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## **MAKING SENSE OF THE PARABLES OF ENOCH: THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND ITS SECONDARY ADDITIONS**

**Abstract:** The complex composition of the Parables of Enoch presents great difficulties for interpreters. There is broad agreement among scholars that the original text has been modified by the secondary addition of an epilogue and several Noahide interpolations. Examining these additions closely, it is shown that they all have the same thrust: a prophetic progression to the final judgment in the original text is interrupted by stories about the flood and the first world judgment, resulting in a conflation of the first and the final judgments. This effect is enhanced by the addition of an epilogue, in which the narrator, Enoch, is taken up to heaven at the end of his earthly life to oversee a messianic age of peace and righteousness. The epilogue and the Noahide interpolations transform the eschatological orientation of the original text from the imminent expectation of end-time judgment to that of realized messianic fulfilment under the ancient patriarch Enoch. Recognizable in all the secondary additions, this transformative character exposes them as the work of a single author/redactor and infuses the current text with a creative ‘clash of eschatologies’. The final part of the study profiles the author of the original text (Scribe A) and that of the secondary additions (Scribe B). Only by defining these two components of the current text, and studying them separately, can we make sense of this Enochic composition, which appears to have played a very important part in the origins and history of the Early Church.

### **1. Introduction**

The Parables, or Similitudes, of Enoch (1 Enoch 37–71) is a Jewish eschatological ascent apocalypse that dates from the start of the first century CE and conveys a messianic prophecy. It is one of the few messianic prophecies that have survived from that era, relatively intact, but has reached us in only one manuscript tradition—that of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The earliest existing manuscripts are written in the ancient language of the Church, Ge’ez, and date from the 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. There are no earlier manuscripts of this text in any language, and no fragments of it have yet been discovered in the caves at Qumran. The challenges presented by the text have been aptly described by Darrell Hannah as follows:

“The Similitudes bristles with difficulties. The date of their composition has been one of the more debated issues in the study of Second Temple Judaism and Christian Origins, although to be sure there is now an emerging consensus that they could not have been written later than the beginning of the second century AD. In addition, the Similitudes as we have them in classical Ethiopic are probably a translation of a translation and have, to some extent, suffered in transmission. Further, the Similitudes are clearly a composite work and on more than one occasion give the impression of

having been clumsily edited. Finally, the text is a mixture of prose and poetry, not unlike the classical prophets. As with ancient poetry in general, the poetry sections at times are rather opaque and a given section's relation to what precedes and/or that which follows is not always very clear. Nonetheless, for all their difficulties, the Similitudes remain one of the most important of non-Christian Jewish apocalypses, not least for the light they shed on messianic expectations of the Second Temple period".<sup>1</sup>

In his comments on the 2005 Enoch Seminar meeting at Camaldoli, Benjamin Wright notes that the limitations of working with translations seem "especially acute" for the Parables of Enoch, but nevertheless commends two pioneering scholars, George Nickelsburg and Michael Knibb, for showing us "just how much we can discover about this important Enochic text using the internal evidence of the text itself".<sup>2</sup> In a rare achievement for two scholars working independently, their agreements far outweigh their disagreements. In Wright's judgment they reach similar conclusions on the basic structure of the text, which can be outlined as follows:

1. A large part of the text stands out as the work of one author and can therefore be called the original text. It has a characteristic style and a clear tripartite structure composed of three sections called 'parables' (or 'discourses'), prefaced by a short introduction (1En 37:1-5) and completed by a short conclusion (1En 70:1-2).
2. The original text is interrupted in several places by passages from another source, which scholars call 'interpolations'. The first parable is relatively homogeneous, except for three verses which appear somewhat out of context (1En 42:1-3). The second parable includes a short passage about the great flood (1En 54:7-10; 55:1-2), and the third parable contains several lengthy interpolations about Noah and the flood, the precise extent of which is still under discussion (1En 60; 65:1-69:1). The interpolations interrupt the narrative continuity of the original text and may have replaced some important parts of it.
3. Both scholars agree that, like the interpolated material, the ending or epilogue, as it is called (1En 70:3-4, 71:1-17), is a later addition to the original text, although the relationship between the epilogue and the interpolations is still under discussion.

Wright goes on to summarize their differences as follows:

"As I see it, two basic areas of difference (or disagreement) emerge between Nickelsburg and Knibb: (a) the extent of the later inserted material; and (b) the process by which these interpolations entered the text of the Parables. The inclusion of Noachic material within an Enochic work is of course not difficult to comprehend, and both scholars suggest very plausible, and not always mutually exclusive, rationales for the insertions. The use of flood traditions in previous Enoch material together with the emphasis on judgment, an important theme in the Parables, makes the Noachic material seem almost natural, at least certainly not surprising, in its context. But while Nickelsburg and Knibb are able to construct reasonable accounts for this context, they apparently disagree about the *nature* of the Noachic insertions. Knibb thinks, although he does not elaborate much, that the interpolations were done "on an ad hoc basis over a period of time". Nickelsburg speaks of a "redactor" who inserted "a set" of Noachic interpolations. For Nickelsburg, the order and placement of Noah material seem to indicate systematic activity on the part of a redactor. I would certainly like to hear more from Nickelsburg and Knibb on this matter".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Darrell D. Hannah, 'The Throne of His Glory: The Divine Throne and Heavenly Mediators in Revelation and the Similitudes of Enoch', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestament Wissenschaft*, 94 (2003), Bd., S. 68-96, quote is from 82.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin G. Wright, 'The Structure of the Parables of Enoch: A Response to George Nicklesburg and Michael Knibb' *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, Grand Rapids MI / Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2007; 78.

<sup>3</sup> Wright, 'The Structure of the Parables of Enoch', *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 77.

This essay is an attempt to respond to Wright’s request for more research on the order and placement of the interpolations, with the aim of elucidating the provenance and purpose of these later additions and the relationship between them. Since those words were published, Nickelsburg has published his masterful 2012 commentary on the Parables of Enoch, and Hannah has given us the following warning about the redacted material: “For now, it will be sufficient to remark that all of this material (42; 54:7–55:2; 60; 65:1–69:25 and 70–71) must be treated with caution. While all of it belongs to the final form of the text, at least the Noahic material is quite disruptive and should not be given the same weight as the rest of the Parables”.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. The Epilogue (1 Enoch 70:3–71:17)

The ending, or epilogue, of the Parables of Enoch is the starting point of this study, because the surprising identification of Enoch with the central messianic figure, the Messiah Son of Man (1En 71:14), is a key to the overall interpretation of the book. Helge Kvanvig rightly identifies it as a *crux interpretum*, “The section [1En 70:3-4 and ch. 71] not only adds new material, but it alters the basic meaning of the book; what is said about the Son of Man throughout the book must now also relate to Enoch”.<sup>5</sup> After a discussion of the context, and its irrefutable assertion of this identification, he clarifies the issue as follows:

“Thus we are left with a dilemma—the scribe of 71:14 really meant that Enoch in his final removal to heaven was identified as the Son of Man. The remaining question is whether this was the intention throughout the Parables, or whether the identification took place at a later stage in the transmission of the book. This is one of the most debated issues in the interpretation of the Parables”.<sup>6</sup>

This dilemma is not only central to the interpretation of the book as a whole, but it also defines the core problem as one of continuity or discontinuity. If the book appears to have been written as a continuous text, seamless and without significant discontinuities, then it would confirm the view that chapter 71 was composed as an original part of the text. Conversely, significant discontinuities would indicate later redaction of the text, and at least two stages in its composition. In spite of many centuries of scribal harmonization, scholars have identified several literary seams indicating secondary interpolations, and at least one major discontinuity just prior to the start of chapter 71—a break that shows this chapter is a later addition.<sup>7</sup> Darrell Hannah identifies it as follows:

“It should be noted that the change from third to first person at 70:3 looks suspiciously like an editorial seam. In light of these two facts [the change of personal pronoun in the narration and the arguments in favour of the longer reading of 70:1], it would appear that 70:3–71:17 is best regarded as a latter addition to the text of the *Parables*. An inconsistency of detail between 70:3–71:17 and

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<sup>4</sup> Darrell D. Hannah, ‘The Elect Son of Man of the Parables of Enoch’, *“Who is this Son of Man?”: The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus*, eds. Larry W. Hurtado and Paul L. Owen, London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2011; 137. On the interpolations between 1En 65:1–69:25, R.H. Charles expressed an even stronger objection: “These chapters professedly and in fact belong to a Noah Apocalypse, and have no right to form a part of the text of Enoch”, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: Translated from the Editor’s Ethiopic Text*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912; 129. For Vered Hillel’s response to Charles’s objection, see n. 23 below.

<sup>5</sup> Helge S. Kvanvig, ‘The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch’, *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 199.

<sup>6</sup> Kvanvig, ‘The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch’, *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 198.

<sup>7</sup> This unavoidable conclusion has not gone unchallenged by scholars intent on demonstrating the coherence of chapter 71 with the rest of the text, but their dependence on verbal and literary connections is unpersuasive, given that substantial harmonization has occurred due to textual adjustment and transmission through several languages, over two millennia, starting with the redactor who appended chapter 71. The enduring discontinuities provide better evidence for the original form of the text than any perceived continuities.

the rest of the text of the *Parables* adds further weight to this conclusion... And finally, the ontological and pre-mundane pre-existence of the Elect son of man, discussed above, confirms such a conclusion... All of the above makes a strong case that in 70:3–71:17 we have an addition, made at a later time, whose sole purpose was to give an identity to the otherwise mysterious Elect son of man. This position remains popular and has many supporters”.<sup>8</sup>

Working from a different starting point (1En 70:1-2), Nickelsburg concurs:

“In my view, something like 70:1-2 constituted the original conclusion to the Book of Parables. Reprising the third person singular used in superscription (37:1), it states that Enoch, having received his revelations (“and after this”), was finally taken up into the presence of the deity. Verses 3-4, employing the first person voice, provide a transition to the material that follows. Chapter 71 is a summary of the whole Enochic experience with a tendentious addition, namely, the identification of Enoch as the future eschatological judge and the companion of the righteous”.<sup>9</sup>

John J. Collins observes the same discontinuity from a slightly different angle:

“The third possible solution [to the anomalous identification of Enoch with the Son of Man in the last chapter] is that chap. 71 is a redactional addition to the Similitudes. This view is not an *ad hoc* solution to the “Son of Man” problem but arises independently from literary considerations. Chapters 70 and 71 constitute a double epilogue to the Similitudes. Each tells how Enoch was carried up to the heavens. Redundancy and duplication are not in themselves surprising in a work such as the Similitudes, but we usually find such redundancy in the visions, not in the narrative framework. Accordingly, the repetition here strongly suggests the hand of a redactor”.<sup>10</sup>

These are three different ways, employed by three different scholars, of arriving at the same conclusion, namely, that there is an obvious discontinuity in the text between 70:1-2 and 70:3–71:17. This evidence is sufficient to demonstrate, beyond reasonable doubt, that 70:3–71:17 is a secondary addition and, therefore, that the identification of Enoch with the Son of Man “took place at a later stage in the transmission of the book”. With this, Kvanvig’s dilemma is solved and the result is what Hannah describes as “one of the most surprising endings in the whole of ancient literature... too surprising to be taken at face value”.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, Kvanvig and several other scholars sidestep the evidence of discontinuity and insist on the originality of chapter 71.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, Kvanvig sets a challenge for the scholars who continue to view it as a secondary addition: “If we presume that the ending is an addition, then we must imagine an influence of the book on later readers in two stages instead of one: one stage where Enoch and the Son of Man are two separate figures, and a second stage where they were identified”.<sup>13</sup> Although ‘we presume’ should be replaced by ‘we are persuaded by the evidence’, Kvanvig’s challenge invites us to determine the impact of the addition of 1En 70:3–71:17 on the meaning of the Parables, which in turn will clarify its purpose, and perhaps indicate its origin.

In an attempt to explain why the identification of Enoch as the Messiah Son of Man is delayed until the end of the book, and is then revealed as a ‘fusion’ of the seer Enoch with the object of his vision, the Messiah Son of Man, Richard Bauckham suggests it is a purely literary

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<sup>8</sup> Darrell D. Hannah, ‘The Elect Son of Man of the Parables of Enoch’, *Who is this Son of Man?*, 154-155.

<sup>9</sup> George W.E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 37-82*, Minneapolis MN/ Fortress Press, 2012; 19, see also 315.

<sup>10</sup> John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Grand Rapids MI / Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 1998; 190.

<sup>11</sup> Hannah, ‘The Elect Son of Man of the Parables of Enoch’, *Who is this Son of Man?*, 152.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., Richard Bauckham, “*Son of Man*”: *Volume One, Early Jewish literature*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023; 80-106, and for a bibliography of like-minded scholars, see 80-81, n. 1, in Bauckham’s “*Son of Man*”.

<sup>13</sup> Kvanvig, ‘The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch’, *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 199.

invention: “it is entirely possible that chapter 71 is an original part of the book and that the revelation of the identity of the “son of man” [as Enoch] was intended to surprise readers, like the solution to a murder mystery revealed at the end of a modern detective novel”.<sup>14</sup> Most readers would surely be amazed to learn that the final revelation of the Messiah’s identity is a literary device aimed to entertain and create surprise.

Although Bauckham’s explanation is not consistent with the character of the work, which is that of serious prophecy and not literary fiction, it does contain a kernel of truth. The prophecy of imminent eschatological judgment by the Messiah Son of Man, to which the entire text of the Parables has been moving, is suddenly dropped as the ancient patriarch Enoch assumes that role, for he is subsequently described as herald of peace and guide for the righteous (1En 71:15-17). The vision of the Son of Man seated on the glorious throne, judging the sinners, the kings, the mighty, the rebel angels and their agents, has faded from view, and is no longer mentioned after the appointment of Enoch as the Son of Man. Set in the heaven of the heavens, the text expresses the change in the following way:

- 71<sup>13</sup>And that Head of Days came with Michael and Raphael and Gabriel and Phanuel,  
and thousands and tens of thousands of angels without number,  
<sup>14</sup>And he came to me and greeted me with his voice and said to me,  
“You (are) that Son of Man who was born for righteousness,  
and righteousness dwells on you,  
and the righteousness of the Head of Days will not forsake you.”  
<sup>15</sup>And he said to me, “He proclaims peace to you in the name of the age that is to be,  
for from there peace has proceeded from the creation of the age,  
and thus you will have it forever and forever and ever.  
<sup>16</sup>And all will walk on your path since righteousness will never forsake you;  
with you will be their dwellings and with you, their lot,  
and from you they will not be separated forever and forever and ever.  
<sup>17</sup>And thus there will be length of days with that Son of Man,  
and there will be peace for the righteous, and the path of truth for the righteous,  
in the name of the Lord of Spirits forever and ever” (1En 71:13-17).<sup>15</sup>

Nickelsburg notices this change and comments as follows:

“Although Enoch is not restored from his prostrate position (an authorial, redactional slip?), the Head of Days (or an accompanying angel) identifies Enoch as the Son of Man whose eschatological status and function Enoch has witnessed throughout the Parables. Strikingly, however, he is not the messenger of doom described in Chaps. 14–16 or the executor of judgment on the kings and the mighty and the demons announced, depicted, and emphasized in most of the relevant passages in the Parables. Enoch, the Son of Man, is the eschatological patron and companion of the righteous, mentioned in this capacity only in 38:2; 39:6-8; 48:4-7; and 62:7-8,14”.<sup>16</sup>

In this way, the final chapter offers a dramatic anti-climax, or ironic reversal, to the preceding narrative (cited below with future verbs in bold), which is intensely focused on the future and imminent end-time judgment of the sinners, kings and powerful, and the removal of all evil and corruption from the face of the earth:

- 69 <sup>26</sup>And they [*the righteous*] had great joy,  
and they blessed and glorified and exalted,  
because the name of that Son of Man had been revealed to them.

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<sup>14</sup> Bauckham, “*Son of Man*”, 80.

<sup>15</sup> The English translation of the text is from Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 321.

<sup>16</sup> From Nickelsburg’s commentary on *1En 71:13-17*, Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 327.

<sup>27</sup>And he sat on the throne of his glory,  
and the whole judgment was given to the Son of Man,  
and he **will** make sinners vanish and perish from the face of the earth.

<sup>28</sup>And those who led astray the world **will** be bound in chains,  
and in the assembly place of their destruction they **will** be shut up;  
and all their works **will** vanish from the face of the earth.

<sup>29</sup>And from then on there **will** be nothing that is corruptible;  
for that Son of Man has appeared.  
And he has sat down on the throne of his glory,  
and all evil **will** vanish from his presence.  
And the word of that Son of Man **will** go forth  
and **will** prevail in the presence of the Lord of Spirits.  
This is the third parable of Enoch (1En 69:26-29).<sup>17</sup>

The next two verses (1En 70:1-2) relate how Enoch was finally taken up into the presence of the Son of Man and the Lord of Spirits and his name departed from among those dwelling on earth (according to the longer Ethiopian variant).<sup>18</sup>

Apart from the change in narration from third to first person, already mentioned, the text continues the theme of Enoch's elevation from Paradise to heaven and then up to the heaven of the heavens.<sup>19</sup> This narrative continuity forces us to read chapter 71 as a sequel to Enoch's ascent in 70:1-2 and to interpret the change in the messianic task of the Son of Man as a consequence of Enoch's elevation and divinization. Since there is no mention of judgment in chapter 71, we must assume that either 1) the judgment was completed by a heavenly counterpart of Enoch acting as the Son of Man before Enoch, a mere human being, had been spiritually prepared to take over the role in 1En 71:14 (i.e., Enoch arrived late on the scene, after judgment had been performed by his heavenly 'counterpart'),<sup>20</sup> or 2) the vision of judgment (1En 61–62) was proleptic and is to be performed swiftly and off-the-record by Enoch soon after his assignment to that role (this is more likely since the flood followed Enoch in time and forms a large component of the judgment).<sup>21</sup> Either way, the addition of chapter 71 has erased Enoch's role in judgment and promotes him as the harbinger of peace and guide for the righteous in a

<sup>17</sup> The English translation is from Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 311 (bold font is mine).

<sup>18</sup> The interpretation of 1En 70:1-2 has been complicated by a small manuscript variant caused by the omission of a word, which results in two different translations: the longer reading which distinguishes Enoch and that Son of Man, and a shorter reading which equates Enoch with that Son of Man. Most scholars favour the longer reading (the shorter one may have been a scribal omission), while recognizing that the decision depends on whether one considers the identification of Enoch with the Son of Man in 71:14 as a later addition, or as an integral part of the book; cf. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 315-319.

<sup>19</sup> The depiction of three heavens limits the dating of the Parables to the first century CE, for towards the end of that century, and the beginning of the second, it became conventional to describe the *cosmos* with seven heavens.

<sup>20</sup> E.g., James C. VanderKam, citing *GenR* 68:2 and the *Prayer of Joseph*, proposes that "a creature of flesh and blood could have a heavenly double or counterpart" and so, in the Parables, "Enoch would be viewing his supernatural double who had existed before being embodied in the person of Enoch", 'Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37–71', *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. J.H. Charlesworth, Minneapolis MN: Fortress, 1992; 182-183. For a firm rebuttal, see John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Grand Rapids MI/Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2010, 201.

<sup>21</sup> E.g., Richard Bauckham, "To the identification of the Messianic Figure with Enoch, it is sometimes objected that Enoch, situated on earth, can hardly be seeing himself in heaven and, moreover, not recognize himself. The answer is that all Enoch's visions of the Messianic Figure relate to the future, after he has ascended to heaven and been transformed into the appearance of a heavenly being", "*Son of Man*", 84. One major objection to this proposal is the text's constant emphasis on the Messianic Figure's future role in judgment, but this is dropped completely in chapter 71, after Enoch is appointed to that role, now reduced to that of herald of peace and guardian of the righteous (1En 71:13-17).

new messianic age. In sum, the author of chapter 71 has indeed altered the meaning of the text, by 1) elevating the ancient patriarch Enoch and identifying him as the Messiah Son of Man, to the exclusion of any other candidate, 2) avoiding mention of his role in judgment in the final chapter and emphasizing his role as leader of the righteous and herald of everlasting peace, 3) creating an ironic reversal and anti-climax in the preceding narration of events by transposing the original author's prophecy of imminent eschatological judgment back into the distant past, to the time when Enoch ascended to the highest heaven, at the end of his earthly life (Gn 5:24), and received the 'Son of Man' role (1En 71:14). The addition of chapter 71 creates a situation of eschatological realization and messianic fulfilment, maintained and guided by the righteous Enoch. Anyone concerned about the coming judgment would be greatly reassured by chapter 71, for it indicates the main part of the final judgment has already taken place, and the present age is the new age of messianic peace and righteousness maintained by the ancient patriarch Enoch.

### 3. The Noahide Interpolations

Apart from 1En 70:3–71:17, several other passages in the Parables of Enoch have been identified as additions to its original text. All but one of these (1En 42:1-3) are related to the great flood or to the life of Noah and for this reason they are called Noahide interpolations.

R.H. Charles was among the first to observe that several interpolations had the flood or Noah as a common theme, and identified them as fragments of an ancient book, or apocalypse, of Noah, which, though no longer extant, is mentioned in the book of Jubilees (10:13; 21:10). Since Charles' first proposed this in 1893, similar passages have been identified in the book of Jubilees and in various fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and two more references to a book of Noah have been found in ancient texts (cf. Genesis Apocryphon 29:5; Aramaic Levi 10:10). For the purposes of this study, it is not necessary to enter the debate on the origin of these 'Noahide interpolations', whether or not they were taken from a missing book of Noah, but simply to study the common characteristics of these interpolations, in order to discern their significance and purpose. In the second edition of his commentary, under the comment to 1 Enoch 54:7, Charles listed the following criteria, which he used for identifying the Noahide interpolations:

“(1) They always disturb the context in which they occur. (2) they profess to be a revelation of Noah, 60<sup>7-11, 24, 25</sup> 65–68<sup>1</sup>. (3) Such a definite date as is given in 60<sup>1</sup> is unknown in the Parables. (4) The demonology is different: the Satans and the fallen angels which are carefully distinguished in the Parables are confused in the additions, 69. The chief, moreover, of the fallen angels in the Parables is Azazel; in the additions, Semjaza. (5) The interpolator seeks to adapt his additions to their new contexts, and accordingly incorporates in them many terms and phrases from the Parables, such as ‘angel of peace’, 60<sup>24</sup>, see 40<sup>2</sup> (note); ‘none shall utter an idle word,’ 67<sup>9</sup>, see 49<sup>4</sup> (note); ‘denied the Lord of Spirits,’ 67<sup>8, 10</sup>, see 38<sup>2</sup> (note); ‘the angel who went with me and showed me what was hidden,’ 60<sup>11</sup>, see 43<sup>3</sup> (note); *but observe that in each of these borrowings he misuses technical terms and phrases*, either through ignorance or of set purpose. Cf. ‘Lord of Spirits’, see 37<sup>2</sup> (note), ‘Head of Days,’ 55<sup>1</sup>, see 46<sup>1</sup> (note); ‘angels of punishment,’ 40<sup>7</sup> 66<sup>1</sup> (note); ‘Son of Man,’ 60<sup>10</sup> (note); ‘those who dwell on the earth,’ 54<sup>9</sup> 37<sup>6</sup> (note). (6) The interpolator misunderstands the Parables, and combines absolutely alien elements; cf. ‘the burning valley in the metal mountains in the west’—an illegitimate combination of 52<sup>1, 2</sup> and 54<sup>1</sup>. (7) Finally, the Parables follow the LXX chronology; the interpolations follow the Samaritan.<sup>22</sup>

This citation from the 1912 edition of Charles' commentary is still valuable as a statement of the detectable and demonstrable differences between the Noahide interpolations and the original text of the Parables of Enoch. It is not necessary to examine every observation made by Charles,

<sup>22</sup> R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, (1912), 106-107.

and verify his criteria, because this task has been effectively performed by Vered Hillel in an article published in 2010, where she concludes:

“Conversely, our examination of the criteria that Charles proposes upholds their integrity and shows that: (1) 54:7–55:2 is an interpolated Noah passage that probably can be traced to a book of Noah; (2) chapter 60 relies on some type of Noah tradition, but the material, which has been attributed to Enoch, has been so thoroughly adapted that it is an integral part of the Similitudes; and (3) 65:1–69:25 consists of two sections (65–67 and 68–69:25) carefully woven together to form a literary unit. Chapters 65–67 are Noah traditions that probably reflect a book of Noah, and chapters 68–69 are an independent Michael-Raphael tradition that is made to look like a Noah tradition”.<sup>23</sup>

Hillel’s study has identified significant editorial variations among the Noachide interpolations, revealing the efforts of a redactor intent on blending his additions to the original text and obscuring the literary seams. In doing this, the redactor has not only managed to complicate the process of interpretation, but also to manipulate the meaning and message of the text in a certain way. In other words, the redactor appears to have had a particular and undeclared purpose. It is significant, then, that at the end of his list of criteria for identifying the Noachide interpolations in all their variety, Charles offers a statement on authorial intention that effectively unites them all:

“The object of the interpolator is clear. Although the final world judgement is treated at length, there are only the briefest references to the first. It was to supply this defect in the Parables that an existing Apocalypse of Noah was laid under contribution”.<sup>24</sup>

This statement opens a fruitful avenue of enquiry into the way the various interpolations change the meaning of the original text, and what may have been their main purpose.

#### **a) 1 Enoch 42:1-3 (first parable)**

The first passage to be considered as an interpolation is a well-composed poem on the dwellings of Wisdom and Iniquity, which is clearly “out of connexion with its present context”.<sup>25</sup> It is found at the end of the first parable, in the middle of one of Enoch’s astronomical journeys (1En 41:3-8; 43:1–44:1). The poem is in two parts: the first part describes how Wisdom set out from her dwelling in heaven to find a home among humans on earth, but she failed and returned to her place among the angels in heaven. The second part describes the unexpected welcome that Iniquity received when she went forth among humans.

Scholars have long recognized these lines as the theological converse of Sir 24:7-12, where Wisdom is given a home in Jerusalem, in the ‘holy tent’ on Mt. Zion, among the sons of Jacob. If we assume that 1 En 42:1-3 was originally composed as a protest against Sirach’s theology of Wisdom in Sir 24:7-12, we could tentatively date it to the second century BCE. Echoes of the same tradition can in fact be detected in the Epistle of Enoch from the early first century BCE (‘Instruction on the two ways’, 1 En 94:5).

Nickelsburg and others see the poem as a polemic against the Torah by apocalyptic communities who sought to replace Moses by Enoch. But there is no evidence of this in the poem, nor in the rest of the text of the Parables of Enoch, and Enoch himself is a character in the

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<sup>23</sup> Vered Hillel, ‘A Reconsideration of Charles’s Designated “Noah Interpolations” In 1 Enoch: 54:1–55:1; 60. 65:1–69:25’, *Noah and His Book(s)*, eds. Michael Stone and Vered Hillel, Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2010; 44. On the relationship between the interpolations and the original text, apropos the criticism of Charles quoted in n. 4 above, Hillel writes, “One further observation is in order. Charles erroneously concludes that the Noah material has no right to form a part of the text of Enoch. This conclusion is unnecessarily extreme. While the Noah interpolations may be out of context, they have been so thoroughly adapted that they are not out of place”, op. cit. 44-45.

<sup>24</sup> Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, (1912); 106-107.

<sup>25</sup> Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, (1912); 81-82.

Torah. Furthermore, all Jews of that time would have considered an attack on the Mosaic Torah as an expression of ‘Iniquity’. The text affirms that the author’s hostility is not directed at the Torah itself, but towards the leaders, the kings, the mighty, the landowners, and sinners who have rejected ‘Wisdom’ and welcomed ‘Iniquity’ into their lives. These social groups can be identified with Hasmonean kings, high priests, Sadducees and priests, who claimed the Torah as a source of ‘Wisdom’, but acted according to the rule-book of ‘Iniquity’. An anti-priestly, anti-corruption, but by no means anti-Torah, attitude of this type was emblematic of the Essenes and contributed towards their exclusion from the Inner Court of the Temple (cf. CD 6:11-14, 1QS 9:3-11, cf. 8:5-10; Josephus, *Ant* 18.19<sup>26</sup>).

Returning to the enigmatic poem itself, its loosely attached position in a report of Enoch’s cosmic journey looks like an accident, rather than the deliberate editorial act of an author or redactor with an ulterior motive. Its position is too random to be an interpolation, it carries no allusion to Noah or to the flood, and its style and content indicate an origin of considerable antiquity and distinction. In an attempt to explain its presence in the text at this point, I propose that it was initially placed, by itself, as an “epigraph” at the start of the scroll in which the original text was inscribed.<sup>27</sup> Then, at some point during its early transmission and translation, this fragment was accidentally displaced and transcribed into its present position. In summary, this eloquent poem is neither an interpolation, nor a piece of Noahide tradition, but a displaced epigraph from the opening section of the scroll.

#### **b) 1 Enoch 54:7–55:2 (second parable)**

Following a description of the end-time punishment that awaits the sinners, the kings, the mighty and the rebel angels led by Azazel (1En 53:1–54:6), this short interpolation refers back to the great flood in the times of Noah, which obliterated all who dwelt on earth (1En 54:7-10), except for Noah and his Ark, and is followed by a statement of regret by God Almighty and his pledge to never do so again (1En 55:1-2). The original text then resumes with a summary of the final end-time punishment awaiting the mighty kings, Azazel, his rebel host and their loved ones (1En 55:3–56:4).

The context here fully supports Charles’ assertion that the interpolator has inserted a reference to the first world judgment (the flood) into a context that is entirely focused on the final world judgment, variously referred to as ‘*that great day*’ and ‘*that day*’. This verbal expression (1En 54:6) may have been the cue, for the interpolation begins with a similar formula: “*in those days*, the punishment of the Lord of Spirits will come forth” (1En 54:7; italics mine).<sup>28</sup> Both the antecedent and interpolated passages mention the divine punishment of the rebel angels at a particular time, in a way that may indeed cause confusion between the two. Bearing in mind that Enoch was alive shortly before the flood, one wonders if this may be an attempt to combine the first and the final judgments, not in order to compare them typologically, but in order to represent them as concurrent. The interpolator’s desire to remind hearers of God’s regret for the near-total destruction of the flood, and of his pledge to never repeat it, reinforces the impression that he wishes to conflate the two judgments and present the second as the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ant*, *JW* and *Life* are the abbreviations used in this study for the *Antiquities of the Jews*, *Jewish War* and *Autobiography* respectively, by the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius. Unless otherwise stated, quotations of these works are from the English translations of the Loeb Classical Library, published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA/London UK.

<sup>27</sup> See the next section in the text below for our description and definition of the ‘original text’.

<sup>28</sup> As before, quotations from the Parables of Enoch are from the translation by Nickelsburg and VanderKam, in *1 Enoch 2*. Note how the verbal tenses jump from future to past, facilitated by the fact that for Enoch both the first and the final judgments were in the future.

conclusion of the first. Careful study of the other interpolations will reveal if this interpretation of the redactor's purpose is accurate.

Summary of	Context (original text)	Interpolation (current, redacted text)
1En 54:7–55:2	This short interpolation has been inserted after a description of the imminent end-time punishment awaiting the sinners, the kings, the mighty and the rebel angels led by Azazel, and their loved ones (53:1-54:6) and it is followed by a summary of the same (55:3-56:4).	This interpolation concerns the great flood in the times of Noah, which obliterated all who dwelt on earth, except for Noah and his Ark. It includes a statement of regret by the Almighty and a pledge to never do this again. The theme of the punishment of the rebel angels ties it to the context in the original text, and there is no clear temporal separation. End-time punishment is conflated with the punishment of the great flood, which was the first world judgment. From the point of view of the ancient seer, Enoch, both are in the near future.

### c) 1 Enoch 60 (60:1-10, 24-25; the start of third parable)

This passage is a complex mixture of textual displacements and interpolations, for which Nickelsburg has the simplest and most satisfying solution.<sup>29</sup> It involves extracting the account of Enoch's cosmic journey in 60:11-23 and returning it to its thematically congruent context following 53:1-3 (it could have been a displaced page of manuscript). The resulting text consists of an interpolation within an interpolation: the former is about the mythical monsters Behemoth and Leviathan and is related to the final world judgment (7-10 + 24a), while the latter is a Noahide interpolation (1-6 +24b-25) concerning the coming first world judgment by the flood. The prior context is an oracle on the bright and glorious future awaiting the righteous and chosen after the final world judgment (58:1-6), and the consequent context describes the preparation for the gathering of the righteous for the future day of judgment (61:1-5).

Once again, we see a conflation of themes from the first and last world judgments: the context is that of the run up to the final judgment, the Noah interpolation concerns the first world judgment by the flood, and the centerpiece on the primordial origin and eschatological destiny of Behemoth and Leviathan has relevance for the final world judgment. The interpolator has been so successful at combining these temporal dimensions of the text, flood and final judgment, that even scholars are divided: "How should the Leviathan/Behemoth material be interpreted: does it apply to the flood or the eschaton?" writes Vered Hillel,<sup>30</sup> who continues: "Consequently, I conclude that chapter 60 relies on some type of Noah tradition that has been thoroughly reworked by the author".<sup>31</sup>

As with the previous interpretation the high degree of editorial blending of the interpolation and original text indicates that the purpose of the interpolator was not to create a typological comparison or contrast between the flood and the final judgment, but rather to produce a conflation and confusion between the two events.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 221-23, 233-42.

<sup>30</sup> Hillel, 'A Reconsideration', *Noah and His Book(s)*, 40. In this part of her study, Hillel documents the dissention between the scholars who consider ch. 60 in relation to the flood (Black and Dillman), thus attributable to Noah and Noahide traditions, and those scholars who consider the Leviathan/Behemoth material in relation to the eschaton (Whitney and Knibb).

<sup>31</sup> Hillel, 'A Reconsideration', *Noah and His Book(s)*, 42.

Summary of	Context (original text)	Interpolation (current, redacted text)
1En 60:1-10, 24-25	This interpolation is inserted between an oracle on the glorious future of the righteous after the final world judgment and an account of the preparations leading to the gathering of the righteous for that eschatological event.	This interpolation concerns the first world judgment by the flood and embedded within it there is a small interpolation on the mythical monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan, which is relevant to the final, eschatological judgment. The literary blending of these two inter-polations has been so successful that scholars are divided over the temporal context of the two monsters, whether it refers to the flood or to the final judgment.

#### d) 1 Enoch 65:1–69:1 (the end of third parable)

This large Noahide interpolation has been inserted after the vision of the final judgment of the kings and the mighty in chs. 62–63 and before a concluding summary of the final judgment in 69:26-29, at the end of the third parable. It consists of three main segments, the first dealing with the impending flood and the salvation of Noah (65:1–67:3), the second with the punishment of the fallen angels and its relation to the judgment of the kings (67:4–68:1) and third is a complaint by Michael, addressed to Raphael, regarding the severity and eternity of the punishment of the rebel angels (68:2–69:1).

According to Nickelsburg, the status of 69:2-25 as an interpolation is still under discussion, for the list of rebel angels and their sins in 69:4-12 relates to the theme of revealed secrets, which links it to 64:1-2 in the preceding section, and to 69:28 in the text that follows.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the list in 69:4-12 is not only linked thematically to the antecedent list of rebel angels in 69:2-3, but also, together with it, closely parallels the two consecutive lists the Book of Watchers (1En 6:6-8 and 8:1-4). It is quite possible that the double list here, in the Parables, is a local adaptation and update of the two successive lists in the Book of Watchers, and that it was composed, by the author of the original text, in fulfilment of the oath “to preserve the books of the sect and the names of the angels” (*JW* 2.142).<sup>33</sup>

Hillel summarizes the literary findings briefly and clearly as follows: “Chapters 65–67 clearly deal with the first judgment, and chapter 68 is assigned to the time of the flood because it discusses the judgment of the angels who are identified as the Watchers. Chapter 69 is assigned to the first judgment because it names the fallen angels and satans and because it reworks 1 En 6:6-8, which definitely refers to the flood. These separate traditions have been adapted into a coherent literary unit that can stand as a whole, independent of context”.<sup>34</sup>

As with the previous interpolations, this one disrupts the text in its vision of the final judgment, in order to add Noah’s account of the flood and of its eternally destructive consequences for the rebel angels. On the function of the interpolation in this setting, Nickelsburg notes its emphasis on the fate of the rebel angels and how this links to events contemporary with the author: “In summary, the interpolation enhances the Parables’ relatively

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 313-314. Although 1En 69:13 seems to be connected with 69:12, it should be said that both the meaning and origin of 1En 69:13-25 are still a mystery, see op. cit. 305-310.

<sup>33</sup> Apart from the Parables of Enoch, Loren Stuckenbruck affirms that “the names of the chief angelic perpetrators of evil are conspicuously absent outside the earliest Enoch tradition”, by which he means the Book of Watchers (1 Enoch 1-36) and the Book of Giants (*The Myth of the Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts*, Grand Rapids MI/ Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2017; 82). The unique act of including the lists in the Parables is therefore good evidence that the author was an Essene, obeying his sworn commitment ‘to preserve the names of the angels’.

<sup>34</sup> Hillel, ‘A Reconsideration’, *Noah and His Book(s)*, 43.

minor interest in the sin of the fallen angels and connects its major interest in the kings and the mighty with the figure of Herod the Great”.<sup>35</sup> This interpolation is of particular interest, because it seems to have erased a part of an original text describing a second judgment scene, in the presence of the righteous, which would have resulted in the final eschatological judgment of the rebel angels.<sup>36</sup> The impression conveyed is that no further punishment of the rebel angels is required because this was fulfilled through the first judgment.

Whether this is the case or not, the interpolation interferes with the description of the final judgment in the original text, by inserting material about the flood and the first judgment of the rebel angels. As in the previous interpolations, this has been done professionally, using scribal joining techniques, in order to produce a text that conflates the added material with its original context, rather than setting it up for comparison and contrast.

Summary of	Context (original text)	Interpolation (current, redacted text)
1En 65:1–69:3	This large interpolation is inserted between 1) the vision of the final judgment of the kings, the mighty (1En 62-63) and the rebel angels (64:1-2, 69:2-25) and 2) a concluding summary of the final judgment (69:26-29).	The interpolation consists of three main segments, the first dealing with the impending flood and the salvation of Noah (65:1–67:3), the second with the punishment of the fallen angels (67:4–68:1) and third is a complaint by Michael, addressed to Raphael, regarding the severity and eternity of the punishment of the rebel angels (68:2-69:1). Again, the context is the final judgment, while the content of the interpolation is the flood and the first world judgment. Concerned with Noah’s account of the flood and of its eternally destructive consequences for the rebel angels, this large interpolation is inserted into a context that touches on the fate of the rebel angels. A section in the original text that described the final judgment of these angels seems to have been replaced by an interpolation that relates this to the flood and the first judgment.

On the basis of this recurring pattern in the Noahide interpolations, it would appear that the author’s intention was to cause confusion between the first world judgment by the flood and the final world judgment by the righteous and chosen Messiah Son of Man, as if the two historically and biblically distinct judgments were actually aspects of the same process, which was fulfilled in the past, in the aftermath of the great flood. It should be noted that this particular shaping of the interpolations towards messianic fulfilment at the time of the flood perfectly complements the heavenly exaltation of Enoch, after his earthly life, leading to his installation as the messianic agent in 1 En 71:14. In fact, so perfect is the integration between the messianic appointment of Enoch in chapter 71 and the scribal conflation of the final judgment with the first judgment by flood, in the Noahide interpolations, that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the same scribe was the author of all these secondary additions, i.e., of 1En 70:3–71:17 and all the Noahide interpolations.

#### 4. The Original Text

The ‘original’ text of the Parables of Enoch is comprised of those parts of the present book (1 Enoch 37–71) that have a characteristic style, a clear tripartite structure and stand out as the work of one author. Above all, it is made up of those parts of the text that remain after removing

<sup>35</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 296.

<sup>36</sup> For the reasoning behind this conjecture, see Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 17-18, 313-314.

the additions that have been identified. According to the analysis outlined above, the secondary additions make up 25% of the present text, so the reconstituted original text is only 75% of its current length. Because of the contingencies of translation and transmission through two languages and over two millennia, this is not the actual original text, but a reconstruction from the information at our disposal. Parts of the text may have been displaced, mistranslated, erroneously copied, deleted through editing or lost from natural corruption, and what remains is reconstituted as follows:

<b>The Parables of Enoch (1 Enoch 37–71)</b>	<b>The Original Text</b>
Epigraph	42:1-3
Introduction	37:1-5 (ch.37)
First Parable	38:1–41:8; 43:1–44:1
Second Parable	45:1–54:6; 55:3–57:3
Third Parable	58:1–59:3; 60:11-23; 61:1–64:2; 69:4-29
Conclusion	70:1-2

The result is very similar to the reconstruction proposed by Nickelsburg in his Commentary.<sup>37</sup> Assembling the passages in the order outlined above creates a text that appears formally complete and surprisingly intact. The three parables that constitute the main body of the text are similar to each other in style and coherent in content. After identifying himself as Patriarch Enoch, the author narrates, in the first person, his visions of a heavenly journey in three consecutive sections, called parables, which include angelic interpretations and visits to earthly locations. The content of the visions relates both to the divine ordering of the cosmos and to eschatological judgment and salvation. Each parable advances a step closer towards eschatological judgment, which is described as imminent: the first parable anticipates the coming judgment and provides a description of the heavenly setting; the second parable outlines the manner in which the final judgment will be conducted by the main protagonists, and includes an opportunity for repentance and an account of the eschatological war; the third parable culminates with a set of visions foreseeing the actual process of the last judgment and looking forward to the new heaven and the new earth where the righteous will dwell. Composed in this way, the style and content of the original text conform closely to the scholarly definition of the apocalyptic genre, as formulated by J.J. Collins in 1979 and validated by many years of use.<sup>38</sup> Since the main protagonist is a righteous, chosen and anointed human being, or messiah, there is no doubt that the original text of the Parables conveys a messianic prophecy, and that this prophecy is presented as being in the process of imminent fulfillment. It is important to emphasize the impression of eschatological imminence conveyed by the original text, because it has been obscured in the present, redacted form of the work (1 Enoch 37–71), by means of the addition of the new ending (70:3–71:17) and several Noahide interpolations.

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<sup>37</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 19-20.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1998), 4, n.11: “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal. Insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation. And spatial insofar as it involves another supernatural world”.

## 5. Discussion

Our reconstruction of the original text has revealed a classical Jewish ascent apocalypse whose main concern was the imminent appearance of a heavenly, though human, messiah who will judge and renew the earth in the immediate future. By contrast, our analysis of the secondarily added material identifies some ancient and reworked biblical traditions concerning Enoch, Noah and the first world judgment through the flood. We are evidently dealing with two very different sources, one apocalyptic and the other biblico-traditional; the first is directed to the future and the second looks back to the past, from an early first-century perspective. This fundamental opposition creates tension in the current redacted text of the Parables, and no little confusion about its meaning. It is no wonder that scholars are deeply divided over this particular text, because it is a skillful blending of two entirely different genres, composed by at least two different authors, in at least two different stages.

Confronted with this literary mix, it is profitable to recall Helge Kvanvig’s challenge for the scholars who continue to view 1En 70:3-71:17 as a secondary addition: “If we presume that the ending is an addition, then we must imagine an influence of the book on later readers in two stages instead of one: one stage where Enoch and the Son of Man are two separate figures, and a second stage where they were identified”.<sup>39</sup> In practical terms, Kvanvig seems to be saying that the full understanding of the Book of Parables, given its two-fold origin, requires the study of each part separately, in order to clarify the meaning, author, dating and provenance of each part.

Responding to this challenge begins with a simple comparison of the role of Enoch in the reconstructed original text and his role in the current redacted text, 1 Enoch 37–71:

	<b>Reconstructed original text</b>	<b>Current redacted text of 1 En 37–71 including secondary additions</b>
<b>Role of Enoch</b>	Heavenly seer, scribe of heavenly secrets, and author of the messianic prophecy in the Book of Parables. In this prophecy, Enoch foresees the imminent coming of the central messianic figure, a righteous and divinely chosen human being, who will guide the righteous, judge the wicked and usher in the new heaven and new earth where the righteous will dwell. The prophecy describes the imminent and complete realization of the messianic age through the future presence and actions of this individual.	With the addition of 1En 71:14, there is a dramatic change in the role of Enoch: he is no longer just the seer, scribe or prophet, but is identified with the central messianic figure himself, whose imminent coming in judgment Enoch had previously prophesied without realizing that he was prophesying about himself. However, in ch. 71, the description of Enoch’s new role as heavenly messiah does not mention a role in judgment, but instead his role as herald of peace and guide of the righteous. The implication is that judgment has been completed for the most part, and Enoch is now the messianic ruler in a realized messianic age of peace and righteousness.

As Kvanvig has stated, the abrupt change in the role of Enoch described in chapter 71 not only adds new material to the text, but also has an impact on the basic meaning of the book. A close examination of chapter 71 and of each of the Noahide interpolations has confirmed, in each case, a common tendency to conflate the great flood and first judgment in primordial times with the future and final judgment prophesied in the original text. In this way, the eschatological orientation of the entire text has been reversed, from that of imminent expectation to realized

<sup>39</sup> Kvanvig, ‘The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch’, *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 199.

fulfilment. In brief, the messianic judgment that was prophesied in the original text and expected in the imminent future, suddenly appears to have been realized in the past, in the aftermath of the flood, according to the current redacted and interpolated text. The intentional and integrated manipulation of the text through each of the secondary additions leads to the conclusion that the author of the final chapter (1En 70:3–71:17) was also the author/redactor of all three Noahide interpolations identified in the text. It would be fair to conclude that he disagreed fundamentally with the author of the original text, and that is why he later modified it by means of his additions.

The final, and most speculative, step in this study therefore involves a characterization of the two authors, and their personal circumstances and aims.

### **i) Scribe A: the author of the original text**

The author of the original text is not only a scribe well versed in apocalyptic writings, but also a messianic prophet deeply immersed in Scripture, especially the books of Daniel, Isaiah, Psalms and Wisdom (Proverbs, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon). He keenly awaits the coming of the messiah as saviour of the righteous and judge of the wicked, and regards his appearance as imminent. According to the text of the Parables, he is a member of a group that calls itself the ‘congregation of the righteous’—a group that had been sorely persecuted by local kings, potentates and landowners. His repeated use of this term (1En 38:1, 46:8, 53:6, 62:8) raises the suspicion that he was an Essene, for this was a technical term denoting their own communities—a term that is found in other Essene writings (e.g., CD 20:2-3; 1QS 5:20; 4Q171 2:5). This is confirmed by the author’s unique act of recording the names of the rebel angels (1En 69:2-12), since every member of an Essene community was obligated under oath to “preserve the books of the sect and the names of the angels” (*JW* 2.142). His description of the eschatological war (1En 56:5–57:3) can be shown to be a reflection of the Civil War of 40-37 BCE (*JW* 1.248-357), which he may have witnessed first-hand and subsequently introduced into his text as prophecy *ex eventu*.<sup>40</sup> Interpreted as such, the author’s allusion to the winning side as the righteous and the losers as sinners (1En 56:8b) implies his support for Herod, which would be consistent with Essene affiliation at that time. The same approach allows us to date his scribal activity to the reign of King Herod (37-4 BCE). His prophecy of the imminent messianic judgment therefore coincides with the intense messianic expectation following the death of King Herod in 4 BCE,<sup>41</sup> an event that corresponds to the generally accepted date for the completion of the Parables of Enoch.<sup>42</sup> As the work of a scribe in an Essene community, sworn “to report none

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<sup>40</sup> For my demonstration of the use of this literary device in the Parables of Enoch, see: [https://www.academia.edu/142946397/The\\_Eschatological\\_War\\_as\\_Prophecy\\_Ex\\_Eventu\\_in\\_the\\_Parables\\_of\\_Enoch\\_1\\_Enoch\\_56\\_5\\_57\\_3](https://www.academia.edu/142946397/The_Eschatological_War_as_Prophecy_Ex_Eventu_in_the_Parables_of_Enoch_1_Enoch_56_5_57_3)

<sup>41</sup> There appears to have been a general expectation that the Messiah would appear early in the first century, due to the Essene interpretation of Daniel’s 490-year scheme, see Roger T. Beckwith, ‘The Year of the Messiah: Jewish and Early Christian Chronologies, and their Eschatological Consequences’, *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian*, Boston and Leiden: Brill Academic, 2001; 217-75; especially: “Essene expectation must have reached fever-pitch towards the end of the first century B.C., with the eschatological war already overdue, and the Messiahs of Levi and Israel expected in the last of Daniel’s 70 weeks, between 10 B.C. and A.D. 2”, op. cit. 265.

<sup>42</sup> In 2005, there was a meeting of the Enoch Seminar at the Camaldoli Monastery in Italy, in which a consensus was reached, among leading scholars, that the ‘Parables of Enoch’ was composed during the reign of Herod the Great and completed around the end of the first century BCE and the start of the first century CE. The date is no longer tentative, writes Paolo Sacchi in his summary of the meeting, “The burden of proof has shifted to those who disagree with the Herodian date. It is now their responsibility to provide evidence that would reopen the discussion”, ‘The 2005 Camaldoli Seminar on the Parables of Enoch: Summary and Prospects for Future Research’, *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, Grand Rapids MI/ Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2007; 511.

of their secrets to others” (*JW* 2.141), the distribution of the original text would have been limited to members of the group and trusted guests (cf. *4Ezra* 14:26, 45-48). Given that repentance and divine forgiveness form a part of the preparations for judgment in the original text (1En 50:1-4), it is highly unlikely that the author was an Essene from Qumran, for whom individual repentance was predetermined, and not a personal decision. Information regarding the provenance of the Parables of Enoch can be gleaned from the correspondence between its description of the eschatological war and the Civil War of 40-37 BCE. Comparison of certain features of the text with the account of the Civil War by Josephus points to a location high up on Mt. Arbel overlooking the Plain of Ginnosar and the Sea of Galilee,<sup>43</sup> a site that has recently been identified with the Arbel Cave Village.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, Mount Arbel has traditionally been associated with the start of redemption, most likely because it straddles the tribal areas of Zebulun and Naphtali, mentioned in the messianic prophecy of Isaiah (Is 9,1-7; Mt 4:12-17).<sup>45</sup> Due to its proximity to Nazareth, and to the hospitality granted to selected young men (1QS 6:13-23, *JW* 2.137-142; *Life* 10-11), it is plausible that Jesus of Nazareth visited this Essene community during late adolescence, encountering there the Parables of Enoch in its original form and also, perhaps, its author, Scribe A. The original text may also have been known to John the Baptist, whose preaching is a clear reflection of its content.

## **ii) Scribe B: author/redactor of the ending (70:3–71:17) and all the Noahide interpolations**

From the concerted anti-apocalyptic thrust of the epilogue and all three Noahide interpolations, it is justifiable to conclude that the author of all these secondary additions to the original text is the same author, Scribe B. His scribal activity is responsible for 25% of the current text of 1 Enoch 37–71. He gives the impression of being a zealous follower and defender of Enoch as he is the first known author to ascribe divine and messianic status to that antediluvian patriarch. He takes a stance against the apocalyptic worldview of Scribe A, for he has skillfully conflated his prophecy of final judgment with passages about Noah, the flood and the punishment of the rebel angels, thereby transposing it back to the times of Noah, and representing it as fulfilled in the present. He emphasizes the Deity’s regret for that event, and his promise to never repeat it (1En 55:1-2). He recounts that, since the end of his earthly life, Enoch has been exalted in heaven where he presides over a new era of peace and righteousness. Scribe B has evidently gone to a lot of trouble to preserve the original text (cf. *JW* 2.142), but has radically changed its meaning by means of his secondary additions. By alluding to the judgment of King Herod for his sinful life (1En 67:8-12), Scribe B is undeniably writing after his death in 4 BCE, and cautiously expresses a low opinion of the king’s reign. From what Scribe B writes about the Herod’s death, he regards judgment to be passed on an individual basis at the end of life, for he has removed every trace of a collective day of final judgment, as portrayed by Scribe A. To this end, it appears Scribe B may have erased from the original text a certain amount of material regarding the final judgment of the rebel angels.<sup>46</sup> Since he is not anticipating a final collective judgment, but an era of messianic peace overseen by Enoch, Scribe B could not have foreseen the First

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<sup>43</sup> For the comparison, see *JW* 1.248-249, 305-316, 326-345, *Ant* 14.330-332, 415-430, 447, 450, 468-469; for the provenance of the Parables of Enoch, see John Ben-Daniel, *The Essenes of Mount Arbel and Jerusalem: Origins, History and Influence*, Qumranica Mogilanensia series 20, Mogilany, Poland: Enigma Press, 2023; 89-120.

<sup>44</sup> For the Arbel Cave Village, see Ben-Daniel, *The Essenes of Mount Arbel and Jerusalem*; 7-36.

<sup>45</sup> For the investigation of this tradition, see Ben-Daniel, ‘Redemption Begins at Mount Arbel’, *The Qumran Chronicle*, Vol 32, Dec 2024; 61-102. It may be no coincidence that Mt. Arbel is also the site of the eschatological battle in the 7<sup>th</sup> century Jewish apocalypse *Sefer Zerubbabel*.

<sup>46</sup> See n. 36.

Revolt (66 CE) and the destruction of Jerusalem (70 CE), so he must have been writing some years before those events.

Further precision in dating Scribe B's additions to the original text can be gained from the identification of Enoch as the pre-existent Messiah Son of Man in 1En 71:14. In chapter 71, it has long been noted that, prior to being identified with this role, Enoch's elevation, divinization and glorification in heaven parallels the resurrection, ascension and glorification of Jesus Christ.<sup>47</sup> Theologically, however, as a human being, Enoch cannot not be identified with a pre-existent divine being, unless that being is first incarnated in Enoch. The words of Enoch's appointment to the role of Messiah Son of Man do indeed hint at his incarnation when they address Enoch as "that Son of Man who was born for righteousness..." (1En 71:14, cf. 46:3).<sup>48</sup> From this wording, it can be inferred that Scribe B was not addressing a Jewish audience, for whom it would have been blasphemous to assert 'the divine Son of Man was born' (cf. Jn 8:58-59), but rather a Christian audience, for whom the incarnation was a familiar concept. To be more precise, his message seems to have been targeted specifically at Christian claims for Jesus Christ, with the aim of refuting his role as Messiah Son of Man, on the grounds that Enoch had received that role long before, in antediluvian times. The specificity of Scribe B's attack against Christian claims identifies him as an antagonist of the Early Church, writing sometime between 33 CE and 66 CE, but realistically closer to the end of this range (50-65 CE). This corresponds closely with dating to the mid-first century, based on the Q source's knowledge of the interpolated version of the Parables in 1 Enoch (Mt 24:37-39, Lk 17:22-37).<sup>49</sup>

The proximity of Scribe B to the Early Church may also hold a clue to his location, for he was evidently close enough to know the details of the Church's proclamation and to oppose it through his editorial work on the original text of the Parables. The opportunity for this work may have been the inclusion of the Parables of Enoch into the collection of Enoch books that is now known as 1 Enoch, a project in which Scribe B would have had a leading role around mid-first century CE. Returning to the question of Scribe B's location, his proximity to the Early Church and his rejection of her proclamation places him in the neighbourhood of the mother Church on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. It is not unreasonable to associate him with the neighbouring Essene community on Mt. Zion, from whom many Essene priests and members had been baptized (Acts 2:41, 6:7). Scribe B would therefore represent Essene opposition to the Early Church, and to the exodus of her members to the Christian Faith. With some justification, it is postulated that the Essene community on Mt. Zion was established soon after 37 BCE, by the community of Mt. Arbel in Galilee, on land granted by King Herod behind his new palace, in return for their support during the Civil War.<sup>50</sup>

In summary, Scribe A was an apocalyptic seer and Essene scribe who lived at the Arbel Cave Village in Eastern Galilee and wrote the original text of the Parables of Enoch during Herod's reign (37-4 BCE). Scribe B was a scribe of the sister community of Mt. Zion, in Jerusalem, who opposed Scribe A's apocalyptic vision of a final collective judgment and rejected the Early Church's claim that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah Son of Man. So, around 50-65 CE, he redacted the original text of the Parables of Enoch, so as to elevate Enoch

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ*, New York: New Press, 2012; 82-95; Peter Schäfer, *Two Gods in Heaven: Jewish Concepts of God in Antiquity*, Princeton: Princeton Press, 2020; 49-53.

<sup>48</sup> As noted by Nickelsburg in his comments on 1En 71:13-14: "The present passage is the only one in the Parables that refers to the Son of Man being "born"", *1 Enoch 2*, 328. This passage is quoted from the translation of Nickelsburg and VanderKam, in *1 Enoch 2*, 321.

<sup>49</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 279.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Ben-Daniel, *The Essenes of Mount Arbel and Jerusalem*, 67-72.

to that role, and thereby prevent the Church from using the Parables as a proof text. Instead, his redacted version of the Parables elevated Enoch to divine heights and set the stage for later Jewish mystical works such as 2 and 3 Enoch. By changing the text of the Parables 1) he opposed the Early Church's claim that Jesus Christ was the Messiah Son of Man, the central figure in the Parables of Enoch; 2) he promoted Enoch to that position, and thus reclaimed the Parables for the Essene community; 3) he helped to restore the integrity of the Essene community and prevent the flight of Essenes to the Church; 4) he rescued Enoch from the accusation of false prophecy among those who did not recognize its fulfillment by Jesus Christ; 5) he provoked a reaction in the Early Church against the new edition of the Parables of Enoch and against the messianic claims for the ancient patriarch Enoch; 6) This tension led eventually, at the end of the first century CE, to the re-envisioning of apocalyptic eschatology in the Book of Revelation,<sup>51</sup> and to the writing of several other apocalypses around that time (e.g., 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, 2 Enoch).

Just prior to the First Revolt, the Church and its leaders fled from Jerusalem to avoid its destruction,<sup>52</sup> whereas the Essene community remained on Mt. Zion, where they suffered torture and slaughter at the hands of the Roman Army (*JW* 2.152-153). After the destruction of the city, their land on Mt. Zion became a part of the garrison camp of the Roman Army's 10<sup>th</sup> Legion.

## 6. Conclusion

The Parables of Enoch presents great difficulties for interpreters for many reasons. In this study we have focused on its complex composition. There is broad agreement among scholars, but not without some opposition, that the original text has been modified by the secondary addition of an epilogue and several Noahide interpolations, all related directly or indirectly to the story of Enoch, Noah, the flood and the judgment of rebel angels. Examining these additions closely, to understand their effect on the meaning of the original text, it has been shown that they all have the same anti-apocalyptic thrust: a prophetic progression to the final judgment in the original text is frequently interrupted by stories about the flood and the first world judgment, resulting in a conflation of the first and the final judgments. This effect is enhanced by the addition of an epilogue, in which the narrator, Enoch, is taken up to heaven at the end of his earthly life and is identified as the central messianic figure he had previously described, inexplicably unaware that he was describing himself. From the highest heaven, he oversees a messianic age of peace and righteousness, for the final collective judgment was fulfilled in the times of Noah and the flood. The epilogue and the Noahide interpolations transform the eschatological orientation of the original text from the imminent expectation of end-time judgment by a heavenly messiah to that of realized messianic fulfilment under the ancient patriarch Enoch. Recognizable in all the secondary additions, this transforming character exposes them as the work of a single author/redactor, and infuses the current text with a creative 'clash of eschatologies'.<sup>53</sup> The final, more speculative, part of the study profiles the author of the

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<sup>51</sup> The affinity between the two works is striking, indicating that John had been previously exposed to the Parables of Enoch. As the 'Revelation of Jesus Christ' (Rev 1:1), John's Apocalypse completes the Son of Man's task to reveal "all the treasures of what is hidden" (1En 46:3; cf. Jn 16:12-15). John reverts to the use of the Danielic expression 'one like a son of man' (Rev 1:13, 14:14) and restricts the titular 'the Son of Man' to the reported speech of Jesus alone, aiming perhaps to uncouple his writing from the Parables of Enoch. In his Gospel, John reaffirms that Jesus Christ fulfils the roles ascribed to the Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch, in tacit opposition to the claims made for Enoch (e.g., Jn 1:18, 3:13, 5:22-23,27, 6:62, 16:12-15).

<sup>52</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, III.5.

<sup>53</sup> The 'clash of eschatologies' in the Parables of Enoch is similar in outline, if not in detail, to the tension between John the Baptist, who anticipated an imminent and collective final judgment (as in the original text of

original text (Scribe A) and the author of the secondary additions in the current redacted text (Scribe B). It is proposed, and demonstrated, that only by defining and comparing these two components of the current redacted text, and by examining them and their origins separately, can we make sense of this Enochic composition, which appears to have played a very important part in the origins and history of the Early Church.

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Scribe A), and Jesus of Nazareth, who came first to establish an intermediate messianic kingdom, before returning at the end of history for the final collective judgment (as in Scribe B's secondary additions, except that the final collective judgment is yet to come, and Jesus, not Enoch, is the chosen judge); cf. Mt 11:2-6; Lk 7:18-23; Ben-Daniel, *The Essenes of Mount Arbel and Jerusalem*, 156-162.