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The Enochic Son of Man and the Apocalyptic Background of the Son of Man Sayings in John's Gospel

Benjamin E. Reynolds

It can no longer be denied that the Parables of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 37–71) reflect a first-century Jewish milieu.¹ Although this is the case, we still cannot be as bold as R.H. Charles to claim: “The influence of 1 Enoch on the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books taken together.”² While Charles represents the opposite end of the spectrum from J.T. Milik, the consensus now is that the Parables of Enoch should be understood as a first-century Jewish document. This viewpoint requires rethinking the relationship between the Parables and the New Testament. One of the places where valuable exploration can be made is in a comparison between “that son of man” in the Parables of Enoch and “the Son of Man” in the four gospels.³

Scholars have drawn attention to the noticeable parallels between the Parables and the Synoptic Gospels, especially the Gospel of Matthew and the reference to the Son of Man's “throne of glory.”⁴ But what about John, the Fourth Gospel? Ever since the rise of critical scholarship, there has been a scholarly “parting of the ways” between John and

¹ See Darrell Bock's *Forschungsbericht* in the opening chapter of this book.

² R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893) p. 41; *idem*, 2nd ed., 1912, p. xciv.

³ The capitalization and lack of it hints at my understanding of the titular use of “the Son of Man” in the four gospels, while also being sensitive to the lack of consensus on the titular use of “that son of man” in the Parables.

⁴ Johannes Theisohn, *Der auserwählte Richter: Untersuchungen zum traditionsgeschichtlichen Ort der Menschensohngestalt der Bilderreden des Äthiopischen Henoch* (SUNT 12; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), pp. 153–54; Leslie W. Walck, “The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and the Gospels,” in G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 299–337.

the Synoptic Gospels, and the Gospel of John has largely been addressed in isolation.⁵ Whereas the Synoptic Son of Man sayings have been placed in three categories of earthly sayings, suffering sayings, and coming/apocalyptic sayings,⁶ the Johannine Son of Man cannot be successfully fit into these categories.⁷ The “coming” or “apocalyptic” Son of Man sayings in the Synoptic Gospels reveal a clear influence from Daniel 7 and refer to the Son of Man coming at a climactic, end-time moment, on the clouds, with the angels, and with great glory. Subsequently, the elect are gathered from the four corners of the earth, implying the completion of judgment (Mark 13:26–27; 14:62/pars.). The Gospel of Matthew makes explicit the Son of Man’s role in the judgment of the righteous and the wicked (Matt 19:28–30; 25:31–46).

The Son of Man sayings in the Gospel of John, on the other hand, do not reflect such obvious influence from Daniel 7, and they do not speak of the coming of the Son of Man with or without the clouds, the angels, or other typical apocalyptic imagery. Since these descriptors are the primary pieces of evidence for including sayings in the Synoptic coming/apocalyptic category, there are legitimate questions concerning whether or not the Johannine Son of Man can be said to have an “apocalyptic” background.

Numerous backgrounds have been suggested for the Johannine Son of Man. The most common suggestions are: (a) that the Johannine Son of Man is a reinterpretation of

⁵ Unfortunately, the obvious differences between the Son of Man in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have too often hidden similarities that are shared among the four gospels. For example, all four gospels consistently present the phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as one used by Jesus alone (cf. Luke 24:7; John 12:34) and as a reference to Jesus.

⁶ Rudolph Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; Kendrick Grobel, trans.; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951, 1955), vol. 1, p. 30.

⁷ Walck, “Son of Man,” p. 335. See the attempts by Stephen S. Smalley, “The Johannine Son of Man Sayings,” *NTS* 15 (1969), pp. 278–301; Clay Ham, “The Title ‘Son of Man’ in the Gospel of John,” *Stone-Campbell Journal* 1 (1998), pp. 67–84.

the Synoptic tradition,⁸ (b) that there is an OT background separate from or combined with Daniel 7 (e.g., Psalm 8; Proverbs 31; Ezekiel; Wisdom, etc.),⁹ (c) that the background is found in the Gnostic Redeemer myth¹⁰ or in a Primal Man myth,¹¹ (d) that the Johannine Son of Man is a reflection of Heavenly Man speculations,¹² and (e) that Daniel 7 and/or other apocalyptic texts such as the Parables of Enoch have had some influence on the Johannine portrait of the Son of Man.¹³

Although these various origins of the expression have been suggested, the argument of this paper is that the background of the Johannine Son of Man primarily

⁸ Maurice Casey, *The Solution to the Son of Man Problem* (LNTS 343; London: T&T Clark, 2007), p. 312. This position may or may not include an apocalyptic understanding of the Synoptic Gospels.

⁹ Edwin A. Abbot, *"The Son of Man" or Contributions to the Study of the Thoughts of Jesus (Diatessarica 8)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910); Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-existence in the New Testament* (SNTSMS 21; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Robert Rhea, *The Johannine Son of Man* (AThANT 76; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1990); Delbert Burkett, *The Son of the Man in the Gospel of John* (JSNTSup 56; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Markus Sasse, *Der Menschensohn im Evangelium nach Johannes* (TANZ 35; Tübingen/Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2000).

¹⁰ Bultmann, *Theology*, vol. 2, p. 37.

¹¹ Frederick H. Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History* (NTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967).

¹² C.H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); A.J.B. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964); Carsten Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου", *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), VIII, pp. 400–81.

¹³ Siegfried Schulz, *Untersuchungen zur Menschensohn-Christologie im Johannesevangelium. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Methodengeschichte der Auslegung des 4. Evangeliums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957); Robert Maddox, "The Function of the Son of Man in the Gospel of John," in R. Banks (ed.), *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 186–204; Francis J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man* (2nd ed.; Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose 14; Rome: LAS, 1978); John Painter, "The Enigmatic Johannine Son of Man," in F. Van Segbroeck, Christopher M. Tuckett, Gilbert Van Belle, and J. Verheyden (eds.), *Four Gospels 1992. Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (BETL 100; 3 vols.; Louvain: Peeters, 1992), pp. 1869–87; Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (WUNT II/249; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). Most recently J. Harold Ellens, "What is the Son of Man in John: The Son of Man Logia in John and in the Synoptic Gospels in the Light of Second Temple Judaism Traditions" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Michigan, 2009), soon to be published as *Jesus as Son of Man in John* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, forthcoming 2010). For other views, see Peder Borgen, "Some Jewish Exegetical Traditions as Background for Son of Man Sayings in John's Gospel (Jn 3, 13–14 and context)," in Marinus de Jonge (ed.), *L'Évangile de Jean* (Gembloux, Belgium: Duculot, 1977), pp. 243–58; Wolfgang Roth, "Jesus as the Son of man: The Scriptural Identity of a Johannine Image," in D.E. Groh and R. Jewett (eds.), *The Living Text: Essays in Honor of Ernest W. Saunders* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), pp. 11–26; and J.-A. Bühner, *Der Gesandte und sein Weg im 4. Evangelium. Die kultur- und religionsgeschichtlichen Grundlangen der johanneischen Sendungschristologie sowie ihre traditionsgeschichtliche Entwicklung* (WUNT II/2; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1977).

evidences an apocalyptic background. More specifically, because the Johannine Son of Man is portrayed with similar functions and characteristics as first-century interpretations of the Danielic son of man, the Johannine figure can also be understood to be an interpretation of the “one like a son of man” and can likewise be called an “apocalyptic Son of Man.”¹⁴ Considering space and the emphasis of this volume, this essay will limit the scope of this argument to a comparison of the son of man figures in the Parables and John’s Gospel. The relevance and need for a comparison between the Parables and the Gospel of John has become all the more necessary since the scholarly consensus on the date of the Parables has shifted and now most Second Temple specialists date the Parables earlier than most NT specialists date the Gospel of John.¹⁵

The focus of this essay will be on similarities between the son of man figures in the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John. First, a description will be given of the Enochic son of man’s functions and characteristics. Second, the Johannine Son of Man’s functions and characteristics will be described, especially those bearing similarities with those of the son of man figure in the Parables. Third, the essay will summarize the similarities and differences between the Johannine Son of Man and the figure in the Parables of Enoch and will conclude with a discussion concerning the possible relationship between the Gospel of John and the Parables of Enoch.

The Enochic Son of Man

In the Parables of Enoch, the figure who is seated on the Lord of Spirits’ throne in ch. 46 (also 51:3; 55:4; 62:2, 3, 5) is called the “Chosen One” (39:6; 40:5; 45:3; etc.),

¹⁴ The phrase “apocalyptic Son of Man” is commonly used to refer to the son of man figure in Daniel 7 and/or the interpretations of the Danielic figure in Jewish apocalypses such as the Parables of Enoch, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*. See Maddox, “Function,” p. 197 n. 3; and Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation* (SNTSMS 107; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 22–33.

¹⁵ This is especially the case with regard to the final redaction and not the initial writing of the Gospel.

“that son of man” (46:2, 3, 4; 48:2; etc.), “Anointed One” (48:10; 52:4), and “Righteous One” (38:2; 51:3). The two most common designations¹⁶ are “Chosen One” and “that son of man.”¹⁷ It is clear that all four of these designations refer to the same figure and not four separate figures. James VanderKam has persuasively argued that this can be seen in the way in which there is an overlap of functions between the designations (cf. 45:3; 49:4; 62:5; 69:27).¹⁸

“Chosen One” most likely derives from the Servant Songs in Isaiah where it is a common description of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah (42:1; cf. 41:8, 9; 43:10, 20; 44:1, 2; 45:4; 49:7).¹⁹ The “son of man” language has its origin in Daniel 7, as is apparent from other terms and concepts from Daniel 7: Ancient/Head of Days with hair white as wool (*1 En.* 46:1; Dan 7:9), thousand thousands and myriad myriads standing before the Head of Days (*1 En.* 40:1; Dan 7:10), a throne (*1 En.* 45:3; Dan 7:9), books opened (*1 En.* 47:3; Dan 7:10), the overthrow of kings (*1 En.* 48:8–10; Dan 7:17–18), and judgment (*1 En.* 46:5; Dan 7:10–12). But how does this figure who is called “Chosen One,” “that son of man,” “Anointed One,” and “Righteous One” function in the Parables of Enoch? And what are this figure’s characteristics?

¹⁶ The word “designation” will be used instead of “title,” since there is no consensus on whether these phrases function as titles. Cf. Maurice Casey, “The Use of the Term ‘Son of Man’ in the Similitudes of Enoch,” *JSJ* 7 (1976), pp. 11–29, at p. 18; and John J. Collins, “The Heavenly Representative: The Son of Man in the Similitudes of Enoch,” in John J. Collins and George W.E. Nickelsburg (eds.), *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms* (SBLSCS 12; Chico: Scholars, 1980), pp. 111–33, at p. 112.

¹⁷ There are three separate phrases translated into English as “that son of man.” The common understanding is that the three *Ge’ez* phrases refer to the same figure. However, see Helge S. Kvanvig’s recent questioning of this line of thinking (“The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch,” in G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* [Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007] 179–215, esp. 193–97).

¹⁸ James C. VanderKam, “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37–71,” in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 169–91.

¹⁹ See Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch* (SVTP 7; Leiden: Brill, 1985), pp. 195–97. Both the Isaianic servant and the Enochic figure are called “my Chosen One” or “my chosen” (Isa 42:1; 45:4; *1 En.* 45:3, 4; 55:4), “righteous one” (Isa 53:11; *1 En.* 53:6), and a light to the nations (Isa 49:6; *1 En.* 48:4).

Functions of the Enochic son of man

Judgment

The most obvious function of the son of man figure in the Parables of Enoch is his role as judge. Although the “one like a son of man” in Daniel is not explicitly said to judge, judgment permeates the depictions of the son of man figure in the Parables of Enoch. This is especially noticeable in the statement: “the whole judgment was given to the son of man and he will make sinners vanish and perish from the face of the earth” (69:27).²⁰ “That son of man” is described as righteous in his judgment (50:4; cf. 62:3), and his execution of judgment is connected with his presence on the throne of glory (55:4; 61:8–9; 62:2; 69:27, 29).

The punishment that ensues from the son of man’s judgment indicates the end-time nature of his judgment. For example, after he is seated on the throne of glory (ch. 62), the kings of the earth become terrified once they recognize the son of man figure and that he sits on the throne of glory and will judge (62:3–5). Following the Enochic son of man’s pronouncement of judgment, the kings of the earth are led by the angels to their punishment (62:9–12). The prevalence of judgment in the depictions of the son of man figure highlights the importance of judgment as a function of this figure.

Revelation of Hidden Things

Secondly, the Enochic son of man reveals hidden things (46:3) and all the secrets of wisdom (51:3), which have been given to him by the Lord of Spirits (51:3). What these hidden things entail is not entirely clear. Considering the things that Enoch and the Watchers reveal, the implication is that they include what “that son of man” has seen in

²⁰ All citations are from George W.E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004).

heaven.²¹ The son of man figure's revealing of hidden things is dependent on his being chosen by the Lord of Spirits (46:3), the Lord of Spirits giving the secrets of wisdom to him, and his enthronement on the throne of glory (51:3).

Salvation

Thirdly, the Enochic son of man also plays some sort of role in salvation. There is no explicit salvific action that the son of man figure carries out. However, the salvation of the righteous and the chosen takes place on the day that the son of man judges the kings of the earth (62:13), and their salvation includes their dwelling and eating with the son of man figure forever (62:14). Thus, there is an apparent connection between “that son of man” and the salvation of the righteous, but the emphasis of the Parables is on the son of man's action of judgment carried out on the kings of the earth. However, the salvation of the righteous occurs at the same time that the kings are judged. The implication is that the Enochic son of man's judgment of the wicked kings is simultaneously vindication for the righteous and chosen who will dwell with him forever.²²

Characteristics of the Enochic son of man

Messianic

Having discussed the functions of the Enochic son of man—acting as judge, revealing hidden things, and playing some part in the salvation of the righteous—we will now address the characteristics of this figure. The first characteristic to be noted is that

²¹ See M.E. Stone, “Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature,” in F.M. Cross, W.E. Lemke, and P.D. Miller, Jr. (eds.), *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976) 414–54. Cf. Ellens, “What is the Son of Man in John,” 223.

²² “That son of man” may be the antecedent of the pronoun in 48:7, in which case he is also the one who has “preserved the portion of the righteous,” “is the vindicator of their lives,” and in whose “name they are saved.” See C.A. Gieschen, “The Name of the Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch,” in G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007) 238–49, esp. 240.

the son of man figure is portrayed as being messianic. He is explicitly called “Anointed One” in 48:10 and 52:4 and is depicted with royal and messianic imagery.

The influence of Isaiah 11 which speaks of the root of Jesse, the Davidic heir (2 Sam 2:7; 4Q174), is noticeable in 49:3 and 62:2. The former text is essentially a citation of Isa 11:4: “And in him will dwell the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of insight, and the spirit of instruction and might, and the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in righteousness.”²³ In addition, the enthronement imagery carries royal connotations and reflects Ps 110.²⁴ The righteous eating with “that son of man” may also echo messianic banquet traditions (*1 En.* 62:14; cf. Isa 25:6–8; *2 Bar.* 29:8). And finally, the designation “Righteous One” may itself be suggestive of the messianic nature of the Enochic son of man.²⁵

The son of man figure in the Parables is clearly presented as the Messiah even if the designation “Anointed One” is only used of the figure twice.²⁶ The messianic sense is obvious from the use of texts such as Isaiah 11 and Psalm 110 to describe the son of man figure.

²³ John J. Collins, “The Son of Man in First-Century Judaism,” *NTS* 38 (1992), pp. 448–66; William Horbury, *Messianism Among Jews and Christians: Twelve Biblical and Historical Studies* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), p. 139.

²⁴ Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), pp. 185–86; Matthew Black, “Messianism of the Parables of Enoch: Their Date and Contribution to Christological Origins,” in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 145–68.

²⁵ Jer 23:5; *Pss. Sol.* 17:32, 36–37; Acts 7:52. See G.S. Oegema, “‘The Coming of the Righteous One’ in Acts and 1 Enoch,” G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 250–59.

²⁶ Cf. Klaus Koch, “Questions regarding the So-Called Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch: A Response to Sabino Chialà and Helge Kvanvig,” G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 228–37.

Heavenly and Preexistent

Not only is the Enochic son of man the Messiah, the figure is found in heaven and appears to have existed before the creation of the world. The son of man is “named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits...even before the sun and the constellations were created, before the stars of heaven were made” (48:2–3); he was “hidden” in the presence of the Lord of Spirits “before the world was created” (48:6); and he was hidden and preserved in the presence of the Lord of Spirits “from the beginning” (62:7). The use of the terms “naming” and especially “hiding” and “preserving” in these sayings seem to indicate that the son of man figure is preexistent in heaven.²⁷

Some scholars have argued that these texts actually refer to a pre-creation election of the son of man and not to a pre-creation existence of the figure.²⁸ In their view, “naming” indicates election and does not require existence. VanderKam admits that “preserving” may mean more than “hiding,” implying some sort of existence, but he contends that “from the beginning” (62:7) only refers to the beginning of the hiding of “that son of man” and not to the beginning of the world.²⁹

On the other hand, the hiding of the Enochic son of man “from the beginning” (62:7) appears to be parallel to the hiding of “that son of man” in the presence of the Lord of Spirits “before the world was created” (48:6). The implication seems to be that the naming and hiding indicate the preexistence of the son of man figure and not merely his

²⁷ E. Sjöberg, *Der Menschensohn im Äthiopischen Henochbuch* (Skriver Utgivna av Kungl. Humanistiska Vetenskapssamfundet 1.41; Lund: Gleerup, 1946), p. 90; Casey, “Use of the Term”, p. 13. Theisohn, (*Richter*, pp. 128–39) and more recently Kvanvig (“Son of Man,” p. 202) see a connection between the preexistence of the son of man and of Wisdom in Proverbs 8.

²⁸ T.W. Manson, “The Son of Man in Daniel, Enoch and the Gospels,” *BJRL* 32 (1950), pp. 171–93; VanderKam, “Righteous One,” pp. 179–82; also Ellens, “What is the Son of Man in John,” pp. 226–27.

²⁹ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” p. 181.

election and consequent protection during his earthly life.³⁰ In addition, these texts also reveal that “that son of man” is present in heaven. The naming, hiding, and preserving all take place in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and the Lord of Spirits is clearly in heaven (39:3, 7; 70:1; 71:1).

Similar to God

Another characteristic of the Enochic son of man is that the figure is described in terms similar to those used of YHWH.³¹ In Micah 1:4, the mountains melt like wax at the coming of the Lord (Ps 97:5; Nah 1:5), and in the Parables, it is the coming of the Enochic figure at which the mountains melt (*1 En.* 52:6).³² The judgment of the kings of the earth is accomplished by the Lord (Isa 24:21–23), but the son of man figure carries out judgment in the Parables (49:4; 55:4; 61:8-9; 69:27). The day of judgment is typically known as the Day of the Lord (Joel 1:15; Obad 15; Zech 14:1-21). In the Parables, the day of judgment is described as “the day of the Chosen One” (61:5). In Ps 114:6, the mountains skip like rams at the coming of YHWH, and in the Parables, it is the enthronement of the Enochic figure and his revelation of the secrets of wisdom that leads to the mountains leaping like rams and hills skipping like lambs (51:4).

Gieschen has recently argued that both the Lord of Spirits and “that son of man” possess the Divine Name. He states: “1 Enoch strengthens the identification of the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man within the mystery of the one YHWH by teaching that they share the one Divine Name.”³³ In addition, “that son of man” sits upon the Lord

³⁰ Casey, “Use of the Term,” p. 13; Collins, “Son of Man,” p. 455; Walck, “Son of Man,” pp. 304–5.

³¹ See Burkett (*Debate*, p. 100) for the following examples.

³² Black, *Book of Enoch*, p. 216.

³³ Gieschen, “Name of the Son of Man,” p. 242.

of Spirits' throne of glory (62:2).³⁴ All of these descriptions of YHWH are applied to the Enochic son of man suggesting, at the very least, a close association between the two, if not some sort of identification.

Glorified and Worshipped

The fourth and fifth characteristics of the Enochic son of man are closely related. Following the naming of “that son of man” in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, “all who dwell on the earth will fall down and worship before him, and they will glorify and bless and sing hymns to the name of the Lord of Spirits” (48:5).³⁵ The figure's relationship with glory is additionally highlighted by the enthronement of the son of man figure on the “throne of glory” (61:8; 62:5), which is elsewhere referred to as the “throne of *his* glory” (62:2, 3; 69:27, 29). Closely related to the glorification of the Enochic son of man is the depiction of the son of man figure as worthy of worship.³⁶ In a passage similar to the one cited above, we see that once the kings of the earth recognize “that son of man” for who he is, they fall on their faces before him, and “they will worship and set their hope on that son of man, and they will supplicate and petition for mercy from him” (62:9).

Human

The possibility exists that the human figure Enoch is understood to be “that son of man” in the Parables of Enoch. If so, the son of man figure is also characterized as being a human being. Viewing Enoch as “that son of man” depends on how we understand *I En.* 70:1 and 71:14. In 70:1, we read: “[Enoch's] name was raised into the presence of

³⁴ See Darrell Hannah, “The Throne of His Glory: The Divine Throne and Heavenly Mediators in Revelation and the Similitudes of Enoch,” *ZNW* 94 (2003), pp. 68–96.

³⁵ The name of the Lord of Spirits most likely refers to the name with which “that son of man” has been named (48:3). See Gieschen, “Name of the Son of Man,” pp. 240, 242.

³⁶ Walck, “Son of Man,” p. 304–5.

that son of man and into the presence of the Lord of Spirits from among those who dwell on the earth.” In 71:14, Enoch is greeted by Michael the archangel and told: “You are that son of man who was born for righteousness and righteousness dwells on you.” Thus, 70:1 seems to indicate that Enoch and “that son of man” are separate figures, while 71:14 apparently portrays Michael identifying Enoch as “that son of man.”

There are essentially three ways of addressing the relationship between 70:1 and 71:14. Either chapters 70–71 were not original to the Parables of Enoch and thus there is no connection between Enoch and “that son of man,”³⁷ 2) Enoch is only declared to be a human being or “a son of man” by Michael in 71:14 (cf. Ezek 2:1; Dan 8:17),³⁸ or 3) that in 70:1 Enoch is called “that son of man” and not raised to “that son of man,” indicating that Enoch may be identified with “that son of man” throughout the Parables.³⁹

Because of recent Ethiopic manuscript discoveries, the third option may be the more plausible option of the above three.⁴⁰ However, the identification of Enoch with “that son of man” was most likely not how the son of man figure was interpreted once the Parables of Enoch was transmitted by Christian copyists, but in the early Jewish stages of transmission, there is a greater likelihood that this understanding was possible. If chapters 70 and 71 were part of the Parables of Enoch at some point prior to the text’s transmission by Christians, it may be plausibly argued that there was a time when “that son of man” was understood to be a human figure, namely Enoch.⁴¹

³⁷ Michael A. Knibb, “Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Scrolls,” *DSD* 2 (1995), pp. 165–84.

³⁸ Collins, “Son of Man,” pp. 456–57.

³⁹ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” pp. 182–84.

⁴⁰ D.C. Olson, “Enoch and the Son of Man in the Epilogue of the Parables,” *JSP* 18 (1998), pp. 27–38.

⁴¹ See Kvanvig, “Son of Man,” pp. 197–210.

Summary

The son of man in Parables of Enoch is a figure rooted in the OT images of Daniel 7, the Servant Songs of Isaiah, as well as messianic passages from Isaiah and Psalm 110. “That son of man” is the Messiah or Anointed One, is preexistent in heaven, shares similarities with YHWH, is glorified and is worthy of worship, and was at some point most likely identified with the human figure Enoch. The Enochic son of man functions as judge, revealer of hidden things, and ostensibly as savior of the righteous.⁴²

Now that we have had a brief overview of the Enochic son of man, it is time to turn our attention to “the Son of Man” in John. Are there similarities between the two figures? Can the Johannine Son of Man be called “apocalyptic”? What relationship might exist between Parables and the Gospel of John?

The Johannine Son of Man

The Johannine Son of Man is most well-known for the themes of ascending and descending (1:51; 3:13; 6:62), lifting up (3:14; 8:28; 12:34), and glorification (12:23; 13:31–32). This language connected with “the Son of Man”⁴³ in John is different from what is found in the Synoptic Son of Man sayings, and so these themes stand out as distinctive Johannine features. At the same time, it is possible to discern some similarities with the son of man figure in the Parables of Enoch. For example, R.H. Charles saw a connection between John 5:27 and *1 Enoch* 69:27.⁴⁴ Despite claims that John’s Gospel

⁴² The last point implies that “that son of man” is also a righteous figure and the leader of the righteous. Walck (“Son of Man,” pp. 309, 311) provides two sets of tabulated characteristics that are both broader and more specific.

⁴³ Because I am of the opinion that ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου has a titular sense in the Gospel of John, I will refer to the phrase as “the Son of Man.”

⁴⁴ Charles, *Enoch*, pp. 140–41.

lacks an apocalyptic sense,⁴⁵ we will see in the following section that like the Enochic son of man, the Johannine Son of Man can be described as apocalyptic. What that may mean for possible relationships between the Parables and John's Gospel is a separate question that will be addressed in the final section of this paper.

Functions of the Johannine Son of Man

Salvation

Whereas the Enochic son of man has an implicit salvific role with the righteous in the Parables of Enoch (62:13–14; 48:7), the Son of Man in the Gospel of John is more clearly involved in salvation. Jesus says in John 6:27, “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that remains to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” It is the Son of Man who provides this food that brings eternal life, and further in chapter 6, we find that the food that the Son of Man will give is himself (6:35). Jesus even says that no one can have life unless they eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man (6:53). These passages draw attention to the dependence of salvation or eternal life on the Johannine Son of Man.

Again, we see the Son of Man's role in salvation in 3:14–15. Jesus states that it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up just as Moses lifted up serpent in the wilderness. The Son of Man's lifting up will occur so that everyone who believes might have eternal life *in* the Son of Man.⁴⁶ Further, it can be argued that it is the Son of Man who will raise those in the grave to a resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment in

⁴⁵ Douglas R.A. Hare, *The Son of Man Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), p. 92; Burkett, *Debate*, pp. 68–81.

⁴⁶ ἐν αὐτῷ (also 20:31) and not εἰς αὐτόν (as in 3:16, 36; etc.). See Josef Blank, *Krisis. Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie* (Freiburg: im Breisgau: Lambertus, 1964), p. 85; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 29, 29A; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1966–70), p. 133.

5:27–29.⁴⁷ Thus, both the Johannine Son of Man and the Enochic son of man take part in salvation, even if the Johannine figure is more explicitly involved in salvation.

Judgment

The Son of Man in John is depicted as a judge both at the future, end-time judgment and in the present. In John 5:27, Jesus the Son has the authority to execute judgment because he is “the Son of Man.”⁴⁸ His future eschatological judgment can be seen in John 5:28–29 where the dead will come out of the grave either to a resurrection of eternal life or to a resurrection of judgment after they have heard the voice of the Son of Man (cf. 6:40).⁴⁹ The Johannine Son of Man’s role in present judgment is noticeable in Jesus’ statement as Son of Man: “For judgment I have come into this world” (9:39).

Some scholars have argued that Jesus does not judge in John because of his statements in 3:17 and 8:15: “for God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world but to save it” and “I judge no one.”⁵⁰ However, in 3:18, Jesus says that everyone not believing has already been judged. Jesus the Son of Man may have come for salvation, but his coming forces a decision of believe or unbelief. Judgment, which he has the authority to execute because he is the Son of Man, results from his coming, just as light coming into the world reveals darkness (3:17–21; cf. 1:3–5; 15:22).⁵¹ It is already worth noting that the Enochic figure has almost the opposite focus in the Parables:

⁴⁷ Jörg Frey, *Die johanneische Eschatologie. Bände 1–3* (WUNT I/96, 110, 117; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997, 1998, 2000), vol. 3, pp. 382, 386.

⁴⁸ There is debate concerning whether or not the anarthrous phrase υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου refers to “the Son of Man.” The context of John’s Gospel infers that it is Jesus as the Son of Man who has the authority to judge and not Jesus as a human being. For a more complete discussion, see Reynolds, *Apocalyptic Son of Man*, pp. 132–37. *Contra* Burkett, *Son of the Man*, pp. 41–45.

⁴⁹ Blank, *Krisis*, p. 178.

⁵⁰ Ellens (“What is the Son of Man in John,” p. 99) states: “...the Son of Man is the judge who refuses to judge or prosecute because he does not need to do so.”

⁵¹ Moloney, *Johannine Son of Man*, p. 85.

salvation results for the righteous at the completion of the Enochic son of man's judgment of the wicked.

Revelation of Heavenly Things

Jesus in the Gospel of John is known as the revealer, the one who brings revelation from God (1:18; 14:6–8). As the Son of Man, he reveals heavenly things, and he grounds his ability and authority to reveal heavenly things in his origin from heaven (3:12–13). Just as the Enochic son of man is given the secrets of wisdom by the Lord of Spirits, so Jesus as the Son of Man receives information from the Father. Jesus says, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I Am and that I do nothing on my own, but *just as the Father teaches me, these things I speak*” (8:28; cf. 5:19–23).

Characteristics of the Johannine Son of Man

The above three functions of salvation, judgment, and revelation are three functions shared by the Enochic son of man and the Johannine Son of Man. The following section highlights similar characteristics shared by the two figures.

Messianic

Both the Enochic son of man and the Son of Man in John are called the Messiah. In the context of the Son of Man saying in 1:51, the disciples Andrew and Philip separately speak of Jesus as the Messiah. Andrew uses the word Μεσσίας (1:41), and Philip refers to the “one whom Moses and the prophets wrote” (1:45). Nathanael also makes messianic claims for Jesus, calling him “the king of Israel” (1:49). The reference to the fig tree in 1:48 may also have messianic implications via Zech 3:10.⁵² J. Harold

⁵² Craig Koester, “Messianic Exegesis and the Call of Nathanael (John 1:44–51),” *JSNT* 39 (1990), pp. 23–34.

Ellens does not see the messianic connection in 1:51. He says that we should “let the *logion* say only as much as it actually says.”⁵³ At the same time, we cannot neglect the fact that John 1:35–51 is full of messianic expectation and that the *logion* is the final statement of this section. Not only is Jesus the Son of Man, he is also Messiah.

The connection between “the Son of Man” and “Messiah” is also noticeable in 12:34 where the crowd does not appear to distinguish between the two titles. The majority of scholars see some sort of synonymy between the two designations. This view is illustrated by Ragnar Leivestad’s statement: “It is clearly presupposed that a “Son of man” different from the Messiah is quite unheard of.”⁵⁴

Heavenly and Preexistent

Not only is the Johannine Son of Man the Messiah, he is also a heavenly figure and a preexistent figure. The preexistent nature of the Johannine Jesus is more than obvious, especially in such verses as 1:1, 14, and 18. However, Jesus’ preexistence can also be observed in those passages that speak of the Son of Man’s ascent and/or descent. In 3:13, Jesus says: “No one ascends to heaven except the one who descends from heaven, the Son of Man.” Leaving aside the question of whether or not the Son of Man ascended to heaven, it cannot be denied that the Son of Man is the one who has descended from heaven. Francis Moloney has stated that we should not make too much of the “movement” of the Son of Man,⁵⁵ but in my opinion, descent *from* heaven

⁵³ Ellens, “What is the Son of Man in John,” p. 53.

⁵⁴ R. Leivestad, “Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man,” *NTS* 18 (1972), pp. 243–67, here p. 251. Cf. Burkett, *Son of the Man*, p. 168; Richard Bauckham, “Messianism According to the Gospel of John,” in J. Lierman (ed.), *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* (WUNT II/219; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), pp. 34–68.

⁵⁵ Francis J. Moloney, Editor’s Note, in Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (Francis J. Moloney, ed.; New York: Doubleday, 2006), p. 257 n. 87.

demands previous existence *in* heaven. In the case of the Son of Man in John 3:13, the Son of Man's descent from heaven implies his heavenly and preexistent nature.

In Jesus' statement in 6:62, the Son of Man will one day be seen ascending to where he was *before*. Considering that he descended from heaven (3:13), the phrase "where he was before" must refer to the Son of Man's prior existence in heaven. The hypothetical aspect of this statement is not the Son of Man's ascent, but rather whether the unbelieving disciples will *see* this ascent.⁵⁶ Further hints of the Son of Man's heavenly preexistence can be seen in the descriptions of Jesus' going away as return to the Father (13:31–33; cf. 14:2–3).

Similar to God

Like the son of man figure in the Parables, the Johannine Son of Man shares similarities with God. First, both God and the Son of Man are described with the adjective 'living' in the context of Jesus' Son of Man statement in 6:53, in which he states: "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves." In 6:51, Jesus the Son of Man refers to himself as "the living bread" (ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν), and only a few verses later, he calls God "the living Father" (ὁ ζῶν πατέρες; 6:57).

Along with being described as "living," God and the Son of Man are both said to be glorified. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately"

⁵⁶ Painter, "Enigmatic," pp. 1883. *Contra* Francis J. Moloney, "The Johannine Son of Man Revisited," in G. Van Belle, J. G. Van der Watt, and P. Maritz (eds.), *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel: Essays by the Members of the SNTS Johannine Writings Seminar* (BETL 184; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), pp. 177–202, esp. p. 195.

(13:31–32). From this statement it can be clearly seen that the respective glorifications of the Son of Man and God are intertwined.⁵⁷

Thirdly, in 8:24, 28, the similarities between the Son of Man and God touch on shared identity. Here, Jesus tells the Jewish leaders, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am...” The use of “I am” (ἐγώ εἰμι) is most likely the absolute use of the phrase and thus a reference to the divine name (see LXX Exod 3:14; Isa 43:10).⁵⁸ The use of the expression in John 8:28 implies that God and Jesus the Son of Man share the same name.

Finally, the Son of Man shares the functions of judging and giving life with God. In the context of the expression “the Son of Man” in 5:27, we see that Jesus judges and gives life. Although these are typical actions of God (5:21–22), God the Father has given Jesus the authority to do these actions (5:24–27; cf. 9:39).

Glorified

As mentioned above, the Johannine Son of Man is glorified. The Son of Man’s glorification is first mentioned in 12:23 when Jesus says, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” But it is not until Judas’ departure into the night in 13:30 that Jesus says, “Now is the Son of Man glorified...” (13:31). The verses following 12:23 speak of a kernel of wheat dying, the one hating his soul in this world keeping it to eternal life, and the importance of following Jesus if one is to serve him (12:24–26). These verses imply the connection between the Son of Man’s glorification and Jesus’ death on the cross. The relationship between the glorification of the Son of Man and

⁵⁷ Hermann Dieckmann, “Der Sohn des Menschen im Johannesevangelium,” *Scholastik* 2 (1927), pp. 229–47, esp. p. 241.

⁵⁸ Catrin H. Williams, *I am He: The Interpretation of ‘Anî Hû’ in Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (WUNT II/113; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), pp. 266–75. See also John 4:26; 8:58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8.

Judas' departure also points to this correlation between glorification and crucifixion (13:30–31). The Johannine Son of Man's glory therefore includes the degradation and shame of the cross.

However, the crucifixion is not all that is meant by the Son of Man's glorification; the resurrection appears to be part of his glorification as well. For instance, the disciples' memories are triggered after he is raised (2:22) and after Jesus is glorified (12:16). This correlation of Jesus' glorification and his resurrection implies the inclusion of the resurrection in the Son of Man's glorification.⁵⁹ Like the Enochic son of man, the Son of Man in John is glorified. In John, the difference is that this glory first includes the suffering and degradation of the cross before the Son of Man is glorified in heaven.⁶⁰

Worshipped

Another characteristic of the Johannine Son of Man that is shared with the figure in the Parables is that both are considered worthy of worship. After the man born blind is thrown out of the synagogue because he claims that Jesus is from God (9:33–34), Jesus finds the man and asks him if he believes in the Son of Man (9:35). Once the man realizes that Jesus is the Son of Man, the man says “I believe” and falls down and worships Jesus (9:38). The Greek word translated as “worship” (προσκυνέω) is used nine times in John 4:24–28 to refer to proper worship of God (cf. 12:20). Based on the usage of the word in John, this is not simply respect, but it implies that this is worship that would normally be given to God.

⁵⁹ Blank, *Krisis*, p. 267; Peter Ensor, “The Glorification of the Son of Man: An Analysis of John 13:31–32,” *TynBul* 58.2 (2007), pp. 229–52.

⁶⁰ Jesus' going away to the Father may further suggest the inclusion of his return to the Father as part of his glorification (13:32–33; 17:1–5).

Human Figure

Finally, although it is almost too obvious to mention, the Son of Man in John's Gospel is a human being, Jesus, the son of Joseph (1:14; 6:42). The Son of Man has flesh and blood (6:53), and Jesus is commonly called a "human" (ἄνθρωπος) by his opponents (9:16, 24; cf. 6:42).

Summary

The Johannine Son of Man is portrayed as a figure who ascends and descends, is lifted up, glorified, believed in, gives life, and judges. The Son of Man functions as the giver of salvation, judge, and revealer of heavenly things. As noted above, the figure is characterized as the Messiah, as heavenly and preexistent, as similar to God, as glorified and worshipped, and as a human being.

The Son of Man in the Parables and in John

Similarities between the Enochic and Johannine Figures

From the above discussion, it should be apparent that the son of man figure in the Parables of Enoch and the Johannine Son of Man have a number of similar functions and characteristics. Although emphases between the two texts are different, both figures take part in judgment, salvation, and the revelation of hidden things, and both are depicted as the Messiah, as being heavenly and preexistent, as sharing similarities with God, as glorified, as worthy of worship, and as a human figure.

The above similarities do not represent the only functions and characteristics of these figures, but merely speak to those where overlap is apparent. Some further similarities worth mentioning are the two figures' connection to a double resurrection of the wicked and the righteous (John 5:28–29; *1 En.* 51:1–5) and the recognition or acknowledgement of the Son of Man (John 8:28; *1 En.* 62:3–5). The Johannine Son of

Man shares the divine name “I Am” with God (8:28, 58), and it appears that the Enochic figure may as well (48:5; 69:26; cf. 48:7).

Differences between the Enochic and Johannine Figures

While the Johannine Son of Man and the son of man figure in the Parables share similarities, there are important differences in the way they function and in the details of their characteristics. The Enochic son of man is clearly portrayed as the judge of the wicked and loosely related to the salvation of the righteous (62:9–14). The Johannine Son of Man is more closely connected to the salvation of the righteous because he is the one who gives the food that remains to eternal life (6:27). However, the Johannine figure is not as unashamedly portrayed as judge. Instead, his judgment is the result of his bringing of salvation. He came to save, but judgment results as the negative response to salvation (3:17–21; 15:22–24; cf. 5:27; 9:39). Further, although eating and/or feasting are connected to the depictions of both figures (John 6:27; *1 En.* 62:14), the Johannine Son of Man is said to be the food which the righteous eat (6:53; 6:27 with 6:33, 35).⁶¹

Both the Johannine and Enochic figures appear to be preexistent in heaven, but the Enochic son of man never seems to leave heaven. The Johannine Son of Man, in contrast, descends from heaven to earth and will ascend to where he was before (3:13; 6:62).

And while both figures are glorified, the glorification that they receive is different. The Enochic son of man receives glory following his being seated on the Lord of Spirits’ throne, the “throne of glory” (62:2–6). The Johannine Son of Man’s glory is

⁶¹ This is not necessarily Johannine as it is Christian (Mark 14:21–25; Matt 26:24–29; cf. Luke 22:22).

not said to include a glorious enthronement (cf. 12:41),⁶² but rather it encompasses Jesus' death on the cross, as well as his resurrection and return to his Father in heaven. The suffering of the Son of Man is an extremely important aspect of Jesus as "the Son of Man" in the Synoptic Gospels, especially Luke. John also maintains that the Son of Man experiences suffering, although it is expressed with the language of "lifting up" and "glorification" (cf. Isa 52:13). Any hint of suffering is lacking in the portrait of "that son of man" in the Parables of Enoch.⁶³

Further differences can be detected in the way in which each figure embodies the Messiah. The Enochic figure is the Messiah who will appear at the end of time to judge while being seated on "his throne of glory." The Johannine Son of Man is the Messiah who brings salvation and judgment in the present, and in contrast with the crowd's expectation, he does not "remain forever" (12:34).

The relationship of each figure to the end-time judgment highlights important differences. The Enochic son of man is revealed at the final end-time judgment (62:1–8; 69:27–29). Following the judgment, the wicked are punished (62:9–12; 63:11–12), and the righteous dwell with the son of man forever (62:14). The Johannine Son of Man is on earth judging in the present by bringing salvation into the world. Those who do not believe are already judged (3:18), and those who do believe have already crossed over into life (5:24). There will be a future consummation of judgment and salvation (5:28–29; cf. 6:39, 40, 44), but the actuality of judgment is being carried out by the Son of Man in the present (3:19–21; 9:39; cf. 15:22).

⁶² However, see Wilhelm Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im Johannesevangelium* (3rd ed.; NTAbh 21; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1979), pp. 3–37.

⁶³ Walck, "Son of Man," p. 335.

And at the risk of again seeming too obvious, the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John name two different human beings as the son of man.⁶⁴

The Apocalyptic Background of the Johannine Son of Man

The similarities between the figures are best described as general concepts or patterns, while the differences occur at a detailed level within these concepts.⁶⁵ The differences between the Johannine Son of Man and the Enochic figure seem to be examples of varied interpretations within a general understanding of who and what a son of man figure is and does. Fluidity in interpretation of the detailed functions and characteristics can be further seen in *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the Synoptic Gospels, and Revelation. This is not to perpetuate the idea of a “Son of Man Concept” that was assumed particularly in older German scholarship.⁶⁶ Instead, the number of commonalities suggests that there appears to be at least a general understanding of the Danielic son of man in Second Temple Judaism, even though the details of these interpretations vary.⁶⁷

That these two figures share similar functions and characteristics, although there are slight differences between them, indicates that the Johannine Son of Man can be described as an ‘apocalyptic’ figure. The Enochic figure is obviously apocalyptic since the figure appears in an apocalypse. The Gospel of John is not necessarily an

⁶⁴ The naming of son of man figures is not entirely common in interpretations of Daniel 7 (see *4 Ezra* 13; *2 Baruch* 29–30; cf. *T. Ab.* A 13).

⁶⁵ Cf. Walck, “Son of Man,” p. 336.

⁶⁶ Bultmann, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1. pp. 28, 31; H.E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (D.M. Barton, trans.; London: SCM Press, 1965), pp. 22–31.

⁶⁷ John J. Collins, “Son of Man,” 448–66; T.B. Slater, “One Like a Son of Man in First-Century CE Judaism,” *NTS* 41 (1995) 183–98. *Contra* Burkett, *Debate*, pp. 113–14; Casey, *Solution*, pp. 82–115.

apocalypse,⁶⁸ but the significant overlap of functions and characteristics between the two figures (both of which most likely derive from the Danielic figure⁶⁹) suggests the high plausibility of describing the Johannine figure as “apocalyptic.”⁷⁰ Further evidence for this conclusion can be seen in the apocalyptic introduction of the Johannine Son of Man following the opening of heaven in 1:51 (cf. Ezekiel 1:1; Rev 4:1–2; 19:11; *T. Levi* 2:6).⁷¹

Is John a Response to the Parables of Enoch?

If these parallels exist between the two figures in the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John, what does this mean for the relationship between the two texts? Is the Gospel of John’s portrayal of the Son of Man a response to the Parables of Enoch or is there a parallel understanding of the Danielic figure? Ellens has recently argued that the Gospel of John is a direct response to the Parables of Enoch. He contends that the author of John was aware of the Parables of Enoch, but reacted negatively to the portrayal of the Enochic son of man. Ellens concludes, “John’s gospel is a broadside attack against any possibility that the Son of Man as represented in *1 Enoch* 37–71 could ever be the true Son of Man.”⁷²

There are some noticeable parallels between the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John that may suggest some sort of literary dependence. First, there is a possible verbal

⁶⁸ John Ashton (*Understanding the Fourth Gospel* [2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007], p. 328–29) refers to John as an “apocalypse—in reverse, upside down, inside out.” See also Christopher Rowland and Christopher R.A. Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament* (CRINT 12; Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 123–36.

⁶⁹ John 5:27–29 shares three characteristics with Daniel 7–12: 1) verbal semblance between John 5:27 and Dan 7:13–14; 2) shared judgment theme (John 5; Daniel 7); and 3) double resurrection of the righteous and the wicked (John 5:28–29; Dan 12:2)

⁷⁰ This can be further substantiated by an examination of the figures in *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*. See Reynolds, *Apocalyptic Son of Man*, pp. 49–61.

⁷¹ Reynolds, *Apocalyptic Son of Man*, pp. 92–95

⁷² Ellens, “What is the Son of Man in John,” pp. 221–33, 248–51, here p. 250.

parallel between John 5:27 and *1 En.* 69:27. This is the closest evidence of any verbal parallel between the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John.

1 En. 69:27: 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.

John 5:27: And he gave him authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man.

Although there is some overlap in the language of “giving,” “judgment,” and “son of man,” there are discernible differences in the Parables’ reference to the “whole judgment” and in John’s to the “authority to execute judgment.” Rather than positing some sort of dependence, these differences and similarities may be more easily explained as a common derivation from Dan 7:13–14. In Daniel 7, the Ancient of Days gives the “one like a son of man” authority. The concept of judgment is most likely an implication from the larger context of Daniel 7 (vv. 10–12, 22, 26), and the Parables’ use of “whole” may possibly be understood as originating from the word “all” in the Danielic phrase “all peoples, nations, languages should serve him” (7:14).⁷³ However, “whole” could just be an Enochic addition or interpretation. Thus, while there is possible verbal semblance present between John 5:27 and *1 En.* 69:27, literary dependence does not provide the best explanation for the similarities between the texts.

A second potential piece of evidence for the Johannine Son of Man being a response to the Enochic figure is Jesus’ statement in John 3:13: “No one has ascended to heaven, except the Son of Man the one who descended.” This declaration is commonly recognized as a polemic against heavenly ascent.⁷⁴ Jesus’ claim that no one has ascended

⁷³ OG Dan 7:14 reads: καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πάντα δόξα αὐτῷ λατρεύουσα (Alfred Rahlfs and Robert Hanhart, *Septuaginta* [2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006]).

⁷⁴ Moloney, *Johannine Son of Man*, pp. 54–55; Ashton, *Understanding*, p. 253.

to heaven could be understood as a specific response to Enoch's ascent(s) in the Parables of Enoch (*1 En.* 39:3; 70:1).⁷⁵ On the other hand, there are numerous examples throughout the OT and Second Temple Jewish literature of figures who ascended to heaven (e.g., Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Levi, etc.).⁷⁶ These multiple ascent traditions make it difficult to claim that Jesus' polemic against ascent to heaven in John 3:13 applies only to Enoch. In contrast, 3:13 would seem to have a more wide-ranging application.

In addition, Jesus makes another polemical statement similar to that in 3:13 when he says that no one has ever seen God (1:17–18; 6:46).⁷⁷ This proclamation could be argued to be a claim against Moses (Exod 33:18–23), Elijah (1 Kgs 19:9–13), and/or Isaiah (Isa 6:1; cf. John 12:41).

Considering that Jesus makes more than one polemical statement (3:13; 6:46) and that the Gospel of John actually names Moses (1:17; 3:14; 5:45–46; 6:32; 9:28)⁷⁸ and Abraham (8:33–58) in contexts that draw attention to Jesus' superiority, it seems highly unlikely that Jesus' declaration in 3:13 is directed specifically against Enoch. However, it may be plausible to include Enoch in the polemic against ascent to heaven, but even this

⁷⁵ Ellens ("What is the Son of Man in John," p. 222) states: "It [3:13] throws down the gauntlet between Enochic Judaism, on the one hand, and the Jesus Movement, on the other. The author is intending to stake out a bold position for the Jesus Movement as the authentic Judaism."

⁷⁶ Abraham (*T. Ab.* A 10–15); Moses (Exod 19:3, 20; 24:9; Philo, *Moses* 1.158); Elijah (2 Kgs 2; 1 Macc 2:58; Sir 48:9); Isaiah (*Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7–11); Levi (*T. Levi* 2–5). On Moses, see Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (NovTSup 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 122–25. Meeks sees the polemic in 3:13 as a response to the Moses ascent traditions (pp. 297–301).

⁷⁷ Moloney, *Johannine Son of Man*, p. 57.

⁷⁸ See Tom Thatcher, "Remembering Jesus: John's Negative Christology," in Stanley Porter (ed.), *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 165–89, esp. pp. 177–83. Thatcher points to John's "More than Moses" Christology.

does not require that author of John's Gospel had a knowledge of the Parables of Enoch (Gen 5:24; *I En.* 14:8).⁷⁹

Regarding a possible literary dependence between the Gospel of John and the Parables of Enoch, I think we can only confidently say that the Johannine Son of Man and the son of man figure in the Parables are analogous presentations of the Danielic son of man. There does not appear to be enough evidence to suggest a literary dependence.⁸⁰ We cannot entirely rule out the possibility that John is a response to the Parables of Enoch, but it seems more plausible that we are dealing with a parallel process of interpretation.

Conclusion

In his book *The Son of the Man in the Gospel of John*, Delbert Burkett states: "...the chief support for the existence of a pre-Christian 'Son of Man', the Similitudes of *I Enoch*, can no longer be considered pre-Christian."⁸¹ His contention is primarily dependent upon J.T. Milik's late dating of the Parables of Enoch. Some of Burkett's other reasons include the lack of the Parables at Qumran and the lack of citations of the Parables in early Jewish and Christian writings. For these reasons, Delbert Burkett concludes that the Son of Man in John's Gospel is not an apocalyptic Son of Man.⁸²

However, as the work of recent scholarship has shown, the Parables of Enoch can be assumed to be Jewish, pre-Christian, and most likely dated from the end of the first-

⁷⁹ See James H. Charlesworth, "Did the Fourth Evangelist Know the Enoch Tradition?" in J. Mrazek and J. Roskovec (eds.), *Testimony and Interpretation: Early Christology in Its Judeo-Christian Milieu. Studies in Honour of Petr Pokorný* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), pp. 223–39.

⁸⁰ Walck, "Son of Man", p. 336.

⁸¹ Burkett, *Son of the Man*, p. 39.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 45.

century BCE to the beginning of the first-century CE.⁸³ As such the appeal to Milik and the lack of material at Qumran can no longer defend the view that the Johannine Son of Man is not an apocalyptic figure. In fact, the pre-Christian origin of the Parables and the common reference to the Danielic son of man requires a comparison between the Enochic son of man and the Son of Man in each of the four gospels.

This essay has highlighted the resemblance of the son of man figures in the Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John. Both figures function in judgment, salvation, and in the revelation of heavenly things. Further, both figures are described as messianic, heavenly and preexistent, similar to God, glorified, worshipped, and human. There are obvious distinctions in the portrayals of the two figures, such as in the figures' roles in judgment and salvation, the timing of that judgment and salvation, and in the naming of the son of man figures as either Enoch or Jesus, but the general categories of similarity between the Enochic son of man and the Johannine Son of Man still exist. These similarities do not indicate literary dependence between the Parables and John's Gospel in either direction. Instead, both interpretations reflect a broad understanding of the "one like a son of man" in the first-century CE.

With the current consensus on the earlier dating of the Parables of Enoch and the similarities that the son of man figure in the Parables shares with the Johannine Son of Man, the evidence concerning the background of the Johannine Son of Man indicates an apocalyptic background. In other words, the Son of Man in John can be understood to fit within the trajectory of interpretation of Daniel 7 in Jewish apocalyptic literature and early Christian literature (*1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the Synoptic Gospels, and

⁸³ See Paolo Sacchi, "The 2005 Camaldoli Seminar on the Parables of Enoch: Summary and Prospects for Future Research," in G. Boccaccini (ed.), *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 499–512.

Revelation). Thus, the Johannine Son of Man can be called an “apocalyptic” Son of Man. The implications of this conclusion for the Gospel of John are that the Johannine Son of Man is a heavenly and preexistent figure who is the Messiah and has come to earth to bring salvation to believers and judgment to those who do not believe. Through his crucifixion, resurrection and return to the Father, he will be lifted up, glorified, and worshipped.