

Abdias, Apostolic History of Pseudo-

This collection of Latin accounts of the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, also indicated as *Virtutes apostolorum*, was composed by an anonymous compiler, perhaps in Gaul, in the late 6th or early 7th century. The final part of the collection, narrating the mission and martyrdom of the apostles Simon and Jude, is concluded by an epilogue which attributes this section to a certain Abdias. This legendary figure is told to have been appointed by Simon and Jude as bishop of Babylon. Because of the attribution of this final part, Wolfgang Lazius (1552) assumed that the entire collection had been compiled by Abdias, hence the indication *Apostolic History of Pseudo-Abdias*. The compilation shows similarity to early medieval Gallic hagiographies, such as the work of Gregory of Tours.

The compilation brings together narratives of the apostles' acts and martyrdoms which circulated individually. The compiler might also have made use of existing collections of *Virtutes or passiones apostolorum*, but this is still to be examined. Manuscripts containing the collection as a whole are found from the 9th century onwards, but there are some manuscripts containing fragments of the collection from the late 8th century.

Ps.-*Abd.* has deeply influenced both textual and pictorial expressions of Christian culture in the medieval West, as is visible in liturgical texts, sermons and legendary narratives as well as in multiple forms of visual art.

Bibliography: ■ D. Alibert et al., "Actes latins des apôtres," in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, vol. 2 (eds. P. Geoltrain/J.-D. Kaestli; Paris 2005) 735–864. ■ R. Lipsius, *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden*, vol. 1 (Braunschweig 1883) 117–78. ■ E. Rose, "Pseudo-Abdias and the Problem of Apostle Apocrypha in the Latin Middle Ages," *Sanctorum* 4 (2007) 129–46.

Els Rose

Abdiel

A descendant of Gad in the post-exilic period (1 Chr 5:15). This form of the name (MT 'Abdī'ēl; LXX Αβ-διηλ) occurs only here in the Bible and it is doubtful (as if "God is my servant"), but a variant of it, the correct form, 'Abdē'el (properly 'abd-'ēl), is attested in Jer 36:26. The name is well attested in Amorite, Ugaritic, and Phoenician onomastica. It is etymologically explained as "Servant of God."

Kristin Helms

Abdon (Person)

Etymologically, the name Abdon (MT 'Abdōn; LXX Αβδων, Αβαδων) comes from the root 'abd (which means "servant"), plus the adjectival ending -ōn.

1. Son of Hillel

Abdon, son of Hillel, appears as a minor judge in Judg 12:13–15, who ruled Israel for eight years. He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons who rode on 70 donkeys, which Rashi takes as an indication of his family's wealth.

2. Son of Shashak

Abdon, son of Shashak, is listed in 1 Chr 8:23 as belonging to the tribe of Benjamin.

3. Son of Jeiel

The first-born son of Jeiel ("father of Gibeon"), of the tribe of Benjamin, as found in the identical genealogical sections of 1 Chr 8:30 and 1 Chr 9:36.

4. Son of Micah

Abdon, son of Micah, is mentioned in 2 Chr 34:20. He is one of the five men commissioned by King Josiah to consult YHWH with regard to the book of the law discovered by Hilkiyah. In the version of the story preserved in 2 Kgs 22:12, his name is Achbor ("mouse").

Kristin Helms

Abdon (Place)

A Levitical city (Josh 21:30; 1 Chr 6:74) allocated from the tribe of Asher, bordering Phoenicia in an area that fell under the regional power of Tyre (1 Kgs 9:13). Abdon corresponds in location with Ebron, found in the tribal list of Asher (Josh 19:28), and the two should probably be equated (Aharoni: 105–6).

Abdon was first identified with Khirbet 'Abdeh by M. V. Guérin (67), and is located in the plain of Acco, roughly 6 km from the Mediterranean port of Achzib (Ez-Zib), along a route that connects the Galilee with the coastal plain (Aharoni: 57). Its position on the Wadi el-Qarn, as it emerges from the highlands and flows west towards Achzib, indicates the interconnection of the two ancient sites (Praisnitz). The toponym derives from the root 'bd ("work"; "make") and may have been related to the production of raw materials that would have passed through the site. The site of Khirbet 'Abdeh has not been fully excavated, though limited soundings were conducted by M. W. Prausnitz confirming its antiquity.

Bibliography: ■ Y. Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography* (ed. A. F. Rainey; Philadelphia 1979). ■ M. V. Guérin, *Description géographique, historique et archéologique de la Palestine accompagnée de cartes détaillées*, vol. 2 (Paris 1868). ■ M. W. Prausnitz, "Achziv and Avdon: On the Planning of a Port and a Fortress City in the Plain of Acre," *EriSr* 11 (1973) 219–23. [Heb.]

Matthew Suriano