FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

The vast disparity between the income of rich and poor makes it somewhat difficult to generalize about all ancient households; a wealthy householder had more than seven hundred times the income of a peasant, and the extremely wealthy might have more than fifteen thousand times the income of a peasant (Bastomsky). Although most of the literary remains depict life in fairly well-to-do households that could include slaves, most of the free inhabitants of the Roman Empire were impoverished peasants whose households differed significantly from this norm. Their houses were overcrowded (sometimes twenty-five to a one-room house; MacMullen, 13–14), helping explain why many peasants abandoned babies on local trash heaps. Nevertheless, extant information on ancient Mediterranean households is abundant and provides numerous insights into first-century home life. Much information from the ancient household relevant to early Christian texts focuses on marriage; here we focus on other household relationships, especially parent-child and slaveholder-slave relationships.

1. Household Codes and Marriage
2. Children
3. Slaves
4. Conclusion

1. Household Codes and Marriage.

Ancient moralists frequently defined household relationships in terms of the authority relations between the male householder and other respective groups within the aristocratic household: wives, children and slaves.

1.1. Household Codes. Aristotle developed household codes to advise aristocratic men about the various ways they should rule their wives, children and slaves (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.1–2, 1253b; 1.5.3–4, 1259b; 3.4.4, 1278b; see Balch 1981, 1988); these three groups also appear together (with some other groups) not only in Greek (e.g., Artemidorus *Oneir.* 1.24) but also in rabbinic sources (Swidler, 84, 117). Aristotle and others thought that order in the household would produce order in society as a whole; thus societal norms and household norms affected one another. Although there were differences between them (e.g., Aristotle *Pol.* 1.1.2, 1252a; 1.5.6, 1260a), codes concerning household management could be linked with the broader category of advice on city management, as in the context in Aristotle (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.1, 1253b) and some other works (Lührmann; Lycurgus 21 in Plutarch *Sayings of Spartans, Mor*. 228CD).

Household codes probably also affected the formulation of some laws in terms of relationships among children, wives and slaves (Gaius *Inst.* 1.48.–51, 108–19). Josephus's apologetic included an emphasis on biblical law's great virtues (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.42 §§291–96), and it is not surprising that Jewish writers with Greek or Hellenized audiences stressed such codes as a way of identifying Judaism with the prevailing values of the dominant culture (see Balch 1988, 28–31). Citing the three groups that appeared in household codes from Aristotle forward, Paul adapts the content of the codes but retains their structure (Eph 5:21–6:9; Col 3:18–4:1), possibly to help Christians witness within their culture (1 Cor 9:19–23; Tit 2:5, 8; cf. Keener, 133–224).

1.2. Marriage. Although some writers advocated either celibate or promiscuous singleness, marriage was the norm in both Jewish and broader Greco-Roman society. Adultery was widespread but viewed as immoral (*see* Adultery, Divorce); divorce was widespread but usually was viewed as merely unfortunate. Although homosexual relations were common, especially in Greek culture, marriages were heterosexual, a primary purpose of marriage being seen as procreation, and the Greek and Roman norm was monogamy. In Greek society men on average were about a decade older than their wives, perhaps due to a shortage of women stemming from a greater percentage of girl babies being abandoned; among Jews the age disparity was less, but throughout the ancient Mediterranean women usually first married in their teens. Husbands held much higher rank than did wives in the marriage relationship, though the husbands proved more dominating in some societies (e.g., classical Athens) than in others.

In contrast to Jewish people, most Mediterranean Gentiles, especially those influenced by Greek culture, did not limit male sexual activity to marriage. In Greek culture, where men typically married around age thirty (Hesiod *Op.* 696–98; *see* Marriage), boys could have intercourse with slaves, prostitutes or one another.

1.3. Relations with Stepfamily and Extended Kin. For remarriages, see the article on divorce, but here we comment briefly on typical relations in stepfamilies. The image of the stepmother was often one of cruelty (Lucan *Civ.W.* 4.637–38; Dixon, 49), even a "viper" (Euripides *Alc.* 310), and in a dream constituted a bad omen (Artemidorus *Oneir.* 3.26). Many times stepchildren resented their father's new wife; for example, a man throwing a stone at a dog missed, struck his stepmother instead and concluded that he had done better than expected (Plutarch *Dinner of 7 Wise Men* 2, *Mor.* 147C). Stepmothers could be compared with days of misfortune, as opposed to good days compared with a mother (Hesiod *Op.* 825; Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 17.12.4).

Thus one selecting a new wife might consider a stepmother who would care for the children (e.g., Tacitus *Ann.* 12.2); it was said that one lawgiver even prohibited from office a man who brought home a stepmother over his children, regarding it as a sign of poor administrative skill (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 12.12.1). Sexual

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Pol. Politica
e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example
Oneir. Oneirocriticon
Inst. Institutiones

Ag. Ap. Against Apion
cf. *confer*, compare
Mor. Moralia
Noc. Att. Noctes Atticae
Bib. Hist. Bibliotheca Historica

desire for a stepson or a stepmother was regarded as terrible (Euripides *Hipp.* 885–90; Appian *Rom.Hist.* 11.10.59; Gaius *Inst.* 1.63–64; *Pseud.-Phoc.* 179–81), though it was known to exist (Apuleius *Met.* 10.3), and some Eastern rulers were thought to allow for this more readily (Appian *Rom.Hist.* 11.10.61).

Extended kin ties were important (see Gardner, 5–6), but inscriptions suggest that the nuclear family was the primary close bond in Roman antiquity (Saller and Shaw), as well as in Roman Palestine (Goodman, 36; cf. Prov 27:10). Male patriarchs held power not only over their children but also over grandchildren and great-grandchildren, if they lived that long (Gardner, 5–6).

Fictive kin ties were also important in ancient Mediterranean society; fictive kinship language was common both among ethnic and religious groups, so that a Jew might thus address fellow Israelites (Tob 5:10; 6:10; 7:3; 2 Macc 1:1; Acts 2:29; 3:22; 9:17). Sibling terminology could likewise extend to fellow rabbis or fellow disciples (*Sipre Deut.* 34.5.3; *b. ʿAbod. Zar.* 18a, *Bar.;* cf. Mt 23:8); co-initiates into mysteries (Burkert, 45); alliances (e.g., 1 Macc 10:18; 12:6, 10, 21; 14:40); friendships (Euripides *Iph. Taur.* 497–98; Plutarch *Many Friends* 2, *Mor.* 93E; Marcus Aurelius *Med.* 1.14; *Ahiq.* 49, col. 4); and other commonalities (*CPJ* 3:41 §479; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 1.1.3); in conspicuous hospitality to a stranger (*T. Abr.* 2:5B; see also fictive parental language in Virgil *Aen.* 9.297; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 17.37.6; Rom 16:13).

2. Children.

Both minor and adult children were responsible to honor their parents; adult children were required to care for aged parents.

2.1. Honoring and Obeying Parents. Despite some Jewish suspicions that Gentiles might dishonor or even kill their parents (*Sipre Deut.* 81.4.1–2), Greek moralists stressed honoring one's parents, which could appear with similar exhortations to respect authority in paraenesis (Isocrates *Dem.* 16; *Or.* 1; Solon in Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 1.60). Greek thinkers sometimes advised that one should behave toward one's parents as one would wish one's children to behave toward oneself (Isocrates *Dem.* 14; *Or.* 1; Hierocles *Fraternal Love* 4.27.20; Thales in Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 1.37). Jewish wisdom similarly stressed that one's old age would go better if one took care of one's father in his old age (Sir 3:12–15); in Jewish narrative one who dishonored his parents might meet the same fate at the hands of his children *(Jub.* 35:10–11; 37:5, 11).

Jewish tradition emphasized the honor of parents even more heavily than did Greek and Roman tradition *(Jub.* 7:20; 35:1–6; *Ep. Arist.* 238; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 95; *Pseud.-Phoc.* 180; *Gen. Rab.* 36:6; Eph 6:1–3). One should honor one's parents, without whom one would not exist (*Abot R. Nat*. 35 §79). Because one biblical text mentions the mother first (Lev 19:3), rabbis argued that one should honor both parents equally (*Mek. Pisha* 1.28; Bahodesh 8.28–32; *Gen. Rab.* 1:15); one should "honor" and "please" one's mother, given the pregnancy and the pains of birth she endured for her children (Tob 4:3–4; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 96–98). Later rabbis consistently extolled people who honored their parents (*b. Qidd.* 31ab; *Pesiq. Rab.* 23/24:2). Not surprisingly, a Jewish philosopher like Philo, who draws on both Jewish and Greek thought, strongly emphasizes honoring parents (Philo *Spec. Leg.* 2.42 §§234–36; *Ebrl.* 5 §17; *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 12 §87).

Jewish teachers often claimed that one should honor one's parents directly after God (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.27 §206; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 9–10; *Pseud.-Phoc.* 8); many considered honoring parents the greatest commandment in the law (*Ep. Arist.* 228), though they undoubtedly implicitly accepted obedience to God first. Some rabbis held that the honor due one's parents is equivalent to that due God, though ultimately obedience to God came first (*b. B. Meṣ* 32a, *Bar.);* because parents participated in a person's creation, honoring them counted as honoring God (*b. Kid.* 30b, *Bar.; Pesiq Rab.* 23/24:2). For Philo parents are copies of God's power because they also create (Philo *Spec. Leg.* 2.1 §2); as begetter-creators they are midway between human and divine, to their children what God is to the world (Philo *Spec. Leg.* 2.38 §§224–25; cf. *Decal.* 22 §§106–7).

The Jewish understanding of parents as divine representatives probably reflects broader Mediterranean conceptions; philosophers sometimes regarded parents as images of the gods (Hierocles *Toward One's Parents* 4.25.53). On a more popular level, a Gentile could exhort a sibling to honor their mother as one would honor a deity (*Select Papyri* 1:320–21, lines 27–28); deities like Isis also offered such exhortations (Horsley, 1:11, 17 §2); one should not dishonor one's father because Zeus was god of fathers (Epictetus *Disc.* 3.11.5). Philosophers often counseled the highest honor for gods, but among people the highest honor for parents (Pythagoras in Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 8.1.22–23; Stoics in Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 7.1.120; Hierocles *Toward One's Parents* 4.25.53).

Moralists also insisted that one should love one's parents (Dicta Catonis collection of distichs 2; Cato *Distichs* 3.24; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 94); the affection between parents and children could be undermined only by a terrible misdeed (Cicero *Amicitia* 8.27). One item for biographers' praise was gratitude to one's parents

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Rom. Romulus (Vitae Parallelae)

Hist. History of the Peloponnesian War

Pseud.-Phoc. Pseudo-Phocylides

Met. Metamorphoses

Sipre Sipre (on Numbers, on Deuteronomy)

Bar. Baraita

Med. Meditations

CPJ Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum, ed. V. Tcherikover, A. Fulks and M. Stern (3 vols.; Cambridge, MA (1957–1964)

T. Testament of Abraham

Vit. Vita

Ep. Arist. Epistle of Aristeas

Sent. Syr. Men Sentences of the Syriac Menander

Mek. Mekilta

Spec. Leg. De Specialibus Legibus

(Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 10.1.9). The harmony of children with parents was highly valued (Menander's maxims 4 in *Select Papyri* 3:260–61). Foolish behavior shamed one's family (Prov 10:1; 17:21, 25; 23:24–25; 28:7; 29:3, 15), and ancients typically understood juvenile delinquency as a problem for the youth's family (Garland).

Anger with one's mother was shameful (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 2.29). Striking one's father was very bad (e.g., Aristophanes *Nub.* 1332–33), warranting death in Jewish law (Ex 21:15); Josephus felt that even attempted misbehavior toward parents warrants execution (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.31 §217). Some early writers had predicted that children would stop honoring aged parents in the end time, after which the human race would be quickly destroyed (Hesiod *Op.* 182–85; cf. Mk 13:12; 2 Tim 3:1–2). Abusive language toward an aged father invited divine punishment (Hesiod *Op.* 331–34); dishonoring one's mother invited calamity (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 8.53.1). Even a countercultural sage like Diogenes the Cynic reportedly reproved one who despised his father by reminding him that he owed even his ability to act thus to his father.

Early Jewish and Christian sources also warned of divine judgment against those who dishonored their parents (*Sent. Syr. Men.* 20–24; *Sib. Or.* 1.74–75; 2.275–76; Rom 1:30, 32; Ethiopic *Apoc. Peter* 11). Those who honored parents would have long life (Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16; Sir 3:5–6; Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 11:9); many taught that this work would also be rewarded in the world to come (*m. Pe'ah* 1:1; *Sipre Deut.* 336.1.1; ARN 40A).

Part of honoring one's parents was obeying them. Although far more texts emphasize honoring parents than obeying them, perhaps because the latter applied in practice most fully to minors still at home, many texts do emphasize children's obedience to their parents. Only children who learned the discipline of obedience would understand how to exercise authority over others (Isocrates *Ad Nic.* 57, *Or.* 3.37). Some qualified the demand by debating whether all a father's commands must be obeyed (Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 2.7; cf. 1 Sam 19:1–6; 20:31–33); an adult son who found it necessary to act contrary to his mother's wishes nevertheless would need to do so very respectfully (Dixon, 180–82, 234). Jewish wisdom emphasized honoring and obeying one's parents (Sir 3:1–4) in deeds as well as words (Sir 3:8), serving them as one's masters (Sir 3:7); positive models in stories also honored and obeyed their parents (*T. Jud.* 1:4–5; *T. Abr.* 5B).

Some philosophers did write that gratitude toward one's parents for conception was unnecessary, since they had procreated for pleasure rather than intentionally (Diogenes *Ep.* 21); true kinship was determined by shared commitment to the good, rather than genetic ties (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 7.1.33), just as in Jewish texts God's law took priority over family fidelity (Deut 13:6–9; 4 Macc 2:10). Skeptics like Sextus Empiricus even regarded such norms as parent-honoring as cultural, pointing to Scythians who allegedly slit their parents' throats once they reached the age of sixty (*Pyr.* 3.210, 228). Most, however, counseled that one bear with even an unjust parent (Publilius Syrus 8) and respected a son who did so (Appian *Rom.Hist.* 3.2; *b. Qidd.* 31a).

2.2. Providing for Aged Parents. Providing for aged parents was essential in ancient ethics (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 1.37), and in Jewish tradition it was part of honoring them *(Jub.* 35:11–13). Roman law required children to support aged parents or face imprisonment, an implicit exception obviously being made for minor children (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 7.6.5); elsewhere in Mediterranean antiquity a mother could file suit against a daughter who failed to provide for her (*P. Enteuxeis* 26; 220 b.c.). From a Jewish and a Christian standpoint, whoever abandoned parents in old age was like a blasphemer (Sir 3:16) or worse than a typical Gentile (1 Tim 5:8).

Ancient writers viewed this care of parents as repayment for rearing children (1 Tim 5:4). From an early period writers complained that those who died young failed to repay their parents (Homer *Il.* 4.477–78; 17.302). Some early Greek writers declared that children ought to repay aged parents for rearing them but would not do so in the end time (Hesiod *Op.* 188–89). Caring for parents in this manner imitated their care for the children after birth (Hierocles *Toward One's Parents* 4.25.53); however one provides for one's parents, one can expect from one's children (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 1.37). Some Jewish sources claim that a son who fails to provide for his parents, so repaying them, must die by stoning (Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2:28 §206); or that those who fail to repay aged parents, abandoning them, will suffer eternal punishment (*Sib. Or.* 2.273–75, maybe a Christian interpolation). Some other cultures also believe that God punishes those who neglect aging parents (Mbiti, 269); modern Western culture, with its societal safety nets for the aged, is more the exception than the rule in history. Some of these texts may reflect the wider concern for just treatment of widows (Is 1:17; Wis 2:10; Jas 1:27; *Sipre Deut.* 281.1.2; elsewhere in the Mediterranean, e.g., *P. Ryl.* 114.5), incumbent first of all on the heirs (*Gen. Rab.* 100:2).

2.3. Stereotypical Parent Images. In contrast to stereotypes one might expect from Greek New Comedy, the Roman mother was seen not as a sentimental model of gentleness but as an "unbending moral mentor, guardian of traditional virtue and object of a lifelong respect" (Dixon, 7; cf. 105). She was a figure of authority to her children of both genders, especially for the daughters (Dixon, 227). The most critical point in the mother-daughter bond may have formed especially when the daughter became a young woman starting her own family (Dixon, 211–12). Perhaps in contrast with (or nuancing) this western Mediterranean model, however, eastern Mediterranean Jewish sources portray mothers as more affectionate than fathers, sharing their children's feelings (4 Macc 15:4).

Ant. Antiquitates Romanae
Sib. Or. Sibylline Oracles
Bib. Ant. Biblical Antiquities *of Pseudo-Philo*
ARN (*see Abot R. Nat.*)
Ep. Epistulae

Inst. Orat. Institutio Oratoria

Fathers were expected to provide for their children (Socrates *Ep.* 6; Seneca *Ben.* 3.11.2; *Ep. Arist.* 248; 2 Cor 12:14) and became the ideal model for ancient benefactors (Stevenson). They could be known for their gentleness (Homer *Odys.* 2.47, 234; 1 Cor 4:15, 21; 1 Thess 2:11; Dixon, 28). One could address as "father" an elder brother who functioned more broadly in this role (*P. Par.* 47.1).

Fictive kinship terminology based on active rather than genetic relationship was common (e.g., Phaedrus *Fables* 3.15.18), and "father" was a title of great respect (Homer *Il.* 24.507; Virgil *Aen.* 8.115; 9.735; 11.184, 904; 12.697). Ancients employed such fictive kinship terminology in an honorary manner, sometimes in direct address (e.g., 2 Kings 5:13; 13:14; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 21.12.5). For example, they employed titles like "father of the Jews" (2 Macc 14:37); "fathers of the world" for the first-century schools of Hillel and Shammai (*Gen. Rab.* 12:14); "fathers" for Roman senators (Plutarch *Rom.* 58, *Mor.* 278D; Lucan *Civ. W.* 3.109; Livy *Hist.* 1.8.7; 1.26.5; Sallust *Catil.* 6.6), for other societal leaders or benefactors (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 12.1.8; Pausanius *Descr.* 8.48.5–6; 8.51.7) and for older mentors (Homer *Odys.* 1.308). "Father" could apply to any respected elders (Acts 7:2; 22:1; 1 Tim 5:1; 1 Jn 2:13; *4 Bar.* 5:28; Homer *Il.* 24.507); thus, for example, the honorary title "father of a synagogue" (e.g., *CIJ* 1:xcv-xcvi; 1:66 §93; 1:250–51 §319); see also "mothers of synagogues" (*CIJ* 1:118 §166; 1:362 §496; 1:384 §523). Age by itself was grounds for respect (*t. Meg.* 3:24; Hom. *Il.* 1.259; 23.616–23), so from the earliest period younger persons could address older men respectfully as fathers (Homer *Il.* 9.607), and older men could address younger men as sons (Homer *Il.* 24.373; *Odys.* 1.308; *4 Bar.* 5:28), as could leaders their followers (e.g., Virgil *Aen.* 1.157). One could address even an older stranger as "father" (Homer *Il.* 24.362, 371; *Odys.* 7.28, 48; 8.145, 408; 17.553; 18.122; 20.199).

Various texts apply father/son language to teachers and their disciples (Epictetus *Disc.* 3.22.82); disciples were called children of their teachers (*4 Bar.* 7:24; *Sipre Deut.* 34.3.1–3, 5; 305.3.4; 3 Jn 4), and their teachers were their fathers (2 Kings 2:12; *4 Bar.* 2:4, 6, 8; 5:5; *t. Sanh.* 7:9; Mt 23:9). Wisdom discourses, which employ the sort of rhetoric one would expect among the early sages, were often addressed to sons (Prov 1:8; *Ahiq.* 96.14A; Sir 2:1; *1 Enoch* 81:5); such wisdom language often occurs in the testamentary genre and hence requires such language *(Jub.* 21:21; Tob 4:3–12; 1 Macc 2:50, 64; *1 Enoch* 92:1; *T. Job* 1:6; 5:1; 6:1; *T. Reub.* 1:3). Because rabbis sometimes claimed greater respect than parents (*m. B. Meṣ* 2:11; *m. Ker.* 6:9; *Sipre Deut.* 32.5.12), it is not surprising that some early sages used the paternal title *abba* in the same way that most came to use "rabbi" (Sandmel, 106). Thus Jesus calling his disciples "children" (Jn 13:33) would have offered ancients no confusion between the Father and Son roles elsewhere in that Gospel.

2.4. Paternal Authority. It is not without reason that Paul addresses not parents but fathers in Ephesians 6:4: a father held the primary authority in the household as the *paterfamilias,* the male head of the home addressed in household codes (see 1.1 above). By contrast, despite the authority inherent in their role, mothers held no legal authority over their own children (Gaius *Inst.* 1.104).

A father was expected to govern his household (Marcus Aurelius *Med.* 1.9). Indeed, because the skills necessary to govern a household were also those necessary to govern cities (Euripides *El.* 386–87; Isocrates *Ad Nic.* 19, *Or.* 2; Plutarch *Dinner of Seven Wise Men* 12, *Mor.* 155D) and because it was natural to reason from private to public affairs (Demosthenes *Lep.* 9), many regarded this demonstration as a prerequisite that one could govern in the larger society (Isocrates *Ad. Nic.* 41, *Or.* 3.35; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 12.12.1; Marcus Aurelius *Med.* 1.16.4; Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 1.70; *Sipre Deut.* 32.5.12; 1 Tim 3:4–5).

Patria potestas, the father's authority of life and death over family members, permeated the fabric of Roman society (Lacey) but had declined in effectiveness by the period of the empire to the extent that in practice fathers could not kill their children (Sextus Empiricus *Pyr.* 3.211; Carcopino, 76–80), though some laws were officially revoked only much later. The father's power of life and death over children was distinctive of Roman law (Gaius *Inst.* 1.55), but Josephus concluded that parents had sufficient authority to function as their children's judges (Josephus *Ant.* 4.260).

Paternal authority remained the standard throughout the Mediterranean world; a writer could describe the father's just rule over his children as a "universal law" (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 3.23.19). Greek ethical tradition granted a father authority over his children comparable to that of a ruler over his subjects (Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* 8.11.2, 1161a). Children were freed from the Roman father's authority only by his death or loss of Roman citizenship (Gaius *Inst.* 1.127–28). The nature of paternal authority did differ depending on whether the children were minors or adults (Cohen, 174); both household codes (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.5.12, 1260b) and Roman law (Sextus Empiricus *Pyr.* 3.211) recognized that boys, unlike wives, matured and became sharers in governing the state. Given the average life expectancy, many adult children no longer had fathers living (Saller, 264), though in theory the older custom of *patria potestas* extended even to grandchildren (Gardner, 5–6).

It is clear, however, that Roman parents loved their children (Dupont, 118–19), as did Greeks (Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* 8.12.2–3, 1161b). Latin poetry expressed great affection for one's children (Frank, 25); Stoics felt that such love came naturally to good people but not so to bad ones (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 7.1.120). Greek ideals suggested ruling one's children lovingly (Agasicles 2, in Plutarch *Sayings of*

Odys. Odyssey
Civ. W. Civil War (or *Pharsalia*)
CIJ Corpus inscriptionum Judaicarum I-II, ed. J. B. Frey ((2 vols.; Rome, 1936–1952)
Hom. Homilies
Sanh. Sanhedrin

Ant. Antiquities of the Jews
Eth. Nic. Ethica Nicomachea

Spartans, Mor. 208B). Fathers could be severe, but most extant cases of such severity are reported as exceptional (Dixon, 27). A satirist condemns a miser hated even by his wife and children because he values money more than their welfare (Horace *Sat.* 1.1.84–87).

2.5. Parental Instruction and Discipline. The mother apparently constituted the main parental influence on a son until age seven, after which the father assumed primary responsibility (Lincoln, 400); the father's deferred responsibility also appears in other cultures (2 Kings 4:18–19; Mbiti, 169). Some scholars argue that children often appear in Greek texts as objects of instruction rather than as individuals (Linde-mann).

Moralists emphasized the need for good *paideia,* education and discipline (e.g., Plutarch *Educ.* 7, *Mor.* 4C; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.2.6; Wis 3:11; *Ep. Arist.* 248). Such education was the father's responsibility in Palestinian Jewish (Sir 30:2–3; Goodman, 72; Safrai, 770) as well as Greek and Roman (Meeks, 61) circles. Some educators emphasized discerning to what forms of guidance (such as control, fear, appeals to ambition) each boy responded (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 1.3.6–7); teachers should be strict in their discipline (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 2.2.4). Rigorists naturally preferred harsher treatment even for young children, to condition them to life's hardships (e.g., Crates *Ep.* 33).

Character was particularly developed in youth, though it could be modified later (Gill; Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 1.l.5, 9); serious learning might begin later, but emotional development occurred in the earliest years (Dixon, 141). Many later rabbis did not regard young children as morally cognizant or responsible (*m. Parah* 3:4; *Gen. Rab.* 26:1), a view shared by most Roman jurists (Gaius *Inst.* 3.208). Rabbis believed that the evil impulse started in infancy (ARN 16A; cf. Crates *Ep.* 12), but knowledge of the law brought moral power (4 Macc 2:23; *Sipre Deut.* 45.1.2; ARN 16A; *b. Qidd.* 30b, *Bar.;* cf. *T. Asher* 3:2). Romans had a coming-of-age ceremony (e.g., Dupont, 229; Gaius *Inst.* 1.196; 2.113); Jewish boys also became young men around puberty (1 Esdr 5:41), and later rabbis attributed the beginning of the good impulse and moral responsibility to this time (*m. 'Abot* 5:21; ARN 16A). Children could not bear legal witness (*t. Sanh.* 9:11).

Disciplining a son with a rod was considered loving behavior for a father (Columbanus, probably Catonian lines, 52; Petronius *Sat.* 4), and even mothers could be exhorted not to spoil their children by encouraging their pleasure (Pseudo-Theano in Malherbe 1986, 83). Like slaves (e.g., Aristophanes *Nub.* 1414), children could be beaten or whipped (Aristophanes *Nub.* 1409–10), but a parent who acts in rage will regret it (Publilius Syrus 514; cf. *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 15.4). Jewish wisdom also emphasized physical discipline in rearing boys (Sir 7:23; 30:12; *Ahiq.* 81.3; 82.4; see Pilch), regarding beating as loving (Sir 30:1; cf. Prov 13:24; *Pss. Sol.* 13:9–10; Heb 12:6; Rev 3:19). Though one might combine firm discipline with loving gentleness (ARN 31, §67B), some sages felt laughing and playing with one's children were too indulgent (Sir 30:9–10). (One should teach a good son wisdom but pray for a bad son's death and train him for gladiatorial combat, *Sent. Syr. Men.* 27–44.) Jewish custom also permitted rabbis to beat their disciples (Goodman, 78), though the rabbis disapproved of beatings that were dangerously severe (*m. Mak.* 2:2).

Some writers protested against excessive discipline or harshness (*Pseud.-Phoc.* 150, 207; Eph 6:4), but they appear to have been the minority. Quintilian notes that flogging was the standard custom but nevertheless rejects it as useful only for slaves, not pupils (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 1.3.13–14); he felt that excessive severity sometimes discouraged a boy from trying (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 2.4.10). Other moralists, while not necessarily balking at corporal punishment, advised gentleness before scolding (Plutarch *Flatterer* 28, *Mor.* 69BC).

2.6. Childbearing. Ancient texts, both Jewish (Wis 7:2; 4 Macc 16:7; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 97) and Gentile (Virgil *Ecl.* 4.61; Ovid *Fasti* 1.28–33; Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 8.3.54; Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 6.1.4; Arrian *Anab.* 7.12.6; *PGM* 101.36–37; Isis aretalogy in Grant 1953, 132), regularly speak of the duration of human pregnancy as ten months; this was the consensus of both physicians and philosophers (Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 3.16). One Epidauros inscription (inscr. 1) does note an exception: a woman named Cleo was pregnant for five years until Asclepius healed her, and on his birth the boy born to her immediately washed himself and began walking around (Grant 1953, 56). It was understood that children normally bore their parents' image (Gen 5:3; 4 Macc 15:4; Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 50:7; Chariton *Chaer.* 2.11.2; 3.8.7; *P.Oxy.* 37).

Especially among peasants in impoverished areas like much of Egypt, the childhood mortality rate was extremely high. A disproportionate number died in infancy, and of those who survived into adolescence roughly half reached twenty-five, with the number of survivors continuing to be halved every decade of life, making the average life expectancy for live births around twenty-five or thirty years (N. Lewis, 54; elsewhere in the empire, see Dupont, 222; for other traditional societies, see Mbiti, 153). Skeletal remains in Palestine likewise testify to a very high child mortality rate (see several articles in *'Atiqot* 21 [1992]: 55–80; among ancient Jews in general, survey *CIJ,* e.g., 1:308, §399, though burial inscriptions probably disproportionately report the youngest deaths [Leon, 230]). Even among the well-to-do, children often died tragically young (Plutarch *Consol. to Wife, Mor.* 608C, 609D, 611D), though ancient medical writers attest significant knowledge of

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Sat. Satyricon

Pesiq. Rab Kah. Pesiqta de Rab Kahana

Pss. Sol. Psalms of Solomon

Anab. Anabasis

PGM Papyri-Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri, G. Preisendanz et al (2 vols.; 1973–1974)

Asclepius *Asclepius 21–29*

Chaer. De Chaerea et Callirhoe

P.Oxy. The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, et al. (London, 1898-)

medical care for children (Demaitre). (For the importance of childbearing in Mediterranean antiquity, *see* Marriage §; § 1.3, 1.4).

2.7. Exposure of Unwanted Infants. The father had the right to refuse to rear a newborn, even against the mother's objections (Gardner, 6). Deformed infants were sometimes killed (Den Boer, 98–99, 113, 116; in other cultures, e.g., Dawson, 324), but most babies were abandoned. Even if the percentage of babies abandoned has been overestimated (see Engels 1984, skeptical of the ten percent figure for infanticide), the exposure of children was a widely known custom (Pausanius *Descr.* 2.26.4); abandoned babies figure commonly in legends (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 4.64.1; 8.4.1; 19.2.3–5; Appian *Rom.Hist.* 1.1.2) and novels (Longus *Daphn. Chl.* 1.2, 5).

The high mortality rate among children may have provided one contributing factor for the abandoning of children; at the least it may have reduced the openness to emotional attachment (cf. Dixon, 113; Dupont, 221). Still, ancients were sad when their children died and did not abandon infants out of dislike for them (Golden). Often poverty required exposure or killing (Ovid *Met.* 9.675–84) of infants, but even a rich family might expose a child if they already had too many (Longus *Daphn. Chl.* 4.24; perhaps Suetonius *Tiberius* 47).

For economic reasons (the expense of the dowry), girls appear to have been abandoned more often than boys (*P.Oxy.* 744; Ovid *Met.* 9.675–84, 704–13), resulting in a high age for marriage for Greek males (*see* Marriage). Of the dozens of census declarations from Egypt, only two list more daughters than sons, and even then only one or two more (N. Lewis, 54–55; cf. Tarn, 101). Some scholars object that high rates of female infanticide would decimate the population (Engels 1980), but this ignores substantial concrete evidence (Harris). Moreover, Roman writers do suggest gradual declines in the Greek population, and in any case selective abandonment did not prevent propagation as effectively as widespread infanticide would. Rescued females often became slave prostitutes (*see* Adultery, Divorce).

When women married, they were lost to the family of origin, thus supporting a preference for sons (*Gen. Rab.* 26:4), but for whatever reasons, most families appear to have preferred sons, both among Gentiles (Artemidorus *Oneir.* 1.15; 4.10) and Jews (*Sipre Deut.* 138.2.1; 141.2; *b. Ber.* 5b; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 9.2). Nevertheless, daughters were loved, especially by fathers (mothers loved especially sons; Plutarch *Bride* 36, *Mor.* 143B). And though all early Jewish sources portray the birth of a daughter as a relative disappointment, Jewish people did not seek to artificially reduce their numbers as their pagan counterparts did (Ilan, 44–48).

Because Egyptian religion prohibited killing infants, Egyptians often rescued babies exposed by Hellenistic settlers in Egypt's nomes; the rescue is reflected in some children's names (e.g., Kopreus, "off the dunghill" [N. Lewis, 54]). Sometimes those who rescued such infants adopted them as children (Juvenal *Sat.* 6.602–9), but the children more often became slaves; the Roman government imposed heavy inheritance tax penalties on those who tried to adopt them as children (BGU 1210; N. Lewis, 58). In places like Ephesus the public bought infants cheaply, whom they then enslaved to Artemis (*I. Eph.* 17–19 in Trebilco, 343). Under Roman law a father who later recognized a child he had abandoned must pay the expenses of his rearing before taking him back (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 7.1.14). Those infants not rescued would have been eaten by dogs and birds (Philo *Spec. Leg.* 3.115).

Like Egyptians and reportedly Germans (Tacitus *Germ.* 19), Jewish people rejected the exposure of infants (Philo *Spec. Leg.* 3.115–17; Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.25 §202; *Sib. Or.* 3.765–66; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 40.3.8), just as they abhorred child sacrifice (Lev 20:2–5; Wis 12:5–6; 14:23; Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 4:16) and pagan oppressors killing others' infants (Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 2:10). It is possible that some Jewish parents in mixed cities may have exposed their infants, but it was far less frequent than among Gentiles (*m. Makš.* 2:7); Jewish and Chinese cultures may have also had a lower incidence of child abuse than did Roman society (see Breiner). Due to their emphasis on procreation Stoics also rejected child abandonment (Malherbe 1986, 99). Child exposure became illegal in a.d. 374 (Gardner, 6), and Justinian in the sixth century regarded all exposed children as free (Rawson 1986a, 172; *see* Marriage).

2.8. Nurses. The milk that sustained infants normally came from human breasts, often from a nurse (e.g., Marcus Aurelius *Med.* 5.4). Sheep and goats' milk usually was pressed into cheeses (Longus *Daphn. Chl.* 1.23; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.16.8) after it was taken to town (Virgil *Priapea* 2.10–11). It was known, however, that one could use animal milk to sustain a child if necessary, though most examples stem from novels, myths and legends (Virgil *Aen.* 11.570–72; Livy *Hist.* 1.4.6; Propertius *Elegies* 4.1.55–56; Longus *Daphn. Chl.* 1.2, 5, 16); adult Scythians' drinking of mares' milk was noteworthy enough to have merited specific mention (e.g., Hesiod *Cat.* 39–40). In 1 Corinthians 3:1–2 Paul, like some of his contemporaries, thus employs the image of nurse or mother.

Roman women of high status often employed nurses (Dixon, 146), but Mediterranean women of high status rarely became nurses unless they were forced by dire financial straits (Demosthenes *Orat.* 57; Euxistheus *Ad Eub.* 35). Nursing contracts stipulating the amount of pay were a standard practice (Horsley, 2:7–8 §1). The nurse could be slave or free. If she were the former (e.g., Chariton *Chaer.* 1.12.9), the slaveholder profited from her labor (*P.Oxy.* 91.16); if the latter, she would agree to nurse the child in her own home for a fixed amount of time: sixteen months (BGU 1107.7), eighteen months (*CPJ* 2:15–19 §146) or two years (the median, N. Lewis, 146; Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 51:1). If the child dies, she must nurse another child for the full length of time or lose her pay. She would be paid some money in advance, more in monthly installments of both olive oil (presumably for the infant's skin) and cash (N. Lewis, 146–47). In one case a foundling died, and

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Daphn. Chl. Daphnis and Chloe

BGU Ä*gyptische Urkunden aus den Museen zu Berlin: Griech. Urkunden* (15 vols., 1895–1983)

Orat. Orations

those who entrusted it to the nurse demanded not merely the advance but also her own child, which they insisted was the foundling; the child looked like her and the judge ruled in her favor (*P.Oxy.* 37). Some contracts prohibit the nurse from intercourse, pregnancy or nursing another child lest she deplete her milk (BGU 1107.13–14; *CPJ* 2:15–19, §146); later rabbis also permitted a husband to spill his seed outside for two years after his wife had given birth to avoid another pregnancy that could interfere with lactation (Safrai, 764). Most often the nurslings in Egypt were abandoned babies whose finders wanted to raise them as slaves (N. Lewis, 146).

The well-to-do sought educated nurses from whom children from infancy would learn correct manners of speech (Plutarch *Lib. Educ.* 5, *Mor.* 3DE; Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 1.1.4–5). Nurses were thought to love their charges (Epictetus *Disc.* 1.11.22, from a former slave); nursing at the same breast was also thought to nurture fraternal bonds (4 Macc 13:20). After growing to adulthood, a boy who had been nursed might honor his nurse even if she were a slave (Homer *Odys.* 1.435; 19.354; Dixon, 145), and nurses were so fondly recalled that they sometimes became models for teachers (Malherbe 1970, 211–12; Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 2.4.5–6), an image Paul may employ in 1 Thessalonians 2:7. (Jewish teachers could also compare their teaching with nursing [*Sipre Deut.* 321.8.5].) Such nurses' epitaphs may not reveal how nurses felt about their profession, however, which many may have experienced as demeaning despite the bonds (Bradley 1986, 220–22; cf. Plutarch *Table Talk* 5, *Mor.* 672F-673A; Joshel appeals to more recent historical analogies).

For the sake of the maternal bond, some moralists advised mothers to nurse their own babies if possible (Plutarch *Lib. Educ.* 5, *Mor.* 3CD; Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 12.1), yet few well-to-do Roman mothers appear to have followed this counsel (Treggiari 1976, 87; Dixon, 3), and there is little evidence that bonds between children and nurses prevented the child's bonding with parents (Dixon, 129). Some Jewish teachers felt that a wife could delegate breastfeeding if she brought enough slave help (*m. Ketub.* 5:5; *T. Benj.* 1:3); even a Gentile could nurse an Israelite baby (*m. 'Abod. Zar.* 2:1). In some later rabbinic Haggadah, God miraculously enabled a male to nurse so the child would not starve (*b. Šabb.* 53b, *Bar.; Gen. Rab.* 30:8), or God miraculously enabled Sarah to feed a multitude of Gentile infants (*Gen. Rab.* 53:9).

3. Slaves.

The most basic distinction between persons in Roman law was that between free person and slave (Gaius *Inst.* 1.9), and among the free, whether they were freeborn or freed (Gaius *Inst.* 1.10). Household slaves were regularly considered as part of the household, under the authority of the *paterfamilias,* or male head of the household.

3.1. Slaves in Relation to Other Members of the Household. The inclusion of slaves in traditional household codes is not surprising; both in the Greek *oikos* and in the Roman *familia,* slaves were members of the household (Rawson 1986b, 7; Dixon, 16; N. Lewis, 57; Barrow, 22–64). The same is true of Jewish households (*CPJ* 1:249–50 §135; *y. Ter.* 8:1); the extended household designation was broad enough for one early sage to include the poor who depended on a charitable householder (*m. Abot* 1:5). Although we do not treat them here, freedpersons were also part of the household (e.g., Cicero *Fam.* 1.3.2).

The portrait of a centurion's household in Acts 10:2 may presuppose slaves (cf. Acts 10:7; Mt 8:6; Lk 7:2). Soldiers enlisted for twenty or more years, during which time they were not officially permitted to marry. Although soldiers often did marry or cohabit with local women (Livy *Hist.* 43.3.2), their offspring were not considered legitimate, preventing soldiers from leaving them any inheritance (BGU 5.34–35). This situation was, however, often remedied by a special grant from the government (BGU 140.10–33; Plutarch *Fabius Maximus* 4, *Sayings of Romans, Mor.* 195EF; Herodian *Hist.* 3.8.5). High officers had more freedom but might refrain for the sake of honor (Plutarch *Scipio the Elder* 2, *Sayings of Romans, Mor.* 196B). In the first century an auxiliary horseman would make about 300 sesterces per year (Speidel); a legionary soldier made roughly three drachmas a day, which if entirely saved in a year would provide enough funds to pay for a modest house or one of the less expensive slaves (N. Lewis, 208; although one would then have to feed and clothe the slave). A centurion received at least fifteen times the pay of a legionary, whereas a *pilus primus,* a senior centurion, could receive four times that amount (sixty times that of a legionary; Jones, 202–3); thus many retired centurions could have acquired servants.

In urban areas, slaves constituted about one-third of the population (based on the report of Galen; Verner, 63). In classical Athens and in the southern United States in slaveholding times, about one-quarter of free families held slaves, and the percentage in Roman Italy would probably not be higher. In Roman Egypt about 10 percent were slaves and about 20 percent of families held slaves, because there were few slaves per household rather than larger plantations as in Italy (Verner, 60; Finley 1980, 80; MacMullen, 103). Slaveholding was more common in the urban centers of Roman Egypt: most Hellenistic citizens in capitals of Egyptian nomes apparently had one or two slaves, and about a quarter of their households had more (N. Lewis, 53). In a major urban center like Alexandria, a wealthy family might hold one hundred slaves (N. Lewis, 57).

Though making distinctions between the specific roles, Aristotle linked the householder's relationship to his wife with that to his slave (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.1.5–6, 1252b). Josephus compared the character and status of wives and slaves (Josephus *Ant.* 4.219), as did many rabbis (*m. Ḥag.* 1:1; *m. Sukk.* 2:8; Stern, 628). Despite such comparisons, however, many would have distinguished clearly between the household head's guardianship of his wife and his rule over his slaves (Livy *Hist.* 34.7.13).

That slaves were often bought as young children (e.g., *CPJ* 3:73 §490) suggests that slaveholders often broke up slave families, selling off young children (Dixon, 17). Of more than sixty private slave-sale documents, no male slave sold was

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Ketub. *Ketubbot*
T. Benj Testament of Benjamin

accompanied by a wife or children; only rarely were children sold alongside women (Finley 1980, 76; for a fuller description of slaves' hardships, see Bradley 1992). Slaves could be divided among children as part of an inheritance (*PSI* 903). Establishing a family life proved particularly difficult if the partners belonged to different households (Rawson 1986b, 24). Even after the decline of slavery in the empire, slave unions did not count as legal marriages wronged by adultery (Justinian *Cod.* 9.23). Nevertheless, many slaves in Egypt remained in the same family for three or four generations and often were then manumitted rather than sold (N. Lewis, 58–59). Further, that slave parents at times found the funds to dedicate a funerary inscription for a deceased child now in another household shows that the bonds of affection ran deep (Dixon, 17–18).

3.2. Sources for Slaves. Various sources existed for slaves (see Buckland, 397–436; Barrow, 1–21; Bartchy, 45–50; Lyall, 29–35), but the most common initial reason was war. Typically prisoners of war were enslaved (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 2.18.5; 14.68.3; 20.105.1; Livy *Hist.* 4.29.4; 26.34.3; 41.11.8), especially the women and children, who were less able to retaliate (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 10.26.3; Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 17.46.4; Pausanius *Descr.* 3.23.4; Herodian *Hist.* 3.9.11); the funds from their sale might be placed in the state treasury (Livy *Hist.* 5.22.1). This practice was viewed as a form of mercy—saving prisoners of war rather than killing them (Justinian *Inst.* 1.3.3). Thus one historian explains that Romans procured slaves "by the most just means," normally from prisoners of war (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 4.24.2, LCL). At one point up to ten thousand slaves were said to be sold in a day on Delos, the primary slave market, for various prices depending on their skills and utility (Grant 1964, 104).

Recently enslaved children often died, but this offered little trouble to the empire so long as wars provided a fresh supply of slaves. Because wars declined in the first two centuries a.d., however, slaveholders began encouraging the production of slave offspring, so that "homeborn" increasingly appears as a description of slaves in papyri from this period (N. Lewis, 57). Both before (*CPJ* 1:125–27 §4) and during the Roman period a number of Jewish people were slaves (*see* Jewish History: Roman Period).

3.3. Slave Roles. Many slaves in Italy worked the massive agricultural estates, which appear to have proved economically profitable to the owners (Appian *Civ. W.* 1.1.8; Petronius *Sat.* 37–38; Finley 1973, 83–84; Barrow, 65–97); the Greco-Roman world took slavery to a new level and became one of the economies in history most dominated by slavery (Finley 1980, 9, 67; Padgug, 21–22). Agricultural slaves were rarer elsewhere in the empire, however; in Egypt peasants could be exploited far more cheaply (N. Lewis, 57). In most of the empire slavery was primarily an urban phenomenon (Finley 1980, 79).

The most degrading and deadly form of slavery was condemnation to work the mines, usually at isolated outposts, described by W. W. Tarn as "a hell on earth" (Tarn, 104). For this job employers used lower-class convicts and slaves, notably captives from the Jewish revolts and in a later period Christians (N. Lewis, 137–38).

Slaves in wealthy households tended toward specialized roles (see Treggiari 1975; Barrow, 22–64). Some slaves in well-to-do households may have appreciated their positions; a servant on an estate ruled by a benign landowner might well fear the change of masters (Apuleius *Met.* 8.15). A high-ranking slave in the imperial household might wield more power than did free aristocrats (Herodian *Hist.* 1.12.3). Those who slept with slaves were thereby enslaved (Tacitus *Ann.* 12.53), but some could marry into slavery to improve their status. Some people employed slavery as a means of upward mobility (Martin, 30–42). For most slaves, however, their state was degrading and difficult (Euripides *Androm.* 88–90; *Hec.* 332–33); half the female imperial slaves died before thirty (Pomeroy, 194), and in poor homes the ages may have been younger (cf. *ILS* 5215, 7420, 7428 in Sherk, 227–28).

A variety of occupations were open to women servants in wealthy households (Treggiari 1976). Slave women had long functioned as concubines (Sophocles *Ajax* 485–91; Arrian *Anab.* 4.19.5), and slaves continued to be sexually exploited in the Roman period (e.g., Appian *Civ. W.* 4.4.24; Babrius *Fables* 10.1–5; *see* Adultery, Divorce, the section on the sexual use of slaves).

Although slaves in comparable roles held lower social status than did free persons (Livy *Hist.* 4.3.7), roughly the same range of occupations existed among slaves as among the free (Finley 1980, 81–82; Dupont, 56–57). Rural peasants constituted perhaps 90 percent of the empire's free work force, and they, like field slaves but unlike household slaves, had virtually no opportunities for social mobility (Phaedrus *Fables* 1.15); rare is an inscription in which a peasant rose to a local aristocracy (*CIL* 9.3088 in MacMullen, 47). Cato's slaves received more bread than the average Egyptian peasant could eat, and the freer (less dependent on a patron) a peasant was in some locations, the closer to potential starvation (Finley 1973, 107–8).

3.4. Negative Views About Slaves and Treatment of Slaves as Property. In aristocratic ideology, slaves were of inferior moral character (e.g., Josephus *Ant.* 4.8.15 §219); Cicero lumps them with the insane and exiles (Cicero *Acad.* 2.47.144). Various sources present them as evil rather than virtuous (Plato *Alc.* 1.135C), as insulting (Seneca *Dial.* 2.11.3); deceptive (Terence *Haut.* 668–78; *And.* 495; Chariton *Chaer.* 2.10.7; 6.5.5) or even a perjurer (Apuleius *Met.* 10.7); lazy (Homer *Odys.* 17.320–21; Sir 33:24–28; *b. Qidd.* 49b); gossipy (Lucian *Lucius* 5); cowardly (Achilles Tatius *Leuc.* 7.10.5); or promiscuous (*m. 'Abot* 2:7; *m. Soṭa* 1:6). One loses half one's worth when one becomes a slave (Homer *Odys.* 17.322–23).

It was thought that one could distinguish one of royal descent by his appearance (Homer *Odys.* 4.63–64), but also a slave (Homer *Odys.* 24.252–53; Arrian *Anab.*

LCL Loeb Classical Library

Androm. Andromache

ILS Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, ed. H. Dessau (Berlin, 1892–1916)

Leuc. Leucippe and Cleitophon

5.19.1; *T. Jos.* 11:2–3); free persons were normally thought more attractive (Chariton *Chaer.* 1.10.7; 2.1.5; 2.2.3; 3.3.10). A free person acting as a slave was shameful (Josephus *Ant.* 4.238), and slavery was a state intolerable to a genuinely free person (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 19.9.4; Dio Cassius *Hist.* 1.5.12; 8.36.3; Chariton *Chaer.* 1.11.3; Philo *Praem. Poen.* 24 §137; *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 5 §36); calling a free person a "slave" thus constituted a deliberate insult (Demosthenes *Lep.* 132; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.6.30; 1.9.20; Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 6.2.33, 43).

In some respects law and custom treated slaves as property, in connection with their economic functions (Buckland, 10–38). Thinkers like Aristotle had long before declared the slave to be the master's tool, analogous to the body as the soul's tool (Aristotle *Eth. Eud.* 7.9.2, 1241b; cf. *Pol.* 1.1.4, 1252a; 1.2.3–6, 10, 1253b–54a); as there could be no friendship between a person and an inanimate object, neither could there be friendship between a slaveholder and his slave, a living tool (Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* 8.11.6–7, 1161b). Slaves and animals alike had no purposes for their own lives (Aristotle *Pol.* 3.5.10, 1280a); subordinating and using them was no different from one's use of animals (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.8–14, 1254ab).

Such theories translated naturally into economic practice. Thus slaves were regularly sold, both before (P Cair. Zen. 59003) and during (*P.Oxy.* 95; Buckland, 30–72) the Roman period. In the Ptolemaic period as later slaveholders paid taxes on slaves as on other kinds of property (*P. Columb. Inventory* 480); failure to register slaves in a Roman census could lead to their confiscation (BGU 5.60.155), as could exporting slaves in violation of proper tax rules (BGU 5.65–67). Slaves could be branded (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 34/35.2.32); divided as part of the deceased's estate (Horsley, 1:69–70 §24); or at times all executed for the suspected act of one, despite notable public protests (Tacitus *Ann.* 14.42–45).

Slaveholders in the empire officially held the power of life and death over their slaves (Gaius *Inst.* 1.52). Jewish legal interpreters in what probably represented the dominant tradition also understood slaveholders as exercising considerable authority because slaves were technically their property (*m. Giṭ* 1:6); at least one early rabbi even forbade saying a funeral oration over a deceased slave, arguing that this death should be treated merely as lost property (*b. Ber.* 16b, *Bar.)*.

Gentler Romans might say that flogging was appropriate not for children but only for slaves (Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 1.3.13–14). Slaves were also far more likely to receive capital sentences than were more directly guilty free persons (Apuleius *Met.* 10.12), even if the latter were foreigners (Livy *Hist.* 22.33.1–2).

Slaves could be examined under torture under the supposition that this practice increased their truthfulness, both in classical Greek culture (Demosthenes *Pant.* 27; *Olymp.* 18–19; *Tim.* 55–58; *Neaer.* 122) and in the Roman period (*Rhet. Ad Herenn.* 2.7.10; Tacitus *Ann.* 3.67; 4.29; Appian *Civ. W.* 1.3.20; Apuleius *Met.* 10.28; Herodian *Hist.* 4.5.4), though in the latter it was often a final resort (Justinian *Dig.* 48.18.1). So typically was torture the lot of slaves that free persons who suffered this abuse could be compared with slaves (Livy *Hist.* 32.38.8). The custom seems to have generated fewer objections than one might hope: even a novel's hero might torture female servants without any remorse (Chariton *Chaer.* 1.5.1). Many ancients were, however, skeptical of torture's effectiveness in always securing truth (Apuleius *Met.* 10.10); in the law court one would either accept or question such evidence depending on the side for which one was arguing (Aristotle *Rhet.* 1.15.26, 1376b; Quintilian *Inst. Orat.* 5.4.1).

In contrast to Israelite law (Deut 23:15), most legal systems did not look favorably on harboring escaped slaves (e.g., Eshnunna 50; it is a capital offense in Hammurabi 15–19). Roman law prohibited encouraging slaves to run away or harboring them (Justinian *Dig.* 48.15.6.2; Llewelyn with Kearsley, 6:56–57 §7), perhaps explaining Josephus's understanding that God's law mandated punishment for fugitive slaves (Josephus *J.W.* 3.8.5 §373). In the empire methods of locating and capturing such fugitives could prove harsh (Finley 1980, 111–12); if the country from which a slave escaped was on good terms with the country to which the slave escaped, the slave might be extradited (Livy *Hist.* 41.23.1–5). Escaped slaves were sometimes thought to spend money extravagantly (Chariton *Chaer.* 4.5.5).

3.5. Views About Slaves as Persons. In other respects law treated slaves as persons, and popular sentiments generally viewed them in this manner as well, albeit not with a modern egalitarian slant. It was illegal to kill or inflict excessively cruel punishment on a slave (Gaius *Inst.* 1.53); by the late first century slaveholders could not arbitrarily hand over innocent slaves to fight in the wild animal shows (Justinian *Dig.* 48.8.11.2). In the Roman period, slaves were usually considered responsible for their own misdeeds (Llewelyn with Kearsley, 7:188–89 §8); slaves also often proved loyal to slaveholders (Martial *Epigr.* 3.21; Appian *Rom.Hist.* 7.1.2; 8.3.17; *Civ. W.* 4.4.26; *T. Abr.* 15A), although some did not (Herodian *Hist.* 5.2.2). By means of what constituted a legal fiction, slaves could procure and hold money or property (e.g., Apuleius *Met.* 10.13), even at times other slaves (*y. Yebam.* 7:1 §2; on this institution, called the *peculium,* see further Buckland, 187–238; Cohen, 179–278).

Relationships between household slaves and slaveholders usually reflected the reality of persons interacting. Slaves could offer good advice, although slaveholders might disregard it (Aristophanes *Plut.* 1–5; 1 Sam 9:6). Even Aristotle admitted that in practice slaves were human, though different by nature from their masters (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.5.3, 1259b).

T. Jos. Testament of Joseph
Praem. Poen. De Praemiis et Poenis
Pant. Contra Pantaenetum
Tim. Timaeus
Neaer. In Neaeram

Rhet. Ad Rhetorica ad Herennium
J.W. Jewish Wars
Epigr. Epigrams
Yebam. Yebamot

Many writers advocated concern for slaves or warned against harsh discipline of them (Seneca *Clem.* 1.18.1; 1.26.1; *Ep. Lucil.* 47.4–5, 18–19; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.13.2), sometimes warning that those who failed to show appropriate care provoked the suffering that resulted (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 34/35/2.32–39; Seneca *Clem.* 1.18.3). Epicurus warned against harsh discipline of slaves, and they were among members of his school (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 10.1.9; 10.118). Beating another person's slaves violated convention (Demosthenes *Conon* 4), but most people seem also to have disapproved of or ridiculed harsh beatings of one's own (Martial *Epigr.* 2.66.1–8; 8.23; cf. 2.82), especially if the beatings risked disfiguring slaves (Achilles Tatius *Leuc.* 5.17.8–9).

Jewish writers could warn against mistreating a slave (*Pseud.-Phoc.* 223–27) and could advocate especially kind treatment for the diligent servant (Sir 7:18, 21; 10:25; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 166–67); rabbinic literature suggests generally friendly relations between slaves and slaveholders (Bonsirven, 147–48), perhaps because the norm appears to have been household slavery on a relatively small scale.

Some moralists could report with approval the notion that honor accrues to merit, not to free birth (Phaedrus *Fables* 2.9.1–4); indeed, some philosophers were slaves (Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 2.18). Many felt that slaves differed from free only by their circumstances, not by their nature (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 4.23.1; Seneca *Ep. Lucil.* 47.11; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.13.4; Hierocles *Fraternal Love* 4.27.20); they were equal in their humanity (Seneca *Ep. Lucil.* 47.10; Sevenster, 185–89). Thus by serving willingly, a slave can grant a benefaction to the slaveholder (Seneca *Ben.* 7.4.4; 1 Tim 6:2). Some went further. Some philosophers argued that slavery was against nature; people should be judged by virtue rather than class, and hence one should not object to eating with slaves (Heraclitus *Ep.* 9).

Such a position would have disturbed Aristotle, who wrote a few centuries before most of these writers. Aristotle maintained that nature demonstrates the superiority of some over others and that it is to the advantage of both for the superior to rule (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.12, 1254b); the equality of those who were not equal was unjust (Aristotle *Pol.* 3.5.8–9, 1280a). Slaves differed by nature from free persons (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.7–8, 1254a); unlike free persons, they were physically designed for manual labor, as animals were (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.14, 1254b), and differed from free persons not only in body but also in soul (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.14–15, 1254b). Barbarians by nature were always fit to be slaves and ruled by Greeks (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.1.4, 1252b; 1.2.18, 1255a). Aristotle warned, however, that a few people thought slavery was *para physin,* "contrary to nature," hence unjust—a view to which Aristotle himself strenuously objected (Aristotle *Pol.* 1.2.3, 1253b).

3.6. Views About Slavery as an Institution. Despite Aristotle's earlier worry, however, most people did not translate the theory of equality into practical abolitionism. When a slave protested to Zeno, founder of the Stoic school, that it was merely his fate to have misbehaved, Zeno allegedly responded, "And also to be beaten" (Diogenes Laertius *Vit.* 7.1.23). Seneca argued not for abolition but for just treatment (Watts). One of the more radical examples is that Pliny dined with his freedpersons by bringing himself to their level (Pliny *Ep.* 2.6.3–4), but these were freedpersons and not slaves, and this is hardly abolition. Seneca urged friendlier association with slaves, allowing for talking and planning together (Seneca *Ep. Lucil.* 47.13). A few went so far as to advocate treating a servant as oneself (Sir 33:30–31; but cf. 33:24–28), even serving them (Eph 6:9 in the light of 6:5–8).

Yet writers could cite more radical models on the fringes of Mediterranean society to challenge the excessive material desire of their culture, even if these models did not prove perfect for their purposes. Some report with approval the lack of slaveholding among Indians (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 2.39.5; Arrian *Ind.* 10.8–9), although sometimes observing with curiosity the caste system (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 2.40.1). Egyptian tradition reportedly punished with death the murder of slave and free alike, regarding slavery as a mere difference in circumstance (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 1.77.6). Tacitus seems impressed by the character of slavery in Germany, where slaves' independence struck him more than their subordination (Tacitus *Germ.* 25), though he reports some sacred slaves drowned in a ritual (Tacitus *Germ.* 40).

Most striking is the model of the Essenes. Philo claimed that the Therapeutae regarded slaveholding as contrary to nature (Philo *Vit. Cont.* 70) and claimed that the Essenes rejected slaveholding as contrary to nature, which established equality (Philo *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 79; *Hypoth.* 11.4), a good Greek concept. In similar language, Josephus claimed that Essenes avoided slaveholding lest it make them unjust (Josephus *Ant.* 18.21). In contrast to the earlier *Institutes* of Gaius, Justinian, perhaps from Christian or Stoic influence and possibly in conjunction with the economic decline of slavery in late Roman antiquity, also regards slavery as *contra naturam,* "against nature" (Justinian *Inst.* 1.3.2; 1.5 introduction). One wonders, however, the extent to which the image concerning the Essenes is the rhetorical invention of Hellenistic Jewish apologetic; wilderness Essenes possessed neither slaves nor other private property, but some other Essenes may have simply been forbidden to sell their slaves to Gentiles (CD 12:10–11; *see* Damascus Document).

Of those who may have disliked slavery, no one in the first century seemed prepared to try to overthrow it as an institution, nor would such an attempt have been successful. A number of slave revolts did occur in Roman history (Diodorus Siculus *Bib. Hist.*. 34/35.2.5–48; 36.4.1— 36.11.3; Livy *Hist.* 32.26.4–8; 39.29.8), including the earlier full-scale war led by Spartacus (Lucan *Civ. W.* 2.554; Appian *Rom.Hist.* 12.16.109; *Civ. W.* 1.14.116–20), and various agitators sought to encourage this (Sallust *Iug.* 66.1; Livy *Hist.* 3.15.9). But such revolts were

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Clem. De Clementia
Ep. Lucil. Epistles to Lucilius

Ind. Adversus Indoctum
Vit. Cont. De Vita Contemplativa
Hypoth. Hypothetica
CD Cairo (Genizah text of the) *Damascus Document*/*Rule*
Iug. Bellum Iugurthinum

sometimes undermined by other slaves who betrayed them (Livy *Hist.* 4.45.2; 32.26.9, 14). Most slave revolts were small in scale, so that M. I. Finley estimates only four full-scale slave wars in recorded history, of which three occurred in Italy or Sicily from 140–70 b.c.; all were unsuccessful (Finley 1980, 114–15). He admits that the Haitian revolt of the modern period was successful, however; he also seems unaware of several successful major slave revolts against Arab rulers in the medieval period (see B. Lewis, 56–57). But these represent military situations different from that of the Roman Empire at the pinnacle of its power.

Even when slaves sought their own freedom by various means, this does not indicate that they sought to abolish the institution of slavery. Freedpersons themselves acquired slaves whenever possible (*ILS* 7503; Martin, 42), as occasionally happened in North American slavery (Koger). Although some early Christians such as John Chrysostom made a case for emancipation, Augustine's tradition permitting slavery prevailed through most of the church's history until it was repudiated by some nineteenth-century Christian abolitionists (Longenecker, 60–66; Rupprecht; Sunderland).

3.7. Manumission. Emancipation contracts are common fare among ancient business documents (e.g., *P.Oxy.* 722), and the matter was so routine that manumissions were sometimes enacted en route from one location to another (Gaius *Inst.* 1.20). Slaves were sometimes freed for loyal service or special skills (e.g., Aulus Gellius *Noc. Att.* 2.18.9–10), but sometimes they purchased their own freedom (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 4.24.4; *m. Qidd.* 1:3; see on the *peculium,* §3.5 above). Roman law permitted a slaveholder to free as many slaves as he wished while alive (Gaius *Inst.* 1.44) but set limits on manumission in wills (Gaius *Inst.* 1.41–43; revoked in Justinian *Inst.* 1.6–7). Roman gravestones suggest more freedpersons than freeborn (Finley 1973, 71), but former slaves were more apt to boast in having acquired freedom than slaveholders were apt to provide gravestones for all slaves.

Slaves of citizens meeting specific conditions automatically become Roman citizens on their emancipation (Gaius *Inst.* 1.13–17; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 4.23.3), providing a higher status than that of provincials. Nevertheless, freed slaves were of lower social rank than were the freeborn citizens (Gaius *Inst.* 1.10); rabbinic sources generally rank them below proselytes and offspring from illegitimate unions (e.g., *Num. Rab.* 6:1). They remained dependents of the person who had freed them, hence his clients (Dupont, 65–66); they could be included as heirs and consequently share responsibilities for debts (*CPJ* 2:20–22, §14).

Because freed slaves continued to be part of a wealthy patron's household, they received a considerable political and economic boost not available to most of the freeborn (see *ILS* 7486, 7558, 7580 in Sherk, 228–29; MacMullen, 124; López Barja de Quiroga). They often possessed significant economic and social power (*CIL* 6.8583 in Sherk, 240), though some of higher rank despised them (Epictetus *Disc.* 1.1.20); reminding one of slave birth could constitute an insult (Martial *Epigr.* 1.81). So rapidly did many freed slaves advance in society that they became targets of aristocratic satirists, sometimes with a hint of envy (Petronius *Sat.* 38, 57). Although first-generation freedpersons were barred from aristocratic status, their children represented a disproportionate percentage of the free population to achieve higher status; in urban centers like Ostia perhaps one-third of the local aristocracy consisted of sons of freed slaves (Finley 1973, 72).

4. Conclusion.

The ancient household included spouse and children, but also other dependents who lived in the household. Among the well-to-do, especially some of the urban free, households often included some slaves. Ancient thinkers most frequently defined household relationships in terms of the male householder's appropriate authority relationships with regard to various groups, especially wives, children or grandchildren and slaves.

See also Adultery, Divorce; Children in Late Antiquity; Marriage; Patronage; Roman Social Classes; Slavery; Women in Greco-roman World and Judaism.

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ed. edition; editor(s), edited by
SBLMS SBL Monograph Series
SBLDS SBL Dissertation Series
MT Masoretic Text (standard Hebrew text of the Old Testament)
Augustus (The Twelve Caesars)

Ages," *Journal of Psychohistory* 4 (1977) 461–90; W. Den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome: Some Historical Aspects* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979); S. Dixon, *The Roman Mother* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1988); F. Dupont, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); D. Engels, "The Problem of Female Infanticide in the Greco-Roman World," *CP* 75 (1980) 112–20; idem, "The Use of Historical Demography in Ancient History," *CQ* 34 (1984) 386–93; M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy,* (Sather Classical Lectures 43; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973); idem, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking, 1980); T. Frank, *Aspects of Social Behavior in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932); J. F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); R. Garland, "Juvenile Delinquency in the Greco-Roman World," *History Today* 41 (1991) 12–19; C. 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WBC Word Biblical Commentary

NovT Novum Testamentum
LEC Library of Early Christianity
CRINT Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad novum testamentum
NovTSup Supplement to Novum Testamentum
TDGR Translated Documents of Greece and Rome, ed. R. K. Sherk

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