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The “One Like a Son of Man” According to the Old Greek of Daniel 7,13-14

SUMMARY:

While studies of the Old Greek (OG) of Daniel 7,13-14 are not uncommon, they are often undertaken as part of a broader examination of the “one like a son of man”. Rarely, if ever, do these studies focus on the description of this figure in the OG version and what readers of this version might have understood of this character. This study is an examination of the interpretation of OG Daniel 7,13-14, and the argument is made that the OG portrays the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days and as a messianic figure.

Studies of the “one like a son of man” in Daniel 7 typically follow the description found in the Aramaic text of Daniel.¹ Reference is made to the two Greek versions of Daniel, the Old Greek (OG) and Theodotion (Θ),² when their support deviates from the Aramaic or offers some other relevant insight.³ Although it is important to keep in mind the differences between the Aramaic and Greek versions and the reasons for these differences,⁴ it is also worthwhile to examine the interpretation provided by the OG because the OG is a witness to a specific tradition of Daniel and since in some sense or at some level, every translation is an interpretation.⁵ Jennifer Dines states:

¹ I am grateful for the various comments and questions given by those who heard earlier drafts of this paper at the Society of Biblical Literature Greek Bible Section, 22 November 2007 and the Scottish Conference for Postgraduate Students in Theology and Religious Studies, 8 June 2006.

² There are only three known witnesses to the OG text of Daniel in existence today: Codex Chisianus 88 (9th-11th century CE), a Syriac version translated from the Greek called the Syro-Hexaplar (7th century CE), and the third-century Papyrus 967 (2nd-3rd century CE). Only Papyrus 967 is witness to the OG prior to Origen’s reworking of the Greek Old Testament into his Hexapla. See H.B. Swete, *The Old Testament Text in Greek* (3 vols.; Cambridge, 1912) 3.xii-xiii (discussion of ms. evidence); A. Rahlfs and R. Hanhart, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart, 2006); J. Ziegler, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco* (Septuaginta 16.2; Göttingen, 1954); T. McLay, *The OG and Th Versions of Daniel* (SBLSCS 43; Atlanta, 1996) 6-7; L.T. Stuckenbruck, “‘One like a Son of Man as the Ancient of Days’ in the Old Greek Recension of Daniel 7,13: Scribal Error or Theological Translation?” *ZNW* 86 (1995) 270. On P⁹⁶⁷, see A. Geissen, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel. Kap. 5-12 zusammen mit Susanna, Bel et Draco sowie Esther 1,1-2,15 nach dem Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967* (PTA 5; Bonn, 1968). N. Fernández Marcos (*The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* [Leiden, 2000] 144) and A. Schmitt (‘Die griechischen Danieltex-te [“θ” und ο] und das Theodotionproblem’, *BZ* 36 [1992] 5, n. 14) who date P⁹⁶⁷ to the second century AD.

³ One possible exception is T.J. Meadowcroft’s work on Daniel 7 (*Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel: A Literary Comparison* [JSOTSS 198; Sheffield, 1995] 198-244), but the emphasis of his study is on the comparison of the Aramaic and OG and the possible *Vorlage* of the OG.

⁴ K.H. Jobes and M. Silva list five reasons for differences between the Greek OT and the Masoretic Text (*Invitation to the Septuagint* [Grand Rapids, 2000] 92).

⁵ See M.A. Knibb, “The Septuagint and Messianism: Problems and Issues”, *The Septuagint and Messianism* (ed. M.A. Knibb) (BETL 195; Leuven, 2006) 9; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 86.

Even if it is unclear whether a divergence between the LXX and the MT comes from the translator or from his source-text, a difference of interpretation between the two texts has significance. If nothing else, it shows that there were different streams of tradition, and if the LXX witnesses to some elements of interpretation which have not otherwise been preserved in Hebrew [or Aramaic], it is a very important window onto a period of biblical interpretation before the MT emerged as dominant.⁶

This paper is a study of what is possibly the earliest extant interpretation of the Aramaic text of Daniel 7 and the “one like a son of man”.⁷ My contention is first that the OG presents the son of man figure as similar to the Ancient of Days, while not identifying the two figures. And second, the OG depicts the “one like a son of man” in a way that suggests that this figure is messianic.

I. The Similarities between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days

Four similarities between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days can be noted in the OG. First, the son of man figure arrives like the Ancient of Days. Second, the “one like a son of man” appears on the clouds of heaven. Third, the Danielic son of man receives service that suggests cultic worship, and fourth, those standing before the Ancient of Days approach the “one like a son of man” and appear to stand before him.

1. *The “one like a son of man’s” Arrival like the Ancient of Days*

The most commonly noted and most significant verse in the OG of Dan 7 is v. 13, particularly line c. The entire verse reads: “I saw in a vision of the night and

⁶ J.M. Dines, *The Septuagint* (London, 2004) 133.

⁷ 4Q246 contains some links to Daniel 7, but the fragmentary nature of the Qumran text provides less certainty about whether the ‘Son of God’ figure is an interpretation of the “one like a son of man”. For various views, see J.J. Collins, “The *Son of God* Text from Qumran”, *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge* (ed. M. de Boer) (JSNTSS 84; Sheffield, 1993) 65-82; J.D.G. Dunn, “‘Son of God’ as ‘Son of Man’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls? A Response to John Collins on 4Q246”, *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* (eds. S.E. Porter – C.A. Evans) (JSPSS 26; Sheffield, 1997) 198-210; H.-J. Fabry, “Die frühjüdische Apokalyphtik als Reaktion auf Fremdherrschaft. Zur Funktion von 4Q246”, *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum. Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. E. Gräßer) (BZNW 97; Berlin, 1999) 84-98.

behold on the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man. And like the Ancient of Days he arrived, and those standing there came to him.”

Papyrus 967 reads⁸:

13 a ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὀράματι τῆς νυκτὸς

b καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἤρχετο ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,

c καὶ ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) παρῆν,

d καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτῷ.

14 a καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία βασιλική,

b καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πᾶσα δόξα λατρεύουσα αὐτῷ·

c καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἀρθῆ,

d καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῆ

Codex 88, supported by the Syro-Hexaplar, reads⁹:

13 a ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὀράματι τῆς νυκτὸς

b καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἤρχετο,

c καὶ ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρῆν,

d καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες παρῆσαν αὐτῷ.

14 a καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία,

b καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῷ λατρεύουσα·

c καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἀρθῆ,

d καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῆ

The significance of v. 13c is that the “one like a son of man” did not come *to* the Ancient of Days (as in the MT and Θ), but *as* or *like* the Ancient of Days. Scholars have debated how the OG translation came to read ὡς while the MT has ַו and Θ has ἕως, and many suggestions have been made. Since we are focusing on the OG as a separate tradition and interpretation, we will not spend time in discussion of the reasons for the difference.¹⁰ Therefore, the question to be answered is: What does ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν mean in the OG of Daniel 7,13?

⁸ Text of Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108.

⁹ Text of Rahlfs and Hanhart, *Septuaginta*, 914.

¹⁰ J.A. Montgomery (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* [ICC; Edinburgh, 1927] 304) suggested that the use of ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν was a scribal error for ἕως. In his critical

Two possible meanings for ὥς in 7,13c were suggested by F.F. Bruce. The word ὥς can either have a temporal referent: “*When* the Ancient of Days came, then those standing there came to him,” or it means the same as the previous ὥς in 7,13b: “he came *as* the Ancient of Days.”¹¹ One of the major difficulties with the temporal meaning is that it would require a different meaning of ὥς in the previous line. While this is not impossible, the chiasmic (P⁹⁶⁷) and the synonymous structure (Codex 88) of the two lines indicate that both uses of ὥς should be taken to mean “as” or “like.”¹²

P967

13 b2 ἤρχετο ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,

13 c καὶ ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) παρῆν,

Codex 88

13 b2 ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἤρχετο,

13 c καὶ ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρῆν,¹³

Recently, Otfried Hofius has argued that the one like a son of man does not come as the Ancient of Days but that the Ancient of Days is the subject of v. 13c. He states: “Wie in V. 13b der Ausdruck ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου das Subjekt zu ἤρχετο ist, so in

edition, Ziegler corrected the OG from ὥς to ἕως thinking that ὥς was a scribal error (*Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 170; also in the second edition, J. Ziegler and O. Munnich, *Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco* [Göttingen, ²1999] 338). As is often mentioned, Ziegler did not have the benefit of Papyrus 967 when his edition was published (see J. Lust, “Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, *ETL* 54 [1978] 62), but Sharon Pace Jeansonne who had access to the full text of Papyrus 967 relies on Ziegler’s emended text and does not mention Papyrus 967 in her discussion of Dan 7,13. She also concludes that ὥς was a scribal error, which caused παλαιοῦ ἡμερῶν to be “hyper-corrected” to παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν (*The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7-12* [Washington D.C., 1988] 96-99; also A. Yarbro Collins, “The ‘Son of Man’ Tradition and the Book of Revelation”, *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* [ed. J.H. Charlesworth] [Minneapolis, 1992], 536-568). Other suggestions for the existence of ὥς in the OG witnesses include a purposeful change by the translator for theological reasons, often referred to as “theological Tendenz” (F.F. Bruce, “The Oldest Greek Version of Daniel”, *OTS* 20 [1977] 25; Stuckenbruck, “One Like a Son of Man”, 276. Cf. A.F. Segal, Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism [SJLA 25; Leiden, 1977] 202; “‘Two Powers in Heaven’ and Early Christian Trinitarian Thinking”, *Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity* [ed. S.T. Davis et al] [New York, 1999] 73-95), or that the OG is an accurate translation of its Vorlage (Lust, “Daniel 7,13”, 66; see also Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 26)

¹¹ Bruce, “Oldest Greek Version”, 25.

¹² Lust (“Daniel 7,13”, 65) rules out the temporal option because he says ὥς is never used temporally in a visionary context within Daniel and in the visions of Ezekiel.

¹³ The underlining notes the change of position in the verbs creating a chiasmic structure in P967 and a synonymous structure in Codex 88.

V. 13c der Ausdruck ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν das Subjekt zu παρῆν.”¹⁴ Hofius has correctly recognized the similar structure between 7,13b and 7,13c, but his interpretation implies the existence of two figures in 7,13 rather than the view taken by most scholars which only sees one figure. Hofius understands this second figure in 7.13c to be the Ancient of Days who is mentioned in 7.9-10.¹⁵

Hofius’ view has difficulty when the grammatical structure of the phrase ὡς...καὶ ὡς... is considered.¹⁶ This construction, which is found here in OG Dan 7,13, typically indicates a synonymous parallelism. A subject or a verbal action is described as like one thing and like another. Even if different verbs are used in each of the ὡς clauses, as we find in OG Dan 7,13, a synonymous parallelism still exists. The subject of each clause is assumed to be the same unless it is clearly stated otherwise and the nouns in the ὡς clauses do not function as the subjects of clauses.¹⁷

Joel 2,7 – ὡς μαχηταὶ δραμοῦνται καὶ ὡς ἄνδρες πολεμισταὶ
ἀναβήσονται ἐπὶ τὰ τείχη

Isa 38,14 – ὡς χελιδῶν οὕτως φωνήσω καὶ ὡς περιστέρα οὕτως
μελετήσω

Ezek 38,9 – καὶ ἀναβήσῃ ὡς ὑετὸς καὶ ἥξεις ὡς νεφέλη κατακαλύψαι
γῆν

Sir 24,15 – ὡς κιννάμωνον καὶ ἀσπάλαθος ἀρωμάτων δέδωκα ὁσμὴν
καὶ ὡς σμύρνα ἐκλεκτὴ διέδωκα εὐωδίαν¹⁸

With respect to OG Dan 7,13, this means that ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου and ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν are placed in synonymous parallelism. Both phrases are descriptions of the figure that Daniel sees in his vision of the night coming with the clouds of heaven. The figure who comes with the clouds like a son of man also arrives like the Ancient of Days.¹⁹

¹⁴ O. Hofius, “Der Septuaginta-Text von Daniel 7,13-14”, ZAW 117 (2005) 84-85.

¹⁵ Hofius, “Septuaginta-Text”, 86.

¹⁶ By ‘ὡς...καὶ ὡς...’, I am referring to passages in which ὡς is used more than once in close succession and separated by a καί.

¹⁷ I could find no instance in the OT, Apocrypha, or the NT of a ὡς...καὶ ὡς... construction in which ὡς and the noun following it served as the subject of the phrase.

¹⁸ See also: Num 23,24; Deut 32,2; 2 Kdgm 22,43/Ps 17,45; Pss 77,52; 81,7; 88,37, 38; Prov 2,4; Hos. 2,5; 9,10; Nah 1,10; Isa 1,9 (cf. Rom 9,29); Wis 3,6; Sir 15,2; 28,23; 39,22; 47,18.

¹⁹ Note that Kim (*Son of Man*, 23-24) also points out that the Ancient of Days is mentioned absolutely in 7,9-10 and not “like the Ancient of Days” as Hofius’ interpretation requires. For further

Thus, the OG witnesses refer to the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days, but this similarity does not mean that the “one like a son of man” is the same being as the Ancient of Days in 7,9-10.²⁰ But, as with the Aramaic text of Daniel, the OG also presents the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days as two distinct figures. Evidence for this is seen in the giving of authority to the “one like a son of man”.²¹ Who else is capable of giving the son of man figure authority other than the Ancient of Days? Therefore, although the “one like a son of man” is portrayed as distinct from the figure of the Ancient of Days in 7,9-10, the OG closely aligns the Ancient of Days and the “one like a son of man” by describing the “one like a son of man” as ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in 7,13c.

2. The “one like a son of man’s” Appearance with the Clouds

The second aspect that indicates similarity between the Ancient of Days and the “one like a son of man” is the son of man figure’s appearance on the clouds of heaven. In 7,13b, the OG states that the son of man figure came ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. The MT uses the preposition םַעַל to indicate the son of man figure’s position in relation to the clouds. Θ translates םַעַל with μετὰ. Some scholars have attempted to argue that the use of ἐπί by the OG implies a divine status of the “one like a son of man” since that figure appeared “on” the clouds of heaven rather than “with” the clouds of heaven.²² However, this much weight cannot be placed on the prepositions alone,²³ especially since the meaning of prepositions is often fluid even within a language. Examples of the fluidity of Greek preposition use can be seen in the references to Dan 7,13 in the NT.

ἐπί—Matt 24,30; 26,64; Rev 14,14

μετὰ—Mark 14,62; Rev 1,7 (but ἐπί in some Rev mss.).

ἐν—Mark 13,26

disagreements with Hofius’ argument, see B.E. Reynolds, “Another Suggestion for ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in the Old Greek of Daniel 7:13”, *Henoah*, forthcoming.

²⁰ Lust (“Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, 68) states: “...in the Septuagint, the ‘Son of Man’ and the ‘Ancient of Days’ are the same.” Cf. M. Hengel, “‘Sit at My Right Hand!’ The Enthronement of Christ at the Right Hand of God and Psalm 110:1”, in *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh, 1995) 184.

²¹ Stuckenbruck, “One Like a Son of Man”, 275.

²² Lust, “Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, 68; Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 228.

²³ See Pace Jeansomme, *The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7-12*, 112.

Therefore, it seems unwise to use the prepositions in Dan 7,13 to argue for or against the “one like a son of man’s” similarity with the Ancient of Days. The important point is the figure’s appearance on the visionary stage in the presence of clouds. His position, whether he is on the clouds or with them (or even in them), does not matter.

Rather, the significance is in the reference to clouds. Clouds, in the OT commonly indicate the appearance of YHWH.²⁴ God’s presence in the tabernacle and in the temple is signified by the presence of a cloud (Exod 40,34-35; 1 Kgs 8,10-11; 2 Chron 5,13-14). The pillar of cloud also indicates the Lord’s presence (Exod 13,21-22; 14,19). In Deut 5,22, the Lord’s presence on Sinai is connected with fire, cloud, gloom, and darkness. Jer 4,13 speaks of God’s chariot as closely related to the clouds (cf. Ezek 1,4, 26), and Ps 97,2 highlights the relationship between clouds, fire, and God’s throne (cf. Ps 18,11). Even the coming of the Lord in judgment on the Day of the Lord is correlated with clouds (Joel 2,2; Nah 1,3; Zeph 1,14).

Other references to clouds in the OT do not connote the appearance of any other being. They refer to clouds in the sky (Gen 9,13; Job 7,9; 37,11), a cloud of incense (Ezek 8,11), mist that quickly passes away, and to coming judgment (Hos 6,4; 13,3).

No other being, including angels, appears with clouds in the OT. Thus, the “one like a son of man’s” coming with the presence of clouds implies the figure’s similarity with the Lord and most likely indicates a heavenly being greater than the angels.²⁵

3. *The “one like a son of man” and Cultic Worship*

The third similarity to be noted is the word used for service in the OG, which communicates that the service the “one like a son of man” receives is of the nature of cultic worship. After the “one like a son of man” is given authority, v. 14 says that the nations of the earth will serve him. What is significant about v. 14 for the OG

²⁴ A. Feuillet, “Le Fils de l’homme de Daniel et la tradition biblique”, *RB* 60 (1953) 187-189. See also W. Bittner, “‘Gott-Menschensohn-Davidssohn. Eine Untersuchung zur Traditionsgeschichte von Daniel 7,13f.’”, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 35 (1985) 349-351. Cf. M. Black, “Die Apotheose Israels: eine neue Interpretation des danielischen „Menschensohns“”, *Jesus und der Menschensohn. Für Anton Vögtle* (ed. R. Pesch – R. Schnackenburg) (Freiburg, 1975) 97.

²⁵ Cf. Lacocque, *Daniel*, 137; C.C. Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation* (WUNT 38; Göttingen, 1986) 71-72; C. Rowland, *Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London, 1982), 181-182. Caragounis (*Son of Man*, 74) states the clouds create a “serious obstacle” for equating the one like a son of man with the holy ones and that “clouds are bearers of the divine presence.”

stands before the Ancient of Days. This is highlighted by the use of the verb παρίστημι in vv. 10 and 13.³¹

Reference to the standing ones in v. 13d by both Papyrus 967 and Codex 88 indicates that these standing ones approached (προσήγαγον) or came (παρήσαν) to him (αὐτῷ), i.e. they approached the one like a son of man.³² In the OG, the approach of the οἱ παρεστηκότες to the “one like a son of man” infers another similarity between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days.³³ In v. 10, the Ancient of Days is surrounded by the great multitude standing before the throne. When the “one like a son of man” arrives, the great multitude approaches this figure. Their approach to the “one like a son of man” shows similarity with their position before the Ancient of Days, and it suggests that the son of man figure has a status similar to that held by the Ancient of Days in relation to the standing ones. This portrayal implies both the “one like son of man’s” exalted state before the οἱ παρεστηκότες and therefore his similarity to the Ancient of Days, but the OG does so without going so far as to claim identity with the Ancient of Days.

Thus, the OG of Dan 7,13-14 depicts the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days in four ways. (1) The son of man figure arrives like the Ancient of Days. (2) He appears on the clouds of heaven, (3) receives service that suggests cultic worship given to God, and (4) is approached by those who stood before the Ancient of Days.

II. The Messianic Characteristics of the “one like a son of man”

Now, while in the OG the Ancient of Days and the son of man figure do share these similarities and the son of man figure seems to be a heavenly figure, there are also indications that this figure has messianic characteristics.³⁴ The first messianic

³¹ Ziegler emended the text based on a marginal reading in the Syro-Hexaplar to read: καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτόν (Ziegler, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 170. Cf. Lust, “Daniel 7,13”, 63. Ralphy, *Septuaginta*, follows the text of Codex 88 and the Syro-Hexaplar.). In Ziegler’s emendation, the accusative pronoun suggests that those standing there presented the one like a son of man. This is similar to the Aramaic text’s וקדמוהי הקדמוהי (“and they presented him before him”).

³² In the Aramaic text and Θ, the standing ones present the “one like a son of man” to the Ancient of Days.

³³ Kim, *Son of Man*, 24.

³⁴ I am using the word ‘messianic’ in line with J. Lust’s definition of Messianism (*Messianism and the Septuagint. Collected Essays* [ed. K. Hauspie] [Leuven, 2004] 142): “Messianism can tentatively be defined as 1. the expectation of a future human and yet transcendent messiah or saviour, 2. who will

characteristic in the OG is that the “one like a son of man” receives kingly authority. Second, he receives an eternal kingdom, and, third, a distinction is made between the “one like a son of man” and the holy ones of the Most High.

1. *The “one like a son of man’s” Kingly Authority*

The first and most significant messianic characteristic is the fact that in the OG the “one like a son of man” receives kingly authority. The OG has a different list of things given to the “one like a son of man” than the Aramaic text. Whereas Aramaic Daniel and Θ speak of the son of man figure being given dominion, honor, and a kingdom (Aramaic: מלכו, יקר, שלטן; Θ: ἀρχή, τιμή, βασιλεία); the OG says that he was only given authority. Interestingly, Papyrus 967 refers to it as ἐξουσία βασιλική (“kingly authority” or “royal authority”).³⁵ In Codex 88 and the Syro-Hexaplar version, the word ἐξουσία is followed by a hexaplaric mark and the words καὶ τιμὴ βασιλική (“kingly authority and honor”).³⁶ The OG thus indicates that what is given to the “one like a son of man” has to do with kingship and for that reason hints at a possible messianic interpretation of this heavenly figure.³⁷

When viewed in relation to the portrait of the Davidic Messiah in Pss. Sol. 17, this implication becomes more convincing.

Pss. Sol. 17,21: “See, Lord, and raise up for them their king, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time known to you, O God.”

Pss. Sol. 17,32: “And he will be a righteous king over them, taught by God.

There will be no unrighteousness among them in his days, for all shall be holy, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.”

2. *The Reception of an Eternal Kingdom*

Further evidence of the son of man figure’s messianic characteristics can be seen in his receiving of an eternal kingdom. In OG Dan 7,14 (also Aramaic Daniel

establish God’s kingdom on earth, 3. in an eschatological era. In a narrower sense, the expected saviour is a descendant of David.”

³⁵ Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108.

³⁶ Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108-109; Ziegler, Susanna, 170. See Hofius, “Septuaginta-Text”, 79, n. 27; and Kim, *Son of Man*, 23, n. 38. This appears to be an attempt to bring the OG in line with the Aramaic version.

³⁷ See Kim, *Son of Man*, 25, who says that these phrases “could suggest an identification of the heavenly figure in v. 13 with the messiah.”

and Θ), the “kingly authority” which the “one like a son of man” receives is said to be eternal authority that will not pass away (καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἀρθῆ). The next line states that the son of man figure’s kingdom will not be destroyed (καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῆ). While the “one like a son of man” is not explicitly said to receive an eternal kingdom, the mention of authority and kingdoms that will not pass away are highly suggestive of an eternal messianic kingdom.

In 2 Sam 7,12-13, God promised David that he would establish one of his offspring, and that the throne of this figure’s kingdom would last forever. 4QFlor 10-12 interprets this promise as referring to the kingdom of the Branch of David, or the Messiah:

“And YHWH declares to you that he will build you a house. I will raise up your seed after you and *establish the throne of his kingdom forever*. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me. This (refers to the) ‘branch of David’, who will arise with the Interpreter of the law who will rise up in Zion in the last days, as it is written: ‘I will raise up the hut of David which has fallen’.”³⁸

Thus, the son of man’s receiving of an eternal kingdom, coupled with the kingly authority he receives, strongly implies that the OG portrays this figure with messianic undertones.

3. The “one like a son of man” and the Holy Ones of the Most High

Thirdly, a distinction is made between the “one like a son of man” and the holy ones of the Most High which suggests that in the OG the “one like a son of man” is a representative ruler of the holy ones rather than merely a symbol for them. Those who argue that the “one like a son of man” is a symbol of the holy ones do so for a few of reasons. First, the primary reason is that the “one like a son of man” is not mentioned in the interpretation of the dream while the holy ones are not mentioned in the dream. Secondly, both the son of man figure and the holy ones are given a kingdom (v. 14; v. 27), and thirdly, the reception of both kingdoms follows the judgment of the fourth

³⁸ Translation from F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* (Leiden/Grand Rapids, 2nd 1996) 136.

beast both in the dream and its interpretation (vv. 11-12; v. 26). These factors lead some to see a one-to-one correlation between the one like a son of man and the holy ones.³⁹

However, this line of argument is based upon the reading of Aramaic Daniel and does not hold up in an examination of the OG text of Dan 7,13-14. In the OG, an explicit distinction is made between the “one like a son of man” and the holy ones in that the holy ones are mentioned in the midst of Daniel’s vision prior to the appearance of the “one like a son of man”. In the description of the eleventh horn in 7,8, the OG contains the phrase: καὶ ἐποίει πόλεμον πρὸς τοὺς ἁγίους. The Aramaic text and Θ do not have this phrase until 7,22. This indicates that the holy ones and the “one like a son of man” are separate characters in the dream, and it therefore calls into question the symbolic interpretation, at least for the OG, since the main argument for symbolically equating the holy ones with the “one like a son of man” is that the son of man figure appears in the dream and the holy ones in the interpretation. Thus, the appearance of the “one like a son of man” with his kingly authority and eternal kingdom after the mention of war being made against the holy ones may suggest that in the OG this figure functions as a representative ruler of the holy ones.

III. Conclusion

Examining the portrait of the “one like a son of man” in the OG has indicated some unique characteristics of the son of man figure. This figure is more closely aligned with the Ancient of Days. He is described as having arrived like the Ancient of Days, appearing with the clouds, receiving service due a divine figure, and having those standing before the Ancient of Days approach him. While the “one like a son of man” is similar to the Ancient of Days, there is no indication of equivalency or identification. In fact the giving of authority to the “one like a son of man” implies that the son of man figure’s status is different from that of the Ancient of Days.

The OG portrait of the son of man figure also suggests that the “one like a son of man” has a messianic nature. This is most clearly seen in the kingly authority that

³⁹ Casey, *Son of Man*, 24-25; A.A. Di Lella, “The One in Human Likeness and the Holy Ones of the Most High in Daniel 7”, *CBQ* 39 (1977) 11.

the figure receives. Other indications include his kingdom that will not pass away and his distinction from the holy ones of the Most High.

It is possible, then, that the interpretation of the “one like a son of man” in the OG may have provided a basis for the more openly messianic and heavenly interpretations of this figure that are found in later Jewish apocalyptic literature such as the *Similitudes of Enoch* and *4 Ezra*.