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RESURRECTION OF ADAM'S BODY: THE REDEEMING ROLE OF ENOCH-METATRON IN 2 (SLAVONIC) ENOCH¹

In *2 Enoch*, a Jewish apocalypse written in the first century CE, a hint about the angelic status of its hero is expressed through his refusal to participate in a family meal. Chapter 56 of this work depicts Methuselah inviting his father Enoch to share food with the close family. In response to this offer the patriarch, who has recently returned from a long celestial journey, politely declines the invitation of his son offering him the following reasons:

Listen, child! Since the time when the Lord anointed me with the ointment of his glory, food has not come into me, and earthly pleasure my soul does not remember, nor do I desire anything earthly.²

The important feature of this passage from the Slavonic apocalypse is the theme of the «ointment of glory», a luminous substance which transformed the former family man into a celestial creature who is no longer able to enjoy earthly food. This motif of transforming ointment is not confined solely to chapter 56 of *2 Enoch* but plays a prominent part in the overall theology of the text. The importance of this motif can be illustrated by its significance in the central event of the story, the hero's radiant metamorphosis in the front of God's *Kavod*. *2 Enoch* 22:9 portrays the archangel Michael anointing Enoch with delightful oil, the ointment of glory identical to that mentioned in chapter 56. The text tells us that the oil's appearance in this procedure was «greater than the greatest light and its ointment is like sweet dew, and it is like rays of the glittering sun».³

One can see that in the Slavonic text the oil of mercy, also known in Adamic traditions as the oil of resurrection, is responsible for the change of Enoch's mortal nature into the glorious state of a celestial being. It is also significant that the oil appears here to be synonymous with the Glory of the Deity since the longer recension of *2 Enoch* 56 describes the oil as the «ointment of the Lord's glory». In this respect it should not be forgotten that Enoch's

¹ This paper was presented in 2003 to the Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism Group at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature.

² *2 Enoch* 56:2, the longer recension. F. A. ANDERSEN, *2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch // OTP*. Vol. 1. 182.

³ ANDERSEN, *2 Enoch*... 138.

embrocation with shining oil takes place in front the Lord's glorious extent, labeled in *2 Enoch* as the Divine Face. The patriarch's anointing therefore can be seen as covering with Glory coming from the Divine *Kavod*.

At this point it must be noted that several manuscripts of the shorter recension bring some problematic discrepancies to this seamless array of theological motifs pertaining to the patriarch's anointing. They insist that the patriarch was anointed not with ointment of the Lord's glory but instead with the ointment coming from Enoch's head. Thus two manuscripts of the shorter recension (*A* and *U*) insist that the patriarch was anointed not with ointment of *the Lord's glory* but instead with the ointment coming from Enoch's head.

The passage from chapter 56 attested in the manuscripts *A* and *U* reads: «Since the time when the Lord anointed me with the ointment of my [Enoch's] head (ЕЛѢМЬ ГЛАВЫ МОЕА)...».⁴

This tradition which describes the miraculous power of the oil coming from the head of the main character of the text appears to be quite puzzling. Yet in the light of the later Jewish materials this motif about the transforming substance coming from the head of the celestial creature might not be entirely incomprehensible. For example, in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* 34 one learns that the reviving dew, a rabbinic metaphor for the oil of the resurrection, will come at the eschatological time from the head of the Deity:

Rabbi Tanchum said: On account of the seed of the earth, when it is commanded, (it) discharges the dew for the resurrection of the dead. From what place does it descend? From the head of the Holy One; for the head of the Holy One, is full of the reviving dew. In the future life the Holy One, will shake His head and cause the quickening dew to descend, as it is said, «I was asleep, but my heart waked ... for my head is filled with dew, my locks with the drops of the night» (Song of Songs 5.2).⁵

In another prominent compendium of Jewish mystical traditions this motif about the dew of resurrection coming from the head of God is repeated again. The *Zohar* 1:130b–131a reads:

And at the time when the Holy One will raise the dead to life He will cause dew to descend upon them from His head. By means of that dew all will rise from the dust.... For the tree of life emanates life unceasingly into the universe.⁶

⁴ М. И. Соколов, Материалы и заметки по старинной славянской литературе. Выпуск третий, VII: Славянская Книга Еноха Праведного / Тексты, латинский пер. и исследование. Посмертный труд автора приготовил к изд. М. СПЕРАНСКИЙ // *ЧОИДР* 4 (1910) 123.

⁵ *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* / Tr. G. FRIEDLÄNDER (New York, 1965) 260.

⁶ *The Zohar* / Tr. H. SPERLING, M. SIMON. 5 vols (London—New York, 1933) Vol. 2. 21.

Both passages about the reviving dew, as well as the tradition found in *2 Enoch* 22, might have their earlier background in Psalm 133:2–3 where the precious oil running down on the head (כִּשְׁמֵן הַטּוֹב עַל הָרֹאשׁ יִרְדּוּ) of Aaron is compared with the dew of the eternal life sent by the Deity. Yet *2 Enoch's* accounts about the oil of anointing appear to emphasize not only the priestly but also the eschatological role of the translated patriarch who is predestined to play an important part in redemption of humanity from the sin of the Protoplast.

The question remains, however, how the traditions about the dew of resurrection coming from the Deity's head are related to the problematic readings postulating that the resurrection oil is coming not from the head of the Lord but instead from the head of Enoch. The confusion between the head of the seer and the Deity's head, God's oil and the oil of Enoch, the glory of the Lord and the glory of the exalted patriarch reflected in Slavonic text, does not appear to be coincidental. It seems to reflect a significant theological tendency of the text where Enoch's heavenly «persona» is understood as the «replica» of the Divine *Kavod*, in front of which the visionary was recreated as a heavenly being. The similarities between the two celestial corporealities — The Divine *Kavod* and the newly acquired celestial extent of Enoch-Metatron, which in some traditions serves as the measurement of the divine body — have been previously explored in several important studies. This paper however seeks to address another eschatological dimension in which Enoch's new identity is connected with his new role as the redeemer of humanity who is able to reverse the sin of Adam. Before proceeding to the analysis of this theme in the Slavonic text and its connection with the Adamic tradition, a short excursus into the later Hekhalot materials is necessary.

Scholars have previously noted that in the additional chapters of *Sefer Hekhalot* Metatron appears to be viewed as a pre-existent being, first incarnated in Adam and then in Enoch, who re-ascends to the protoplast's heavenly home and takes his rightful place in the heights of the universe.⁷ *3 Enoch* 48C:1 (§ 72 of Schäfer's edition) reads: «The Holy One, blessed be he, said: I made him strong, I took him, I appointed him, namely Metatron my servant (עֲבָדִי), who is unique among all the denizens of the heights... "I made him strong" in the generation of the first man (בְּדוֹרֵי שֵׁל אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן)...».⁸

⁷ P. ALEXANDER, *From Son of Adam to a Second God: Transformation of the Biblical Enoch // Biblical Figures Outside the Bible* / Ed. M. E. STONE, T. A. BERGEN (Harrisburg, 1998) 102–104; M. IDEL, *Enoch is Metatron // Immanuel* 24/25 (1990) 220–240.

⁸ P. ALEXANDER, *3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch // OTP. Vol. 1. 311*; P. SCHÄFER with M. SCHLÜTER and H. G. VON MUTIUS, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen, 1981) (TSAJ, 2) 36–37.

Scholars have noted that «Enoch here becomes a redeemer figure — a second Adam through whom humanity is restored».⁹ This understanding of Enoch-Metatron as the Redeemer does not appear to be a later invention of the rabbinic and Hekhalot authors but can be already detected in *2 Slavonic Enoch*.

In chapter 64 of the Slavonic text an «astounding account» can be found which, in the view of one of *2 Enoch*'s translators, «could hardly please a Jew or a Christian». The chapter depicts a prostration of «the elders of the people» and «all the community» before Enoch at the place of his second departure to heaven. The people who came to bow down before the patriarch delivered to Enoch the following address:

O our father, Enoch! May you be blessed by the Lord, the eternal king! And now, bless your sons, and all the people, so that we may be glorified in front of your face today. For you will be glorified in front of the face of the Lord for eternity, because you are the one whom the Lord chose in preference to all the people upon the earth; and he appointed you to be the one who makes a written record of all his creation, visible and invisible, and the one who carried away the sin of humankind (*2 Enoch* 64:4–5).¹⁰

An important detail in this address is Enoch's designation as «the one who carried away the sin of humankind». This depiction of the patriarch as a redeemer is intriguing. But what kind of sin was Enoch able to carry away? Can it be merely related to Enoch's role as an intercessor for humans at the time of the final judgment? In this respect it is important that in *2 Enoch* 64 the «elders of the earth» define Enoch, not as the one who will carry away the sin of humankind, but as the one who has already carried away this sin. The emphasis on the already accomplished redemptive act provides an important clue to understanding the kind of sin Enoch was able to erase. The focus here is not on the individual sins of Enoch's descendents but on the primeval sin of humankind. Therefore, it becomes apparent that the redeeming functions of the patriarch are not related to his possible intercession for the sins of his children, the fallen angels or the «elders of the earth». Rather they pertain to the sin of the protoplast which the patriarch was able to «carry away» by his righteousness, ascension, and transformation. Yet Enoch's role in the economy of human salvation is not confined solely to his past encounter of the Face of God. In the Slavonic apocalypse he himself becomes a redeemer who is able to cause the transformation of human subjects. The significant detail of the aforementioned account in chapter 64 that unfolds Enoch's redeeming functions is that the same people who proclaim the patriarch as the redeemer

⁹ ALEXANDER, *From Son of Adam to a Second God...* 111.

¹⁰ ANDERSEN, *2 Enoch...* 190.

of humanity now also find themselves prostrated before Enoch asking for his blessing so that they may be glorified in front of his face. *2 Enoch* 64 tells:

And the elders of the people and all the community came and prostrated themselves and kissed Enoch. And they said to him, «O our father, Enoch! May you be blessed by the Lord, the eternal king! And now, bless your sons, and all the people, so that we may be glorified in front of your face today».¹¹

This depiction recalls the earlier scene of the patriarch's approach to the *Kavod* in *2 Enoch* 22 where the visionary is depicted as prostrated before the Divine Face during his account of transformation. The only difference here is that instead of the Divine Face people are now approaching the Face of Enoch. It is intriguing that the shorter recension of *2 Enoch* 64 seems to attempt to portray the translated patriarch as a sort of replica or an icon of the Divine Face through which humans can access the Divine *Panim* and become glorified:

And they kissed Enoch, saying, «Blessed is the Lord, the eternal king. Bless now your people, and glorify us to the face of the Lord. For the Lord has chosen you, to appoint you to be the one who reveals, who carries away our sins».¹²

In light of these theological developments taking place in the Slavonic apocalypse where the patriarch assumes the role of redeemer whose face is able to glorify human subjects, it is not coincidental that some manuscripts of *2 Enoch* confuse the glory of the Deity with the glory of the patriarch and the oil of the Lord with the oil of Enoch's head. These readings therefore appear to be not simply scribal slips but deliberate theological reworking in which Enoch's oil might be understood as having the same redeeming and transformative value as the oil of the Lord.

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the ritual of anointing with the oil of the resurrection found in *2 Enoch*. *2 Enoch* 22:9 portrays the archangel Michael anointing Enoch with delightful oil, the ointment of glory which transforms the patriarch into a celestial creature. According to some rabbinic materials this oil of the resurrection which is responsible for the change of human mortal nature into the glorious state of a celestial being will come at the eschatological time from the head of the Deity.

¹¹ *2 Enoch* 64:4 (the longer recension). ANDERSEN, *2 Enoch*... 190.

¹² *2 Enoch* 64:3–4 (the shorter recension). ANDERSEN, *2 Enoch*... 191.