Notes

1. All Bible citations are from The New JPS Translation, 2nd ed.; all Homeric citations are from the Loeb Classical Library.
5. “The Religion of the Canaanites,” in V.T.A. Fern, ed., Forgotten Religions (Freeport, NY: Books for Library Press, 1970), 124. This island, near the Peloponnese, is mentioned by Herodotus (Histories 3.45). The fact that Carpathos is a single island may be why Jeremiah 47:4 uses the singular “the island of Caphtor.”
6. In the ancient Near East, linen was considered a fabric worthy of the aristocracy, exemplified by the fact that it was used to mummify pharaohs. A passage of Egyptian wisdom literature called the Harper’s Song (3rd millennium BCE) instructs the listener to enjoy the finest luxuries in life: “Put myrrh on your head,/Dress in fine linen,/Anoint yourself with oils fit for a god” (Karel van der Toorn, “Did Ecclesiastes Copy Gilgamesh?” Bible Review 16:1 [2000], p. 26). The Hittite king Hattushili III (13th century) mentions “the silver and the linen which I have given to the physician” (Kathleen R. Mineck et al., “Hittite Historical Texts II,” in Mark W. Chavalas, ed., The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation [Oxford: Blackwell, 2006], 278). Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II (ninth century BCE) received tribute that included “silver . . . gold . . . [and] multicolored linen garments” (Sarah C. Melville et al., “Neo-Assyrian and Syro-Palestinian Texts I,” in Chavalas, 288). The only biblical episode that resembles the Samson incident is that in which Joseph, now vizier of Egypt, supplies his brothers with provisions for the journey back to Canaan to collect their father, including a change of clothing for each of them (Gn 45:21–22). However, the passage does not specify if the garments were particularly luxurious, and no economic barter was involved.
8. Even the Trojan-born Aeneas is portrayed as having been steeped in this peculiarly Aegean form of combat. First, he challenges a native Italian warrior-prince, Turnus, to single combat (Aeneid 11.434–35, 440–42); following this, Book 12 recounts in vivid detail the fight between the two while their respective armies look on (12.697–790, 887ff.).
