative view suggests that the explanation is based on the root מִשָּׁר/שָׁר, which does mean 'to loose'.<sup>5</sup> This still has two grave problems. First, it means that Philo ignored the obvious interpretation of a simple word to choose a much less likely one. Second, and equally important, such an explanation, like the first, completely destroys the common and necessary connection between the two names, צֶדֶק and מִישָׁר. Thus, as Barr puts it, both explanations leave us with a Philo who 'misrepresented [Misor's] functional sense in the original myth'.<sup>6</sup>

The answer lies at hand. For εὐλυτον read εὐθυτον. Thus, Misor and Suduk are 'the one who makes straight and the just one'.<sup>7</sup> The roots of מִישָׁר and εὐθυνος, יֵשֶׁר and εὐθ-, both mean 'straight'. The Hebrew root יֵשֶׁר is commonly rendered in the Septuagint by εὐθύνειν and κατευθύνειν. Indeed, our very noun מִישָׁר is rendered with the verb κατευθύνειν (Malachi 2:6).

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<sup>1</sup> *FGrHist* 790F2 = Eusebius *P.E.* 1.10.36a1–2.

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Gifford, *Eusebii Pamphili Evangelicae Praeparationis Libri XV* (Oxford, 1903), vol. 3.1, 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 45.

<sup>4</sup> A. I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos* (Leiden, 1981), 175.

<sup>5</sup> See J. Ebach, *Weltentstehung und Kulturentwicklung bei Philo von Byblos* (Stuttgart, 1979), 220.

<sup>6</sup> J. Barr, *BJRL* 57 (1974), 44, n. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, with a slight change of vocalization, מִישָׁר means exactly 'makes straight'.