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Construction and Collapse on Paper: *Clades Judacae Gentis* of Maarten van Heemskerck, 1569

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Abstract

Construction and Collapse on Paper: *Clades Judacae Gentis* of Maarten van Heemskerck, 1569
By Frances Allitt

Maarten van Heemskerck was an artist who lived in the Low Countries in the Sixteenth Century. He was one of the first Northern European artists to devote a large amount of time to the production of prints using the new professionalized system. Like many of his contemporaries he was influenced by the growing popularity of biblical illustrations functioning as moral exempla, and near the end of his life produced a series of 22 prints titled *Clades Judacae Gentis,* or *The Vicissitudes of the Jewish People.* This paper is an exegetical study of the series, examining the works both individually and in a narrative context. It is possible to understand the portion of the series that focuses on the Old Testament as divided into groups of six, and further subdivided into pairs. The following two scenes are illustrations of the New Testament and the first and last images stand alone. Through these groupings, Van Heemskerck shows his viewers how God's relationship with the Israelites worsens throughout their history and eventually disintegrates entirely. The artist uses the visual tradition of the Northern and Italian Renaissance and portrays himself as a latter-day ancient in his understanding and use of architecture.

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Contents

Introduction

In the 16th century, the Low Countries, particularly the cities of Haarlem and Antwerp, were centers of print production. At the beginning of the century, the rise of autonomous printmaking meant that artists would design and engrave or etch their own images independently. In the 1550's, however, printmakers began employing specialized engravers to produce their designs. The professionalization of print production increased the number and scope of prints published in total. [1]

The shift in the method of print production accommodated a separate shift in public and private concerns that the Reformation had influenced, starting in 1517. Some Protestant groups broke off from the national Catholic Church in the Low Countries, but ecclesiastical leaders and private citizens more often hoped to address the Church's troubles from within rather than to leave it. The diversity of theological ideas in circulation, along with pressure from the government for religious unity, brought various changes in general artistic production, rather than a polarizing split between Catholic and Protestant artists. Before the rise of a distinctive Counter-Reformation style around 1585, artists in the Low Countries tended to take a more moderate line than was the case with the schismatic artistic productions in Reformation Germany. If nothing else, prints that were theologically uncontroversial were more likely to sell widely than their more sectarian counterparts, adding a financial advantage to their production. The majority of

[1] Ilja M. Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul: function and meaning in Netherlandish prints (1450-1650),* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2006), 32.

prints were likely to follow a progressive Humanistic train of thought than anything either emphatically Catholic or Protestant.[2]

By the third quarter of the 16th century, fewer customers and collectors than hitherto sought devotional images, such as those of the various Catholic saints, favoring instead biblical illustrations. The most popular biblical images were depictions of the life of Christ, especially His parables, as well as moralized images of the Old Testament.[3] Moral exempla were meant to help the laity understand the path to leading a good life through the illustration of episodes in the Bible. Often exempla were presented through series that illustrated instructional biblical passages such as the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament or the Beatitudes of the New.[4]

Maarten van Van Heemskerck (1498-1574) was the first northern artist to devote the majority of his time to printmaking using the new professionalized system. Over his career he produced around 600 prints, including many moralizing images, an unprecedented amount in the 16th century. [5] Originally a painter, Van Heemskerck spent most of his life in Haarlem. He was notable for employing a markedly Italian figural style in his works, a technique learned in Italy where he traveled as a young man. He was involved with a circle of Humanist thinkers — some of whom also served as his publishers and engravers — and remained a devout Catholic his entire life.

In 1568 Van Heemskerck designed a series of prints titled *Clades Judacae Gentis*,

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[2] Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul*, 92.

[3] Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul*, 92-93.

[4] Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul*, 92.

[5] Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul*, 32.

or *The Vicissitudes of the Jewish People* [figs. 1-22]. The series uses scenes predominantly from the Old Testament, illustrating key moments in the history of the Jewish nation and the eventual downfall of God's chosen people in the destruction of the Second Temple. It can be understood in the tradition of moral exempla, though the subjects portrayed are not themselves entirely traditional. Some of the scenes depicted were fairly common, including narratives Van Heemskerck had worked on before, such as the stories of Samson and Noah [figs. 23 & 24]. The series as a whole, however, is remarkable for its inclusion of some unusual biblical scenes that had seldom, if ever, been portrayed previously. Though the series is illustrative of scripture, in keeping with the exegetical tradition from which it comes, Van Heemskerck's lengthy series also offers moral instruction to its viewers.

Clades consists of 22 prints, which Philips Galle executed and published in 1569 in Haarlem after Van Heemskerck's design.[6] As a sequential series, *Clades* depicts the history of the Jewish people and their shifting fortunes as they gradually fall out of God's favor.[7] All but the frontispiece and the final scene are based upon short passages from the Bible that represent turning points in the history of the ancient Jewish nation. The scenes are set against a distinct background of Classical architecture, particularly ruined structures. Van Heemskerck uses the Classical ruins as a visual device to signify God's changing favor. Shifts in God's favor occur when the Jews either honor or betray their covenants with God, and the ruins themselves signify either the destruction or

[6] Typically, the publisher (in this case Galle) would commission the series from the designer (Van Heemskerck) on a particular subject. The designer, who had a great deal of license to portray the subject, would then deliver the finished series for mass production.

[7] Merel Groentjes in *Scripture for the Eyes: Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Pints of the Sixteenth Century,* Ed. James Clifton and Walter S. Melion (New York: Museum of Biblical Art, 2009), 129.

reconstruction of that relationship.

I will argue that in the prints created for the series, Van Heemskerck represents himself as an architect, creating a foundation on which his viewers can build an exemplary life. The model of Van Heemskerck as designer follows the theme of architecture, which ties the series together. The ruins of the buildings represented in the various episodes represent God's favor and His anger as He withdraws from the lives of His chosen people. I will look at the way in which Van Heemskerck fashions himself in the series and uses architecture and then I will move to a description of how the series of prints is organized in groups that appear to chronicle God's withdrawal.

The scenes are organized in the order they appear in the biblical narrative. Starting with six scenes from the Book of Genesis, the ensuing 14 scenes are taken from later books of the Old Testament, followed by two from Matthew and Luke, two of the synoptic Gospels of the New Testament.[8] Within the chronological ordering, the scenes are arranged in pairs, up to the final print, which stands alone and is not part of the biblical narrative. The pairs generally represent scenes that depict two episodes from the same story that are closely linked in the biblical text (the exceptions to this rule being the eighth and ninth prints and the 20th and 21st prints).

The first nine pairs, which comprise all the Old Testament scenes, are grouped into sets of three. I believe that it is possible to argue that in each successive group of three pairs, God's direct interaction with the Israelites steadily decreases. In the first three pairs, God is a major presence in the lives of the early Israelites. He communicates with their leaders directly and causes the ruins by means of His own destructive power. In the

[8] The synoptic Gospels are arranged in a similar narrative pattern and are thus normally equated. The scenes in the prints, however, are each unique to their respective Gospel.

second triad, God has withdrawn somewhat. He still communicates directly with human leaders, but while He bestows on them divine strength and power to destroy their enemies, God does not involve himself personally in this destruction. In the third group of three pairs, God has withdrawn almost completely. The biblical narrative indicates God's pleasure and displeasure with the Jewish kingdom, but He never speaks or interacts directly with humans. Rather he allows houses, cities and kingdoms to war against one another, to punish humanity's wrongdoings. In the final pair, however, God returns in the form of Jesus Christ, made flesh among his people. The pair shows two groups of gentiles coming to pay the newborn Christ homage, but from the Jews' failure to accept Christ into their hearts, God withdraws His favor from the chosen people. God's ultimate abandonment is portrayed in the final print, where He allows the Romans to sack the Second Temple of Jerusalem, the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant.[9]

I. The Self-Fashioning of Van Heemskerck and the Style of the Print Series

Clades is a record of the turning fortunes of the ancient Jewish people, ending with their rejection of Christ and ultimately God's desertion. The series is not meant so

[9] The Ark of the Covenant contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments and represented the presence of God for the Israelites.

much as a historical record, however, as it is as a lesson for Van Heemskerck's viewers. The overarching message is the necessity of accepting Christ. Van Heemskerck portrays himself as a highly qualified messenger as well as a latter-day ancient, further qualifying this self-image by displaying his knowledge of Classical architecture.

The series displays several of Van Heemskerck's influences that can be understood through a brief look at his biography. The first of the influences is the interest in the Classical world, especially the ruins of Ancient Rome, arising in part from Van Heemskerck's extended stay in the city from 1532 to around 1535. Also important was the influence of Van Heemskerck's circle of Humanist companions, which was instrumental in both the ideas behind the series and the inscriptions. Finally, there was the influence of fellow northern artists, coming from a tradition of religious landscape painting.

The earliest extensive biography of Van Heemskerck appears in Karl van Mander's *Schilderboek* (1604). The narrative, which in places is less formal than a typical modern biography, presents a picture of a diligent artist and a zealous antiquarian. Van Heemskerck was born Maarten Jacobsz Heemskerk van Veen to, Jacob Willemsz. van Veen, a farmer, in 1498. He was interested in art from a young age, and managed to secure a place under the tutelage of Jan van Scorel (1495-1562) in Haarlem shortly after leaving home. Scorel was famed for his mastery of the Italian style, which primarily focused on figural images. The artist had studied in Italy as a young man and in 1532, Van Heemskerck followed the path of his tutor to Italy. After about five years in Italy, Van Heemskerck returned north, settling in Haarlem.[10] Van Mander's biography grows

[10] The historical record remains unclear on this point, but it is generally accepted that he left in 1538.

briefer after this point. Van Heemskerck, a devout Catholic for his whole life, became the warden of his church in 1552, which he remained until his death in 1574, five years after the publication of *Clades*, at the age of 76.

The artist's large output drew praise from critics, such as Van Heemskerck's contemporary Hadrianus Junius (1511-1575) and later Van Mander, both for its size and for its aesthetic value. Van Heemskerck's efforts to capture the Italian style were considered particularly successful. The Italian painter and writer Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), in his second edition of *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1568), describes a group of Old Testament prints as "drawn by Martin [van Heemskerck] in a bold, well-practised, and most resolute manner, which is very similar to the Italian."[11] In his modern commentary, John Knipping refers to Van Heemskerck as one of the "Antwerp Romanists," whose search for fresh inspiration in Italy led to their new style at home.[12] During his stay in Italy Van Heemskerck developed not only a bold new style but also an interest in the ruined monuments of Rome. Describing Van Heemskerck's antiquarian interests Van Mander writes, "he copied many things, as much after antiquities as after the works of Michelangelo – also many ruins, ornaments and all kinds of subtleties of the ancients which are to be seen in abundance in this city."[13] He also drew inspiration from the contemporary achievements of Renaissance architecture with their Classically influenced style, recording in detail the reconstruction of St. Peter's

[11] Giorgio Vasari. *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects.* ed. and trans. Adrienne De Angelis. **http://www.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariMBolognese3.html**. Part III, "Lives of Marc' Antonio Bolognese (Raimondi) (1480-1527/34) and of other engravers of prints," section 3.

[12] John B. Knipping. *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: heaven on earth.* (Nieuwkoop : De Graff, 1974), 7.

[13] Van Mander, *Schilderboek*, 56.

Basilica as well as various villas and piazzas.

While in Rome, Van Heemskerck worked as a landscape painter as a way of making a living. Starting with Joachim Patinir (1480-1524) in the early 16th century, landscape work had been regarded as the forte of Northern artists. Delicate, highly detailed landscape scenes were desirable to Roman collectors from the northern artist. By the time he left Rome, Van Heemskerck had begun combining images of ruins with his landscapes. His *Landscape with the Rape of Helen* (1535) and *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (1550), for example, include a multitude of Classical ruins along with the small-scale figures, panoramic views and distant rock formations, reminiscent of Patinir's and his followers' works [fig. 30, fig. 31].

Although *Clades* was not to follow for 33 years after Van Heemskerck's return to the Low Countries, his drawings of Roman architecture already anticipate the later prints. For example, compare his drawing of the construction of the new St. Peter's from c. 1536, and the image of Samson's funeral from *Clades* [fig. 27, fig. 13]. Both images present the viewer with a ghostly complex of buildings, laid open so that the vaulting and brickwork are visible. The composition of both are similar: the series of arches slightly to the right of the image's center, a tower with square construction on the left; even the figure on the horse are congruent in the two images. While Van Heemskerck may not have copied the Samson image from his drawing of St. Peter's directly, it is undoubtedly his work in Rome that laid the groundwork for images in *Clades*.

The similarities between the sketches and the prints are sometimes more specific. In the destruction of Tirzah, the idol on top of the arch leading to the palace is a copy of a

statue Van Heemskerck had drawn in the old Piazza del Campidoglio [fig. 14 & fig. 28]. The arch in the destruction of Sodom is the Arch of Titus without the inscription above it [fig. 6 & fig. 29]. The mythical landscape Van Heemskerck presents is constructed in large part from the ruins of Rome itself. Throughout *Clades*, Van Heemskerck's treatment of Classical architecture remains detailed and respectful. Rather than portraying the architecture as the result of a pagan society, he presents it as the result of ingenuity and fine craftsmanship which he himself strives to emulate.

Van Heemskerck further articulates his knowledge of Classical architecture through the repeated use of specific forms. The triumphal column, for example, which he shows in the frontispiece, he shows again in the scene of Noah's sacrifice [fig. 2]. In the Noah image he incorporates two triumphal columns: one still standing, and another before it, which has collapsed. The inclusion of both displays Van Heemskerck's familiarity with the exterior and the interior construction of the columns, including the difficult architectural feat of interior stairs.

Van Heemskerck's familiarity with architecture extends to the inclusion of obelisks, pyramids, and the interiors of buildings; barrel or groin vaulted and sometimes decorated with coffers. These structures are not just Classical but draw on the influence of other ancient structures (obelisks and pyramids are originally Egyptian, for example, though Van Heemskerck would have observed them in Rome where they had been imported).

Beyond the variations in architecture within each print, no two prints show quite the same scene. Even pairs such as the two depicting the tower of Babel offer different

views of the scene [fig. 5 & fig. 6]. In the *Clades*, the constant change in scene and the use of many types of architecture within the prints suggest that Van Heemskerck means to show each scene set not in a specific setting, but rather in a world landscape. The world landscape, or *Weltlandschaft*, had arisen in the new vogue for landscape painting in the 16th century. Patinir popularized the artistic model of the world landscape in Northern Europe. Falkenburg defines *Weltlandschaft* as "an encyclopedic view of the entire world,"[14] that describes both the beauty of the world and a world that has surrendered to sin. Unlike the medieval *mappa mundi*, literally maps of the world, the world landscape showed "something of the diversity and extent of the earth's surface."[15] Many of the world landscape artists showed a particular interest in dramatic topographical elements such as rivers and craggy rock formations.[16]

Van Heemskerck alludes to the tradition of the world landscape in his prints using ruins rather than topographical formations. See, for example, the similarity between the shelter that serves Lot and his daughter in the seventh print and the shelter set up in Patinir's *St. Jerome in a Rocky Landscape* (c. 1515-1524) [fig. 7, fig. 32]. Both show a foreground shelter, slightly enhanced (with a shelter or a curtain) then in the background are further repetitions of the foreground construction. Clearly the thematic material of the two works is very different, but visually there is a link; Van Heemskerck is familiar with the tradition that comes through Patinir. Van Heemskerck manipulates the tradition

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[14] Rindert Leonard Falkenburg, *Joachim Patinir: landscape as an image of the pilgrimage of life*, trans Michael Hoyle (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: J. Benjamins Publishing Co., 1998), 9.

[15] Walter S. Gibson, *Mirror of the Earth: the world landscape in sixteenth-century Flemish painting*. (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1989), xx.

[16] Falkenburg, *Joachim Patinir*, 120.

slightly, however, by using the ruins of a man-made building as the shelter for Lot and his daughter, and in the background further ruins reinforce the image of destruction. In effect, Van Heemskerck expresses his role as latter-day ancient and architect while adapting elements of a visual tradition familiar in the North.

By the time he had begun designs for *Clades* in 1568, Van Heemskerck had begun working with Philips Galle (1537-1612), who had taken over from his teacher and former collaborator, Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522-1590). Galle, like Coornhert, was part of the circle of Humanists who influenced and worked with Van Heemskerck. Less educated than some, due in part to his humble origin, Van Heemskerck may not have been proficient in Latin but the scholars who collaborated with him compensated for him`. The scholar Hadrianus Junius created many Latin inscriptions for Van Heemskerck's work, especially in the 1560's. Unlike earlier lines from Van Heemskerck's collaborators, such as Coornhert, Junius' tended to be more straightforward and descriptive. [17] As the *Clades* inscriptions are such direct descriptions of the scenes, it is probable that they too were the work of Junius.

The interest in Humanism also plays into Van Heemskerck's design choice, offering a further explanation for decision to work with Classical ruins. In keeping with the Humanist interest in surpassing the ancients, he shows several times throughout the series, particularly by comparing himself with Apelles of Cos, how the modern world has equaled and risen above the ancient world in technology, learning and art.

[17] Veldman, *Images for the Soul and Eyes,* 85.

II. The Prints[18]

1. **The Frontispiece**

The first image in the series is the frontispiece [fig. 1]. It is not one of the paired images but it sets out the purpose and style of the series visually and through its

[18] In my paper, I have used the series reproduced in the New Hollstein series, from the first Volume on Van Heemskerck. The volumes use the first of three editions of the prints. Ilja M. Veldman, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700: Maarten Van Van Heemskerck Part 1 [Old Testament, Including Series with Old & New Testament Subjects]*, ed. Ger Luijten (Netherlands: Roosendaal, 1993), 127-135.

inscription. Placed on top of an inscribed base, an elaborate socle or plinth dominates the image and is angled so that one corner juts forward towards the viewer.[19] The outward facing corner is recessed and a decorative stone ram's head, placed near the top, is mirrored on the other two visible corners. A wreath is connected to the ram's right horn and a rope to its left. The rope borders a niche to its right containing a large bust of Van Heemskerck. The bust is rotated and seems to hover in the niche, the left shoulder projecting from the niche. The figure is curly haired and wearing a fine garment with a lace collar, reminiscent of Van Heemskerck's 1553 self-portrait [fig. 33]. On the left side of the niche hanging from the ram's horn are a set of paintbrushes, a jug, and three oil palettes. Directly below the niche, from left to right, are another set of brushes, Van Heemskerck's coat of arms and a piece of parchment. Carved into the stone on the right side of the niche are a compass and angle. The tools of the artist's trade surround the bust of Van Heemskerck.

The bust is angled toward the viewer so it faces the left side of the socle. On the left face is a sheet of paper tacked up with a circular seal with the letter "m" (for Maarten) in the center. The paper reads:

Martinus Heemskerrck+
Pictor, alter nostri Saeculi Apelleo, inventionum Pater ad viuum expressus.

Martinus Heemkserrck
A painter, another Sacred Apelles of our own time, father of inventions, expressed after the life.

The inscription marks the beginning of Van Heemskerck's equation of himself with the ancients, an association that runs throughout the series. In this instance, Van

[19] A socle is equivalent to a plinth, an architectural element used to support statues of column. Typically, they are made of stone.

Heemskerck is comparing himself to Apelles of Cos, a fourth-century Greek painter. Though all of Apelles' works were lost, various writers, significantly Pliny the Elder (23 – 91), and other artists recognized him as the greatest Classical artist, if not the greatest artist of all time. By the 16th century, Apelles had become an icon for artists. The court painter of Alexander the Great, Apelles is described posthumously in Pliny's *Naturalia Historiae* (AD 77 – 79) as an ingenious painter, notable also for his candor, gracefulness, courteousness .[20] The skill on which Apelles particularly prided himself was his ability to recognize when he had completed a painting rather than overworking it, a talent that he felt set him apart from his colleagues.

To equate oneself with Apelles was to claim great skill and ingenuity, but it was nevertheless a claim made with some frequency by artists of Van Heemskerck's time.[21] In the world of Christian painters, Apelles was of relatively recent popularity, however. For much of their painting tradition it was St. Luke, traditional portraitist of the Virgin Mary and divine benefactor of artists, who was considered the iconic patron of painting. It was not until the resurgence of interest in the ancients, particularly in the Italian Renaissance, that Apelles returned to prominence. Van Heemskerck depicted St. Luke several times throughout his career, but influenced as he was in *Clades* by the Classical world selected a figure known for his "impeccable social connections and his equally prestigious artistic accomplishments," despite the moralizing nature of the series.[22] In so doing, Van Heemskerck does not merely claim to rival Apelles' skill, inventiveness and

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[20] Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History,* ed. John Bostock and H. T. Riley, in the Perseus Digital Library, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plin.+Nat.+1.dedication. XXXV.36.79-97.

[21] Ilja M. Veldman. *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century.* (Maarssen: G Schwartz, 1977), 149-150.

[22]Zerka Zarenda Filipczak. *Picturing Art in Antwerp*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 26.

dedication; he surpasses the ancient master and reinvents him, to become *alter nostri Apelleo*, a new Apelles. Not only will Van Heemskerck's works endure physically, rather than in historical description, he will also bring spiritual and aesthetic satisfaction to his viewers.

The coat of arms beneath the niche in the frontispiece furthers the Apelles connection visually. This was not a historic family crest, but rather an invention of Van Heemskerck's.[23] It appears in front of two crossed maulsticks, which symbolized his work as a painter. On the top register are a half Gothic eagle and the lion rampant. Veldman suggests that these appear to have no particular meaning other than to give the coat of arms the appearance of authenticity.[24] This is probably the case, though it is interesting to note that lion rampant, while a popular heraldic device, also appears on the coat of arms of the city of Heemskerck. The tortoise with the winged arm upon it, however, furthers the Apelles connection. In his *Schilderboek* Van Mander explains that the winged arm on the turtle "represents … Apelles' advice not to be too sluggish regarding work, nor to overburden the spirit with too many details."[25] Hemskerck takes the advice and puts it at the center of his self-representation, placing Apelles at the core of his image.

On the right side of the large base is another important inscription. Here, Van Heemskerck sets out the mission of the print series:

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[23] It also appears on the monument that Van Heemskerck set up on his father's grave.

[24] Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck,* 151.

[25] Karel van Mander, *The lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German painters, from the first edition of the Schilder-boeck (1603-1604) : preceded by the lineage, circumstances and place of birth, life and works of Karel van Mander, painter and poet and likewise his death and burial, from the second edition of the Schilder-boeck (1616-1618),* ed. Hessel Miedema (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), 247r.

Damus tibi, benigne lector, uno libello tanquam in speclo exhibitas, memorabiliores judaeae gentis clades, ut delictorum semper comites, ita cum presenti, tum postere aetati pro exemplis futuras

We give to you, dear reader, displayed [published] in one little book as though in a mirror, the vicissitudes of the Jewish people which are worth remembering, as now in the present so also in the future ages.[26]

The purpose of the series, in other words, is to teach a lesson — that is, the importance of maintaining steady obedience towards and faith in God. In order to do this, Van Heemskerck will show visually, skillfully and briefly, "as though in a mirror," the mistakes and triumphs of God's chosen people.

Back on the base on the left side is a small inscription reading *"Martinus Van Heemskerck Inventor*" and below it "*Philippus Galle fecit*." The inscriptions translate to "Maarten Van Heemkerck designed [it]/Philips Galle made [it]." The tradition of this inscription (which continues throughout the series) was common starting in the Netherlands in the 15th century. Netherlandish painters began to sign their works "fecit" after a custom started by Jan van Eyck (1395-1441). In the mid 16th century, the inscription changed to "invenit et fecit." Here, in keeping with the new professionalized system, the steps of invention and creation are fittingly divided between the two artists. The actions of inventing and creating were reflective of two of the steps in the preparation of rhetorical speech, those being *inventio, elocutio* and *dispositio*: invention, arrangement and the act of the delivery. In the process of producing an image, *inventio* refers to the selection of the subject.

In the series, however, Van Heemskerck is not so much a rhetoritician as an

[26] All translations in the text are original and have been completed with the help of Dr. Louise Pratt and Dr. Walter S. Melion.

architect. Above the inscription sits a man, his leg hanging over the side so that the shadow nearly touches the top of the text. He is dressed in a cloak, tall hat, and tunic and holds a drafting board. A man standing on the ground before him holds an L angle (like the one pictured on the right side of the socle); he gestures upwards with his left arm while addressing the man on the base. They appear to be discussing the ruins that surround the monument. The two figures are likely to be architects. The figure standing holds an L-angle and the seated figures is drawing, presumably sketching a ruin for future study or creating a new architectural plan. Indeed, the same pair of tools appears in the hands of the architects in the fourth print, which shows the construction of the tower of Babel. The two figures reflect the inscription: *Martinus Van Heemskerck Inventor/ Phillippus Galle Fecit*. In this case, the draughtsman must represent Van Heemskerck simply on the basis of the fact that he is designing the image that his standing companion will soon construct. On closer inspection, indeed, the identity of the seated figure is further solidified.[27]

Though the seated man sits facing away from the viewer, his beard resembles the one on the bust of Van Heemskerck in the recess of the socle. Moreover, the man directly resembles Van Heemskerck's depiction of himself in his aforementioned 1553 self-portrait [fig. 33]. In the self-portrait, a larger bust portrait of the artist is shown in front of a painting (made apparent by the slip of paper attached to the canvas of the inner painting). The painting within a painting shows a smaller, full-length figure of Van Heemskerck sketching the ruins of the Flavian Amphitheater, or Colosseum, in Rome. The three-quarter turn away from the viewer, the hat, the cape, the presence of the

[27] Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp*, 31.

drawing board, the artist's beard, and even the leg slanting to the left, are all suggestive of the figure in the frontispiece.

Unlike the elaborate base and socle on the opposite side of the monument from the viewer, the scene is one of destruction. Two male effigies have fallen. Both wear light drapery, and one has fallen so that only his legs are visible, while the other has fallen so that the viewer can see him from the knees up. Behind him at nearly the same angle an obelisk has toppled. In front of it one still stands intact, but the vision of dilapidation carries on at the left side of the work. Here there are steps leading up to a building supported by Corinthian columns. Behind those a barrel-vaulted structure with coffered ceilings has crumbled away, leaving its interior visible while its roof is grown over with vegetation.

Van Heemskerck as the architect of the series has created something more lasting, however. If Van Heemskerck is the architect, then his constructions are made of paper. The only paper clearly depicted in the series is shown in the frontispiece and declares Van Heemskerck the new Apelles. Although there is an obvious discrepancy between the durability of stone and the apparent ephemerality of paper, Heemskerkeck here argues for the endurance of his chosen medium. In a landscape where obelisks, statues and buildings have collapsed, the paper remains in place and intact. Only on the left edge of the paper is there a tear. The tear is mirrored on the left edge of the socle, also otherwise undamaged. Thus Van Heemskerck shows that the paper, and by extension the paper on which he has made his prints, which are his constructions, will survive as long as the constructions of the ancients. In fact, with his claim to his works' durability, Van Heemskerck may even be declaring himself greater than the ancient Apelles, all of whose works had vanished by

the 16th century. He is certainly fulfilling the humanist goal of surpassing the ancients with paper, a medium unavailable in the classical world, a further way in which the moderns had surpassed the ancients. Van Heemskerck is a new Apelles in every way: a modern who uses his ingenuity not just for the sake of art, but also for the sake of God.

Van Heemskerck's ingenuity extends beyond the frame of the picture. His self-portrait is placed significantly at the base of a triumphal column. Triumphal columns, or victory columns, were set up in imperial Rome to commemorate military victories. Usually topped with a victory statue, the triumphal column usually displayed scenes from the memorialized war in relief carvings spiraling up it. Placing the frontispiece at the base of such a monument allows the artist to aggrandize himself further, suggesting that his accomplishments are comparable to those of the Roman emperors. With this device he intensifies the relationship between paper and stone that he has already started to develop. Van Heemskerck would have been familiar with Trajan's Column, or at least columns like it (such as the Column of Antoninus Pius) from his time in Rome, and used similar technique in his narrative. Trajan's Column had been completed in AD 113 under the Roman Emperor Trajan, and features a spiral bas-relief that wraps like a piece of parchment around the 98-foot-tall shaft of the column. The relief series chronicles Trajan's victory in the Dacian wars.

Like Van Heemskerck, the designer of Trajan's column was undertaking a challenging task: to show in a limited space a long and complex history. Though the Dacian Wars took place in a relatively short time (two years, as opposed to Jewish history which spanned from the beginning of time to the present), the technical difficulties in representing a story pictorially required the artist to become a careful editor, showing

only the most important scenes. The designer made the column "readable," even as the figures grew higher and farther away by inserting stock scenes and recognizable figures throughout.[28] Following this example Van Heemskerck too carefully confines his story to a set of stock images organized around buildings. These prompts make the series easier for his audience to understand.

However, in this opening scene, Van Heemskerck tightens the sightline, bringing the viewer up right in front of the base of the monument so that it is impossible to see even the first few registers of the narrative above. Like a visitor to a triumphal column in Rome, the viewer moves in close to the monument first to read the inscription and understand the context of the construction, before backing up, to have the rest of the narrative unveiled.

From the outset, Van Heemskerck is establishing the basic aspects of the series. He sets out his mission in the inscription: to make his viewers remember the stories of the Bible, and, using these stories as a foundation, to construct a code of proper faith and moral behavior for the future. The inscription casts Van Heemskerck as the designer for the new construction. To confirm his authority Van Heemskerck portrays himself as a latter-day ancient — an Apelles, in fact — who has the authority to teach his viewers through the vicissitudes of the Jewish race. He puts himself at the base of a triumphal column. Above his head is the same laurel wreath found at the bottom of the Columns of Trajan and Hadrian in Rome. Thus he is at the base of this triumphal monument, and just as it is constructed above him, from the images he lays out, his viewers will build in their own minds the lessons brought by the disasters and the triumphs of the Jewish nation.

[28] Tonio Holscher. "The Transformation of Victory Into Power." In *Representations of War in Ancient Rome*, ed. Sheila Dillon (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 45.

The following section will examine the print pairs in the groups of three described above. Each section will include a brief analysis of each print and describe the connections within each pair as well as in each group of three pairs.

2. **The first three: stories from Genesis**

Through an examination of the first print in the sets of pairs, it is possible to get a sense of the pattern that the rest of the images will follow. This first biblical scene depicts Noah's sacrifice [fig. 2]. It shows the moment just before God makes his covenant with Noah, one of the only survivors after God has flooded the earth, promising never to destroy the earth and its people again.[29] The landscape in which the covenant is made is one of total destruction. The waters of the flood, which lasted about 150 days, have abated, but the ground is littered with human and animal remains and ruined buildings. So complete is the destruction that even the graves have been laid open, the skeletons exposed to the eye. All the buildings of the earth, from the barrel vaulted building in the right foreground to the pyramids in the middle ground have been laid to waste. The only structure still intact is a central middle ground triumphal column. The line of the column draws the eye up to the background where the ark has landed on a mountain, Mt. Ararat. In the foreground kneels Noah, his arms spread and face turned towards God, who is visible in the top left hand corner. Noah and his family are kneeling around the altar which holds the cow Noah is offering as holocaust in thanksgiving for his family's safe landing.[30]

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[29] This and all following biblical passages in translation are taken from the Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition of the Bible. Gen. 8:20.

[30] In this case, holocaust refers to a sacrifice consumed by fire.

The first print contains several elements that are important for the original three pairs. This print, like the five that follow, presents God as a character present in the lives of his people. The flood is a result of God's physical creation ("Behold I will bring the waters of a great flood upon the earth, to destroy all flesh"[31]), but Noah's sacrifice quells God's anger and leads to a verbal agreement. While the scene of utter destruction is indicative of a sinful world that has experienced the wrath of God, Noah's presence in the image and his ritual sacrifice to God signify the reconstruction of that world by a righteous man with his heavenly father's aid. Noah opens his arms, mirroring God's gesture above him, intensifying their visual connection. Noah gazes directly into God's down-turned eyes. God's gesture of blessing accepted by Noah alludes to the covenant that is forming between the two.[32] The first print is the only scene in the entire series in which God as Father is depicted, making the connection between the patriarch and the divine all the more significant. After the first print, even in the subsequent scene, the connection is lessened.

Noah's continued communication with God is evident in the first print. The inscription reads:

Prima Noe imponit pingues holocausta per aras
Decrescente unda, penetrauit ad aethera nidor.

First, Noah places a sacrifice at the fertile altars
At the weakening of the flood the aroma penetrated to the heavens.

Placing "prima" at the beginning of the first inscription, the author not only emphasizes the primacy of the image in the series, but also demonstrates Noah's

[31] Gen. 6:17.

[32] The covenant, described in Genesis 9, is formed between Noah and his sons and is a series of seven imperatives also known as the Seven Laws of Noah or the Noahide Laws.

commitment to God by performing the sacrifice before any other action. The inscription is based on Genesis 8:20, "And Noe built an altar unto the Lord: and taking of all cattle and fowls that were clean, offered holocausts upon the altar." In the print, however, all other animals are strangely absent. The only animal present is the sacrificial cow. Its lone presence serves to make the connection between man and God more intimate. The next Bible verse continues, "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and said: I will no more curse the earth for the sake of man … I will no more destroy every living soul as I have done."[33]

The ark takes on an architectural form in the print, rising like a distant tower out of the mountain. Built in proportions dictated by God, the ark it is set on a level with Him, with Noah placed at the bottom of a V-shape between God and the vessel. Noah appears visually as the instrument of God's will, implementing His instructions for humanity. The elevation of the ark also reinforces its role as a sacred structure since it was built under God's direction. Noah, who was spared as a result of his close communication with God, will go on to rebuild a ruined world through following God's dictates, just as he did with the ark.

The first print is also an important image as it reminds the viewers of the value of Old Testament stories, as is explained, for example, in Hebrews 1. Despite the relationship between man and God, however, the first scene presents an important link between the Old and the New Testaments, the reason the series was important for Christian viewers. The scene reminds the viewers of the Jewish relationship with God. In Hebrews 1, Paul reminds his readers that the events of the Old Testament are significant

[33] Gen. 8:21.

because they are the word of God. The distribution of laws to the chosen people as well as the punishment that follows the failure to follow these edicts are recorded not just as a historical endeavor, rather than as a way that future generations could learn from and interpret the mistakes of the Hebrew people.[34] In his letter, Paul continues that God's promise of human salvation to Noah is ultimately realized in the coming of Christ:

> God, who, at sundry times and in diverse manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all,
> In these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world.[35]

Another connection between the Old Testament and contemporary readers of the print returns us to the ark. The presence of the ark follows the tradition of depicting sacred objects in art, a custom that had become important in the 16th century. The *Biblia Polyglotta* was a five-language edition of the Bible published in the same year as Van Heemskerck's series in Antwerp. It contained maps, weights, measurements and pictorial reconstructions of the Temple of Solomon and the Ark. The Spanish theologian and overseer of the project Benito Arias Montano (1527-1589), wrote the introduction to the multi-volume series. About the illustrations in the appendix he explains: "No-one who has not first observed and become thoroughly acquainted with the skillful and clearly divine structure of the images … may duly acquire the true knowledge concealed and as it were lying hidden in the selfsame images of those historical matters."[36] In keeping with this idea, Van Heemskerck thus depicts many sacred constructions throughout his series: the ark of Noah, the Ark of the Covenant and the two Temples of Jerusalem. Even in the

[34] Clifton and Melion, eds, *Scripture for the Eyes*, 30.

[35] Heb. 1:1-2.

[36] Clifton and Melion, eds, *Scripture for the Eyes*, 38.

second image of the first pair when the landscape and ruins have changed, the ark remains the same, anchored in the background.

Van Heemskerck generally focuses on different architectural elements, however, placing the scenes in a Classical context, as can be seen in this first image. The presence of the various ruins, including the triumphal columns, the tombs and the ruined basilicas also sets up a visual motif that will continue throughout the first three pairs, that of the misplaced glorification of human deeds represented by monuments. Earlier in the century, writer and theologian Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535) had expressed his disgust for buildings he construed as destructive to the natural world, and particularly for monuments of the type that appear in the first three *Clades* pairs: "[they are] nothinge auailable unto men, but to behold, and maruaile at, and, as *Plinie* saithe, are builte with very great expense for an idle and foolish ostentation of money." He includes the Tower of Babel, the pyramids, obelisks, the Colossus and arches of triumph in a list of offending monuments. In 1561, a few years before the publication of *Clades*, the designers of an allegorical procession in Antwerp included in visual depiction of "Idle Glory," the Tower of Babel, "great tombs, pyramids, edifices, and the battle of the Gods."[37]

Although triumphal columns do not make either of the lists, pyramids, tombs, obelisks, edifices, an arch of triumph and the Tower of Babel all appear in the early images. It might not be stretching too far to argue that colossus-like figures appear in Van Heemskerck's depictions of Ham and Nemrod — though if it is stretching too far, there are certainly colossi present in the frontispiece. Unlike Van Heemskerck's column, none

[37] Margaret Carroll. *Painting and Politics in Northern Europe: Van Eyck, Breugel, Rubens, and their contemporaries*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 82.

of these creations of man instructs on morality, but rather on the short-lived deeds and achievements of men. Nevertheless, Van Heemskerck draws a parallel between his work and Classical architecture, particularly the triumphal column, to glorify faith in God.

The final important element of the scene is the presence of sin in the new world. In His decision to spare the world in the future, God observes "for the imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth."[38] The *Glossa Ordinaria* offers a collection of biblical glosses that offered commentary alongside the Biblical text.[39] A passage in the *Glossa* from the writing of John Chrysostomus (c. 347-407) more specifically defines the evil as humanity's seeking of false idols, and man's desire from the beginning to offer sacrifices to these idols instead of the true God.[40] Further down, a passage from Aurelius Ambrosius (c. 340-397) adds an old adage saying that trying to rid sin from the hearts of men is like trying to draw water from a fine net.[41]

In Van Heemskerck's print, the deeply impressed presence of human sin is represented in Noah's family. The presence of the family represents an impending break with God and a falling back into sin, even at the first moments of the new world. The family is gathered around the altar of the sacrifice, yet they seem to direct their prayers toward the sacrificial cow rather than to God himself. Noah's son shown standing raises

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[38] Gen. 8:21.

[39] For the *Glossa* passages I have used the 1603 edition of the standard text, digitized from Jacques de Cuilly, Jean Dadré, and Francois Feuardent, eds., *Biblium sacrorum cum glossa ordinaria* Jacques de Cuilly, Jean Dadré, and Francois Feuardent, eds. (Venice: 1603) and available at http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=glossa%20ordinaria%20AND%20collection%3Atoronto.

[40] "*Quare aute haec fieri permittit Deus? Et in hoc nostrae infirmitaties habetur ratio: Quia enim hominess an vero Dei cultu defecturi errant, et proprios Deos effecturi, quibus sacrificial immolarent, prius voluit ut sibi dona offerretur, quo vel sic a proposito depelleret pernicioso errore illiciendos."* Cuilly et al., eds, *Glossa,* vol 1.,163.

[41] *" Tamquam in proverbio: Si quis reti subtili haurire cupiat aquam, sic qui malitia expectoribus hominu auferre conatur."* Cuilly, et al., eds, *Glossa Ordinaria,* vol. 1, 163.

his arms like his father, but he appears to stare into the flames rather than towards the opening clouds that reveal God. The other figures also drape themselves over the base of the altar; the woman behind Noah clasps her hands in supplication towards the sacrifice in an idolatrous manner. Even in their time of heavenly redemption, Van Heemskerk suggests that God's chosen people have already begun to stray into idolatry, as they will repeatedly throughout their history.

These elements, God's presence in destruction, the communication between man and God, the rebuilding of new society and the almost immediate fall from grace even in the reconstruction, remain important in the following scenes. Visually, the presence of Noah's sons represents a genealogical continuity for the first three pairs of prints, as his sons Ham and Shem were the ancestors of Nimrod and Lot, the two main figures in the following scenes, respectively. The second scene in the pair, as well as the pairs that follow, all come from Genesis and follow the genealogical line set up in the first print. In the following scene the splintering of the family of Noah will provide a background for the blessings and curses of Noah's descendants.

The children of God have strayed further from him in the next print [fig. 3]. In this image, Noah, lies exposed having planted a vineyard and gotten drunk off the fruits of his labors ("And drinking of the wine was made drunk, and was uncovered in his tent."[42]). His sons stand around him, two, Shem and Japheth, backing towards him with a blanket, the third, Ham, indicating him with his right hand, the other placed on his hip.

As in the previous scene, a column draws the eye to the background of the print where the ark still rests spectrally on top of Mt. Ararat. The pillar, this time a free

[42] Gen. 9:21.

standing Corinthian column, holds a vine, spiraling up it, rather than depictions of past glories, and the scene is in many ways one of rebirth. The wine press is visible in the background, populated by more workers than would have been included on the ark — life has begun again. In the ruins of the middle ground, Noah's family is shown now with two younger boys and a man and a woman under a makeshift shelter. The family has hung a tarpaulin under the oculus of a dilapidated groin-vaulted building, through which new vegetation grows.

The author of Genesis mentions only that Noah has fallen asleep and that Ham reports back to his brothers about what has happened. The inscription, however, reads:

Dormit in aprico multo Noe victus Iaccho,
Et nudata patris Ridet Genitalia Chamus.

Noah sleeps in the open air having been conquered by Dionysus [Iaccho]
And Ham [Chamus] laughs at the nudity of his father.

Noah reclines on a chair-like fragment in what perhaps alludes to Noah as the cornerstone of the new civilization under the relief figure of a goat. Ham, however stands on a flat slab, placing him at the foundation of the three-fold split of civilization between the brothers. Ham's cursed line, diverges from the divine favor of the patriarch's line after this scene. In the *Glossa* Isidorus further clarifies that from Shem come the Jewish people, from Japheth comes "another great line," but Ham's line is not great and is impenitent and quick-tempered rather than wise.[43]

The scene and inscription leave off before Noah awakes, but as in the previous scene, the moment is key in the development of Israelite history. After awaking, Noah realizes what has happened and curses the line of Ham, calling him a servant of servants

[43] Cuilly, et. al., eds. *Glossa Ordinaria*. vol. 1, 172.

to his brother Shem[44]. Thus, the family line is cursed and divides, leading to the next pair of scenes.

Chapter 10 of Genesis gives the genealogy of Noah's sons. Ham's line leads to Nemrod as described in verses 8-10: "Now Chus begot Nemrod: he began to be mighty on earth. And he was a stout hunter before the Lord. Hence came a proverb: Even as Nemrod the stout hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, and Arach, and Achad, and Chalanne in the land of Sennaar." After this verse, Nemrod never appears again, but traditionally he is associated with the tower of Babel, in both the literary and the artistic tradition.

The biblical episode of the fall of the tower has a long history of illustration. Even if Van Heemskerck were not familiar with Nimrod's identification in Flavius Josephus' (37-100) *Antiquity of the Jews* (c. 94), he would have been familiar with images such as Pieter Brueghel the Elder's (1525-1569) 1563 painting *The Tower of Babel* [fig. 25].[45] Traditionally, as shown in in Brueghel's painting, Nemrod is pictured as a giant, and the large scale of the king in Van Heemskerck's fourth and fifth prints indicates that he must be Nemrod.

It is the tower itself that changes from image to image in visual history. St. Augustine (354-430) in his book *The City of God* (early 5th century), equates Babylon with Rome, a sinful city in direct conflict with the City of God represented by Jerusalem. Some artists, following this assertion, chose to depict the tower as an enlarged Roman

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[44] Gen. 9:24.

[45] Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews.* Sir Roger L'Estrange, trans. In the Eighteenth Century Collections Online, http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&contentSet=ECCOArticles&type=multipage&tabID=T001&prodId=ECCO&docId=CW115046181&source=gale&userGroupName=emory&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE. (accessed March 12, 2010), I.2.

monument. Brueghel's Babel for example, is a large Flavian Amphitheater. Van Heemskerck, however, in keeping with his respectful treatment of Classical architecture throughout the series, has his illustration of the building correspond more closely with the description given by the Greek historian Herodotus (5th century BC), who described the tower as square and about seven to eight stories high (*Histories* I.181).[46]

Though Nemrod stands in the foreground of both images [figs. 4 & 5], the people are credited with envisioning and constructing the building in both the biblical account and the inscription. The author of Genesis writes, "they found a plain in the land of Sennaar, and dwelt in it. And each one said to his neighbor: Come, let us make bricks, and bake them of stones, and slime instead of mortar. And they said: Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven: and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands."[47] Likewise the inscription for the first print reads:

Enmolem aedificant animisque, opibusque parati,
Verticequae nubes, et vertice tangeret astra.

Behold they build a structure having raised their strength and spirit,
The summit of which will touch the clouds and the stars.

Again, this pair presents the viewer with collapse and the start of a new society built on the sin of mankind. Instead of making their name famous, as they intend, God instead "confounds them" for their vanity in trying to reach heaven. The building of the new society is evident in the labors of the people shown behind the king. In communicating with him and each other, however, they have failed to listen to God, who

[46] Carroll, *Painting and Politics in Northern Europe,* 77-78.

[47] Gen. 11:3.

thus angered, takes his revenge on the people directly.

In Genesis, there is no mention of the fall of the tower. God enacts his destruction here by dividing the peoples through giving them different languages. The pair of scenes, however, shows the tower crumbling to the ground with lightning flashing overhead, the manifestation of God in the collapse:

Alta cadit Babylonmulta constructa virum vi,
Concutit Haec terras, mortalia pectora sternit.

This high [tower] of Babel falls having been constructed with much strength of the people,
It strikes the earth, [and] scatters many lives.

At the same time though, there is still the suggestion that as communication gradually breaks between human and divine, human error has increased. Not only has humanity sinned by constructing the tower in the first place, it has also erred in the design. In the first print of the pair two architects, identifiable by the angle in the left hand of one and the draughtboard in that of the other, rush to the king, gesturing back to the tower even as it falls. The tower is built according to no divine directive, making it distinct from, for example, that lasting Ark that Noah had constructed and that could plainly be seen enduring on its mountaintop in the previous pair.

With the line of Ham with its scattered kingdom the series turns to the line of Shem, blessed by Noah. Shem's descendant Lot has settled in Sodom, a sinful city — so sinful in fact that God, once again, decides to obliterate it from the Earth [fig. 6]. Within the story of Lot's exodus from Sodom, where he, like Noah before him, is the only righteous man to be found, is the story of Lot's wife. In the story, found in Genesis 19, God warns Lot not to look back at the burning city: "Escape for thy life; look not behind

thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."[48] Lot's wife, whom God has allowed to leave with Lot and the rest of his family, ignores the warning, and looking back, turns into a pillar of salt. The inscription focuses on Lot's wife as well:

Duciture Sodoma Loth uxor et utraq[ue] nota
Concretiq[ue]salis coniunx trahit ecce rigorem

Lot and his wife are led out of notorious Sodom together,
And his wife acquires – see! – the stiffness of hardened salt.

In the tradition of the *Biblia auperum*, an illustrated Bible with short annotations, and the *Speculum humanae salvationis*, a typological book written Latin verse and linking the Old and New Testaments, the scene of the escape from Sodom was notable both for the transformation of Lot's wife as well as the exodus of Lot's family; it was placed in the *Speculum* alongside images of the flight from Egypt.[49] Lot's wife's transformation, however, is equated with the hardening of one's heart as it returns to one's sin. The image is influenced by both traditions, and, as in the last two pairs, God's favor in facilitating the escape is coupled with human sin foreshadowing the desertion to come in the following scene. Of the two traditions, the scene in fact emphasizes the sin at the root of a new civilization by including the transformation of the wife rather than Lot's

[48] Gen. 19:17.

[49] The *Biblia pauperum*, or "Bible of the Poor," was a series of images and Latin inscriptions taken from the Bible. The images here take greater importance than the text, which acts as explanatory notes from the scenes depicted. For my purposes I have used a facsimile (*Biblia Pauperum*, ed. Rudolf Ehwald. [Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1906]) as well as the fairly helpful "Internet Biblia Pauperum" (http://www.amasis.com/biblia/). The *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* or *Mirror of Human Salvation* was a theological text illustrated with typological scenes, dating, like the *Biblia Pauperum*, from the late Middle Ages. I used one facsimile (Kommentar von Willibrord Neumuller O.S.B. *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* [Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1997]) as well as a translated version of a later edition (*The Mirror of Salvation: An Edition of British Library Blockbook G. 11784*. Trans & Commentary: Albert C. Labriola and John W. Smeltz, [Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2002]).

deliverance.

The sinful nature of the new world continues in the next scene [fig. 7]. This, the seventh print, shows Lot sleeping with his daughters. The misguided girls believe that they are the last people surviving on earth and that it is their duty to reproduce with Lot. In order to sleep with him, they get him drunk so that he is oblivious to their actions (the Bible verse says, "he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose"[50]) and then both sleep with him on successive nights. The biblical account chronicles this incident without comment, other than to mention that both girls conceive by their father. The inscription, on the other hand, comes down much harder on the both the girls and the father:

En pater (infandum) natarum amplexibus haeret Inscius
Has vitiat diffuses nectare multo.

Behold (unspeakable) the father clings to his daughters with embraces
Unknowing, having been drunk with much nectar, he damages them.

The girl in the foreground hunches against the side of what seems to be a rock formation but is in fact the debris of an old building. Lot and one of the daughters are shown in an opening in the stones. A curtain is drawn aside to give the viewer a glimpse of the couple embracing, two - presumably empty - cups before them. The other daughter, head on her knee as though in shame, sits against the backdrop of another ruined world. Trees with sparse leaves cling to the sides of the ruined building, their roots exposed and their trunks battling to remain upright, symbolizing the weakness of the progeny that could possibly result from such a union.

[50] Gen. 19:35.

Three times, under three separate leaders, the early Israelites are forced to rebuild after their sin leads to destruction by God. At the end of the first three pairs, the land has returned to the failing state it was in at Noah's sacrifice. The outside daughter's head is bowed like that of the sacrificial ox in the first print. She believes the world must be rebuilt, but this time humanity is going about reconstruction without divine instruction — as in the case of the tower of Babel, no building endeavor can succeed without divine instruction. God, so present in the first scene has begun already to withdraw, leading to the next trio of pairs.

3. **Joshua and Samson: Man and God in Dialogue**

In the first three pairs, the rhythm is fairly steady: each new pair portrays a different leader from Genesis establishing a new society, the new society subsequently abandoning God through sin, and God finally exacting a punishment through the destruction of the sinful people. The next three pairs, however, represent stories from the historical books, which chronicle wars between nations rather than God's autonomous destruction of cities or kingdoms. The series jumps from Genesis to the book of Joshua and the destruction of Jericho and Hai. The series lingers in these scenes from Joshua 8 for the next pair, detailing the story of the death of the king of Hai. The triad ends in the book of Judges with the death of Samson.

Unlike the first three pairs, neither the prints nor the corresponding biblical passages ever present God as an active participant in the lives of the Israelites. He is never shown figurally as in the first print or in the vapors and fire of the Babel and Lot stories. The next three pairs are united instead by the continuing theme of communication

with God leading in each case to the Israelites' victory over their enemies. In the stories of Jericho, and Hai, which span the first two pairs of prints, the Israelites succeed because they are following the Law. It is because Joshua asks God for guidance in his military conquests that he achieves victory. The two images both show the Israelites razing the city, having followed God's instructions and carried out His will. In the final pair, the death of Samson, God answers the judge's call to give him the necessary strength before he tears down the pillars of the Philistine temple.

It is in this group of pairs that the first "unusual" scenes appear, with the death of the King of Hai. The story, which appears in the visual record seldom if ever before the Van Heemskerck series, is not only included in the group, but is stretched through an entire pair. This cannot be simply a quirk on Van Heemskerck's part, however. He chooses the scene for the importance of architecture and ruin in the corresponding biblical passage, as well as the results of the destruction in the history of the Jews.

The first story of the first pair is fairly straightforward: Joshua, who has become king of the Israelites after the death of Moses, finds himself at a standstill in his attempt to capture the city of Jericho, a heavily fortified city [fig. 8]. God instructs him to have his army walk around the city once a day for six days, and on the seventh day to lead his priests around the city six times, holding the Ark of the Covenant and blowing trumpets. "And when the voice of the trumpet shall give a longer and broken tune, and shall sound in your ears, all the people shall shout together with a very great shout, and the walls of the city shall fall to the ground, and they shall enter in every one at the place against which they shall stand."[51] Joshua follows the instructions and is rewarded with victory on

[51] Josh. 6:5.

the seventh day.

In the first image, the walls of Jericho collapse outwards as the soldiers who follow the priests shout toward the fortresses of the city. The two priests in the center of the image carry the Ark of the Covenant, both shouting, and one looking straight out at the viewer. The progress the army has made on the walls is clear from the destruction visible on the right side of the print and the walls still standing on the left.

The story with which the destruction of Jericho is paired is also straightforward, and directly follows the biblical narrative [fig. 9]. The army starts out with divine reassurance of their victory: "And the Lord said to Josue: Fear not, nor be thou dismayed: take with thee all the multitude of fighting men, arise and go up to the town of Hai. Behold I have delivered into thy hand the king thereof, and the people, and the city, and the land."[52] Joshua sends a small troop of men (including mercenaries he has captured in Jericho) to attack the city of Hai, confident they will have no trouble capturing such a small city. The defenders of Hai destroy the army, however, and Joshua appeals to God. God explains that one of Joshua's men has stolen from the spoils of Jericho and must be put to justice in keeping with the Deuteronomical Law before the Israelites will be granted victory. God's behest comes from a passage in Numbers 15 that dictates that the sinner who sins and knows he does wrong must be put to death by stoning.[53] Therefore when one man from the army, Achan, admits that he is the culprit, Joshua has him stoned, even though he repents. After Joshua and his men have fulfilled the Law, God restores his favor and the city of Hai falls easily to Israelite hands: "And when [Joshua] had lifted

[52] Josh. 8:1.

[53] Num. 15:30-31.

up his shield towards the city, the ambush that lay hid, rose up immediately: and going to the city, took it and set it on fire."[54]

Both inscriptions also follow the biblical text fairly closely, simply describing the cause and effect of the situation. First, the inscription that goes with Jericho:

Corruit Hiericho totam cum circuit urbem Arca Dei,
Voce et populi, et clangore tubarum

All of Jericho collapses when he encircles the whole city with the Ark of God [the covenant]
With both the voice of the people and the blast of the trumpet

and then for the destruction of Hai:

Finit Achas vitam per sa[x]a[55] *volantia auarus*
Huius quicquid erat multo consumitur igni

Greedy Achas finishes life, stones flying through the air
Whatever there was of [the city] is being consumed by a great fire

In the first pair of the second triad, the lessons are easily extracted: follow the law and win divine favor; sin and face divine punishment. Why, then, the sudden and relatively lengthy pause over the following pair, the hanging and burial of the king of Hai?

The image [fig. 10], rather than showing the progression of the story of Hai, instead conflates the events of the story into a continuous narrative. Joshua, in the foreground, raises his right hand toward two men crouching as though to still them as they prepare for ambush. Joshua's tent is visible on the left, and a page holds his cloak. The Israelites are preparing to go into battle. In the right middle ground of the image Achan is seen being stoned to death. However time jumps forward in the background as

[54] Josh. 8:19.

[55] The original inscription reads "sapa" (meaning "new wine") which is impossible to translate in this context and must be a misprinting of "saxa."

the soldiers rush into Hai and the city burns. Just as suggestions of coming disaster appeared in scenes of deliverance in the first three pairs, a scene of disobedience punished appears here within a scene of victory.

The king is nowhere named in the passage, and, unlike in the case of Nemrod, there is no tradition even to suggest his identity. Hai rarely appears in the biblical narrative before or after, beyond the first two verses of Joshua 10: "When Adonisedec king of Jerusalem had heard these things, to wit, that Josue had taken Hai, and had destroyed it, (for as he had done to Jericho and the king thereof, so did he to Hai, and its king,) and that the Gabaonites were gone over to Israel, and were their confederate, he was exceedingly afraid." This passage solidifies Joshua's role as a strong leader with the help of God.

The first scene of the pair, the hanging of the king of Hai, is described:

Nobilis ardit Hay (diuino numine) capta,
Regis et aptantur pallenti vincula collo.

The noble city of Hay having been captured is burning
And chains are put on the paling neck of the king.

The distant Israelite army is just beginning to flood into the gates of the city. In the background columns and walls collapse as the city burns. In the foreground, however, Joshua gestures to his men, his left arm raised towards the gallows where the still crowned figure of the king is dying.

For the scene of the death of the king and his burial, Van Heemskerck in an unusual deviation focuses on construction rather than destruction [fig. 11]. The sky begins to grow dark as Joshua watches his men carry the body to what must be the gate of the city and bury it - not simply under rocks, as both the Bible and the inscription read —

but under a great heap of rubble from the ruins of the city. The inscription describes the scene:

> *Stipite de celso corpus iam exangue refigunt*
> *Abiectum magno lapidum tumulatur aceruo.*
>
> They take down the corpse now bloodless from the high post,
> [Which = the body] thrown outside is buried beneath a great heap of rocks.

It is the *magno lapidum...aceruo* that Van Heemskerck shows the most interest in, the idea that not only was this burial monument built out of recovered material from the city but also that, according to the biblical passage, "the great heap of stones...remaineth until this present day."[56] As energetically as they stoned Achan to death, the Israelites heap rocks on top of the king's still visible body.

Van Heemskerck directs the eye to the mound with every element of the composition: Joshua stands on the gibbet, right hand pointing toward the grave, as does the crossbar above him that holds the king's arms. Four men carrying a stretcher with the king's body point his feet toward the grave. Two men standing in a ditch gesture toward the grave, beckoning the body towards it. Even the slant of the falling tower in the background echoes the slant of the grave, looking ramshackle next to the elegant building behind it. The juxtaposition of the well-constructed building with the grave serves as a reminder that despite the skill of the architect, the finely constructed palace behind it with its caryatids and crenellations will perish, while this makeshift grave will stand forever. With the king at the base of the pile construction, it is impossible to build any structure ever again, reminding the viewers of the inviability of sinful efforts as seen before in the

[56] Josh. 8:29.

stories of Lot and Babel.

It is further significant that the passage incorporates a scene of construction in a series centered on collapse. The image of the king's burial refers back to two images of the rebuilding of the nation. On the right foreground, Joshua with his upturned eyes and his outspread arms is visually reminiscent of Noah in the sacrifice scene. The pile of debris in its construction and placement refers to the cave from the scene of Lot and his daughters. Both symbols are slightly twisted however: Joshua stands under a gallows on the opposite side of the work, and the tension presented by changing the device that formerly served as a place for reproduction into a grave has sinister implications of its own.

To understand further the inclusion of this passage, perhaps it is best to look ahead in the biblical text. To begin with, the Jewish people are following the law as laid out in Deuteronomy: His body shall not remain upon the tree, but shall be buried the same day: for he is accursed of God that hangeth on a tree: and thou shalt not defile thy land, which the Lord thy God shall give thee in possession."[57] Their obedience leads to further success in the following passage.The author of Joshua describes how after the battle the king builds an altar and divides Israel, reading the blessings of Moses from the top of Mt. Gerizim and the cursings from the top of Mt. Hebel, building an altar at Hebal and writing into the stone the Deuteronomy of the Jewish law: "He left out nothing of those things which Moses had commanded, but he repeated all before all the people of Israel, with the women and children and strangers that dwelt among them."[58] Through the

[57] Deut. 21:23.

[58] Josh. 8: 30-33, 8:35.

construction of the altar, he fulfills one of the prophecies of Moses, and reading out all the blessings and the cursings of the book of the law, he elevates himself to a grander role before all his people. He has made possible this elevation through his military accomplishments, culminating in his destruction of Hai. The construction of a sacred altar is juxtaposed with the "altar" or mound in the image of the king's burial, contrasting the results of the efforts of a king that refused God and one that accepted Him.

The Hai passage is important in the Old Testament, as the Israelites have won God's favor and been elevated through their laying waste to the city in accordance with His will. These scenes are a bright passage in the history of the Jews and of the series. Again, these scenes remind the viewer that the changing history of Jews included good chapters as well as bad, and that they were God's chosen people. The reminder makes the coming scenes all the more tragic, showing how far from grace the Jewish people will fall.

The scenes of Israelite triumph are followed by the story of Samson, a darker episode in the Israelite tradition. One of the last judges of the Israelite people and the last whose life is recounted in the book of Judges, Samson is blessed with great strength. His downfall comes when he meets and trysts with a Philistine woman, Delilah. At a time when the Philistines had control over the Israelites, they were eager to overthrow this man who, because of his immense strength, had managed to kill many of them in the past. Using Delilah they trick him into revealing that the source of his strength lies in the locks of his hair. She has the seven locks of his hair shaved while he sleeps, and when he awakes he finds that his strength has left him.[59] The Philistines then put out his eyes and

[59] Judg. 16: 4-23

throw him in prison, but while he is there his hair grows back and his strength returns. The Philistines eventually bring him out to entertain them by "playing" between two pillars at the feast of the Philistine god Dagon. Samson calls to his God saying, "O Lord God, remember me, and restore to me now my former strength, O my God, that I may revenge myself on my enemies, and for the loss of my two eyes I may take revenge...Let me die with the Philistines."[60]

The printed image picks up the narrative at this point. In the first image of the pair, Samson lunges forward with a pillar tucked under each arm [fig. 12]. He steps over an abandoned lyre (its apparent owner flees into the foreground) head down, and the Philistines tumble around him, with the remains of the building. The inscription reads simply:

Utramque implicuit dextra laevaq[ue] columnam Sampson,
et ingenti cecidit domus alta ruina.

On the right side and the left side, Samson grasps both columns,
And the great house tumbles into deep ruins.

In the foreground a boy, perhaps the boy that guides Samson to the columns in the biblical account, looks back to another musician who places his hand on the boy's shoulder, possibly comforting him in the face of the destruction.[61]

The second scene in the pair shows Samson's funeral, described in the Bible simply, "And his brethren and all his kindred, going down took his body, and buried it between Saraa and Esthaol in the burying place of his father Manue: and he judged Israel

[60] Judg. 16:28, 30

[61] This may be the boy from Judges 16:26: "And he said to the lad that guided his steps: Suffer me to touch the pillars which support the whole house, and let me lean upon them, and rest a little." The boy is essentially responsible for facilitating the disaster.

twenty years" (Judges 16:31) [fig. 13]. Van Heemskerck portrays the setting as a funereal city: after all, it is not just Samson who has died, but all the revelers of the feast of Dagon. The procession moves past the ruins of the building, presumably the one Samson has just destroyed, where dead bodies still lie. One man stands in the ruins, carrying the corpse of a friend or brother. Samson, on the other hand, is given a long procession with many attendants. He is laid on an elaborate bier on the back of a donkey. Over the donkey's back is a cloth decorated with a pattern showing the jawbone of an ass, the weapon he had used earlier to kill 1000 of the Philistines.[62] Now, having killed more Philistines in his death than he did during all his life, Samson receives a hero's funeral.

The image inscription reads:

Cum gemitu mandatur humo miserabile corpus
Supermum maesti fraters comitantur honorem

With a groan, the miserable corpse was entrusted to the earth
With his sad brothers accompanying the mourning funeral procession.

The inscription, as in the episode of Lot and his daughters, intensifies the emotional content of the image. The heightening of emotion reminds the viewers that the loss of Samson's heroism is a tragedy for the Jewish nation. In fact, Samson is that last human hero that Van Heemskerck portrays (the only subsequent figure that is completely positive being Jesus Christ). By showing the procession heading to the left, the scene echoes the first print of the group of three pairs, the destruction of Jericho [fig. 8]. In a scene that is entirely triumphant, the Ark of the Covenant is carried at the same point in the image as Samson is in his funeral procession. The similarity of the scenes and the simultaneous dichotomy of the moods they present, reminds the viewer of the Jewish

[62] Judg. 15:16.

people's steady fall from grace.

The scene, which falls almost exactly in the middle of the series, is the most calm and contemplative of the collection. The slowing of the rhythm is appropriate at this central point. Coming after the two victorious scenes, the pathos of this image emphasizes the rising and falling of the Hebrews' fortunes. Above all, it is a scene of silence, rather than of war or supplication, and it suitably ushers in the next trio of pairs.

4. **The Absence of God: The Final Old Testament Scenes**

The final three pairs of prints from the Old Testament consist of the capture of Tirsah by Amri and the division of Israel, the story of Jehu, and the Chaldean destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem. These last three episodes show a steady fall from God's favor. The scenes are unified by God's absence. God neither instructs nor acts in any of the biblical passages. In the *Glossa*, the historian Theodoritus explains in the biblical passage about the destruction of Tirsah, God hands the wicked to the wicked, using them like messengers for his will.[63] Rather, God withdraws, letting the sinful smite the sinful, allowing cities to war against one another and bring about their destruction, rather than directly intervening, or guiding the leaders.

For the first time in this last trio, dominant buildings are seen at the brink of destruction rather than as ruins (as is the case in the destruction of Jericho, for example). First, there is the capture of Tirsah followed by the division of the Israelites [fig. 14 & fig. 15]. Though the burning palace dominates the scene, the structure remains intact. The

[63] "*et sceleratum tradit sceleratiori, eis utens tanquam quibusdam lictoribus"* Cuilly, et. al., eds. *Glossa Ordinaria*. vol. 2, 813.

destruction is only implied in the second image, when the unity of Israel collapses, and likewise, pillars break and fall behind them. Again in the Jehu story, the first image, the destruction of the statue of Baal, shows the temple fairly intact [fig. 16]. The fire that engulfs the idol is contained and the scene appears controlled. In the second image in the pair, Jehu worshipping the golden calves, the building complex has been wasted: the ruins become the new city sewer. It is as though these sinful and pagan edifices have taken stronger root in the ground where they stand. The inclusion of the Temple in the last pair, however, suggests that Van Heemskerck's decision to leave the building in the first of each pair standing was partly to intensify the visual effect of each destruction in this late point of the series [fig 18 & fig. 19]. In the first scene, though the Chaldeans are seen wheeling away a great pillar and flames billow into the sky, the Temple of Solomon appears completely intact. In the second scene the roof and facing wall are gone, exposing an interior filled with rubble, as the Chaldeans cart away the treasure. The impending collapse of each building mirrors the fortunes of the Jewish nation, which is consumed by sin, even when standing triumphant over its enemies. It alludes to the coming destruction of the nation in the final pair of scenes by putting the emphasis on the fall of the people rather than on the fall of the buildings.

Van Heemskerck's laying open of buildings serves a double purpose: first, it allows him to show his own familiarity with the interior architecture of the building, playing into his authority as a latter-day ancient. At the same time, however, the visual pattern set up by a closed building followed by an open one visually implies entrapment, an important part of all three stories. In the first pair, Zambri is trapped inside his burning palace, and the building is shown as a whole, a sort of impenetrable prison. In the second,

it is the followers of Baal who are trapped within the standing edifice, left to burn and die. The third pair leads to the greatest entrapment of all: the forced Babylonian exile of the Israelites. In this case, it is the laying open of the Temple, and the relinquishing of God's presence that ensues, that leads to the capture of the Hebrew people and their ensuing banishment.

In the Bible, the three pairs stand out for the violent and architectural descriptions of the destruction. The three pairs are all martial in nature. The first and last pair show scenes of the sacking of the city, and though the Jehu pair does not itself depict a war, Jehu is shown fully armed; even the statue of Baal is reminiscent of a figure of the god Mars, the Roman patron of war. The importance of language for the three pairs also helps explain another less commonly illustrated episode, that of the destruction of Tirsah. The author of 1 Kings writes:

Videns autem Zamri quod expugnanda esset civitas ingressus est palatium et succendit secum domum regiam et mortuus est.[64]

And Zambri, seeing that the city was about to be taken, went into the palace, and burnt himself with the king's house: and he died[65]

Not only is it pithy and emphatic in its description of the destruction, the vocabulary of the passage includes *civitas* (city), *palatium* (palace) and *domus* (house). It is not just the words that are architectural, however, but also the sentence itself. The author tightens the focus with each successive term: from the city the reader then focuses in on the palace, then on the house, and are finally left simply with a man. Van Heemskerck mirrors this sequence in his image. On a first look, it is a generic battle scene. Then the eye is drawn

[64] The biblical passages presented in Latin are taken from the vulgate as written by St. Jerome.

[65] 1 Kings 16:18.

to the object of the attack, which is the palace. From there, the eye travels across the bridge to the man in the flames, who is otherwise difficult to pick out.

Though no following scene shows such an interest in the tightening focus, there is a similar interest in architectural terms throughout the biblical scenes that Van Heemskerck selects. A similar scene follows with the destruction of the statue of Baal in the second pair:

…et duces et ierunt in civitatem templi Baal
et protulerunt statuam de fano Baal et conbuserunt
et comminuerunt eam destruxerunt quoque aedem Baal et fecerunt pro ea latrinas usque ad diem hanc.

…and they went into the city of the temple of Baal
And brought the statue out of Baal's temple, and burnt it
And broke it in pieces. They destroyed also the temple of Baal, and made a jakes [also translated draught-house or sewer] in its place unto this day.[66]

And in the final Old Testament pair:

Columnas autem aereas quae erant in templo Domini et bases et mare aereum quod erat in domo Domini confregerunt Chaldei et transtulerunt aes omnium in Babylonem.

And the pillars of brass that were in the temple of the Lord, and the bases, and the sea of brass, which was in the house of the Lord, the Chaldees broke in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.[67]

The first image in the first pair, the capture of Tirzah shows the army of Amri, King of Israel, storming the city [fig. 14]. The king of Tirzah in this episode is Zambri, one of the captains of the previous king Ela's army. Zambri had murdered Ela, who had been a sinner, while Ela was drunk in the governor's house. Zambri took control of the city. When Zambri had ruled for seven days, Amri, hearing of what Zambri had done,

[66] 2 Kings 10:25-27.

[67] 2 Kings 25:13.

rushed upon the city, and in fear he set fire to the house of the king and burned himself alive inside it. The scene in the series seems to take place slightly after the description:

Hela cadit, regnat Zambri, qui milite cinctus Seq[ue]
Suamq[ue]domum rapidos coniecit in ignes.

Hela falls, [which] Zambri rules, who surrounded by an army
Throws both himself and his own house into swift flames.

The scene, on the other hand, shows the flames licking at both Zambri and the house of the king. The composition instead frames the river god sculpted over the gate to the castle drawbridge, with the foreground banner pointing up to the figure that tops the gate. Zambri is in the top left corner. His arms are raised in panic at the oncoming rush of the Israelites. Below him flows the river, and two people, perhaps escapees from the burning house, float towards the left corner of the image. Two more figures in the background on the steps of the palace prepare to run downstairs, perhaps also preferring to face water rather than fire. Two figures have already fallen under Israelite spears in the foreground.

Paired with it is a scene following closely in 1 Kings [fig. 15]. After the death of Zambri, the narrative continues, "Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: one half of the people followed Thebni the son of Gineth, to make him king: and one half followed Amri."[68] The tribe of Amri then prevails over that of Thebni and Thebni dies. Amri, who is sinful in the eyes of God, reigns in the succession of wicked kings that continuously replace one another. However, as seen in the Joshua episode, Amri is also the father of a significant construction plan. After this victory, and having prevailed over the followers of Thebni, Amri buys the hill of Samaria, on which he builds his capital

[68] 1 Kings 16:23.

city.[69] Samaria rather than Thersa becomes the capital of the Kingdom of Israel, but again, it is only after the battle is won and Amri has subdued the other half of Israel that the construction of the capital city begins. Van Heemskerck must include this little-known episode for the sake of the historically important construction that it thematizes.

The division of Israel print shows the start of Amri's reign, however, rather than the founding of the city. Amri stands between the two groups of Israelites, physically dividing them. A figure who lunges to the left in the foreground is presumably Thebni, appealing for support, but Amri commands the scene. Both groups of armed men stand discussing the situation. The group on the left, however, is slightly more jumbled in its ranks, some of the men looking or even turning away, while the men on the right gesture to their comrades as though inviting them over. The more disorganized group at left is destined to fall. The inscription reads:

Scinditur Israhel, rex parte creatur utraq[ue] Pugnam ineunt,
Thebni succumbit praeualet Amri.

Israel is divided, the king is created on both sides; they began the fight,
Tibni gives way, Omri prevails.

Just as one set of columns is seen toppling over on the right, mirroring Thebni's pose, so the strong standing columns mirror Amri's strength and posture. The weaker man gives way while the stronger man stands.

The second pair involves Jehu, a later king of Israel. Among the acts in his bloodthirsty reign described in 2 Kings is the destruction of the cult of Baal. Jehu sets up a celebration to Baal, keeping all the priests and supporters of the idol inside the temple while keeping out all the supporters of God. Then, Jehu sends in his warriors, has every

[69] 1 Kings 16:24.

worshipper slaughtered, and brings out the statue of the idol setting it on fire along with the temple[70]. In typical fashion, the print focuses on the destruction of objects, particularly the idol, more than on the slaughter of crowds of worshippers [fig. 16]. Yet the image is strangely gruesome, with the decapitated figure lying in the flames, while the men cut off its limbs.

In certain ways, the image equates the statue and the king in enmity. Jehu, who stands in the lower left corner of the image, wears a costume eerily similar to that of the statue (seen particularly in the sleeves of the garment), and a crowd clusters around the scene of destruction. The inscription emphasizes the power of Jehu but also the size and thus the power of the statue, reading:

Grande Bahal numen fortis disiecit Iehu,
Cunctaq[ue] combussit disiecti dona colossi

Jehu destroyed the strong Baal with great power
And burned all the gifts to the discarded colossus.

The two seem to be worthy adversaries.

The next scene shows Jehu worshipping the golden calves, skipping over part of the biblical narrative which reads, "And the Lord said to Jehu: Because thou hast diligently executed that which was right and pleasing in my eyes, and hast done to the house of Achab according to all that was in my heart: thy children shall sit upon the throne of Israel to the fourth Generation."[71] Instead, Van Heemskerck continues straight to the following verse, which negates the call for the Lord's praise: "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord the God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed

[70] 2 Kings 10:25.

[71] 2 Kings 10:30.

not from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel to sin,"[72] thus reinforcing the pattern of these last three pairs, where the people and God are seen to draw apart and direct communication to cease.

Jehu appears with two attendants who stand behind him, apparently discoursing on the golden calves [fig. 17]. The reference to Jeroboam in the biblical passage alludes to an earlier king who had set up golden calves at Dan and Bethel, extremities of the kingdom, and encouraged his subjects to worship there in order to encourage the division of the southern kingdom of Judah from that of Israel. The Israelites, however, took to worshiping the calves themselves, rather than using the statues as a place to sacrifice to Yahweh. In the second image, Jehu perpetuates the idolatry.

The image is grand. In the foreground four golden calves stand on a platform with the same bucchrania and wreath that adorn the platform in the frontispiece. However, the presence of the ruins-turned-sewer in the background undercuts the grandeur of the scene. This transformation features in the inscription as well:

Areaq[ue] est templi in tetram mutata cloacam,
Apse tamen dium vitulis decernit honorem.

And the precinct of the temple was changed into a foul sewer,
But he decreed that honor be paid to the calves of the gods in [their] apse.

In the back right of the corner, a figure can be seen defecating in the ruins, a sardonic reminder of the total debasement of the cult of Baal. The sewer simultaneously serves as a monument to Jehu's own hypocrisy. That is to say, that on the surface, Jehu's dedication to the destruction of idolatry appears to be a grand gesture on behalf of the Lord, but he nevertheless continues to worship other idolatrous statues. Similarly, while

[72] 2 Kings 10:31.

the old temple appears grand on the outside, the viewer knows that in fact it is rotten and foul within.

The final pair of Old Testament scenes illustrates the Babylonian destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem and the start of the Babylonian captivity. The Babylonian Captivity, in which Nabuchodonosor, the Babylonian king, moved all the inhabitants of Judah into forced exile, spanned nearly 50 years until Cyrus the Great (c. 600-576 BC), the Persian emperor overthrew Babylon and released the Jews. Beyond the obvious disasters of losing political autonomy and homeland, the destruction of the Temple was particularly catastrophic for the Jewish kingdom for the Temple held the Ark of the Covenant that in turn housed the spirit of God. It was the only place for sacrifice in the Jewish world, and to be in the Temple was to be physically in the presence of God. With the destruction of the Temple, God's spirit was lost to the Jewish nation.

The description of the destruction of the Temple in 2 Kings 25 begins, "And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, the tenth day of the month, that Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon came, he and all his army against Jerusalem: and they surrounded it: and raised works round about it." The rest of the chapter is a long description of how Nebuchodonosor and the Babylonian army gradually take over and destroy the city and Temple. The fire in the background is described in the narrative, "And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and the houses of Jerusalem, and every house he burnt with fire."[73] The first scene shows the Babylonians (or "Chaldeans" in the Vulgate) carrying away the Temple pillars: "And the pillars of brass that were in the temple of the Lord, and the bases, and the sea of brass which was in the

[73] 2 Kings 25:13.

house of the Lord, the Chaldees broke in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon."[74]

A detailed description of the pillars in the biblical passage must have interested the artist in the second scene of the pair "One pillar was eighteen cubits high, and the chapiter of brass which was upon it was three cubits high: and the network, and the pomegranates that were upon the chapiter of the pillar, were all of brass: and the second pillar had the like adorning" [fig. 18].[75]

In the first image, Van Heemskerck shows a single pillar laid horizontally on a contraption, apparently invented for the purpose of carrying away pillars. At least four oxen walk ahead dragging the cart, and the foreman waves it forward. The scene behind him is busy with the Chaldeans carrying various spoils of the Temple out of the gates of the city. The inscription reads:

Dona auro gravia, et bases, binasq[ue] columnas
Insultans patrias transfert Chaldaeus ad oras

The heavy gold, gifts, and pedestals, and the columns two-by-two
The mocking Chaldeans carried to the[ir] ancestral shore.

The inscription emphasizes not only the totality of the destruction, but also the effort invested in sacking Jerusalem. Just as the biblical account relates the steps Nebuchodonosor took to lay siege to the city, so too does Van Heemskerck show how the columns were carried away; their heaviness is demonstrated by the number of animals on the team pulling a single column. The heaviness corresponds with the biblical description: "two pillars, one seat, and the bases which Solomon had made in the temple

[74] 2 Kings 25: 17.

[75] 2 Kings 25:17.

of the Lord: the brass of all these vessels was without weight."[76]

The second print of the pair shows another team of oxen (five, in this case) carrying a great metal bowl filled with the temple treasures [fig. 19]. The bowl rests on the backs of many carved statues, reminiscent of the golden calves of Jehu, again emphasizing the weight of the treasures in their scale. The biblical description of the treasures lists pots of brass, mazers, forks, cups, mortars and all the other vessels the Israelites used in the Temple.[77] The Temple is in utter ruins in the background, and in the foreground, three men pick away at the roof of the arched colonnade. The inscription invokes the name of Sedechai, king of Israel, in its brief summary of the fall of the Temple:

Sol nouies magnum se circumvolverat annum
Sub te Sedechia vastatur machina templi.

The sun had traveled nine times around the great ring
(Under you, Sedechi) a siege laid waste to the temple.

And so, the Israelites fall.

The last mention of God before this scene in the biblical account is in the preceding chapter, which concludes, "And he did evil before the Lord, according to all that Joakim had done. For the Lord was angry against Jerusalem and against Judah, till he cast them out from his face: and Sedecias revolted from the king of Babylon."[78] God does not appear at all in chapter 25. Of all the preceding passages, it is the one that makes mention of God's favor or disfavor, yet is clearly the one where the fortunes of the Israelites and the utter destruction of their capital most clearly represents His divine

[76] 2 Kings 25:16.

[77] A mazer is a type of drinking vessel.

[78] 2 Kings 24:19-20.

displeasure. Here, the ruins represent God's disfavor in the form of abandonment. He does not try to speak to Sedechai, he does not intervene as his home on earth is destroyed. God has withdrawn from the lives of his chosen people.

5. **The New Testament: The Final Pair**

Now Van Heemskerck brings the viewer to the New Testament. The final pair depicts the culmination of the Old Testament prophecies in the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah and son of God the Father. The two images depict scenes from the birth of Christ, early in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Why, though, would Van Heemskerck choose the scene of the birth rather than the scene of Christ's death or resurrection, the climax of the Christian faith, to instruct his viewer?

There is the attraction of an architectural reference, and such references occur rarely elsewhere in the New Testament. The prevalent tradition, taken from the nativity scene in the gospel of Luke, was that Jesus was born in a manger, or feeding trough. Matthew, however, specifies that when the wise men followed the star, which guided them to the place of the Messiah's birth, they come at last to a house (*et intrantes domum invenerunt puerum cum Maria matre eius*[79]). In the gospel of Luke "*domus"* is used to describe the house of David through Joseph's descent:

Ascendit autem et Ioseph a Galilaea de civitate Nazareth in Iudaeam civitatem David quae vocatur Bethleem eo quod esset de domo et familia David.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David.[80]

[79] Mt. 2:11.

[80] Lk 2:4.

The real architectural attraction in these passages is in fact not a manmade construction at all. Rather than the presence of a physical building in the prints, a construction is represented in the body of Christ. Christ's presence represents him as the foundation of a new society. Just as Noah and Lot are found in the ruins of the old world and the foundations of the new, so upon Christ, who is born into a sinful world, the new world will be rebuilt. The coming of Christ offers the chance to repair the damage that has occurred represented earlier in the series. An allegorical passage in the *Glossa* under the passage of the tower of Babel contrasts the unity of the doctrine of the Christian faith (one God, one faith, one baptism, taken from Ephesians 4) with the scattering of the people. Moreover, the same *Glossa* passage refers the reader to Zacharias, a book of prophecies dating from the Babylonian captivity: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, saying: BEHOLD A MAN, THE ORIENT IS HIS NAME: and under him shall he spring up, and shall build a temple to the Lord. Yea, he shall build a temple to the Lord: and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne."[81] The section of the *Glossa* brings three episodes of *Clades* together (Babel, the beginning of the Babylonian captivity and birth of Christ), showing how Christ is the solution to the trials of God's chosen people. In His own new world the temple comes not from the physical efforts of man, but from the sanctity of Christ's own divine person.[82]

To understand further the illustration, take a line from Psalm 117. The psalm centers around God's everlasting mercy, beginning, "Give praise to the Lord, for he is

[81] Zech. 6: 12-13.

[82] Cuilly, et al., eds, *Glossa Ordinaria*, vol. 1, 179

good: for his mercy endureth for ever."[83] The enduring nature of God's mercy is repeated throughout the lines, and would in itself be appropriate for the New Testament prints. The most salient line with regard to the print returns to the theme of architecture: "The stone which the builders rejected; the same is become the head of the corner."[84] The line to the head of the corner, or, more traditionally, "cornerstone," is a foretelling of Christ's coming and by extension the church that He will build. Until the rise of modern architecture, the cornerstone was placed at the base of a construction in order to provide adequate support. In both prints of this pair, Christ is strategically placed. In the first print, Van Heemskerck places Christ below the oculus of the structure. In Roman architecture, the oculus (appearing in buildings such as the Pantheon in Rome) replaced the arch that would normally cover the dome, where the compression force would be the greatest. Placing Christ beneath the oculus in the first print and at the base of the torque of the spiral ramp in the second, Van Heemskerck visually refers to Christ as the cornerstone, the load-bearing element of construction, in Classical architecture. Christ as a supportive base to the structures is in direct opposition to earlier stories, such as the burial of the king of Hai, where those who refused God provided an unviable base for construction.

As the first moment of Christ's life, it represents the first moment of the Jews' failure to accept Him as the Messiah. Whereas gentiles from the East and simple shepherds from the fields come to pay the child tribute, no Jewish leaders recognize the child's birth.

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[83] Psalm 117:1.

[84] Psalm 117: 22

The first scene in the pair is reminiscent of the first episode in the series, the sacrifice of Noah [fig. 20]. Van Heemskerck spotlights the child with a shaft of light shining through an oculus above His head; the light breaking through is reminiscent of God's appearance amongst the clouds in the earlier print. As in the mocking of Noah, vegetation has begun to reclaim buildings, and a tarpaulin is hung in the ruins to protect the inhabitants. The central figures all bend towards the child in worship like Noah's family around the altar. Overhead the angels flank the shaft of light, arms spread in blessing and praise like those of God and Noah I the earlier scene. The inscription reads:

Aeditus hic Christus, *subsidet poplite Mater*
Adsunt pastores, fulua canit ales ab aethra.

Christ is born to these, the Mother sinks to a knee,
Here are the shepherds, an angel sings what is to come to the ether

The angel's song rises to the heavens like the scent of the sacrifice did before. This time the sacrifice is the body of Christ, and the scene represents the new covenant between God and mankind.

The second scene of the pair presents a less dilapidated building [fig. 21]. Here, the magi have come to visit. The Holy Family appears in the center of a spiral building, which has standing columns supporting the upward curve. The Holy Family sits in the light that pours in from directly above them, while the star shines obliquely through the hole in the roof. The scene is more intimate than the one preceding. In this print, for the first time in the series, Van Heemskerck has invited the viewer inside the building. It has a strongly pronounced classical style, more so than the previous print; Mary sits like a noblewoman on an Etruscan sarcophagus, or a Roman woman at a dining table. The two kings in the foreground frame the image, balancing it. The shift to a more Classical scene

suggests the emphasis on balance and order that the Romans celebrated in their architecture. Van Heemskerck gives the impression that order has been restored with the coming of Christ.

Adding to the classicizing effect is the inscription:

Stella notat congestum cespite culmen,
Dona Magi puero portant Oriente profecti.

The star marks the roof of the cottage heaped high with earth
The Magi bring the boy gifts, having set out from the East.

The phrase "*congestum cespite culmen*" is taken from a verse in Vergil's *Eclogues.*Translating, "the cottage heaped high with earth," it describes the ancient Italian cottages of the poor.[85] Van Heemskerck shows here how the Gentiles have come from all corners of the earth, as the men come from each corner of the picture, to worship Christ, and have been welcomed in to the place where he lies.

The scene is a reminder of the fulfillment of the promise in Hebrews 1 as discussed earlier. In the advent of Christ, God has performed His greatest act of love, the fulfillment of His covenant, by giving Himself in the form of His son to the people. The story of the New Testament comes to fulfillment with Christ's rising from the dead, having been put to death by his own people. The Israelites have refused to accept God at the moment of his utmost presence among them. For Van Heemskerck, their refusal to accept Christ marks the final turn in their fortunes and leads to the culmination of the series.

The presentation of Christ's body as an architectural construction presents an

[85] The complete line is *Pauperis et tuguri congestum cespite culmen.* Vergil. *Eclogues*. Konrad Scroder, ed. from J.B. Greenough *Bucolics, Aeneid, and Georgics of Vergil* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1900). in The Latin Library http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/vergil/ec1.shtml (Accessed March 12, 2010). Ec. i., ver. 68.

interesting tension with the following print. In John 2:19-21, Christ, while in Jerusalem, refers to his body as a temple: "Jesus answered, and said to them: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up./ The Jews then said: Six and forty years was this temple in building; and wilt thou raise it up in three days?/But he spoke of the temple of his body." The passage furthers the impetus to include two scenes of Christ's body. At the same time, it provides a segue into the final print, the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. As St. Paul explains in his epistle to the Hebrews, Van Heemskerck shows that while Christ's body, the Church, has carried on for hundreds of years, the Jewish temple collapses after they deny Him, never to be rebuilt.

6. **The Final Print: The Destruction of the Temple by the Emperor Titus**

The final print in the series, like the frontispiece, is not part of a pair [fig. 22]. It is not recorded in the Bible, but is taken from the Flavius Josephus account in his *Antiquities* and depicts a scene from AD 70 during the first Jewish-Roman War during which the Roman Emperor Titus laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed the Second Temple. The crowds of Roman soldiers flood down a hill from the Roman camp, some already celebrating as the great temple starts to burn. Though Van Heemskerck includes some ruins in the right corner of the foreground, he shows the Temple itself still fully intact, emphasizing the grandeur of the structure. The inscription carries the weight of the destruction:

Titus habens Solymas, flammis radicitus vrit
Et Templum donis opulentum & numine summi.

Having captured Solomon's Temple rich with offerings,
Titus by the will of the most high, burns it to the ground.

The great building will be burnt to the roots, utterly destroyed. And for the first time in many prints, God is fully present and fully vengeful: the "flammis" (flames) and *numine summi* (the highest divine will) are equally responsible for the destruction. Indeed, these flames are clearly an expression of divine will. God seems to be present in the flames that are at the point of engulfing the building.

However, as in the scene with the tower of Babel, the story as told by Josephus, it is clearly the doings of the Israelites in a mechanical sense that lead to the implementation of God's will, rather than the ruthlessness of their enemies:

> But God in his Providence had from all eternity doomed it to the fire, and in the course of time, the fatal day was now at hand … But this was a conflagration which the Jews brought upon themselves; for Titus had no sooner left them in quiet, but the rebels made a sally upon Caesar's guards as they were at work, by his order, to extinguish the fire: who put the Jews to the rout upon it, and had the pursuit of them to the temple."[86]

Again through their arrogance, the Jews attempt a final time to take their fate into their own hands and it leads to the destruction of their temple their final historical diaspora.

[86] Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews.* Sir Roger L'Estrange, trans. In the Eighteenth Century Collections Online, http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&contentSet=ECCOArticles&type=multipage&tabID=T001&prodId=ECCO&docId=CW115046181&source=gale&userGroupName=emory&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE. (accessed March 12, 2010), VII.9.

Conclusion

Van Heemskerck's work falls into the tradition of moral exempla common in the second half of the 16th century, but bears witness to influences beyond that tradition. The artist's self-aggrandizement at the beginning of the series and his respect for Italian and Classical architecture throughout and the use of a Northern European landscape style make the work progressive visually while religiously uncontroversial.

Clades Judacae Gentis requires close examination from its viewers because of the complexity of the connections between its component prints. Each image is linked to Jewish and Christian history, to the biblical record, to Classical architecture and to Humanist philosophy. Beyond these connections, each print is part of a web connecting it to all the others.

In this study, I have attempted to provide an exegetical reading of the prints that operates for the series as a whole as well as for each individual print. Beginning with an overall explanation of God's withdrawal from the Jewish people in the larger print groupings, I then examined the process as the incremental separation progressed in each pair. At various points, I have shown how non-sequential images are linked, especially back to the triad of Genesis pairs. There is more work that could be done on these interconnections, especially with the last three pairs of Old Testament pairs, which I believe to be the densest of the series.

In creating such an intricate network of images, Heemskerck invites the viewers to look more closely and reflect on problems in biblical history. At the same time, he is offering a display of his own artistic skill an adding a worldly element to his religious teaching.

Figure 1: Frontispiece

Figure 2: The Sacrifice of Noah

Figure 3: The Mocking of Noah

Figure 4: The Tower of Babel

Figure 5: The Scattering of the People

Figure 6: The Destruction of Sodom

Figure 7: Lot and His Daughters

Figure 8: The Destruction of Jericho

Figure 9: The Destruction of Hai

Figure 10: The King of Hai

Figure 11: The Burial of the King of Hai

Figure 12: Samson Destroying the Temple of the Philistines

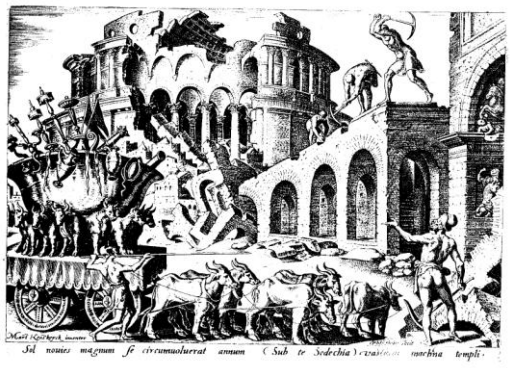

Figure 19: The Looting of the Temple

Figure 20: The Adoration of the Shepherds

Figure 21: The Adoration of the Magi

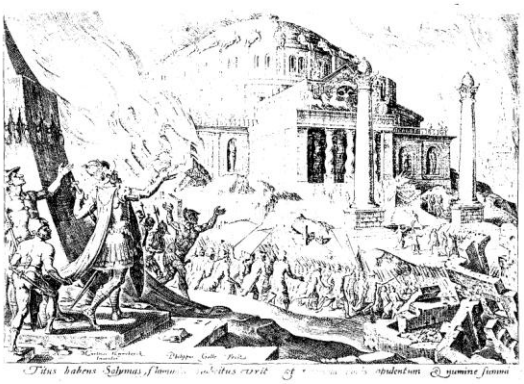

Figure 22: Titus Destroying the Temple

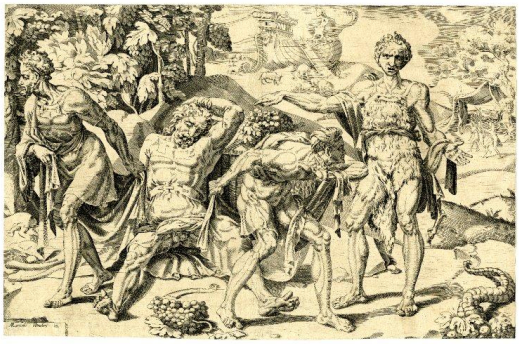

Figure 23: Van Heemskerck. *The Mocking of Noah,* c. 1550. The British Museum, London.

Figure 24: Van Heemskerck. *Samson Destroying the Temple.* , c. 1550. The British Museum, London.

Figure 25: Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Tower of Babel*, 1563. Kunsthistorisches Museum Vien, Vienna.

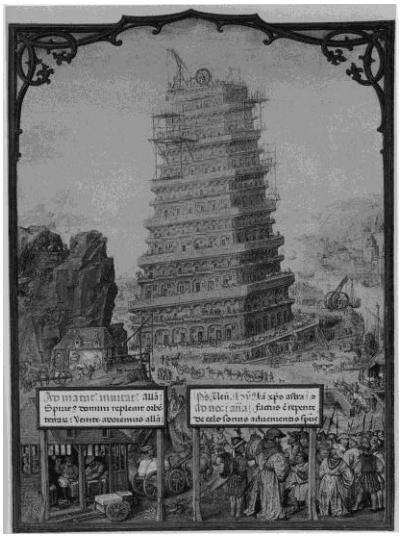

Figure 26: Manuscript illumination of the Tower of Babel from the Grimani Breviary. c. 1520. Biblioteca Nationale Marciana, Venice.

Figure 27: Van Heemskerck, *Construction of the New St. Peter's in Rome*, 1536. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

Figure 28: Van Heemskerck. *Piazza del Campidoglio* of the *Romisch Skizzenbucher von Marten van Heemskerck*, comp. 18th century. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

Figure 29: Van Heemskerck: *Arch of Titus* of the *Romisch Skizzenbucher von Marten van Heemskerck*, comp. 18th century. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

Figure 30: van Heemskerck, *Landscape with the rape of Helen*, 1535. The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

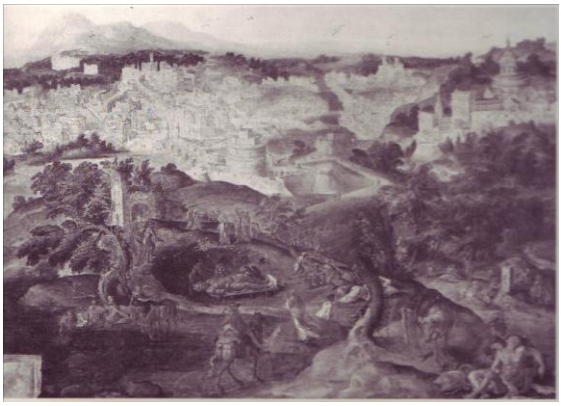

Figure 31: Maarten van Heemskerck, *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, 1550. FransHalsmuseum, Haarlem.

Figure 32: Joachim Patinir. *St. Jerome in a Rocky Landscape*, c. 1524. The National Gallery, London.

Figure 33: Maarten Van Heemskerck. *Self portrait of the artist before the Colosseum,* 1553. The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

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