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JUDGE JESUS: INTERPRETING JESUS' ROLE AS JUDGE IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
THROUGH AN EARLY JEWISH MINDSET

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JEREMIAH STALLMAN
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APPROVAL SHEET

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Jeremiah Stallman

Chair: Leo Percer Ph.D.

Reader: C. Fred Smith Ph.D.

Reader: Gaylen Leverett Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Jesus proclaimed that the Father gave him the authority to judge because he is the “Son of Man” (John 5:22, 27). This proclamation is spoken to an immediate Jewish audience that would have had preconceived theological beliefs concerning eschatological judgment and messianic expectation. However, these are not the preconceived beliefs of the modern reader. The modern reader of the Gospel of John will better understand John’s presentation of Jesus’ words concerning his role as messianic judge through an Early Jewish interpretive lens. The first century Jew in John’s audience would have been infused with two to three centuries of preconceived Jewish thought concerning messianic expectation and the Messiah’s role as eschatological judge. Chapter two will consider the multifaceted Jewish beliefs concerning their own messianic expectation and eschatological judgment in Early Jewish documents and whether or not there was a conflation of the two. It will explore Jewish beliefs on the themes of judgment, messianic expectation, role of judge, criteria of judgment, and time of judgment. Chapter three will provide the reader with information regarding the Jewish tradition of the “Son of Man” originating in the book of Daniel and then in the later Jewish texts of the *Parables of Enoch* and *Fourth Ezra*. These two chapters will indicate that Jesus’ immediate audience and the first Jewish readers of the Gospel of John would likely have had preconceived beliefs that the expected Messiah would have an active role in eschatological judgment. Chapter four will then consider Jesus’ teachings concerning himself as the expected Messiah and his role as judge. John presents Jesus’ teachings about himself with familiar Jewish themes but in a radically different way than what John’s first Jewish audience would have expected. This study will have hermeneutical implications that will aid the modern reader into a more illumined and robust interpretation to theological themes presented in the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The modern Christian reader of the Gospel of John tends to interpret the Gospel through a twenty-first century mindset full of well nuanced descriptions of Jesus influenced by the rest of the New Testament and nearly two thousand years of Christian interpretation. The original readers of the Gospel of John had a different interpretive lens through which they would have understood the words of Jesus. John's audience was comprised of both Jews and Gentiles.¹ This study will focus on John's Jewish audience due to the Jewish nature in which the Gospel was written and due to the fact that John presents an intrinsic audience of Jesus within the Gospel of "the Jews" who would have initially interpreted Jesus' words through their own Jewish mindset. The overall goal of this study is to not just establish how John's first Jewish audience would have understood Jesus' teachings up against their own beliefs and traditions, but also to demonstrate to the modern interpreter of the Gospel of John that a deep study of Early Jewish beliefs and traditions concerning messianic expectation and his role as judge will more greatly illuminate and amplify Jesus' teachings concerning his role as Messiah and judge as they are presented in the Gospel of John.

Jesus presents himself as having the role of judge in the Gospel of John.² For the modern Christian, this is not a problem since Jesus' claim as judge fits with other New Testament teachings concerning his role as judge and the Christian belief that Jesus is God. However, the question is rarely, if ever, asked concerning what John's Jewish recipients would have reacted

¹ Craig L. Blomberg indicates a Gentile and Jewish audience based on John's provenance and date written but argues that John's main audience in mind seems to be Jews due to the heavily Jewish nature of the Gospel of John, see *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001), 41-44, 61-63; see also Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters: Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 70-72, 422-35.

² John 3:17-19; 5:19-30; 8:15-16; 9:39; 12:31, 47-48.

when Jesus boldly proclaims to the religious leaders at the Temple that, “the Father does not judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22 LEB) and later, “he has granted him authority to carry out judgment, because he is the Son of Man” (5:27 LEB). Were these claims by Jesus something that was completely foreign to the Jews or was there a precedent in their own messianic expectation for the Messiah to be given the right to Judge? In the writing of his Gospel to his own audience, it seems that John assumes his audience would have been familiar with what the Early Jewish beliefs would have been concerning the expected Messiah and his role as eschatological judge.³ This project will specifically explore Early Jewish literature with special consideration which focus on Early Jewish beliefs concerning messianic expectation and how the role of judgment relates to the Messiah. These Jewish beliefs will then be the lens through which the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John will be explored in order to reveal just how radical Jesus’ words would have been to John’s first century Jewish audience. Thus, the modern reader of the Gospel of John will better understand John’s presentation of Jesus’ words concerning his role as messianic judge through an Early Jewish interpretive lens.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Within the last two decades there has been a significant increase in Second Temple Jewish studies, especially as it relates to New Testament interpretation. However, there still remains a vast need for these studies in New Testament commentaries, introductions, teaching materials, etc. The scholarly community is well aware of their existence and is overall familiar with the implications and importance they hold for New Testament biblical studies. The well-informed pastor will add these implications to his sermon. Many biblically literate people in the church are not aware of Early Jewish sources and may see extra-biblical sources in a negative

³ Chapter four will explore in depth how John represents the major Jewish messianic expectations of his day.

light. Another reason for this study is to point the biblically literate (and biblically illiterate) church community to the fact that Early Jewish documents are necessary to help the church understand more fully the teachings of Jesus.

Another reason that this study is needed is because there is very little interaction in Early Jewish studies as they relate to the Gospel of John. Various scholarly works have focused on Early Judaism and the Synoptic Gospels and Early Judaism and the Pauline Epistles, but there are very few scholarly works that consider Early Judaism and the Gospel of John. Furthermore, this author is unaware of any scholarly sources which extensively consider John's representation of Jesus as messianic judge in light of Early Jewish belief. Thus, there is a great need for increased scholarship in this area of interpreting various aspects of the Gospel of John in light of Early Jewish beliefs.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The modern reader of the Gospel of John does not read and understand the presentation of Jesus' teachings in the same way that John's original audience would have understood them. The author of the Gospel of John writes to a first century audience that would likely have understood John's Jewish references and the words of Jesus' teachings would have been understood from a first century Jewish perspective. A first century Jewish reaction to the teachings of Jesus is not the automatic response of the twenty-first century reader of the Gospel of John. Since its initial distribution to its first readers, there has been nearly 2000 years of interpretation and primarily through a Western European Christian point of view. Although there is nothing wrong with this approach, most western interpreters of the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John do not consider how a first century Jew would have heard and reacted to the teachings of Jesus. The modern reader does not read these inherently Jewish teachings through

the lens of a first century Jew who would have been one of the primary recipients of this Gospel when it was first written. Thus, the modern reader must understand Jesus' teachings in "their town" before interpretation is made in "our town."⁴

There is then a gap between the modern reader and the implied reader. Most modern readers do not consider deep Jewish backgrounds and thought processes when reading through how John presents the teachings of Jesus to a first century Jewish audience. Köstenberger and Patterson delineate the difference between the two readers as they note:

The reader is the actual reader of the narrative. This is a label that properly applies to a contemporary reader. The *implied* reader is the one or ones for whom the author composed his work. It is necessary to understand this distinction, because while the original readers of the text are no longer alive, the message was originally intended for them. Understanding this original context permits the interpreter to gain more insight into the original purpose of the author.⁵

Original meaning is a key piece that the interpreter of the text needs to seek. The original meaning that John would have intended for his words would have been understood by his target audience because John would have been familiar with his audience and their beliefs. Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard state, "Of course, if we are seeking the meaning the author/editor intended for the original recipients, that meaning *must* be what they could have understood at that time, not some meaning later readers would determine based on based on later historical and theological (or scientific) understanding."⁶ It is the later reader's responsibility to seek out and

⁴ "Their town" and "our town" are terms used by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays in their five step principizing process in determining an applicable biblical principle from the text to the modern reader, see *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Interpreting and Applying the Bible*, Third Edition, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 39-47.

⁵ Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011), 391.

⁶ William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Third Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 49-50.

understand as much and as close as possible to how the implied reader would have understood John's presentation of Jesus' teachings.

The contention then is the identity of this original audience in order to know where to focus one's efforts to research the background of the proper audience. Craig Blomberg argues for one of the original recipient groups to read this text as Palestinian Jews living in Asia Minor where John was originally writing.⁷ He argues that John writes a sharp polemic to Christians with Jewish backgrounds who were experiencing Jewish opposition. John was reassuring them that their faith in Jesus Christ was properly placed. Thus, John had an acute focus on a Jewish audience in the writing of his Gospel. Andreas Köstenberger also argues that the original audience first and foremost had Diaspora Jews and Gentiles attracted to Judaism.⁸ Köstenberger also argues that this Gospel is partially written as reactionary and is a response to the destruction of the Temple since John presents Jesus as the new temple.⁹ Although gentiles would have also been part of John's audience, the primary indicators within the Jewish nature of the text, indicates that John's first priority was to reach a Jewish audience and comprehensively prove to them that Jesus was indeed the long expected Messiah and not just Messiah but also God himself in the flesh.

In order for "our town" to best understand "their town" when it comes to understanding Jesus' statements in John 5:22 and 27, one must explore the many facets which would have influenced their current state of belief. This study will explore key passages in Early Jewish texts for beliefs concerning their views on judgment which included judgment criteria, recipients of

⁷ Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001), 41-44, 61-63.

⁸ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters: Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 70-72, 422-35.

⁹ Köstenberger, *Theology of John*, 84-85.

judgment, imminent and eschatological elements of judgment, judgment as it relates to the coming messiah, God's role in judgment, the messiah's role in judgment, and various Early Jewish views of messianic expectation. Understandably, there is no certainty that John's audience would have had access to each of the documents as the modern reader has. However, a comparison of these texts with themes found in the Gospel of John will reveal that at a minimum there would have been a verbal tradition that first century Jews would have been familiar with. Another consideration that this study will explore will be the historical and social settings that influenced the composition and content of each document.

This study will then focus on John's immediate Jewish audience which is the original implied reader. This study will investigate the composition of Jesus' audience represented in the Gospel of John which is also representative of John's Jewish audience. This study will also delineate what each group within John's audience would have likely believed about Messiah and judgment based on historically known information. This study will then exegete Jesus' own teachings concerning his fulfilment of Jewish Messianic expectation and his role as imminent and eschatological judge in light of John's Jewish audience's preconceived Jewish beliefs. The final step of this method will indicate to the modern reader just how radical Jesus' teachings would have been to the first century Jewish ear and inform the modern reader that he will have a much more robust understanding of the teachings of Jesus when he first seeks to understand the words of Jesus through a first century Jewish mindset.

Knowing as much as possible about the beliefs of the original Jewish recipients of the Gospel of John will aid the modern reader in understanding how they would have understood and received the teachings of Jesus as John presents them. The author of the Gospel of John would have had the religious and cultural background of his audience in mind when he penned

the words of this Gospel. The Jewish nature of this Gospel indicates that both the author and his target audience were Jewish or familiar enough with Jewish rituals, customs, and beliefs.

Knowing key Jewish beliefs will aid the modern reader to read the Gospel of John through the interpretive lens of the original Jewish audience. The first century Jew would have understood the words of Jesus through their own preconceived beliefs on the topics of judgment, messianic expectation, and the Messiah's role as eschatological judge.

LIMITS OF THIS STUDY

The Second Temple literature discussed will mostly consider sources written prior to AD 100 since scholarly estimates place the authorship of the Gospel of John around AD 80-100. Early Jewish documents that date after Jesus' ministry (after AD 30) will only be considered to show continuity of Jewish belief in first century Judaism concerning the expected Messiah's role in judgment. One of the limitations with some of the Early Jewish sources is Christian interpolation in these documents. Thus, caution will be taken in the examination of certain texts such as *I Enoch* and the *Testament of Moses* to distinguish an Early Jewish belief from a later Christian interpolation.¹⁰ This study will seek to find the root Jewish beliefs regarding the expectation of a messianic judge and dismiss later Christian interpolations on the text which do not inform original Jewish belief.¹¹ Dating of the primary Jewish sources will play a large role in determining original Jewish belief at the time that Jesus taught. Another challenge linked to the dating is linking the document to a certain historical and social setting because the content and emphases of most if not all of the Early Jewish documents were influenced by historical and

¹⁰ The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as collected and edited by James H. Charlesworth specifically deals with which parts of Early Jewish documents are later Christian interpolations, see *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vols. 1 and 2, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), see especially the introductions to each translated document.

¹¹ This will be heavily explored through chapters two and three.

social settings. These settings influenced what was said about the type of Messiah expected as well as the extent of judgment whether God was the one judging or judgment was a role of the messianic figure.

One of the largest limitations of this study is the limited number of Early Jewish sources and some of the key sources contained within the Dead Sea Scrolls are highly fragmentary such as 11QMelchizedek and 4Q246 (the “Son of God” text). The primary sources for this study will include but are not limited to: Daniel, 2 Maccabees, Sirach, the *Sibylline Oracles* 3, the *Psalms of Solomon*, *Jubilees*, the *Testament of Abraham*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the *Testament of Moses*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the *1 Enoch*, The Dead Sea Scrolls, and The Gospel of John. There is only so much that can be gleaned from Early Jewish sources concerning what John’s Jewish audience would have believed about the role of the Messiah as judge. The limit on the number of sources means that there is a lack of knowledge concerning some areas of what may or may not have been the exact beliefs of John’s Jewish audience, but, overall, these documents give a enough information to paint a more than sufficient picture of what a first century Jew would have believed concerning judgment, the Messiah, and his role as judge.

CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH

Review of Second Temple Research

Several authors over the past few decades have offered various surveys on Second Temple texts found in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.¹² Each of these surveys has a different focus and goal in mind. For example, some New Testament scholars give the survey with the intent of showing how the Jewish texts inform New Testament study.¹³ Others have sought to be more objective and informative.¹⁴ These surveys will be of great use for this study as they will help give key background information on specific Early Jewish texts such as date, provenance, historical and religious setting, and the overall impact that each document may have

¹² Lester L. Grabbe offers a chronological survey of Jewish literature from the Persian period (539-333BC) through the end of the first century AD in *Judaic Religion in the Second Temple Period: Belief and Practice from the Exile to the Yavneh*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 11-126. This portion of his study focuses on the historical events that would have directly influenced each of the writings. This survey will be of great value for this study because it will help to trace chronologically Jewish thought concerning messianic expectation, the topic of judgment, and the identity of the one doing the judging. This source will help show the progression and change of belief and what events led to those changes. The second half of Grabbe's study considers special topics and Chapter thirteen will greatly inform this study as Grabbe considers what early Jewish texts said concerning messianic expectation and the type of messiah put forth in each text (271-91).

Shaye J. D. Cohen offers a synthesis of religion, literature and history of Judaism as it developed from 164 BC to AD 300. His work considers this period from a Jewish perspective which will aid in this study because part of the goal is to understand Jesus' teachings through a Jewish lens. See *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Third Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014).

James C. VanderKam gives a three part introduction to Early Judaism including history, literature, and societal structures in *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). This text will provide necessary background and dating information for many of the Early Jewish texts considered in this study.

¹³ Larry Helyer analyzes Jewish texts based on a few different approaches in *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Students*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002). He considers some texts in light of historical events which makes up the largest body of his book. He also considers literature that fits into certain genres such as apocalypticism. He also considers literature from geographic locations (Qumran) and from individuals (Philo and Josephus). Each work that he analyzes, he seeks to give a basic introduction, dating and composition, purpose, features, topics, and its relationship to the New Testament. For this study, the overview of each Jewish text will inform the various subsections on specific sources used to build a case toward the expectation of a messianic judge.

¹⁴ See Susan E. Docherty, *The Jewish Pseudepigrapha: An Introduction to the Literature of the Second Temple Period*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015).

had on other documents and especially the shaping of the Jewish mindset regarding specific topics that will be explored in depth in this study.¹⁵

The Parables of Enoch

The *Parables of Enoch* is an instrumental piece of Second Temple Jewish literature that informs or begins to inform first century AD messianic perspectives and expectation.¹⁶

Scholarship on the *Parables* has increased significantly over the past two decades and this study seeks to add to the conversation. The *Parables* contain many links to each of the four Gospels. Leslie Walck has significantly added to recent scholarship on the *Parables* by comparing the use of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch* to its use in the Gospel of Matthew. His overall Goal is to show the similarities between the two with special consideration to the judgment scenes in both. Although this work focuses on Matthew, the research done on the *Parables* will greatly inform this current study.

James A. Waddell offers an intriguing study on how the Messiah is presented in the *Parables of Enoch* compared to how the Messiah is portrayed in the writings of the Apostle Paul.¹⁷ Although this book considers the writings of Paul as its end goal, chapter three focuses on how the Messiah is pictured in the *Parables of Enoch*. Especially important for this study is the section of chapter three that considers the functions of the Messiah such as salvation and

¹⁵ This review of literature will not consider secondary sources for every Second Temple text utilized for this study. This study will only review literature associated with the *Parables of Enoch* since this text gives the greatest input for messianic expectation found in the Gospel of John regarding the expectation of messianic judge. Secondary sources for all other Second Temple sources will be considered in the various subsections of chapter two and three.

¹⁶ Dating of the *Parables* is crucial to this study since this source greatly informs messianic expectation, especially as it relates to Messiah as Judge. A sub section of chapter two will argue for a dating of the *Parable* that predates the ministry of Jesus which gives a precedent of messianic judge as a part of messianic expectation.

¹⁷ James A. Waddell, *The Messiah: A Comparative Study of the Enochic Son of Man and the Pauline Kyrios*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), especially 48-103.

judgment since both topics are in view in Jesus' discourse on his self-portrayal as messianic judge in the Gospel of John.¹⁸

Gabrielle Boccaccini presents a comprehensive collection of essays surrounding recent scholarship of the *Parables of Enoch*, especially as this text relates to Early Jewish messianic expectation.¹⁹ The essays in this book add significantly to the discussion of the identity of the Messiah or "Son of Man" in Second Temple Judaism. Unfortunately, one aspect that is lacking from these essays is the influence of the *Parables* on the New Testament. Although this aspect is lacking, the information conveyed will greatly move one toward allowing the conversation to move in that direction as will be the case with this study.

Son of Man

The "Son of Man" debate has been going on since the Protestant Reformation.²⁰ Although there is wide interpretation on the meaning of "Son of Man," The focus of this study will be upon how "Son of Man" was referenced in texts that predate the ministry of Jesus. These references will be compared to and contrasted with how Jesus uses the title "Son of Man" in the Gospel of John, especially in relation to Jesus as messianic judge. Unfortunately, much of the scholarship concerning the interpretation of the "Son of Man" in the gospels focuses on the

¹⁸ See also Leslie Walck's discussion on the characteristics of the Enochic Son of Man in the *Parables of Enoch* in *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 156-64

¹⁹ Gabriele Boccaccini, Ed., *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). Since *The Parables of Enoch* are one of the key sources in this current discussion, most if not all of the essays or the research presented in the essays will be utilized to inform the arguments of this section of the study.

²⁰ Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-2. Burkett offers an extensive look at the development of the debate over the past three centuries. His main goal in this book is not to necessarily give a historical survey of the debate but to show the many different ways that "Son of Man" was understood in Early Jewish texts and into Rabbinic texts.

Synoptics.²¹ However, J. Harold Ellens writes a helpful book on this topic concerning the use of “Son of Man” in the Gospel of John.²² Ellens exegetes each of the uses of “Son of Man” in John and comments on the theological/Christological significance of each use. One of his most helpful chapters for this current study is his consideration of how “Son of Man” is used in all four Gospels in light of how it is used in Second Temple Judaism.

Lester L. Grabbe offers a brief yet detailed overview of how the definition and understanding of the “Son of Man” developed in Second Temple Judaism.²³ Grabbe explores how “Son of Man” was understood eschatologically. He considers Daniel 7, *The Parables of Enoch*, and *4 Ezra* 13. His comments on the first two sources will inform the current study, especially since Jesus’ discourse on his claim as messianic judge has eschatological judgment in view.²⁴ Grabbe draws a distinct connection between the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch* and the four Gospels, especially Matthew, as opposed to just the Danielic tradition of “one like a son of Man.”

Benjamin E. Reynolds traces the use of “Son of Man” in Early Jewish Sources (*Daniel, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch*) and New Testament Passages (The Synoptic Gospels, Acts,

²¹ One of the examples of “Son of Man” studies in the Synoptics is Leslie Walck, *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011). Walck does a comparative study on how “Son of Man” is used in the *Parables of Enoch* and Matthew offering thorough exegesis on select key passages that the “Son of Man” is mentioned. The exegesis of *1 Enoch* will prove to be highly useful for this study since the *Parables* shed the greatest amount of light on the concerning Jewish expectation of the “Son of Man” that predate the ministry of Jesus.

²² J. Harold Ellens, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010).

²³ Lester L. Grabbe, ““Son of Man”: Its Origin and Meaning in Second Temple Judaism,” in *Enoch and the Synoptic Gospels: Reminiscence, Allusions, Intertextuality*, edited by Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Gabrielle Boccaccini, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 169-97.

²⁴ Concerning *4 Ezra* (and *2 Baruch*), both sources will only be mentioned briefly due to the fact that they post-date the ministry of Jesus. Depending on the dating tradition of the Gospel of John, both sources also predate John. Both of these sources lend evidence to the fact that there was a developed “Son of Man” tradition in Judaism in the first century AD. These sources will be utilized to show precedence and not influence.

Revelation).²⁵ Reynolds' study emphasizes the apocalyptic characteristics of the "Son of Man" in John. The apocalyptic features of the Messiah ranked high in Jewish expectation. Reynolds brings out each of these features in his exegesis and interpretation of key Gospel of John passages. In fact, he speaks directly to one of the key passages that will inform this current study in chapter six where he discusses the "Son of Man" as apocalyptic judge. His study focuses on an end times view of the "Son of Man" which would have been a key feature in the beliefs of John's Jewish audience. One thing that this current study will seek to bring out is Jesus presenting himself as not only the apocalyptic or eschatological judge, but he also presents himself as an imminent judge who is already judging the thoughts and intentions of his audience.

Judgment Literature

The focus of this study is what the Jews would have expected concerning the Messiah as judge and what this role would have looked like. Although this is the primary focus of this study, the topic of the Jewish view of judgment will be explored as it relates to who they viewed as the one doing the judging (God, a human figure, angelic being, Messiah) and who were to be the recipients of the judgment (the unrighteous, Romans, Greeks, all gentiles, compromising Jews, fallen angels, etc.). This study will show that the recipients of judgment in the teachings of Jesus is unexpectedly different from who his audience, the Jews, expected it to be.

Recent scholarship that links the topic of judgment from Early Jewish texts to New Testament texts are very few. Two of the main sources that this study will consider link Early Jewish sources on judgment to the Apostle Paul's view of judgment in his epistles. Kent L.

²⁵ Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

Yinger focuses his comparative judgment study on judgment according to deeds.²⁶ His main contribution to the topic is a pointed survey of Second Temple Jewish texts that speak to the topic of judgment. His method is to show how this motif comes up in these texts as opposed to looking at it topically and following different aspects of judgment. His goal is to show what Paul and his Jewish audience would have believed about judgment when the topic is presented in various epistolary passages. Although he does not speak directly to judgeship, his survey of Second Temple sources will contribute to an understanding of what judgment would have looked like to John's Jewish audience since the type of judgment presented by Jesus in the Gospel of John informs the type of judge that Jesus is presenting himself to be. Yinger's emphasis is to show judgment according to deeds and in a sense, there is a "deed" that Jesus tells his audience that they must do in order to be saved.

Another recent study that discusses the topic of judgment and relates Early Jewish thought to the Pauline Epistles is put forth by Chris VanLandingham who singles out specific ideas about judgment and shows how each Jewish source speaks directly to that topic.²⁷ He addresses many of the same passages as Yinger but in greater detail and adds to judgment the topic of justification and how these relate to the covenants that God made with Israel and later in his study how these topics relate to God's covenant with the church. This study will provide great insight on what the Early Jews believed about judgment and who would be saved. This will provide some of the needed information regarding the contrast that Jesus will provide his audience which will show just how radical Jesus' teachings on judgment and salvation would

²⁶ Kent L. Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment According to Deeds*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

²⁷ Chris VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006).

have been to his audience. Although the topic of judgment is an instrumental piece of this study, one aspect of judgment that is lacking in the area of comparative Early Jewish and New Testament studies is the identity of the judge especially in light of what Jesus taught about his own judgeship.

Stephen H. Travis presents a study on the topic of divine retribution as it is presented by every New Testament author.²⁸ After a brief background of the topic in the Old Testament and Second Temple literature, Travis focuses primarily on how divine retribution is traced throughout the New Testament. The reason that this study is useful when considering Jesus as judge is because the longest held belief concerning the person of judgment in Jewish belief belonged solely to God. However, this study will demonstrate that the one doing the judging began to shift in Jewish thought between the first century BC through the end of the first century AD. This study also reveals the nature and character of divine judgment as seen in the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of Paul. This is important for the current study because the nature and character of divine judgment that Jesus poses to his audience in the Gospel of John will greatly contrast with what was expected from God and his Messiah.

REVIEW OF JOHANNINE RESEARCH

The review of Johannine research focuses on two verses in the Gospel of John, 5:22 and 5:27. The two main themes for this study will consider is Jesus as judge and interpretation of the use of “Son of Man” in the immediate context of 5:27 and more broadly how John’s Gospel uses the title. One of the main goals of this review is to see what background information various commentators bring to light concerning the Jewish backgrounds of the idea of a messianic judge

²⁸ Stephen H. Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God: The Limits of Divine Retribution in New Testament Thought*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008).

and the Jewish background of Jesus' usage of the "Son of Man" title in the Gospel of John. The reason for this is to understand how John's Jewish audience would have understood Jesus' words in 5:27 when he says, "And he has granted him authority to carry out judgment, because he is the Son of Man (LEB)."

The following reviewed sources have mainly been placed in chronological order for the purpose of tracing thought and research development of Jesus as judge and the his use of the title "Son of Man" in the Gospel of John, especially in 5:27. One of the things that this review will bring to light are those commentators that bring out the Jewish and possible messianic background of the "Son of Man" as judge predating its usage in the four Gospels.

C.K. Barrett points to the uniqueness of the Son of God as for the reason that this particular instance of "Son of Man" in John is *anarthrous*. His overall view on its use here points to his special position in all of humanity.²⁹ Francis Maloney follows this line of thinking and holds that Jesus' use of "Son of Man" in John accentuates his humanity.³⁰ However, many Johannine scholars lean toward the notion that this title points to both Jesus' humanity and divinity because of the way it is used elsewhere in the gospels.

C.H. Dodd conflates the use of the titles "Son of God" and "Son of Man" and in essence two sides of the same coin.³¹ Dodd also supports the notion that the title "Son on Man" used in John finds its background from the common tradition found in the Synoptics.³² He also points

²⁹ C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, (London: S.P.C.K., 1962), 218.

³⁰ Francis J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1978).

³¹ Dodd, *John*, 244.

³² C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 241.

out that there is little reference to this title in pre-Christian Judaism other than Daniel 7:13-14 and *I Enoch*.³³ Like other commentators, Dodd points to the Synoptics for the main origin for the use of “Son of Man.” The problem with this is that one then must seek to explain the origins of “Son of Man” in the Synoptics. Commentators only defer the problem by pointing to the Synoptics for origin understandings.

Rudolf Schnackenburg brings out that the kind of judgment mentioned in John 5, according to the Jewish mindset, was one of God’s supreme acts of Sovereignty and thus something reserved for God alone. He shows that 5:22 is part of Jesus showing his equality with God.³⁴ He also shows the Jewish messianic background of “Son of Man” in Daniel 7 and *I Enoch*. For his interpretation of Daniel 7:13-14 he shows how judgment is not a part of this passage, but only power and authority.³⁵ By the end of this section, he remains inconclusive as to the origin and Jewish understanding of the link between “Son of Man” and “judgment.” He points to *I Enoch* but does not explore further the implications of this Early Jewish text.³⁶

Unlike Schnackenburg, Leon Morris holds that there is not a Jewish precedent for the Messiah to hold the function of final judgment. He holds that John is presenting a new and distinctive teaching concerning the role of Messiah in judgment.³⁷ The problem with this

³³ Dodd, *John*, 241-44.

³⁴ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John*, Vol. 2, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1980), 2:107.

³⁵ Schnackenburg, *John*, 2:107.

³⁶ Schnackenburg, *John*, 2:112-13.

³⁷ Leon Morris, *Jesus is the Christ: Studies in the Theology of John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 100-01.

conclusion is that Morris fails to consider Early Jewish sources for not just “Son of Man” thought but also Jewish expectation of judgment and general messianic expectation.

Delbert Burkett focuses on the ascending-descending concept of the “Son of man.” He advocates for the reader of John not to try to push for any single category for each use of the title but to let each one speak individually.³⁸ Burkett develops this thesis throughout his commentary concerning each individual usage of “Son of Man” but he ends up missing what John is trying to do as a whole with how he weaves this title throughout. John is notorious for building complex multifaceted meanings into the words and phrases that he repeats all throughout and “Son of Man” is one of many.

D.A. Carson rejects the notion that the *anarthrous* usage points to Jesus’ humanity and that Jesus can judge mankind because he himself became human. He rejects this notion on the basis that this is a condition indicative of all humankind.³⁹ He also says that the usage here is used to point to Daniel 7:13-14. However, Carson does not stop with Daniel 7 and recognizes there is ambiguity of how the title has been used in the past. He says, “Jesus could therefore shape the title to suit his own understanding of his role.”⁴⁰ Carson identifies three aspects of the use of the title “Son of Man” being not only his divinity and humanity but also the self-revelation he imparted upon humanity which is the basis for judgment coming upon mankind. Rejection of this revelation brings condemnation.⁴¹

³⁸ Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

³⁹ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 257.

⁴⁰ Carson, *John*, 257.

⁴¹ Carson, *John*, 257-58.

Gerald L. Borchert sees the roll of judgment in 5:22 and 5:27 as eschatological.⁴² He also mentions the use of “Son of Man” had a certain Jewish expectation behind it, though he does not go into detail as to what that expectation would have looked like.⁴³ Concerning the *anarthrous* nature of the use in 5:27, Borchert points to Colwell’s rule but goes further by saying that it is likely on purpose to point the author to Daniel 7:13-14.⁴⁴ He holds that the relationship between the “Son of Man’s” relationship to the Ancient of Days in Daniel parallels the Son-Father relationship in the Gospel of John.⁴⁵

Herman Ridderbos focuses on the eschatological tension of John 5:19-30 between realized and inaugurated eschatology. Concerning Jesus’ statement in 5:27, he does point the reader to Daniel 7:13 but focuses more on the power of the Son to give life than the right of the Son to judge and bring condemnation.⁴⁶ In John 5, Jesus holds salvation and judgment in close tension with each other and the Jews had clear views about each one and who the recipients of each would be. Jesus’ speeches on judgment and salvation in John will reveal the irony of the Jewish situation and belief about who will be judged and for what reason.

Rodney A. Whitacre also considers Daniel 7 and *1 Enoch* behind the statement in John 5:27. One thing that He points to is the implications that this title and situation of the conversation might have on his listening audience. He says, “So Jesus is saying that if they recognized him as the eschatological “Son of Man” and if they understood this identity aright,

⁴² Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1-11*, (Nashville: B&H, 1996), 241.

⁴³ Borchert, *John*, 241, footnote 37.

⁴⁴ Borchert, *John*, 241, footnote 37.

⁴⁵ Borchert, *John*, 241, footnote 37.

⁴⁶ Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary*, Translated by John Vriend, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 195-201.

they would know they were facing their judge.”⁴⁷ Thus, Whitacre is one of the few commentators that seeks to show the mindset of Jesus’ audience. This translates into the Jewish mindset of John’s Jewish audience.

George R. Beasley-Murray asserts that the “Son of Man” tradition put forth in the Gospel of John follows the tradition put forth by the Synoptics as opposed to Early Jewish tradition.⁴⁸ He follows a similar view to that of Dodd’s position but the fact remains that the problem with this view is that one still needs to explain the background usage in the Synoptics which in essence closely mirrors John’s usage.

Raymond E. Brown seeks to give background to the origin of the title “Son of Man” by considering its use in Ezekiel, Daniel 7, and *1 Enoch* 37-71. He posits that there is one main thread from which the title originates and that there were those in Jesus’ audience that were not fazed by his use of the title which indicates that they would have been familiar with the title and its previous use and understanding by Early Jews.⁴⁹ This supposition of familiarity is a crucial piece to this entire argument because the John mainly only give one side of the conversation, Jesus.’ The modern reader is unaware of the preconceived ideas concerning the role of the Messiah or “Son of Man” in judgment. Understanding the beliefs of the audience helps one to better understand the words of Jesus. The goal is to see the beliefs of those on the other side of the conversation.

Craig S. Keener comes the closest to achieving this goal in his commentary and gets to the heart of the issue behind the passage by proposing that Jesus saying that authority to judge

⁴⁷ Rodney A. Whitacre, *John*, Edited by Grant R. Osborne, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1999), 132.

⁴⁸ George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Second Edition, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000),77.

⁴⁹ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, Edited by Francis J. Moloney, (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 252-56.

being passed to the Son was meant to be unnerving to his audience.⁵⁰ Keener points out the delegation of judgment by God in other Early Jewish sources such as *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Abraham*. He says that although there is a Jewish precedent for the delegation of judgment, the prevailing view in Early Judaism and into the Rabbinic materials is that God judges alone without the aid of or delegation to another.⁵¹

John Ashton also makes some significant observations and points to John's use of the "Son of man" title as a one whose true home is in heaven and possibly even a divine figure with Daniel 7:13-14 as the backdrop. He shows how the use of this title is something that no ordinary human being would dare to claim.⁵² He distinguishes the use of this title from "Son of God" which he sees as messianic. Concerning the judgeship given to Jesus in 5:27 as it relates to the use of "Son of Man," Ashton points to the uniqueness of the phraseology in this verse because it is the only instance of "Son" and "Son of Man" used next to each other and it is the only anarthrous use of the title in the entire gospel which he says points directly to the anarthrous use of the title in Daniel 7:13.⁵³ He also points to emergence of Jewish thought in *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch* show the link of this title to a messianic heavenly figure. He concludes that the "Son of Man" is a conflation of both the Enochic and Danielic traditions.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, Vol. One, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1:651.

⁵¹ Keener, *John*, 651-52.

⁵² John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, Second Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 240.

⁵³ Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 259-61.

⁵⁴ Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 261-66.

Andreas Köstenberger sees the “Son of Man” as “a human figure with a transcendent origin, will be the place where God will uniquely reveal himself in a striking and supernatural way.”⁵⁵ He points out that the Johannine “Son of Man” in several of the instances are in relation to being “lifted up” in reference to the crucifixion and others are similar to how the title is used in the Synoptics.⁵⁶ His reference to the use in 5:27 surrounds the divine prerogative to judge. He does not mention the use of this title as messianic and the background text he references is Daniel 7:13 which he says refers to judgment as a key feature of the Danielic “Son of Man.”⁵⁷ Later, he notes that this title highlights the tension between Jesus’ humanity and divinity.⁵⁸

J. Ramsey Michaels indicates that the Son “avoids” the responsibility of judgment.⁵⁹ He does recognize one irony of this passage when he says, “Ironically, the very words he speaks (v. 23) carry out the “judgment” that he says God has given him (v. 22).”⁶⁰ Michaels rejects the notion that there is anything significant about the fact that “Son of Man” in 5:27 is *anarthrous*. In fact, he cites Colwell’s rule that says, “Definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the article.”⁶¹ He points to possible background passages such as Daniel 7 and *I Enoch* and

⁵⁵ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John’s Gospel and Letters*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 191.

⁵⁶ Köstenberger, *Theology of John*, 386-87.

⁵⁷ Köstenberger, *Theology of John*, 388.

⁵⁸ Köstenberger, *Theology of John*, 529.

⁵⁹ J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 313.

⁶⁰ Michaels. *John*, 314.

⁶¹ Michaels, *John*, 319; Michaels’ Citation of E.C. Colwell, “A Definite Rule for the use of the Article in the Greek New Testament,” in *JBL* 52 (1933), 20. Carson also points to Colwell’s rule as a likely reason for this usage to be *anarthrous*, see *John*, 259.

says that it is clear that the use of “Son of Man” in John points John’s audience back to these to sources but it is not due to the lack of the definite article.⁶²

Urban von Wahlde rightly sees judgment belonging to God and compares 5:22 to Deuteronomy 32:39-41 but he does not explore further the background of God handing over the right to judge.⁶³ Concerning the relation between 5:27 and Daniel 7:13 he notes that the “Son of Man” in Daniel is only given “power” not the power to judge. Further he notes that it is not until *I Enoch* that judgment is something handed over to the “Son of Man.”⁶⁴ Concerning aspects of judgment, He notes how John points to both present and future judgment.⁶⁵

Frederick Dale Bruner rightly points to two prolific Jewish beliefs which are that only God gives life at the beginning and only God judges at the end.⁶⁶ The focus for Bruner in 5:22 is on Jesus’ claim to divinity. Concerning the use of “Son of Man,” Bruner looks to Psalm 8 as to whom Jesus initially wants to be heard and to Daniel 7 as the one whom he wants finally believed. He says that this title refers to Jesus’ lowliness as well as exalted. Bruner asserts that the referent of the “Son of Man” in John mostly refers to the Danielic “Son of Man” who receives power and authority.⁶⁷

Richard Baukham does not see the “Son of Man” as messianic and points to John 9:35-37 to support his argument. He sees the title as just a self-designation meaning no more than “the

⁶² Michaels, *John*, 320.

⁶³ Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and the Letters of John Volume Two: Commentary on the Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 232.

⁶⁴ Von Wahlde, *John Vol. 2*, 235.

⁶⁵ Urban C. Von Wahlde, *The Gospel and the Letters of John Volume One: Introduction, Analysis, and Reference*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 490-93.

⁶⁶ Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2012), 314.

⁶⁷ Bruner, *John*, 114-15.

man.”⁶⁸ However, the emphasis of 9:35-37 does not at all point toward this notion since Jesus’ self-designation in this passage as “Son of man” causes the one healed to worship him. One identified as “the man” only would not garner this response. Concerning the use of the “Son of Man” in 5:27 he rightly points that this directly alludes to Daniel 7:13.⁶⁹

Colin Kruse focuses on Jesus’ judgment as eschatological and not much concerning Jesus’ immediate judgment. He does not tie this to messianic expectation. Judgment is a divine prerogative. He mainly points to Daniel for the background for the title of “Son of Man” and briefly references Ezekiel, *1 Enoch*, and *4 Ezra*. He does point to the fact that this title had messianic implications in late writings.⁷⁰

Johannes Beutler says, “The judgment is actually reserved exclusively to the Son so that God himself does not take part in it.”⁷¹ Beutler rightly picks up on the notion of both realized and eschatological judgment in John 5:24-27, though he mostly emphasizes eschatological judgment from the passage. Concerning 5:27, He also points out that John references Daniel 7:13-14. However, he says that Daniel is not emphasizing the judgment aspect of “Son of Man” but his dominion until the end of time. Beutler also interprets the Danielic “Son of Man” as Michael and Jesus taking over the title for himself.⁷² One thing that Beutler does not bring into his study is Early Jewish interpretation of judgment and “Son of Man.”

⁶⁸ Richard Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 177-78.

⁶⁹ Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory*, 178.

⁷⁰ Colin G. Kruse, *John*, Revised Ed., (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), Judgment Excursus 126-27; 5:22, 27 Comment 174-75; Son of Man Excursus 92-94.

⁷¹ Johannes Beutler, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 155. He seems to miss the Father-Son dynamic. It still is God doing the judging.

⁷² Beutler, *John*, 154-56.

Overall, most commentators rightly point toward Daniel 7:13-14 of the likely origin of Jesus' use of "Son of Man" in John 5:27. Many also rightly point to *1 Enoch* for a continuation of the view of the "Son of Man," especially his relation to judgment.⁷³ Only a few point past the Gospel of John to *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* in order to show that there was a continuation of the "Son of Man" tradition in Jewish thought and belief. Concerning the role of judgment, most of the commentators considered for this study rightly pointed to the fact that this passage points to Jesus' claim to divinity. However, some have gone passed this as simply a divine claim and have pointed out the messianic implications of Jesus' claims in light of juxtaposing it with his use of "Son of Man" in 5:27. Only a few commentators went beyond the passage and sought to show the implications that Jesus' words would have had on his audience and their possible reaction to those words. This is one of the main things that this current study will seek to explore as it unfolds what Jesus taught about himself in the Gospel of John concerning his role as messianic judge.

CONCLUSION

As this study progresses, it will become more evident to the reader just how complex and multifaceted Jewish belief grew to be concerning the themes of judgment and Messiah. Chapter two will explore the main Jewish documents that informed the Early Jewish views of judgment, the criteria and recipients of judgment, the role God plays in judgment, the role the Messiah plays in judgment, and what kind of Messiah the Jews expected. Chapter three will focus on the Jewish "Son of Man" tradition as it first appears in Daniel and its evolution in Jewish tradition to the end of the first century AD. Chapter four will consider how all of these themes play into Jesus' teachings about himself in the Gospel of John. This chapter will compare Early Jewish

⁷³ The notion that John would have been familiar with Early Jewish beliefs in *1 Enoch* and *4 Ezra* will be explored in detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

thought to the teachings of Jesus and demonstrate just how radically different they would have been to the Jewish beliefs of John's first century audience. The overall intent and goal of this study as originally stated will be to aid the modern reader in understanding the teachings of Jesus through the lens of the original Jewish audience.

CHAPTER 2: JUDGMENT AND MESSIANIC EXPECTATION IN EARLY JUDAISM

INTRODUCTION

Contained within the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John are themes of judgment that would have been familiar to John's Jewish audience such as judgment according to deeds (3:19-21; 5:29), punishment for those who do evil (5:29), reward and eternal life for those who are righteous (5:21, 24), eschatological judgment (5:27), imminent judgment (3:18), the Messiah taking on the role as judge (5:22, 27), judgment of the world (12:31a), and judgment of the ruler of this world (12:31b). John's representation of Jesus' audiences also reveal certain beliefs concerning messianic expectation which would have influenced his role as a messianic judge such as declaration of all things (4:25), unknown origin (7:27), Davidic (7:42), and he will remain forever (12:34). These would all be eschatological themes that John's Jewish audience would have likely been familiar with and by the first century AD it is likely that certain eschatological beliefs would have been highly developed. Although there were varying beliefs amongst the different Jewish sects, it is likely that each sect knew each other's beliefs (see Matt. 22:23; Acts 23:26).⁷⁴ The beliefs that John represents of Jesus' audience are rooted in Old Testament Scripture but there are numerous developments and interpretations that are specific to Early Judaism that are found in Early Jewish literature that would have had a greater impact on their preconceived views concerning end-times events and messianic expectations.⁷⁵ This chapter solely focuses on those Early Jewish beliefs from Jewish texts concerning judgment and

⁷⁴ Chapter four will expand upon some of the nuances between the various Jewish parties that John represents in Jesus' audience.

⁷⁵ Early Judaism or Second Temple Judaism refers to the time period from the completion of the rebuilding of the Temple (516 BC) destroyed by the Babylonians to its final destruction by Rome (70 AD). Early Jewish literature refers to Jewish documents written within this time frame and will also encompass some documents composed after the destruction of the Temple. These documents include, but are not limited to, canonical scripture, the OT Apocrypha, and the OT Pseudepigrapha. For a fuller discussion on Early Judaism and documents considered as Early Jewish literature, see VanderKam's *An Introduction to Early Judaism*.

messianic expectation that would have influenced a first century AD Jew above and beyond what was written in the Law and the Prophets. Each of the above-mentioned themes from Jesus' teachings in John will be explored and this chapter as well as the next will reveal the beliefs that John's initial Jewish audience would have likely believed concerning each theme.

The Early Jewish beliefs concerning judgment and messianic expectation that this chapter will consider were developed over a span of two and a half centuries. Each text has its own set of circumstances that influenced its writing and content. Thus, each text will be looked at individually with dating and background to understand the *sitz im leben* and the eschatological themes surrounding judgment and messianic expectation (if present). One thing that will be observed is that by the first century AD, beliefs concerning judgment and messianic expectation are developed with much greater detail with a conflation of the two. It will be seen that as Early Jewish literature develops, God's judgment and the arrival of the Messiah become intertwined up to the extent that some sources reveal a messianic figure as the one who executes God's judgment. This highly developed eschatology in Early Jewish literature lends credence to the notion that John's Jewish audience would have also held similar well-developed eschatological beliefs.

One of the main themes surrounding judgment in Early Jewish literature is judgment according to one's deeds.⁷⁶ Concerning the contrast of the righteous and the wicked in Early Jewish apocalyptic literature, Travis says, "The righteous are those whose basic loyalty to God and his covenant is not a question, and who will therefore be acceptable to him at the final judgment. The wicked are Gentiles who oppress God's people, or apostate Jews who by the

⁷⁶ See Stephen H. Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God: The Limits of Divine Retribution in New Testament Thought*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 26-52; Kent L. Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment According to Deeds*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 64-142.

seriousness and persistence of their sins have forfeited their place in the covenant.”⁷⁷ Good or evil deeds become one of the measures by which one would be considered as either righteous or wicked. John will represent Jesus as using these criteria of good and evil deeds but in a manner that the Jews would not have expected (cf. John 3:19-21; 5:29).

The identity of those being judged plays a major role in judgment passages of Early Jewish literature. Most Early Jewish sources break people into two major categories, the righteous and the wicked. Each source will further nuance who falls into each category and in many sources, the wicked are directly identified. There is also an assumption on the identity of the righteous. In the Gospel of John, Jesus will also define the identity of the righteous and the wicked. Understanding what John’s Jewish audience thought about who were righteous will help one to better understand the impact of Jesus’ words when he redefines the righteous, who will receive eternal life, and the wicked, who will be judged by the ‘Son of Man.’ This chapter will not only discuss the development of Jewish thought towards God and the messiah’s role in judgment, but also will show the development of the identity of the righteous and the wicked in Early Judaism which will better inform the mindset of John’s Jewish audience and how they would have reacted to Jesus’ teachings in John 5.

BEN SIRACH

Dating and Background

The emphasis throughout the Wisdom of Ben Sirach is on the relationship of wisdom to the Torah.⁷⁸ The author was a scribe by profession writing in Jerusalem and most likely wrote

⁷⁷ Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God*, 29.

⁷⁸ David A. deSilva remarks on this emphasis as a guiding feature of *Sirach*; see *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance*, Second Edition, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 161-210.

(198-175 BC) just prior to the reign of Antiochus IV (175-164 BC).⁷⁹ His writings, although Jewish in nature, were influenced by Hellenistic culture that surrounded him. Sirach seeks to continue the already established Jewish wisdom tradition, but in spite of the Jewish focus the work contains some Hellenistic influences as well. In this text, one finds hardly any mention regarding the Davidic dynasty or other kingly rule since there was foreign rule in Israel at the time. The Jewish “rule” that is present is the Aaronic priesthood which is why Sirach spends a lengthy portion on it. This will factor into any potential “messianic” emphases of this text.

Sirach was quite influential to the Judaism of the latter portion of the Second Temple era. This text not only had an impact on other Jewish texts, but it also helped to shape the Jewish mindset in various ways.⁸⁰ John and his Jewish audience were likely familiar with the themes presented in this text. One theme that Sirach considers is judgment according to one’s deeds (16:14). In the Gospel of John, Jesus will use similar language of being judged according to one’s deeds (5:29), but his explanation of a good deed will be dramatically different from an Early Jewish view of judgment according to one’s deeds. This text, as well as all of the others examined in this chapter, will build a case for what John’s Jewish audience’s mindset and beliefs may have looked like.

⁷⁹ Larry R. Helyer gives an original publication date of around 180 B.C. due to the lack of references of the turmoil from surrounding the Maccabean revolt; see *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Students*, (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 94.

⁸⁰ De Silva notes just how influential Sirach was on Early and Rabbinic Judaism. He shows how it was quoted or referenced by both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds and by many other Rabbis. See De Silva, *Apocrypha*, 205-06. Collins shows that fragments of Sirach have been discovered at Qumran (2Q18). He argues extensively of the influence of wisdom on the Qumran community. Although the text of Sirach is only represented by two fragments, it is likely that the text influenced the beliefs and thinking of those at Qumran. See John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 112-31.

Judgment

The emphasis on judgment in Sirach focuses on one's present life. The judgment one receives in the afterlife is not a major theme in this text. Concerning judgment in the present life he says, "everyone receives in accordance with his or her deeds (*Sirach* 16:14 cf. 16:12b; 17:23; 28:1)."⁸¹ The view that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked in this lifetime reflects the prevalent view of judgment throughout Early Jewish Literature and the theme, though nuanced, also appears throughout the New Testament as well. One thing that will change as Jewish literature develops from this point to the time that John writes his Gospel is the nature of the deeds that are being judged and even the identity of those who are being judged. Understanding both of these aspects and their development throughout two centuries of writings will be instrumental in understanding John's presentation of Jesus' words and the effect these words may have had on John's Early Jewish audience.

Jesus Ben Sirach was writing his wisdom literature at a time and place when Jewish persecution was not as prevalent as it would be within just a few short decades after he wrote. Although Sirach was written during a time of foreign rule, his writing was not influenced by the coming waves of violence and injustice that came with Antiochus IV's tyranny. His writings reflect a more peaceful situation and tend to be more general when talking about those that God will judge. The language used is also not as harsh and severe as will be seen with the texts that arise during the Antiochus IV's reign and later Roman occupation.

Sirach also gives warning to the "sinner" in various passages (16:12b; cf. 16:14; 17:23; 28:1). He emphasizes that this "sinner" is also able to receive forgiveness and able to avoid the

⁸¹ Unless otherwise noted, all direct quotes from the Apocrypha will be taken from the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV).

judgment he is heading towards (5:4-7; 28:2ff.).⁸² Skehan and Di Lella summarize the concept of divine retribution as presented in *Sirach* when they say, “Keeping the commandments and fearing the Lord brought prosperity, happiness, and longevity to nation and individual believer; failure to observe the Law brought adversity, distress, and early death.”⁸³ One must also note that this warning of judgment was directed towards national Israel and not against Gentile nations as will be the case with later Jewish Literature. *Sirach* places the responsibility of judgeship in the hands of God himself (35:15, 22, 25).⁸⁴ He outlines how the one in the earthly office of judge ought to conduct himself (Ch. 45), but there is no indication that anyone other than God himself will ultimately judge between the “sinner” and the “righteous.” There is no indication that God shares in eschatological judgment nor passes it to another to fulfill its requirement.

Messianic Expectation

Ben Sirach acknowledges that the promise of the kingship remains with the house of David as he says, “Also His covenant was with David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah; the inheritance of the king is his son’s alone” (Sir. 47:11; cf. 45:25; 47:1-22). Also, concerning the division of the kingdom he states, “Nevertheless God did not forsake His mercy, nor did He

⁸² Randall A. Argall shows how Ben Sirach argues that judgment upon one’s sin happens in this lifetime and if not at this lifetime then immediately after one’s death. See Randall A. Argall, *I Enoch and Sirach: A Comparative Literary and Conceptual Analysis of the Themes of Revelation, Creation and Judgment*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 220-23.

Collins shows how Ben Sirach argues that one can obtain atonement for sin either through sacrifice or through good works (cf. 2:7-11; 5:5-7; 18:1-15; 21:1-3). See John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 91.

⁸³ Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 83.

⁸⁴ Argall expands upon the Divine Warrior motif found in *Sirach* 35-36. He argues that this motif comes from the Divine Warrior passages from second and third Isaiah and that the Warrior in this passage will win the battle for Israel against their foreign enemies and render vengeance upon the nations. See Argall, *I Enoch and Sirach*, 211-20.

suffer any of His words to fall to the ground. He will not cut off the posterity of His chosen, nor will He destroy the offspring of them that love Him; and He will give to Jacob a remnant and to the house of David a root from him” (47:22).⁸⁵ Skehan and Di Lella recognize that these two verses are an expression of messianic hope.⁸⁶ Rogers notes that Sirach was well aware of the covenant promise made to the house of David with an expectation that one day there would yet again be a Davidic ruler sitting on the throne of Israel.⁸⁷

Although Sirach acknowledges the promise to David, there is still debate as to whether Jesus Ben Sirach’s writings looked toward a coming messiah. The messiah is often viewed as a key figure in the eschatological age. In light of this, John J. Collins points to the fact that the only explicitly eschatological passage is the second coming of Elijah in 48:10.⁸⁸ Another idea or term associated with the messiah is “anointed” and this is the term that is used throughout Early Jewish literature to define and describe the Messiah. It is also the term that causes debate among scholars as to whether a text is deemed messianic. Sirach uses the term “anointed” throughout the last six chapters. However, each use of “anointed” refers to the four main Old Testament offices that would have received an anointing as one set aside for service such as the priest (45:15, 23-26; 49:1-3; 50:1-21), judges (46:1-2), prophets (46:13, 19; 48:1-14, 17-25; 49:8-10),

⁸⁵ Kenneth E. Pomykala explores whether or not these passages indicate a messianic hope. His analysis and exegesis of the text leans toward the fact that Ben Sirach uses David’s cultic practices to point toward the legitimacy of high priestly cultic practices and he wants to legitimate the cultic practices of his own time, see *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 131-52. Even if these passages argue for seeking legitimacy in the current cultic practices, the language used in the passages indicates that there was a strong notion in Judaism that yearned for a pure Davidic monarchy. A messianic figure may not necessarily be in view but there is every indication of a longing for a restoration of the Davidic monarchy but in its original intended form.

⁸⁶ Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (New York: Doubleday, 1986), 526-28.

⁸⁷ Rogers, “Promises to David,” 288-89.

⁸⁸ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 108.

and kings (47:1-25; 49:4-7, 11-13).⁸⁹ Further, Simon the High Priest is referred to using royal verbiage but the cause of the use of this language may be indicative of the fact that there was no Davidic King over Israel and this was the only “anointed” office that currently held any power and authority in Jewish life at the time Sirach was writing (Ch. 50).⁹⁰ Helyer notes, “Ben Sira is enamored with the priestly office and ritual. His description of Simon’s officiating reads like an eyewitness account and thus affords a valuable window into temple worship in the second century B.C.”⁹¹ Thus, with relative peace at the moment of writing, it is not surprising that the High Priest would be looked to for not only spiritual guidance but also “kingly” guidance since he would have been the closest thing the Jews would have had concerning a national leader. This does not mean that Sirach abandons Davidic hope and the Davidic promise. In fact, he says, “But the Lord will never give up his mercy, or cause any of his works to perish; he will never blot out the descendants of his chosen one, or destroy the family line of him who loved him. So he gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root from his own family (47:22).” This possibly indicates that Sirach holds out hope that the Davidic Kingship will one day be restored, but the remainder of

⁸⁹ Chester notes that there is undoubtedly a holding up of the divine promise of the Davidic Dynasty (Ch. 47), it fades into the background as Sirach more so exalts the High Priesthood of Simon (Ch. 50). See Andrew Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*. (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 331-32.

⁹⁰ Dunn argues that the priestly messianic expectation found in *Sirach* influenced multiple branches of early Judaism which included Maccabean Judaism and the Judaism found at Qumran. Later he argues that the gospels do not directly make Jesus out as fulfilling a priestly messianic figure because of his obvious non-Levitical lineage, but he does say that it is because of this expectation that the author of Hebrews argues for Jesus as a great high priest after a different priestly lineage. See James D. G. Dunn, “Messianic Ideas and Their Influence on the Jesus of History,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, Edited by James H. Charlesworth, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 367-68, 373.

Lucass indicates that the emphasis in Sirach is not only the elevation of the High Priest as the highest office but to do so in such a way as the priest is spoken of in similar terms as God when he is emerging from the inner sanctuary (50:5-7). See Shirley Lucass, *The Concept of the Messiah in the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 127.

⁹¹ Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 100.

the book shows that Sirach puts a greater emphasis on present leadership, the high priesthood, as opposed to future Davidic leadership.⁹² Although *Sirach* does not purport messianic expectation, he does define the ideal person who lives righteously according to the Law and lives according to God given wisdom which comes to have an influence on identifying the ideal messianic candidate.

Since Sirach's overall concern is how to live rightly according to the Torah, there is a greater stress on living righteously and not falling into doing wicked deeds. The "anointed" figure present to aid in this would be the Aaronic priesthood. Thus, the messianic figure in this text was present to aid one in gaining reward for righteousness and avoiding judgment for wicked deeds in the current lifetime.

WISDOM OF SOLOMON

Dating and Background

The *Wisdom of Solomon* was likely composed in Alexandria, Egypt around the first century BC.⁹³ *Wisdom* follows a similar theme of the high place of wisdom as it was seen in *Sirach*. The work itself is heavily Hellenistic yet thoroughly Jewish in its theological themes.

⁹² Collins notes that 49:4-5 refers to the end of the Judean royal line without any hint of future restoration; see *Jewish Wisdom*, 108. See also Kenneth E. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 147. Collins further notes that Sirach likely saw the covenant with David as inferior to the covenant with Aaron which is likely due to exaltation of and satisfaction with the "priestly theocratic regime;" see "Messianism in the Maccabean Period," in *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, edited by Jacob Neusner, et al, (New York: University of Cambridge, 1987), 98.

⁹³ DeSilva notes that there is a wide debate on the dating of *Wisdom*. Scholars place the dating from 220 BC to AD 100. The dating does not change the overall message of this text but the date would influence the notion of when certain Jewish theological ideas came into vogue, especially concerning ideas of judgment and punishment in the afterlife. However, the language and message of this text most likely places it in the first century B.C. DeSilva leans toward a date toward the beginning of the Roman domination within the first century BC due to textual indicators that lineup best with Jewish thought on early Roman occupation. See deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, 137-38.

Authorial intent suggests that the author desired his readers to live upright lives that followed the Law while living in a time and place that made it increasingly difficult to do so. This intent lies behind why the author spends the first six chapters dealing with living lawfully and upholding justice. These chapters also serve as a stringent reminder to the Jewish community the judgment waiting for those that do not seek proper justice. Unlike *Sirach*, this work has a greater emphasis on punishment for the wicked and reward for the righteous. *Sirach* views punishment and reward for deeds in this lifetime while *Wisdom* extends this notion of reward and punishment into the afterlife. This notion follows with other Jewish works that were written during the first century BC and first century AD.⁹⁴

The first six chapters of this work show a contrast between the righteous and the impious or sinners and reward or punishment waiting for each group in the afterlife. Concerning the message of this text deSilva says, “The unknown author focuses the hearer on the judgment of God in order to demonstrate that forsaking the path of God-fearing and lawful conduct that leads to immortality means utter folly and loss.”⁹⁵ The references to judgment often speak of future afterlife judgment that will come upon the wicked because of the evil deeds committed in this life time. The author also offers a contrasting picture of the righteous person who seeks to live uprightly in a pursuit of eternal life.

⁹⁴ Cf. Wis. Sol. 5:13-16; 2 Macc. 7; Jub. 23:30-31; 4 Macc. 18:23; 1 En. 22:9-10, 46:3-4, 51:1-10; 4 Ezra 5:31, 7:1-99; 2 Baruch 30:1-2, 50:2-3, 51:12.

⁹⁵ deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, 131.

Judgment

On the same note of *Sirach*, the judgment and the identity of those being judged remains general.⁹⁶ Those that are being judged are being judged by the very sins that they have been committing (11:16; 15:18-16:1; 18:5). It seems that the author has the idea of *Lex Talionis* in mind concerning the nature of judgment. It is also retributive and a judgment that is received in this lifetime (11:9; 12:22; 16:5-14). The judgment described in *Wisdom* is not eschatological in nature, though the author does point toward a day of final judgment and an already determined verdict based upon deeds performed in one's lifetime (3:10, 18; 4:19-5:14).⁹⁷ The author indicates that the kings of the earth who God has placed in positions of authority but have abused their God given power will receive an especially harsh judgment (6:1-11). Judgment of those in high leadership positions will remain a common theme throughout Early Jewish Literature, especially Gentile kings.⁹⁸ God is the one that is identified as the one judging the unrighteous (1:9-10; 6:3).

⁹⁶ Gowan also notes that defining what the righteous life looks like is also spoken of in general terms with no reference to it being defined by any detail. See Donald E. Gowan, "Wisdom," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1 – The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Edited by D. A. Carson et al., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 230. This does not mean that the author does not make clear distinctions between the righteous and the wicked but the defining features are general.

⁹⁷ Reiser notes that this text represents both the Jewish notion that there will be a final Day of Judgment and the Greek notion of the assignment of reward and punishment that comes immediately after death. See Marius Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment: The Eschatological Proclamation in its Jewish Context*, Translated by Linda M. Maloney, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 43-46.

Luca Mazinghi explores the usage of "punish" and "benefit" that are juxtaposed throughout *Wis. Sol.* and concludes that these concepts are closely associated with what was waiting for the individual at the time of death based upon if they lived a righteous life or not. See Luca Mazinghi, "The Antithetical Pair "to punish" and "to benefit" (κολάζω and εὐεργετέω) in the Book of Wisdom," in *Wisdom for Life*, Edited by Nuria Calduch-Benages, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 237-41.

⁹⁸ Cf. *1 En.* 38:5, 46:4-5, 53:1-7, 90:30-33; *1QM* 12:13f; *Ps. Sol.* 17:41.

Messianic Expectation

Messianic expectation is arguably a theme that is not found in the *Wisdom of Solomon*. However, this does not mean that there is not a Davidic nature to this book. The book itself is being written from the perspective of Solomon. Although this book was written at a time when the Davidic monarchy was dissolved, the prayer of chapter 9 looks at the Davidic kingship as a present reality. This seems to indicate that although there was no current Davidic king, the idealistic Davidic king remained an ever-present reality. There is also a description of the ideal righteous person in Chapters 2-5. This may also be an indication of an expectation for the ideal Davidic king. Although these elements are present in the text, it does not mean that this text can or should be labeled as messianic.

Although messianic development is not a focus of this text, there is a noticeable shift of when judgment was to take place, from this lifetime to sometime after death. Judgment also becomes more spelled out concerning what one may be judged for as well as the identity of those being judged.

JUBILEES

Dating and Background

Jubilees was composed sometime between 160 and 130 BC and is a retelling of Genesis and Exodus.⁹⁹ The time period in which this text was written is significant due to the political and religious events that were taking place. This time frame saw the violence of Antiochus IV and the end of his reign of terror as he was defeated during the Maccabean rebellion which gave birth to the Hasmonean dynasty of Jewish self-rule. *Jubilees* was written in an era of uncertainty

⁹⁹ Helyer broadens the dating from 175 BC to 100 BC but no later than that because of internal indicators. See Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 120-21.

and foreign oppression. Vanderkam argues that this text reflects the struggles between the Jews and the Seleucids and even between the Jews that sought to maintain a pure Judaism against those that freely accepted Hellenization.¹⁰⁰ The author of *Jubilees* seems to argue against the Hellenization of Judaism. Thus, the passages concerning judgment would be highly influenced by these historical events. These passages in their context would be directed toward Jews who embraced Hellenism and against the Seleucids who imposed the Hellenistic culture and violence toward the Temple and against those that sought to practice a pure Judaism. Although this is the immediate context, it is during this era that Jewish authors really started to specifically define those that would be judged which started to include compromising Jews.

Concerning the genre of *Jubilees*, Docherty says, “Biblical interpretation often aims to bring a scriptural text up to date and relate it to the issues facing a contemporary audience. This goal, called actualization, is clearly in evidence in *Jubilees*, providing some clues to its historical setting.”¹⁰¹ This text serves as a rewriting of Genesis and part of Exodus but it also serves to fill in the gaps of the text with added details and background. In a way, it also serves as a commentary on the text. It is from these additions and interpretations of Genesis and Exodus that one can surmise the dating and background information but also religious, cultural, and political leanings of the author. The book itself is considered apocalyptic but unlike other apocalyptic works, *Jubilees* does not contain fantastic visions of future judgments and heavenly scenes such as *1 Enoch*. However, there are thematic parallels with *1 Enoch* concerning the deeds of people that lead to judgment (see *Jub.* 4:16-25; cf. *1 En.* 5:1-2; 7:20-9).¹⁰² God’s covenant relationship

¹⁰⁰ James C. Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 139-41.

¹⁰¹ Susan Docherty, *The Jewish Pseudepigrapha: An Introduction to the Literature of the Second Temple Period*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 16.

¹⁰² Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 17.

with Israel lies at the center of *Jubilees* which lends to the view of judgment that it portrays, especially the binding of those that led God's children astray (10:1-2; 11:4-5; 12:20). God's judgment is seen as particularly reserved for a final day of judgment for these individuals and angelic beings.

Judgment

Throughout *Jubilees* God is the one who judges (9:15; 16:9; 24:30, 33; 36:10) and he judges fairly and according to one's deeds (5:15-17; 21:4; 33:18). A theme of judgment is present from the very beginning of *Jubilees* (1:5-29). In the first chapter, the judgment seen remains against Israel and serves more as a warning to not continue in the sins of previous generations that caused God to bring judgment upon Israel. However, there remains a hope of restoration of the "elect of Israel" and peace will be renewed in Israel (1:29). A prevalent event surrounding the theme of judgment in Early Jewish literature is the Noahic flood and the events leading up to it which caused this great judgment. *Jubilees* 5 makes brief comments on Genesis 6:1-8 and interprets the "sons of God" as angels who took the daughters of men and bore children and it was from these offspring that sin and wickedness multiplied upon the earth (5:1-3).¹⁰³ God was especially angry with the angels and were bound in the depths of the earth until the final judgment (5:6, 10). Yinger rightly argues that the universal Noahic judgment is prototypical and acts as a model of the final judgment to come.¹⁰⁴ Thus, the author of *Jubilees* has in mind immediate judgment of the flood but there is also a final judgment that is beyond the events of the Noahic flood and is still yet to come. Yinger continues to show how the judgment

¹⁰³ *I Enoch* 7-36 expounds upon Genesis 6:1-7 in great detail and the subsequent imprisonment of the angels which caused mankind to sin.

¹⁰⁴ Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 65-66.

in this passage is all inclusive (5:15) and that there will be judgment for the great according to the greatness of their deeds and judgment for the small according to their smallness.¹⁰⁵ However, this passage concludes on a positive note with salvation for those that are repentant. These will receive forgiveness and mercy at the final judgment (5:17-18).¹⁰⁶ Peter Enns nicely summarizes the message of salvation in *Jubilees* as he says:

The author of *Jubilees*, from first to last, is concerned to emphasize God's promise to never forsake his *people*. *Israel as a people* will always remain because God is faithful. Transgression of eternal commands, however, will result in individual punishment and forfeiture of one's individual covenant status. The fact of Israel's election, however, remains sure. In fact, it is precisely the fact that God destroys individuals while maintaining the whole that demonstrates to the people that he is *faithful to the covenant*: the actions of individuals cannot affect God's purpose and plan – Israel's existence is his doing.¹⁰⁷

The book of *Jubilees* gives an account of what an angel revealed to Moses during the forty-day period he was on the mountain.¹⁰⁸ Docherty notes that although *Jubilees* has many elements similar to other apocalypses in the same era, it lacks extensive eschatological speculation.¹⁰⁹ Chapter 23 contains the lengthiest section on future judgment. This chapter represents why judgment is coming which is because of all the evil works of man (*Jub.* 23:17-18, 22). There is nothing that can save the wicked on that day of judgment (23:24). This judgment

¹⁰⁵ Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 66-68.

¹⁰⁶ VanLandingham says that this passage indicates that the mercy of God is only given to the righteous or the repentant but he also says that there is possibly a view that comes out of this that God's mercy is deserved because of these qualities. See Chris VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 77.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Enns, "Expansions of Scripture," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1 – The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Edited by D. A. Carson et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 97.

¹⁰⁸ O.S. Wintermute, "Jubilees," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2. James H. Charlesworth Ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 35.

¹⁰⁹ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 17.

will cause many to return to a path of righteousness (23:26).¹¹⁰ Even Satan will have been judged (23:29). Mercy will only be shown to those that love God (23:31). The executor of this judgment is seen to be God. Judgment against sinners is based on their evil deed.¹¹¹ This is an eschatological judgment, but there is also an element of divine discipline since there are those that are turned back to righteousness. Those that are saved are those that love God and within this there is a form of righteousness.

Messianic Expectation

There is no direct indication of messianic expectation or messianic figure in *Jubilees*. In fact, the author points to the fact that it is the Law that will bring the people back to the way of righteousness as opposed to a messianic figure in other Early Jewish texts (23:26). Andrew Chester notes concerning this verse, “There is no messianic figure here or elsewhere in *Jubilees*, and the judgment and restoration are carried out by God himself, but the striking point is that observance of Torah is set as the precondition and characteristic of belonging in the new age that God brings about.”¹¹² Although there is not a direct messianic reference in *Jubilees*, James VanderKam looks for messianic interpretation in this text in light of the priestly messiah of Qumran.¹¹³ Interpreting *Jubilees* in light of earlier Qumran documents which leaned toward a

¹¹⁰ Kugel indicates that this judgment is focused on the sins of the Israelites and the Israelites not keeping the covenant of God. Thus, there is an inward focus instead of an outward focus of the gentiles or the nations being judged as later Jewish literature will begin to indicate. See James L. Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of its Creation*, (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 131-32.

¹¹¹ Reiser notes that although the notion of judgment according to deeds is in view, there is also in mind that God as judge is no respecter of persons and judges the small according to their small deeds and the great according to the greatness of their deeds. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 73-74.

¹¹² Andrew Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 531.

¹¹³ See James C. VanderKam, “Jubilees and the Priestly Messiah of Qumran,” in *Revue de Qumran* Vol. 13 (October 1988), 353-65.

priestly messiah causes 23:26 to make sense in light of the fact that the priests were the ones that were supposed to be the teachers of the law. This also could possibly explain why there is not any emphasis on the Davidic Monarchy. In fact, VanderKam stresses the fact that the Patriarchal figure of Levi holds a greater position in *Jubilees* than the patriarchal figure of Judah.¹¹⁴ VanderKam also makes sure that his readers understands that “It should be stressed that *Jubilees* never speaks of a messiah nor does it present Levi in an eschatological setting.”¹¹⁵ Further, VanderKam states, “The claim which will be presented here is not that Levi or a descendant of his is being pictured messianically in *Jubilees*. The point is that the remarkable transformation of Levi in this book reveals a prior stage in the theological evolution which culminated in the Qumran belief in a sacerdotal messiah.”¹¹⁶ Even though there are not direct messianic references in *Jubilees*, there are notions that the author was pointing his reader to the fact that the Levitical priesthood would play a role in bringing the hearts of the people back to God by means of the Torah prior to the coming final judgment of God.

1 ENOCH

The book of *1 Enoch* is a compilation of five works collected into one unit over a two to three-hundred-year time frame.¹¹⁷ The completed collection of the Book of *1 Enoch* consists of

¹¹⁴ VanderKam, “Jubilees and Messiah,” 359.

¹¹⁵ VanderKam, “Jubilees and Messiah,” 359.

¹¹⁶ VanderKam, “Jubilees and Messiah,” 359.

¹¹⁷ The oldest texts possibly date as far back as the third century BC (*The Book of the Watchers*) and the majority of scholars place the last work (*The Parables of Enoch*) into the late first century BC to the early first century AD (See the section on dating of the *Parables* in chapter three for a more detailed analysis).

the Book of the Watchers (1-36), the Parables of Enoch (37-71),¹¹⁸ the Astronomical Book (72-82), the Book of Dreams (83-90 within which contains the Animal Apocalypse (85-90)), and the Epistle of Enoch (91-108). The eschatological and messianic views espoused by each of the authors will vary, some quite significantly. Therefore, each of the five books needs to be considered individually to evaluate properly the nature of judgment and messianism (if present). The book of *I Enoch* from start to finish has judgment as its theme. This judgment is usually seen as eschatological and universal (cf. 10:12; 16:1; 22:4, 8; 25:4; 27:2; 45:4-5; 72:1; 91:9, 15-16; 97:5; 103:8). This text sees judgment as something that happens post-mortem but ultimately there is a final Day of Judgment which all mankind will face and the measure of the severity of judgment is largely based upon one's deeds (see 95:5; 100:7).¹¹⁹ Although judgment is seen to be according to works, salvation is given by God by his mercy and grace (cf. 92:4-5). Other than in the *Parables* and a few other distinct places, one item that is lacking in *I Enoch* is specific judgment prophesied against specific historical figures or groups of people. One reason for this is that these first four books of *I Enoch* were composed early on in Early Judaism and thus far only one main enemy had arisen to this point in this time frame of Jewish history. Later judgment literature will reflect judgment upon the Romans, the Gentiles, Herod, the High Priesthood, and other wicked Jews that certain Jewish sects deemed as unrighteous. The content of *I Enoch* will lead to the development and influence many of the other Early Jewish writings.

¹¹⁸ The Parables of Enoch will not be evaluated in this chapter but will be fully evaluated in Chapter three since they contribute significantly to the "Son of Man" argument which informs how Jesus utilizes the title in the Gospel of John.

¹¹⁹ Yinger indicates that this judgment according to one's deeds falls upon both the wicked Gentiles as well as the apostate Jews. He also argues that these judgment passages are written in order to give the righteous in Israel hope that they will eventually receive justice and vindication for the evils committed against them. See Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 70-73.

The Book of the Watchers

Dating and Background

The Book of the Watchers possibly dates back as late as the third century BC.¹²⁰ The work itself does not give any indication of its provenance. Although its origin and author are unknown, it serves as an introduction to *1 Enoch* as a whole and even becomes a foundational and introductory piece of Jewish literature with theological themes that echo throughout much of Early Jewish literature. The Book of the Watchers paired with the Astronomical Book serve as pieces of literature that help shape Enochic Judaism which Jackson identifies as an offshoot of Early Judaism that arose at Qumran.¹²¹ The Book of the Watchers carries with it the theme of imminent judgment which will be a prevalent theme throughout the remainder of *1 Enoch*.¹²² Except for the Astronomical Book, the theme of judgment pervades the entirety of the collection of *1 Enoch*. This is seen from the very beginning of the book in the first chapter where a day of tribulation is announced. This book also gives an alternative view on the origin of human sin and shows how God judged the introducers of that sin with the Noahic flood. There is also a theme of salvation present in this text. The author indicates that God has not forgotten the righteous but has created separate places for different kinds of souls to receive their just reward based upon their deeds in the present life. This theme is prevalent throughout in order to give

¹²⁰ VanderKam notes that this dating comes from the fact that the oldest copy at Qumran dates between 200 and 150 BC, meaning that the original likely dated prior to this dating since the text itself did not originate with the Qumran Community. See James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 91.

¹²¹ David R. Jackson argues for three paradigm exemplars that define the Enochic Judaism of the Qumran Sect. These paradigm exemplars are largely defined by the theological and astronomical content of the Book of the Watchers and the Astronomical books. See, David R. Jackson, *Enochic Judaism: Three Defining Paradigm Exemplars*, (London: T&T Clark International, 2004).

¹²² Helyer notes that the *Book of the Watchers* looks at the origin of the problem of evil. He says that this problem goes far beyond human sin and the BW seeks to show that there is a cosmological origin to sin found in the angelic rebellion. The judgment announced is rooted in this angelic rebellion. See Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 84-85.

hope to righteous Jews who seeing reward in this present life. On this subject Docherty says, “The expectation that God will soon come in judgement is expressed from the first chapter of 1 Enoch to the last, although no one systematic picture is given of this event. This theme of judgement is presented as a positive rather than a fearful message, as it is intended to console those who may be enduring suffering and oppression with the belief that something better awaits them.”¹²³

Judgment

The first verse of the Book of the Watchers sets the tone for not just this book but the pervasive theme of judgment throughout all of *1 Enoch*. The first verse not only announces judgment on all the enemies of God but also the salvation of the righteous.¹²⁴ In a way, *1 Enoch* is written to the Jews as a message of encouragement to persevere through times of tribulation (1:8).¹²⁵ God was going to very soon judge the wicked and deliver the righteous and if this judgment did not come in this lifetime,¹²⁶ it would definitely come in the afterlife (22:10-14) which is seen at the end of the Book of the Watchers when the angel reveals to Enoch the separate places in the afterlife that souls are sent depending on how they led their lives on earth

¹²³ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 130.

¹²⁴ Bauckham notes that chs. 1-5 have no exhortation to the wicked to repent but simply an announcement of judgment with no possibility of forgiveness. See Richard Bauckham, “Apocalypses,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1 – The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Edited by D. A. Carson et al., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 144.

¹²⁵ Reiser notes that chapter one represents both a passing of sentence and forensic judgment, thus a twofold judgment on all sinners but the righteous are excused from it. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 52-53.

¹²⁶ VanLandingham notes that the Jews likely viewed the identity of the righteous as the Jewish people. The righteous Jews remain in constant contrast to the wicked all throughout *1 Enoch*. See VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification*, 87.

(1:9; chs. 21-22).¹²⁷ This book also speaks of God himself being the one that comes with his armies from heaven to bring judgment on the earth (1:4, 6-7).¹²⁸

The author moves from the announcement of coming judgment (chs. 1-5) to a retelling and interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4 of the events that led to God bringing the first judgment upon the earth (chs. 6-11). This second section looks back on what was commanded to be judged during the Noahic flood, but it also serves as a warning of the kind of judgment to come. Throughout the next several chapters Enoch is shown the punishment that will happen to the fallen watchers and the children that they begat with the daughters of men. He is shown their place of eternal incarceration.

The Astronomical Book

Dating and Background

The Astronomical Book dates to a similar time frame as the Book of the Watchers. Unlike the Book of the Watchers, this book is the only one of the five that does not have judgment as a primary theme.¹²⁹ This book seeks to give intimate knowledge of the cosmos

¹²⁷ Reiser argues that *1 Enoch* 22 shows that at the time of death the individual will go to the place allotted them based on their life. There will not be a time of judgment for the individual after death because their fate has been determined by the time of their death. This contrasts with later Jewish sources that see an initial judgment taking place at the time of death which is usually prior to the ultimate final Day of Judgment which takes place at the very end of time. The concept of initial judgment is also a major piece of judgment seen in John 5 as Jesus presents an unexpected initial judgment as he defines his version of initial judgment and the criteria for that judgment. See Reiser, *Judgment and Jesus*, 56-57.

¹²⁸ Argall argues that the divine figure in the introduction is the Divine Warrior figure that has its origins in Canaanite mythology and is later adapted by the Hebrew Scriptures in Second and Third Isaiah. He argues that the theophany present embodies all the major characteristics of this warrior motif. See Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 167-184.

¹²⁹ Jackson extensively argues that one of the results of the sins depicted in the Astronomical Book, as espoused in Enochic Judaism, is that since the cosmology is off due to the sins of the Watchers, the liturgical calendar is now off which will ultimately be a piece that leads to God's judgment and eventually be corrected in the final day. See Jackson, *Enochic Judaism*, 139-196.

including the various positions of the sun and the moon. This book also shows Enoch as one that is privy to such information as to how the solar calendar was set up. Interestingly, this text does not give a theological interpretation to the movements of the celestial entities and the calendar fulfillment each year. However, this book does influence certain theological themes in *Jubilees* and Qumran literature that deal with eschatology and Judgment.

Judgment

In chapter 80, the angel Uriel reveals to Enoch the result of sin on the earth that rainy seasons will grow shorter (80:2), plants that bear fruit will not grow at its normal time (80:3), the celestial entities will have a changed course (80:4-7), and the result will be punishment and destruction for the sinners (80:7). This is an interesting discourse that is an interlude of sorts fixed in between chapters on the ordering of the luminaries and how the solar calendar is supposed to be ordered. Other than this short discourse, there is no other mention of judgment nor is there a judgment scene as there is in the rest of the books of *1 Enoch*.

The Book of Dreams

Dating and Background

The Book of Dreams can be divided into two parts. The first part consists of a predictive dream had by Enoch early on in his life concerning the impending flood (83-84). The second part consists of the Animal Apocalypse (85-90) that speaks to the events surrounding the tyranny of Antiochus IV Epiphanes where each animal represents a different historical figure or entity.¹³⁰ Both dreams have judgment on the wicked as a pervasive theme. However, the Animal

¹³⁰ Helyer notes that this vision is written in the form of an allegory and if one is familiar with the historical events, it is easy to follow with the allegory and what each animal represents. See Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 136.

Apocalypse gives the vision of a messianic figure and creation reverts back to the form that God had originally intended for it.

Judgment and Messianic Expectation

The first dream (83-84) speaks from the mouth of Enoch telling his son Methuselah the vision he has had about the coming destruction of the earth and the judgment that God is going to pour out upon all of his creation. Although this vision has the great flood in mind, the author seems to be connecting this great day of judgment to a future eschatological day of judgment. For the author, this serves as a warning to his audience and is not just a look back upon the judgment God dealt to the earth in the past. This is evident from the last verse of this dream (84:6) which asks God to once again bring his judgment upon the earth but also to save the righteous.

The Second dream starts off in a similar fashion, but the content of the dream is different because the author is now reflecting upon biblical history as well as current events. The end of this vision reveals that the author believes that God's judgment and justice upon the wicked is imminent and He will soon come and deliver the righteous. Chapter 90 considers the current events of the author which considers the defeat of the Seleucids by the Jews. Halfway through the chapter, historical events are no longer being considered and the author switches to his interpretation of eschatological events which are viewed to happen soon after the events of his current day. He switches to a heavenly throne scene where there is judgment pronounced against those that sinned against God by their actions against Israel.¹³¹ Their punishment is to be thrown

¹³¹ Patrick A. Tiller indicates that the judgment scene here follows other Enochic angelic judgment scenes. He also notes that this scene shows a traditional Jewish judgment scenario that traces back to the Book of Jeremiah. See Patrick A. Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 368.

into a fiery abyss (90:20-27; see also 91:9-10). The author then turns to show that all things are now being made new now that those who have done the wicked deeds have been punished (90:28-36).¹³² Interestingly, the author introduces a messianic figure to the scene (90:37) but this figure just remains in the background and the author does not develop this figure beyond a vague introduction and that this figure became their leader (90:38).¹³³ Unfortunately, this messianic type figure introduced by the author does not give much indication of the type of messiah that the author would be expecting.¹³⁴ However, the author does give the reader a great deal of insight into what he believed about the judgment of God, those who would be judged, and the severity of the punishment. This passage also reveals that there is an association of sorts in Jewish belief that starts to arise that places the Messiah as an eschatological figure in association with the final judgment. This text remains vague but other texts such as the *Parables of Enoch* and the *Psalms of Solomon 17* will start to develop this messianic figure further, especially as it relates to his role in the eschaton. The author also reveals what he believed about those that would receive salvation and what their reward would look like. Ultimately, just like the rest of *1 Enoch* thus far, this was a message that was supposed to give hope to those Israelites that had suffered under the hand of the Seleucids or other enemies that were oppressing them. This showed the Jews that

Bauckham notes that there are concrete social distinctions on the identity of the “sinners” in 91:19 who are identified as the powerful, rich, arrogant, unscrupulous, and oppress the poor. He also specifically says that they are not identified as Gentiles but as Jewish apostates. See Bauckham, “Apocalypses,” 146.

¹³² Reiser notes that the final judgment scene contains various forensic elements but there is no formal procedure. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 61.

¹³³ Tiller notes that contrary to the figure in Daniel 7, this figure is represented as human due to the fact that the author represents him as an animal which follows from all of the other human figures being represented as animals in this apocalypse. See Tiller, *Animal Apocalypse*, 383-89.

¹³⁴ Oegema argues that this messianic figure is likened to the figure of Michael in Daniel 8-12. Although there is not much detail on this figure, this imagery would cause this angelic imagery to come to the mind of the reader. See Oegema, *The Anointed*, 68-69.

punishment of the wicked would definitely take place even if the punishment did not take place in their lifetime. This message gave hope to the righteous Jews who were steadfast and maintained the Law and did not waiver because they believed that their deliverance was sure, and their reward would ultimately be waiting for them in the end.

The Epistle of Enoch

Dating and Background

The Epistle of Enoch begins with one of its most noteworthy pieces, the Apocalypse of Weeks. The remainder of the Epistle gives various ethical exhortations which deal largely with topics of social justice. The Apocalypse of Weeks indicates that history is broken up into ten periods called ‘weeks.’ Concerning the date of composition, Docherty notes, “The seventh epoch runs from the Babylonian exile to the author’s own time in the era of the Hellenizing emperor Antiochus IV Epiphanes (93.9-14). This marks the turning point of history, since it will be followed by future judgement and the extension of God’s reign over the whole earth forever (91.14-17).”¹³⁵ This would put the date of composition probably just before the defeat of Antiochus IV Epiphanes since judgment was still future. Concerning two of the characteristics of the apocalypse, VanderKam says, “A noteworthy feature of the apocalypse is its periodizing of history, implying that all is already predetermined in heaven, supposedly long before most of the predicted events took place. Also, the writer never mentions a resurrection before the judgment but consoles the readers with the thought of judgment on evil and a future life forever free from its influence.”¹³⁶ Overall, this text keeps in form with most of the rest of the eschatological

¹³⁵ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 137.

¹³⁶ VanderKam, *Early Judaism*, 104.

themes seen throughout the rest of *I Enoch* which see judgment and punishment for the wicked and reward and life for the righteous.

Judgment

The *Epistle of Enoch* opens with a pronouncement of judgment against sin and its ultimate destruction (92:5). The author also emphasizes mercy and salvation for the righteous (92:1-4) which again reiterates the pattern found throughout *I Enoch* concerning the fact that this message is meant for the righteous to have hope and not necessarily as a warning for the wicked. This introduction leads into the *Apocalypse of Weeks* which divides historical epochs into ten distinct sections at the end of which is the tenth week which will bring everlasting judgment (91:15). This apocalypse does not go into detail as to what this judgment will look like nor the identity of those that will receive judgment. The author's intent is to show the righteous what they should expect their reward to look like. The rest of the *Epistle of Enoch* acts as a guide to show the unrighteous person the things that he will receive judgment for through a series of woes. This section also sees a contrast with the righteous who are admonished to stand firm and to continue in their righteousness because an eternal reward awaits them.

2 MACCABEES

Dating and Background

The book of 2 Maccabees focuses on the events and matters surrounding Judas Maccabeus as opposed to 1 Maccabees that records the events of several members of the early Hasmonean dynasty. This book records the events from the ascent of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175 BC) to Judas Maccabeus' victory over general Nicanor (161 BC). The intent of this book is recorded in the first three chapters as the author seeks to get the Jews in Egypt to embrace the

festival of Hanukkah.¹³⁷ As opposed to 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees gives more concerning the theological interpretation of events that are outlined in 1 Maccabees as well as more detailed accounts of the persecution and martyrdom experienced by the Jews under the tyranny of the Seleucids. Despite the brevity of this text, it gives helpful insights into the theological mindset of the common Jew during this part of the Second Temple Era, especially regarding matters of the afterlife, reward for the righteous, and punishment for the wicked (see ch. 7). Second Maccabees brings out the persecution that came upon the righteous and since it seemed like the righteous were not receiving their reward in this lifetime, an eschatological view of reward and punishment began to develop. The author saw the soul itself is seen as immortal and there is immediate reward for the righteous after death. Second Maccabees 7 tells a story of a righteous family that was martyred with one of them confessing his hope that he will be resurrected one day because of his righteousness. Doran notes that the author of 2 Maccabees is trying to draw a contrast between those that are martyred, the brothers who are righteous for keeping God's law, and the king, who is wicked and opposes God.¹³⁸ God will raise these martyrs to eternal life with a future resurrection and the king will receive eternal punishment.

Judgment

Second Maccabees gives the reader two aspects of judgment that God will bring about upon the wicked. The first form of judgment is in the form of *Lex Talionis* where the same sins that the individual committed will be the same things that the person will be punished with. Thus, this form of judgment is something received in this lifetime (see 4:38; 5:9-10; 9:5-12;

¹³⁷ Helyer notes that the emphasis in 2 Macc. is on the topic of a belief in divine intervention which includes the miraculous and supernatural. See Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 161.

¹³⁸ Robert Doran, *2 Maccabees: A Critical Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 156-7.

13:8). An example of this is found in 2 Maccabees 9:5-12 when it is reported that Antiochus Epiphanes is struck with a severe intestinal disease. The author says concerning the reason for this affliction was because “he had tortured the bowels of others with many and strange inflictions (9:6).” The authors reasoning is that now God was torturing Antiochus in a similar nature that he had tortured many of the Jews.

The second form of judgment is actually spoken by the seven brothers being martyred in 2 Maccabees 7. The words of the seven brothers and their mother give the reader much insight to what the common Jews believed about judgment and salvation in the afterlife. The brothers and their mother hold fast to their beliefs that they will be saved, have renewed life, and a resurrected body as long as they hold fast and not break the laws of God. On the other hand, they boldly tell Antioch the misfortune and judgment awaiting him from God. The fourth brother tells him that there will be no resurrection to life for Antiochus (7:14). The fifth brother speaks of the torture waiting for Antiochus and his descendants (7:17).¹³⁹ The sixth brother tells the king that he will not go unpunished (7:19). The seventh brother has the most to say about the coming judgment upon Antiochus as he boldly says, “You have not yet escaped the judgment of the almighty, all-seeing God. For our brothers after enduring a brief suffering have drunk of ever-flowing life, under God’s covenant; but you, by the judgment of God, will receive just punishment for your arrogance (7:35-36).”¹⁴⁰ Although it can be argued that this can refer to judgment in this lifetime,

¹³⁹ Bartlett indicates that this torment is seen with how Antiochus IV’s death is described in Chapter 9. He also indicates the death that his children died; His son was murdered by the supporters of Demetrius (14:2; cf. 1 Macc. 7:4), his alleged son Alexander Balas was beheaded (1 Macc. 11:17), and Alexander’s son was killed by Trypho (1 Macc. 11:39-40; 13:31). See John R. Bartlett, *The First and Second Books of Maccabees*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 272-73.

¹⁴⁰ VanLandingham notes that the post-mortem judgment described here indicates whether one’s verdict is resurrection to eternal life or annihilation as opposed to a conscious, eternal punishment. See VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification*, 137.

the overall emphasis leans towards an afterlife with eschatological judgment in view. This passage gives one insight into what the common Jews of the time period would have believed concerning judgment and punishment in the afterlife.

SIBYLLINE ORACLES

Dating and Background

The *Sibylline Oracles* are a collection of Jewish, Christian, and other sources whose composition spans several hundred years with the earliest one composed as early as the second century BC. The *Oracles* were viewed as prophetic in nature and typically thought to be the utterances of an older woman having prestige. The overall messages in the *Oracles* tend to lean toward gloom and judgment. Docherty notes, “Their ongoing relevance was secured by the ease with which the often vague or opaque sayings could be reworked or added to in different circumstances.”¹⁴¹ For purposes of this study, only *Oracle 3* will be considered because it is the only one that can be definitively dated before the composition of the Gospel of John. This oracle has both Greek and Jewish elements to it and follows the typical pattern of other pagan oracles of the era; predicted disaster followed by a change in the world. Concerning the reason that Jews in Egypt adopted this pagan form of writing, Docherty again notes, “Jews, especially those living in Egypt, adopted the sibylline genre in order to provide a sense of authority and antiquity for their history and religion. They made important adaptations to the form, however, placing more emphasis on ethical teaching and eschatological expectation, and weaving in scriptural allusions.”¹⁴² The contents of *Oracle 3* reflect much of the theological themes that were popular

¹⁴¹ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 79.

¹⁴² Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 79.

in Early Judaism. The sibylline oracle was another avenue for the Jews to express their thoughts about the conditions of their current situation in a somewhat enigmatic way without drawing direct attention from those that the oracles were spoken against.

Judgment

Collins notes the sporadic nature of these oracles with an overall theme of woe and disaster being proclaimed.¹⁴³ For the *Sibylline Oracles* there are a few different aspects of judgment represented. One of them is the idea of imminent or impending judgment which takes an earthly form and has an Old Testament judgment against the nations ring to it.¹⁴⁴ Docherty says, “One of the most characteristic features of the sibylline genre is the frequent announcement of impending judgement and disaster for specific people or cities (e.g. 3.205-10, 300-80, 493-544; 5.54-135, 160-213, 287-359, 434-46).”¹⁴⁵ There is also the theme of future or eschatological judgment. Book three is especially striking and reflects a great deal concerning messianic expectation and how the coming eschatological king will come and reign and judge (3:652-656).¹⁴⁶ There is also a notion of God will judge the earth (3:741-43) and establish a righteous kingdom on earth where God is ultimately the king over all (3:767-808).¹⁴⁷ From these oracles,

¹⁴³ J.J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1. James H. Charlesworth Ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 317-320.

¹⁴⁴ Bauckham notes that there is a more universalistic scope to the judgment of God in this oracle. Both Jews and gentiles will be held accountable under the same standards and punished under the same Law of God. See Bauckham, “Apocalypses,” 186-87.

¹⁴⁵ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 82.

¹⁴⁶ Reiser indicates that the judgment Oracles follow Isaiah 65-66 and Ezekiel 38-39. He says that in Isaiah 65-66 the emphasis of judgment makes a distinction between Israelites but the emphasis in the *Oracles* the distinction between Israel and the Nations and the nations are the ones that are judged and Israel is seen as righteous. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 100.

¹⁴⁷ Oegema does a side by side comparison of 3:767-808 with Isaiah 11:1-12 and argues for the messianic nature of this passage based on the fact that Isaiah 11 is typically classified as messianic. The author of the *Oracles*

one sees that there is a sense of imminent judgment and even an eschatological judgment and it is likely that the author sees the imminent earthly judgment as an immediate precursor to the eschatological day of Judgment that God will bring just prior to the setting up of the eternal kingdom on earth. The purveyor of that judgment overall is done by God and there is a sense that the king sent by God will perform the earthly portion of the final judgment. Although judgment is a major theme of *Oracle 3*, this oracle, along with the theme found in the Jewish literature surveyed to this point, serves as encouragement for the righteous that God will judge their enemies and save the elect (3:702-31).

Messianic Expectation

The passage concerning messianic expectation that scholars point to is 3:652-56 where it is said that “God will send a king from the sun (v. 652).” This is typically linked historically to Ptolemy VI Philometor who reigned over Egypt from 163 to 145 BC. Concerning a Ptolemaic king as a messianic figure, VanderKam says, “It may seem strange that a Ptolemaic king would be hailed in what appear to be quasi-messianic terms, but the third sibylline oracle is a good reminder of what at least some Jews may have understood a messianic leader to be: a human king who would effect God’s will in the perilous and frightening times of the author.”¹⁴⁸ Docherty notes, “It would indeed be a significant theological development for a Jewish author to hail a gentile ruler as a divinely sent savior.”¹⁴⁹ Although it is not typical, it is not unheard of in Judaism for a Gentile king to be seen as a messianic deliver of sorts or considered as God’s

3 uses Is. 11 allegorically for his own interpretive purposes to match his current historical context. See Oegema, *The Anointed*, 83-85.

¹⁴⁸ VanderKam, *Early Judaism*, 109.

¹⁴⁹ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 83.

anointed. The Persian king Cyrus is referred to as the Lord's "anointed" in Isaiah 45:1 as the king to decree that the Jews were allowed to return home from exile and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-11; 6:3). The Jews were not lacking in enemies and they did not have a nation or king of their own during this time frame. It should not be unexpected that a powerless people would look to a powerful king, who looked upon them favorably, to be sent by God to deliver them from their enemies. The interesting part of this passage is that this Gentile king is the one being used by God to usher in the final judgment and eschatological kingdom as opposed to a Davidic king or Messiah.

TESTAMENT OR ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

Dating and Background

The *Testament of Moses* follows along testament genre and records a pseudepigraphal account of the final words of Moses. There are historical indicators within the text that place the date of authorship such as clear allusions to the reign of Herod the Great and possible references to the Temple prior to its destruction in 70 A.D., thus an early first century A.D. authorship. The work itself is a very short document that gives snippets of prior historical events which give the reader a notion of what the Jewish author was feeling theologically and politically at the time of composition. Although this text falls into the testament genre, there are apocalyptic elements to it which consist of divisions of history and an eschatological scene in chapter ten that has God saving his covenant people Israel and delivering them from all of their enemies. Although this work is short, it represents much of the frustration that the Jews had with various enemies during this era and their hope for swift deliverance and judgment on all of their enemies.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Helyer notes that this document comes from a pietistic group who believed that it was more important to follow the Mosaic Law at all cost as opposed to a violent defense of one's faith. Thus, this document emphasizes a rejection of militant nationalism. See Helyer, *Jewish Literature*, 142-43. See also John J. Collins, "The Date and

Judgment

Chapter ten provides the reader with an eschatological judgment scene that follows along with what other Jewish literature has witnessed up to this point.¹⁵¹ Since this is likely a first century A.D. document, it gives a clearer glimpse of eschatological thought that would be more present at the time that Jesus would have given his teachings concerning the nature of judgment and his role as judge. There remains a similar pattern of the judgment of the wicked and salvation for the righteous. The judgment of God will be upon the devil (10:1), the nations and enemies of God (10:2, 7), and even the earth and the heavens will be affected by this judgment (10:4-6).¹⁵² The nation of Israel is the one named as the nation that God will raise up and save (10:7-9). Verse two also indicates an elevated angelic figure.¹⁵³ However, there is not much indication in the text to the role of this figure, but it still indicates a figure other than God that will be a part of the final judgment. Verse seven then shows God appearing as judge. The appearance of the figure in verse two possibly indicates a Jewish belief that there would be a vice regent of sorts aiding God or receiving from God the right to judge a portion of or possibly all of

Provenance of the Testament of Moses,” in *Studies on the Testament of Moses*, ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg, SBL 4 (Cambridge, MA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973), 32.

¹⁵¹ Kugler notes that this text is quite deterministic in its outlook with a severe division between the righteous and the wicked. This text also indicates that one will be terminally punished for failure to maintain the covenant relationship with God. He goes even as far to say that this text indicates that one could “unelect” themselves by a failure to keep the law. See Robert A. Kugler, “Testaments,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1 – The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Edited by D. A. Carson et al., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 195-97.

¹⁵² G. Anthony Keddie argues that though the Gentile nations are included in judgment, the priestly ruling class of Israel are the primary recipients of judgment in *Test. Mos.* See G. Anthony Keddie, “Judaean Apocalypticism and the Unmasking of Ideology: Foreign and National Rulers in the *Testament of Moses*,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, 44 (2013), 301-38.

¹⁵³ Reiser argues that this figure is similar to Melchizedek found in 11QMelch or even the angel Michael. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 86.

Chester argues that this figure is likely Michael who is given a militant role. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 376.

creation. In its brevity, the *Testament of Moses* gives light to what the Jews in first century Israel would have expected concerning the final judgment. This text indicates that the Jews believed that this judgment on all of their enemies was imminent which is seen by the fact that the judgment scene of chapter ten immediately proceeds the historical events of chapters six and seven which are likely speaking of the reigns of Herod the Great and his sons and were likely the events that just happened in the life of the original author. This time period witnessed both the height of the expectation of the final judgment but also the height of messianic expectation which began to intertwine with each other as it will be witnessed by the *Psalms of Solomon*, various documents at Qumran, and the *Parables of Enoch*.

PSALMS OF SOLOMON

Dating and Background

The *Psalms of Solomon* date to the late first century BC and a completed compilation no later than the early first century AD.¹⁵⁴ The work itself has clear references to Pompey which aid in dating. This Roman occupation also helps one understand the Jewish mindset behind the *Psalms* and why there was a militant Messiah presented in *Psalms* 17. The *Psalms* have a heavy Davidic messianic theme that focuses on judgment and deliverance. Beyond the fact of Roman oppression present in the *Psalms*, Docherty notes that Hasmoneans were also in view of those that were going to be judged, “The community of devout Jews behind these poems were vehemently opposed to the Israelite rulers of the time, the Hasmonaeans, regarding them as corrupt, violators of the Temple cult, and illegitimate because they were not descended from the

¹⁵⁴ This dating comes from a series of references to specific historic events in *Psalms* 2, 8, and 17 that take place between 80-30 BC.

line of David.”¹⁵⁵ The theological position that they take would have been on the minds of John’s Jewish audience, especially the claim John presents in Jesus’ teachings concerning his messiahship.

The *Psalms* speak against both Roman occupation and Hasmonean rule and often comments directed toward specific leaders.¹⁵⁶ The comments in the *Psalms* also reflect an opposition to religious leaders and certain Temple conduct. Docherty points out that the views expressed in the *Psalms* are very closely linked to the views of those at Qumran concerning apostasy in leadership and it is a possibility that the authors may have been from this community.¹⁵⁷ Regardless of the authorship, the content of the *Psalms* suggests that there was mounting messianic and eschatological expectation for a Davidic deliverer to come and make right the perversions that were happening in the leadership both politically and religiously.¹⁵⁸ Part of the understanding built into this messianic figure portrayed is that this Davidic Messiah would be an instrument of judgment. In fact, the psalmist goes as far as to say that the judgment is coming as punishment because of the many sins of the leadership such as sexual immorality,

¹⁵⁵ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 69-70.

¹⁵⁶ Trafton identifies the “sinners” in *Ps. Sol. 17* as referring to the Hasmoneans. See Joseph L. Trafton, “What Would David Do? Messianic Expectation and Surprise in *Ps. Sol. 17*,” in *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*, Edited by Eberhards Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 162.

¹⁵⁷ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 74.

Reiser puts this work as a Pharisaic composition which was originally written in Hebrew and later translated into Greek. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 47.

¹⁵⁸ Trafton presents seven ‘surprises’ of Davidic messianic expectation that are not common expectations in the “Davidic” passages already developed in the Hebrew Scriptures. Many of these attributes are also surprising because they are attributes of God and not associated with a messianic figure in the Hebrew Scriptures. (1) The Davidic king will “cleanse” Jerusalem (vv. 22, 30). (2) He will “gather” a holy people (v. 26). (3) He will “distribute” the people upon the land according to their tribes (v. 28). (4) He will “discipline” the house of Israel (v. 42). (5) He will judge his people Israel “in synagogues” (v. 43). (6) He will “show mercy upon” all the nations before him in fear (v. 34). (7) He will engage in “hostile actions” against his enemies (v. 24). See Trafton, “What Would David Do?,” 166-71.

hypocrisy, arrogance, excessive wealth, lying and slander (1:4-8; 2:11-13; 4:1-5; 5:16; 8:9-12; 12:1-3). Thus, part of messianic expectation was for Messiah to judge the unrighteous for the sins committed. In the *Psalms* the Davidic Messiah is God's instrument in judgment as opposed to the one given all authority by God to judge as the *Parables of Enoch* indicate. However, this points to a growing expectation of what would have been expected by John's Jewish audience as he makes certain messianic claims about Jesus.

The *Psalms* also speak to the salvation and protective care of the righteous (2:35-6; 4:25; 5:15; 6:6; 10:6-8; 11:1; 13:12; 14:10).¹⁵⁹ As it has been seen in previous texts, this juxtaposition of righteousness and judgment is a significant piece of many judgment passages not only in the *Psalms* but in most Early Jewish literature.¹⁶⁰ This juxtaposition of salvation of the righteous and the punishment of the unrighteous is a prominent feature in the *Psalms* will also play into the views of Jesus' audience represented in the Gospel of John. Part of John's Jewish audience likely consisted of the religious elite who would have seen themselves as the righteous who were under God's protection of judgment.¹⁶¹ However, John will show that Jesus will radically redefine judgment and salvation that is quite different from what they would have expected the Messiah to teach. The *Psalms* not only provide necessary information concerning the messianic

¹⁵⁹ Reiser brings out the fact that the *Psalms* have an emphasis on the contrast between the punishment of the wicked and the reward received by the righteous at the Day of the Lord. He also brings out that the contrast in the *Psalms* goes beyond a general contrast between righteous and wicked but the author goes further and make the distinction between Israel and the Nations as the identity of the righteous and the wicked. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 47-50.

¹⁶⁰ Falk notes that the language of righteousness in the *Psalms* is not concerned with saving activity, but almost exclusively associated with judgment, in God's judgments are found his righteousness. See Daniel Falk, "Psalms and Prayers," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1 – The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Edited by D. A. Carson et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 39-44.

¹⁶¹ VanLandingham notes that the *Psalms* indicate that those that are seen as wicked may also include those that are outside of a certain sect of Judaism and not necessarily based upon one's deeds, though that is a major piece of how one is judged. See VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification*, 138-39.

expectation of John's Jewish audience, but they also provide key insight into His audience's view of who will be saved and who will be judged. Both of these notions are key features in understanding Jesus' teachings in the Gospel of John to the fullest.

Judgment

Chapter 2 contains a judgment scene which pronounces judgment on the nations that took part in oppressing Israel (esp. 2:34-41). The author spends the majority of the chapter calling out the nations and the kings of those nations for the atrocities that they brought against his people, against Jerusalem, and against his holy Temple (2:2-11, 13-14, 20, 25-28). The author also identifies that judgment is upon the people according to their deeds (2:17). In 2:17 he has both the previous sins of Israel in mind which brought the judgment of God upon the Israelites through the means of other nations and especially against the deeds of the nations for going too far in the God ordained punishment against the Israelites in their arrogance.¹⁶² Thus, the psalmist argues that the wrath and judgment of God against these nations because of their arrogance will be much more severe and will have eternal ramifications (2:35, 39). This psalm identifies God as the true righteous king who will come down and execute judgment and wrath upon all of his enemies and the enemies of Israel (2:36). Ultimately, this psalm is written to give hope of salvation to the righteous who will receive an eternal reward (2:37-41).¹⁶³

The theme of God's judgment pervades much of this short psalter with a striking messianic emphasis in the last two psalms (*Ps. Sol.* 17-18). Wright notes that the reason for such

¹⁶² Yinger notes that the judgment on Israel is much more than just corrective but more punitive in its force. See Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 75-76.

¹⁶³ Yinger indicates that the reward for the righteous is not necessarily automatic but the *Ps. Sol.* present those who accept God's discipline and punishment and correct their ways as that will receive God's mercy and the reward of eternal life. On the other hand, those that despise God's discipline will receive his wrath and eternal destruction. See Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 73-74.

a strong message of judgment is because it is “a response of devout Jews to the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans in the first century B.C.”¹⁶⁴ There is a clear concern about the fate of the righteous and the sinners at the time of final judgment.¹⁶⁵ Chapter 17 represents a tangible way in which the nations will be placed in submission and ruled over by the Messiah for eternity. Entailed in this would be a form of earthly judgment. De Silva notes that the Messiah will purge the sinful from the land which entails the ability to judge what is considered sinful.¹⁶⁶ However, the place of ultimate judgment of the righteous and wicked remains in the hands of God in the last day. Docherty notes that one of the themes concerning judgment is a present punishment from God for sins but there is also a theme of God’s mercy.¹⁶⁷ There is also an aspect of divine separation of the righteous and the wicked at the final judgment where the righteous look forward to eternal life (3:12; 14:10) and the wicked face destruction in Hades (3:11;12:6; 14:9; 15:10). The Messiah is not in this heavenly realm, but the author of the psalms sees him as an immediate solution to their current circumstances with their new Gentile oppressors.

Messianic Expectation

Nearly two hundred years after Ben Sirach wrote, the expectation of the coming of a Davidic figure changed drastically. Ben Sirach wrote at a time when foreign occupation had been a reality for a few centuries, but oppression of the foreign power was not severe. The severity of the oppression changed drastically soon after his death and became a present reality in much of

¹⁶⁴ R.B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2. James H. Charlesworth Ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 639.

¹⁶⁵ Marius Reiser emphasizes the concept of reward for the righteous and punishment for sinners in his discussion on judgment as seen throughout the *Psalms*, see Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 47-50.

¹⁶⁶ DeSilva, *Jewish Teachers of Jesus*, 151.

¹⁶⁷ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 74-75.

the Jewish literature from the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The *Psalms* now have a new oppressor in view which sparks the author to write in much more detail regarding a Davidic Messiah that would deliver Israel and judge this foreign power.¹⁶⁸ Thus, *Psalms* 17 intertwines the judgment of God with a heavy messianic emphasis upon one from the house of David coming to deliver the Jews from the oppressive Gentiles.¹⁶⁹ Joseph Trafton cannot emphasize the importance of *Psalms* 17 enough as he says, “Ps. Sol. 17 remains the longest, continuous description of the messiah that we possess from pre-Christian Judaism.”¹⁷⁰ Reiser shows how the Messiah described in the *Psalms* closely resembles the description of the Messianic figure in the *Parables of Enoch* which is to be expected because of the similar time frame in which they were being written.¹⁷¹ Although the two documents contain opposite views of messianic type, they

¹⁶⁸ Benedikt Eckhardt looks at the *Psalms* as an important historical source of information for Second Temple Judaism, especially the late Hasmonean period, see “The Psalms of Solomon as a Historical Source for the Late Hasmonean Period,” in *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*, Edited by Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 7-30. Eckhardt says that the *Psalms* do not reflect Pompey’s Campaign because of the retrospective language used concerning God’s justice in the condemnation of the Jews (24). He also concludes that, “[The *Psalms*] do not represent the theocratic zeal of the Jewish populace, but a small group of Jews alienated from the great majority (25).

¹⁶⁹ Pomykala puts the dating of this psalm between 61-57 BC which would make it at the time of Pompey’s capture of Jerusalem and the waning of the Hasmonean dynasty, see *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 159.

Reiser notes that *Psalms* 17 represents one of the first instances in Jewish literature that someone other than God himself partakes in the final judgment. This text paired with the *Parables*, which Reiser says was likely written about the same time, gives merit to the idea that there was a growing messianic expectation in the first century BC that the messiah would have some sort of Day of Judgment responsibilities handed to him from God. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 50.

¹⁷⁰ Joseph L. Trafton, “What Would David Do? Messianic Expectation and Surprise in Ps. Sol. 17” in *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*, Edited by Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 157-58. Trafton notes that the section in the Temple Scroll concerning “the king” (11Q19 LVI, 12-LIX, 21) which is the longest section on kingship is in no sense messianic, see footnote 10, 158. In his essay, Trafton highlights the main verbs used in *Psalms* 17. He considers expectations, extended expectations, and surprises in light of what messianic passages in the Old Testament say concerning expectation of David as king and the Davidic Kingship. The “surprise” expectations are those that are not supported in the Old Testament such as: the cleansing of Jerusalem (vss. 22, 30), the gathering of the holy people (v. 26), distributing the Jews upon the land (v. 28), the disciplining of the house of Israel (v. 42), judging Israel in the Synagogues (v. 43), showing mercy upon the nations (v. 43), and engaging in hostile actions against his enemies (vss. 22-25, 36), see 166-71.

¹⁷¹ Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 50.

both have similar judgment themes that mirror the Jewish mindset of the day concerning the judgment of the wicked and salvation of the righteous. Political turmoil would be one of the key motivating factors for the authoring of this psalm.¹⁷²

This Psalm has from the very beginning a cry for a deliverer (v. 3).¹⁷³ The plea is for God to come and deliver them. Verse 5 looks back to the original Davidic covenant showing that God specifically chose David to rule over Israel and to always have one on the throne. Zacharias notes that this is the first time David is mentioned in the whole corpus.¹⁷⁴ A push for a Davidic dynasty is likely expressed in the light of the fact that the Hasmonean dynasty had no legitimate Davidic claim to the throne. There is a longing for the restoration of the Davidic monarchy and a longing for a Davidic king to be raised up to bring judgment upon all the enemies of God. This idea is most clearly expressed in verse 21 as the author says, “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.”¹⁷⁵ The author acknowledges some of the blame for the loss of the Davidic Monarchy (v. 6) but puts most of the blame to the lack of a current Davidic Monarchy on foreign oppressors (vs.6-15). Zacharias notes, “Those who have not been promised anything have set up their own

On the other hand, Chester argues that, although idealized, this Messiah is in no sense otherworldly. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 342.

¹⁷² Pomykala points past a Pharisaic authorship and argues for an Essenic authorship since much of the language in the psalm mirrors language used in the documents at Qumran, see *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 159-60.

¹⁷³ Pomykala notes that this psalm is a communal lament or complaint meaning that this was a grievance expressed by many in the and not just a select for or just the author, see *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 160.

¹⁷⁴ H. Daniel Zacharias, “*Raise up to them their King:*” *Psalms of Solomon 17-18 in the Context of Early Jewish Messianism*, (Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM, 2008), 18.

¹⁷⁵ Pomykala notes that the phrase “Son of David” likely refers to messianic expectation. He later shows that this Son of David is pictured in an idealized and superhuman way, see *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 162-70.

royal house in direct contrast to the [kingdom] of David and his descendants.”¹⁷⁶ Verse twenty-three beseeches God to raise up a king for Israel. The Psalmist uses the phrase ‘the son of David’ to describe this one to be raised up. Verse 24 shows why there is a need for this Davidic King which is to “shatter unrighteous rulers.” The rulers which were over Israel during the time that this was written was Rome and possibly more likely the Herods who were seen as unrighteous and illegitimate rulers.

Verses 25-49 then considers the actions and characteristics this ruler will have. The significance of this psalm is that it is one of the most explicit explanations of the Davidic Messiah in all of the Jewish literature written prior to the coming of Jesus. In verse 25, the first thing that this ruler will do is purge Jerusalem of unrighteous rulers. Zacharias notes that the rulers here are the illegitimate rulers which are contrasted with the legitimate Davidic Ruler.¹⁷⁷ This is not surprising since by the writing of this psalm, there have been all kinds of unrighteous rulers over Jerusalem. It is likely that the current rulers in Jerusalem are who the psalmist is referring to, but one cannot help but see allusions to previous unrighteous rulers such as Antiochus Epiphanes and even the Hasmoneans who ended their reign in unrighteousness. Most likely the author has the Herods and even the Romans in mind in the current context. The Psalmist has already spoken on the fact that the only ruler who can legitimately rule in Jerusalem is from the line of David and he looks forward to when that will be a reality once again.

Verse 26 shows that this ruler will reign with wisdom and righteousness. With these two characteristics, he will rightly rule the kingdom and execute necessary justice. He also makes mention of a “rod of iron” which likely refers to Psalm 2, a Messianic psalm. Davenport notes,

¹⁷⁶ Zacharias, *Raise up to them their King*, 19.

¹⁷⁷ Zacharias, *Raise up to them their King*, 25.

“the psalmist has modified the content of Psalm 2:9 so that now it is not the nations that are to be broken, with a rod of iron, but sinners.”¹⁷⁸ Zacharias makes a notable point as he says, “the actions of the messiah towards the sinful leaders of Israel are not life-threatening, it is only their pride that he smashes.”¹⁷⁹ The idea of the Messiah ruling with an iron rod is also repeated in Revelation referring to how Jesus will also deal with the unruly nations (Rev. 2:27, 12:5, and 19:15). The rod itself is a symbol of how the Messiah will rule and not a symbol of war against his enemies. Each reference shows how a messianic figure will deal with the ungodly nations and eventually bring them into submission. Verse 28 talks about how he will “gather together a holy people” which likely has implications of gathering the diaspora Jews that have been scattered all over the world. The Jews saw themselves as reigning and ruling with the Messiah in the future kingdom in Jerusalem. Verse 30 has the king redistributing the Jews in their rightful plots of land after they have all been gathered together. The emphasis in this psalm is what it has been for the Jews since the entrance in the land which is a long life in the land as their reward for righteous living. The unrighteous are expelled from the land. The kingdom set up by this king is described as present and physical. The view presented by the psalmist looks to a restoration of Israel to how it was formerly in days of old under the original reigns of David and Solomon but without any form of unrighteousness. In a way he is describing the kingdom in the ideal way which Moses described the kingdom in Deuteronomy as long as the people remained without sin. He is presenting a king who is without sin and will completely abolish unrighteousness to set up the kingdom how God intended all along.

¹⁷⁸ Gene Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’ in Psalms of Solomon 17,” in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* Eds. George W. E. Nickelsburg and John J. Collins (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1980), 73.

¹⁷⁹ Zacharias, *Raise Up*, 26.

Verse 41 sees this Messiah-king as one without sin which makes him the prime candidate to be able to rule in righteousness and in wisdom.¹⁸⁰ Zacharias notes, “As a representative of YHWH this righteous state makes sense, and in light of the perception that the spiritual status of the king reflects the spiritual status of Israel, this sinlessness also makes sense because the Jews are now a holy people.”¹⁸¹ The rest of this section then describes more in depth the righteousness and wisdom of this king. He is thus the ideal figure to not only reign over the house of Israel but also over the rest of the nations. He is also the one who will fully acknowledge God as his king and follow his sovereign will fully and completely and cause others to do the same.

This psalm presents what the ideal king in Israel should have looked like from the beginning. This will be the one future king that will reign and rule on earth from Jerusalem and bring everything into subjection under his feet. This view of the Messiah was likely something that the author may have expected in his own lifetime or something that was about to happen shortly after. The mindset was that the Messiah’s coming was imminent and would be something that would take over with a great military force. In fact, this psalm may have been in the minds of the people in AD 132-35 as Bar Kokhba led a revolt against Rome. A strong military leader is what the Jews were looking for so that they could expel the Romans from them and once again rule themselves in the manner they believed God wanted.

¹⁸⁰ Grindheim specifically points out that this messianic figure is understood as completely human. There are not divine qualities escribed like other messianic texts. Being sinless just means that he is a unique human being. See Sigurd Grindheim, *God’s Equal: What can we Know about Jesus’ Self-Understanding in the Synoptic Gospels?* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 136-37.

¹⁸¹ Zacharias, *Raise Up*, 38.

QUMRAN

Dating and Background

The Qumran community was likely an Essene community established on the northwest rim of the Dead Sea and only just seven miles outside the community.¹⁸² The vitality of the community lasted from around 150 BC to AD 68. The community itself was somewhat secluded and quite exclusive as to who they would allow into the community. The community was a separate sect of Judaism with its own religious nuances and practices. It is likely a sect that was Levitical in its origins as a group of priests and Levites that split away from the rest due to stark disagreements with the Hasmoneans and the priests placed in office by that dynasty. This is reflected throughout the texts produced by this sect and it will be seen that those that they say will receive the severest of judgments are the apostate Jews associated the Temple cult that parted from the strict Judaism of the Torah.

There are various types of literature discovered at Qumran. Represented in the Dead Sea Scrolls are all of the Old Testament minus the book of Esther, the Pseudepigraphal texts of *I Enoch* (minus the *Parables*) and *Jubilees*, Tobit, and a multitude of works produced by the community which include rule books, Bible interpretation of various kinds, religious poetry, Wisdom compositions in prose and in verse, sectarian calendars, and liturgical texts. The extent of the library at Qumran reveals that the community itself was quite religious and even stricter in their belief and practice. The leader of the community is referred to as “The Teacher of righteousness” who is referred to continually throughout the literature that was exclusive to that Qumran community. There is no indication that this leader was seen as a messianic figure but

¹⁸² Scott gives a helpful summary of the history, beliefs, and social structure of the Essenes and the Qumran Community in *Jewish Backgrounds*, 215-29. See also Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 239-328; John J. Collins, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Biography*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

there is indication that they believed that the “Teacher” was a precursor to the Messiah or Messiahs that would follow him. The community believed themselves to be an eschatological community that was living in the end times with the great Day of the Lord to be revealed. Thus, they developed their own eschatology concerning judgment and messianic expectation. It is necessary to understand this communities’ thoughts on judgment and messianic expectation because John John’s representation of Jesus’ teachings concerning messianic judgment challenge views held by the Qumran community.

Judgment

The Qumran community was an exclusivistic community who saw themselves as the true remnant of Israel. As it was with some of the other Early Jewish texts concerning being judged for one’s deeds, so also the Qumran community believed that God did not base righteousness upon individual deeds but upon whether or not one was in the covenant community (1QH; 1QM).¹⁸³ Sanders notes that salvation was through entrance into the community and not due to the scrutiny of one’s deeds.¹⁸⁴ The view of judgment that this community had, overall, was an eschatological judgment but it was an imminent eschatological judgment. Concerning the imminent and eschatological view of judgment at Qumran, Reiser observes while commenting on the psalms of the Teacher of righteousness, “The ultimate judgment and accomplished salvation are in the future, but even now the lot of the one and the other group is being decided.

¹⁸³ Yinger shows how the deeds represented in 1QH IV are seen as the abominable sins of idolatry and a hardened heart. See Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 108-09. The emphasis of the overall message of 1QH would characterize these sins upon those that are outside the community. The community would not have seen themselves as guilty of these sins that are leading to judgment.

¹⁸⁴ E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1977), 240-57.

Hence the present is seen completely in its eschatological aspect.”¹⁸⁵ Thus, God was going to bring about the final judgment at any moment. Travis notes that there was a sort of hatred for the outsider and it was the outsider (Jews and Gentiles) who would receive the greatest portion of God’s wrath.¹⁸⁶

Throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls, it is seen that God is the initiator of this judgment, but members of the community will be active participants in the final judgment (1QS; 1QH).¹⁸⁷ Travis notes, “The eschatological battle will be the time for retaliation against the sons of darkness, as the War rule makes plain.”¹⁸⁸ It should also be noted that this judgment is taking place in an earthly scene and not in heaven as other above Early Jewish sources put the final judgment at the throne of God in heaven (e.g. *Parable of Enoch*). There is also thought in this community that a Messianic figure from the ‘Branch of David’ will be the one to lead the way and free the people from those that oppress them (4Q285; 4Q161; 1QSb). This Messianic figure is seen as one who receives the scepter from God and given authority to judge and rule the nations (4Q161). He is the one that will receive the covenant of kingship (4Q252) and one of the

¹⁸⁵ Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 75.

¹⁸⁶ Travis, *Christ and Judgment*, 33.

¹⁸⁷ VanLandingham notes that the receiving of reward for being righteous is not a matter of the amount of good deeds but is more black and white in aspect, either one obeys or does not. See VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification*, 118.

Falk notes that salvation in 1QH means “deliverance from the wicked, release from the guilt of sin and the weakness of humanity, and participation in the heavenly community.” He also notes that there is a present reality of salvation for those that are in the community. The idea presented of salvation is much more exclusivistic than other notions of salvation found in Second Temple Judaism. See Falk, “Psalms and Prayers,” 28; 28-29.

Chester argues that there are clear messianic allusions in 1QH as the text alludes to 2 Samuel 22-23 and links to Isaiah 66:7-11 as it portrays the birth of a messianic child as well as the birth of a new people. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 263-64.

¹⁸⁸ Travis, *Christ and Judgment*, 33.

main features included within kingship is the seat of judgment. There is also a sense in which the Messiah will partake in an aspect of final judgment and possibly even the resurrection (1Q521).¹⁸⁹ There is also a semi-ambiguous fragment which contains the title ‘Son of God’ as one who will partake with God in final judgment and the establishment of the kingdom on earth (4Q246).¹⁹⁰ The ‘Son of God’ does not contain a direct reference and is thought to be most likely referring to one of the archangels such as Michael or the exalted figure of Melchizedek or perhaps even the Messiah.¹⁹¹ The figure of Melchizedek takes up final judgment against the Prince of Darkness Belial and also one who has a hand in restoration at the final Jubilee (11Q13). The overall picture is that God is not alone in his final judgment but uses people, the Messiah, and heavenly beings to partake in final judgment. This translates well into Jesus’ claim as Messianic judge, especially with his references to the final judgment in the Gospel of John.

The Commentary on Habakkuk (1QpHab) exhibits much of the eschatological views of the Qumran community. Right from the beginning the text reveals the belief that they saw themselves as the final generation which would see judgment come upon the Gentiles.¹⁹² This text not only shows that the Gentiles were wicked but also that the current priesthood residing

¹⁸⁹ 1Q521 is only a small fragment and the larger context of this passage is incomplete.

¹⁹⁰ This “Son of God” figure can possibly be a reference to an antichrist figure such as Antiochus IV Epiphanes or the eschatological archenemy of God. However, Grindheim argues that the title should be viewed positively such as the collective people of God, an angelic figure, a coming Jewish ruler. He more concisely argues that this figure is most likely a messianic figure that was inspired by the Danielic Son of Man. See Grindheim, *God’s Equal*, 137-38.

¹⁹¹ Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* 7th Ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2012), 617. Kindle Edition.

¹⁹² Oegema says that although the Teacher of Righteousness is not specifically mentioned in 1QpHab, the Teacher of Righteousness is believed to play a key post-prophetic role that leads up to the coming of the Messiah. See Oegema, *The Anointed*, 108-09.

over the temple was wicked and those priests would also receive judgment.¹⁹³ The reason for this judgment is because they despise the Law of God and the many sins that have been “heaped up” over the many things they have done against God’s people. The author sees the Teacher of Righteousness and the members of the community as those who will be saved, and it also indicates that God will use the elect community to aid in the bringing about of judgment on the community. The author also comments of the means of God’s judgment by the use of fire and brimstone. This language is likely used to point the reader to Genesis 19 where God uses fire and brimstone to judge the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The author seems to be saying that this is the type of judgment that God is about to bring upon the wicked of this final generation. The commentary on Habakkuk is acutely focused on judgment of both the wicked nations as well as the wicked priests. The author also wants to make clearly known the sins for which both groups are going to be judged. The author is also intent on making a clear distinction between those that are being judged and the elect whom God will save.

Messianic Expectation

One of the expectations for the messiah was two different messiahs. One messiah from the line of David as a kingly messiah and one from the line of Aaron as a priestly messiah.¹⁹⁴ Hurst argues that the Qumran literature points to a kingly messiah as one from the line of David

¹⁹³ Yinger argues that this warning against the priesthood should not just serve as an outward warning. He sees the emphasis of this warning as internal, saying that what will happen to the Priests in judgment will happen to those in the community who follow this same path of apostacy. See Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment*, 130-31.

¹⁹⁴ Pomykala focuses on just the Davidic dynasty tradition at Qumran and focuses solely on sectarian documents that were specific to the Qumran Community: 4QDibHam, 4QpGen^a, 4QFlor, 4QpIsa^a, and 4QSerek HaMilhamah, see *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 171-216. His conclusion concerning these documents is that all of the documents, with the exception of 4QDibHam, have a common Davidic messianic theme (written between 30 BC and AD 70). He notes that the characteristics of this “Branch of David” are one that would take office in the last days as a militant leader whose power would come from God, he would have the qualities of compassion, sinlessness, holiness, wisdom, faithfulness, and purity, and he would rid the nation of foreign powers and authorities as well as apostate Jews, his rule will extend over all nations (212-16).

as the redeemer of Israel and the priestly messiah functioning as the leading priest who functions alongside the primary Davidic messiah.¹⁹⁵ One place that these two messiahs can be seen is in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS). The texts that support this idea are the Damascus Document (CD), The Manuel of Discipline (1QS), and The Rule of the Congregation (1QSa). Many other documents such as the War Scroll (1QM) and the Messianic Apocalypse also refer to the Messiah. Overall, it can be concluded that there was an idea of two possible Messiahs which would come at the same time, one for spiritual matters and one for political matters. Other than a few defining terms, there are not a lot of defining characteristics of this Messiah as has been seen with other pieces of Second Temple Literature such as the *Psalms of Solomon* and the *Parables of Enoch*.

The Damascus Document (CD) is a work containing rules and regulations to live by within the Qumran community. This document also looked forward to the coming of an eschatological messianic figure. Prior to the presentation of the Messiah in the CD, the author indicates that there will be time of judgment when God will execute judgment upon the backsliding members of the covenant (8:1-2; 19:13-14) and retribution will be upon the wicked (8:9; 19:6).¹⁹⁶ In four distinct places, the CD presents the variation of the phrase “the Messiah from Aaron and Israel” (cf. CD 9b:10; 9b:29; 15:4; and 18:7). The biggest implication from these texts is that the Jews from Qumran were expecting two different Messiahs. The presence of the messianic figure in the midst of judgment indicates that the Messiah is an eschatological figure. However, the CD does not go into much detail concerning the eschatological role of the

¹⁹⁵ L. D. Hurst, “Did Qumran Expect Two Messiahs?” in *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 9:1 (1999), 160.

¹⁹⁶ Reiser indicates that these passages utilize Isaiah 7:17 and Zech. 13:7 which themselves are messianic in nature. See Reiser 78-79.

Messiah.¹⁹⁷ This view seems to be mostly unique to the Qumran community, though later Jewish texts such as the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* picks up on this notion (Cf. *Test. Reuben* 6:7-12). Hurst notes that the instances that the *Testaments* are talking about a “Messiah of Levi,” they are likely referencing the Hasmonean priest-kings, but when John Hyrcanus departed ways from the Pharisees, that is when the shift went to just a Messiah from Judah.¹⁹⁸ However, there is also a conflicting view in the *Testament of Judah*, likely a different author sees only one Messiah coming from the line of Judah (21:1-5; 24).

The Manuel of Discipline (1QS), because of the way 9:10-11 is worded, has led some to gather the idea of three possible messiahs in the mind of the author. It states in verse 11, “...until there come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.”¹⁹⁹ It is possible that this may support the notion of the tripartite office of the Messiah and even may be where the author of Hebrews bases his argument that Jesus is the perfect prophet, priest, and king. However, Hurst notes that there is much debate on the syntax of this one instance and its possible meaning.²⁰⁰

The Rule of the Congregation (1QSa) is likely supposed to be a preface to 1QS. It is also more fully known as *The Rule of the Congregation of Israel at the End of Time*.²⁰¹ This is also a document that purports to have two Messiahs listed. Hurst notes that there is a Levitical

¹⁹⁷ Oegema notes that the community behind the CD likely saw themselves as living in the period just prior to the coming of the eschatological Messiah. See Oegema, *The Anointed*, 97.

¹⁹⁸ Oegema, *The Anointed*, 162-63.

¹⁹⁹ Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996), 139.

Oegema notes that this document is an earlier Qumran work and this phrase only appears here in the earlier documents but in the later documents it appears more often. See Oegema, 90-92.

²⁰⁰ Hurst, “Two Messiahs,” 169-71.

²⁰¹ Hurst, “Two Messiahs,” 172.

domination of a messianic figure.²⁰² This document refers to the end times messianic banquet and, in this banquet, the priestly figure precedes the Davidic figure but only on who appears first. This, however, does not necessarily mean that one is more important than the other. Hurst makes a keen observation to the reason for the prominence of a Levitical messiah since the community itself was composed of Temple priests so naturally the lean would be toward a prominent Levitical figure as the main messianic figure.²⁰³

The Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521), also known as the Resurrection fragment, was likely written in the first Century BC which suggests a messianic development within the community which possibly moved away from two ambiguous figure from Aaron and Israel and began to focus on one figure that possibly began to be more defined and held more divine qualities. According to Vermes, the reference to ‘messiah’ in this document is in the singular and is likely not referring to ‘Aaron’ or ‘Israel’ as has been seen in previous documents.²⁰⁴ One significant element of this is that the author quotes Ps. 146:6-7 and Isaiah 61:1 in the text which are viewed as part of messianic expectation in this document since that is the emphasis of this document. These passages are also quoted by Jesus in Luke 4:18 as being fulfilled by Jesus in the presence of the people.

²⁰² Hurst, “Two Messiahs,” 172.

²⁰³ Hurst, “Two Messiahs,” 172.

²⁰⁴ Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* 7th Ed., (New York: Penguin Press, 2012), Kindle Location 8426.

Chester argues that the Messiah presented in this text is most likely a Royal Messiah, especially with reference to a scepter. This Messiah is also associated directly with the time of eschatological deliverance. He also indicates that this Messiah can may also play a prophetic role like Moses or Elijah. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 251-54.

11QMelchizedek (11Q13) is an intriguing document that also sites Isaiah 61:1-2 in a Messianic form. The author uses the name of Melchizedek in place of *El* and *Elohim* and 61:2 uses the name in place of *Yahweh*. Wise, Abegg, and Cook note, “Melchizedek is said to atone for the sins of the righteous and to execute judgment upon the wicked—actions usually associated with God himself.”²⁰⁵ The figure of Melchizedek only appears twice in the OT, Genesis 14 and Psalm 110. In the OT he is a mysterious figure and very little is known about him. However, by the first century BC, at least in the Qumran community and maybe even in other pockets of Judaism, Melchizedek is viewed as a divine being and maybe even viewed as God Himself.²⁰⁶ However, there is very little to support this claim other than this one passage. Within this text there is a messianic figure who is an eschatological figure. This figure is also associated with final judgment which indicates that the Qumran community believed the Day of the Lord would be accompanied by an end times figure other than God himself. The text says he is the one prophesied by Daniel who will proclaim God’s truth but will be “cut off.” The author the quotes Isaiah 61:2 directly identifying this ‘anointed one’ as the Messiah.²⁰⁷ Unfortunately, this text is highly fragmented and many of the details of the passage are missing. Thus, only speculation remains as to the overall message and content of this text. However, the rest to the documents at Qumran give helpful indications to the eschatological message of this text.

²⁰⁵ Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996), 455.

²⁰⁶ Grindheim argues that this figure most likely represents an exalted angel who serves as a divine agent rather than one that is equal with God. See Grindheim, *God’s Equal*, 150-51.

²⁰⁷ Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 457.

Chester says that one should interpret the one ‘anointed with the spirit’ as a separate figure from Melchizedek and should not necessarily be seen as a Royal Messiah but says that a prophetic messiah is more plausible. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 259-61.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The theme of judgment is central to Early Jewish literature. Judgment according to one's deeds is a common theme seen throughout early Judaism and it is a theme that reappears in the Gospel of John as Jesus speaks to what deeds merits one judgment or eternal life. There is also a notion of *Lex Talionis* seen in some of the earlier works such as *Sirach* and *2 Maccabees* where those that do wicked deeds receive an earthly punishment in a similar form to the wicked deeds that they performed in their lifetime. However, it also seems that later literature partially abandoned this notion because there were those that did evil deeds that did not receive punishment in their current lifetime. Thus, Early Jewish literature transitioned into punishment and reward being received after death and/or at the final resurrection and/or Day of the Lord. The punishment received by the wicked upon death or the final judgment has been seen to be predetermined with no way out of what the individual will justly receive. The recipients of this punishment are most clearly seen to be received by the mighty, rulers, and kings who have abused their power and reached beyond their God given authority. There is also designation for apostate Jews and those outside a certain community or sect such as what was seen in the Qumran literature. Another group which was not considered in depth were the angelic beings that forsook God and procreated with the daughters of men and revealed heavenly knowledge to mankind. Several sources allow for the wicked to receive mercy in judgment if they repent in their current lifetime. Reward at death or the final judgment is seen by those that maintain the covenant or those that are within a certain community or sect. Good deeds are important, but reward and receipt of eternal life is based upon God's mercy. The texts above have the main purpose of encouragement for the righteous who were not seeing their reward in their present lifetime, but these texts encouraged them to persevere because they would eventually receive

their reward at their death or the final resurrection. This also encouraged them that the wicked would ultimately be punished for the evils that they were committing against God's people.

Other than later documents such as the *Psalms of Solomon*, the *Parables of Enoch*, and various Qumran documents, messianic expectation is not highly developed nor is it central to most Early Jewish documents. However, this does not mean that it is not present. One aspect of messianic expectation which runs throughout is that the Messiah was an eschatological figure who would appear at or just prior to the final judgment. Thus, there was a close association with the Messiah and the final judgment. Davidic hope is also a common thread seen from *Sirach*, the *Psalms of Solomon*, and various Qumran documents. The *Psalms of Solomon* 17 is the most highly developed texts concerning Early Jewish Davidic messianic expectation which predates Jesus' ministry. This figure is a physical deliverer who acts as a warrior to deliver Israel and set up God's kingdom on earth. Qumran documents reveal that there is a possible expectation of two Messiahs, one kingly and one priestly. However, later Qumran documents point toward a Davidic or an exalted heavenly messianic figure. There is also a servant of the Lord motif in Isaiah that is also alluded to throughout early Jewish literature which is directly associated with the messianic figure in those texts.

Judgment was a major aspect of what John's Jewish audience would have expected with the coming of the Messiah in one form or another. Jesus' teachings about his role as judge and the righteous and the wicked being judged according to deeds were not foreign concepts in Early Jewish messianic expectation. Jesus also taught on reward and punishment as well as the final resurrection of the dead. These are all eschatological themes and topics that John's Jewish audience would have had well developed views on. However, Jesus will redefine the common Jewish belief on the expectation of a messianic judge and who would receive judgment and who

would receive eternal life. Chapter four will reveal just how unexpected Jesus' teachings about himself as the eschatological messianic judge were to John's Jewish audience. Another unexpected teaching will be who Jesus says will receive judgment and the identity of those that will be rewarded with eternal life.

CHAPTER 3: THE DANIELIC SON OF MAN AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

INTRODUCTION

In the Gospel of John, Jesus presents himself as the Danielic “one like a son of man” with characteristics that would have been associated with that figure. John’s Jewish audience would have had preconceived beliefs about the “Son of Man” which has origins in Daniel and becomes more highly developed in the *Parables of Enoch*. Jesus’ teachings contain familiar themes associated with the “Son of Man” from Daniel and the *Parables* such as judgeship passed from God to him (5:22, 27), the general resurrection with the separation of the righteous and the wicked (5:28-29, judgment according to deeds (3:19-21; 5:29), the revelation of heavenly knowledge (3:12), heavenly origin and pre-existence (1:2; 3:13), and exaltation (13:31). There is also much overlap in the themes presented in the introduction of chapter two concerning judgment and messianic expectation which will also be briefly mentioned in this chapter. Both this chapter and chapter two give a combined view of the eschatological beliefs that were likely present in John’s Jewish audience concerning judgment and messianic expectation. This chapter specifically considers the Jewish development of the Danielic “one like a son of man” which eventually developed into a title synonymous with ‘Messiah’, especially in the *Parables of Enoch*. This development helps inform what an Early Jewish audience would have been thinking when Jesus uses the title “Son of Man” for himself throughout the Gospel of John. One must keep in mind that John strategically placed Jesus’ “Son of Man” sayings throughout his Gospel with a specific purpose in mind. In the Gospel of John, the “Son of Man” sayings are used in proximity to or directly pertaining to judgment or Jesus’ role as messianic judge (see John 5:27). This chapter will seek to elaborate upon what John’s Jewish audience would have thought about the Danielic “Son of Man” and what their preconceived beliefs about him would have been. The

words that Jesus used in John would have likely elicited certain beliefs and imagery both from Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch* throughout his teachings. Chapter four will then consider just how radically different Jesus' teachings would have been when contrasted with known Jewish beliefs. Each of the above teachings of Jesus will be considered in light of what John's Jewish audience would have believed concerning each theme.

DANIEL (7:13-14)

The Son of Man in Daniel

The use of "son of man" in Daniel 7:13 is the first appearance in Jewish literature that this title is used as a term to describe a quasi-divine heavenly figure as opposed to it being used to refer to a human being.²⁰⁸ The phrase in Daniel 7:13 is most often translated as "one like a son of man" while some translators push further and seek to translate the essence of the phrase as "one like a human being."²⁰⁹ Although the latter phrase captures the essence of "one like a son of man" in its immediate context in Daniel, it fails to capture theological implications and future Jewish and Christian interpretations of the "title." Previous uses of the phrase or title in the Hebrew Scriptures are used in connection to a human figure (e.g. Ezekiel) or the collective humankind (e.g. Ps. 80:17; 144:3). Daniel becomes the first instance in Jewish literature that this title is used to refer to a heavenly figure and it is this passage that moves the "son of man"

²⁰⁸ Lester Grabbe considers the philological background of the title "son of man" throughout Hebrew and Aramaic documents, especially those in the same Middle Aramaic language category as Daniel 7. The documents that fall into this category are mainly those that are found at Qumran. Each use of the Aramaic phrase consistently refers to a specific human being or humanity as a collective. In fact, Grabbe concludes without hesitation that every use of "son of man" in the documents considered was not used messianically. See Lester Grabbe, "'Son of Man': It's Origin and Meaning in Second Temple Judaism," in *Enoch and the Synoptics: Reminiscence, Allusions, Intertextuality*, Eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Gabrielle Boccaccini, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 169-80.

²⁰⁹ Marius Reiser puts forth this interpretation; see *Jesus and Judgment: The Eschatological Proclamation in its Jewish Context*, Translated by Linda M. Maloney, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 39.

tradition in the direction of this title being associated with a messianic and/or heavenly figure.²¹⁰ Concerning the Jewish tradition, this will be evidenced in the *Parables of Enoch* (1 *Enoch* 37-71) and *4 Ezra* which present the “son of man” as a heavenly and messianic figure who is closely associated with or directly participates in the final judgment.

Scholars debate the identity of the ‘one like a son of man’ in Daniel 7:13. One argument is that this figure represents the collective Jewish people. Another argument is that this “one” represents a messianic figure.²¹¹ Lester Grabbe makes an argument that Daniel is referring to the archangel Michael or to Gabriel since similar language is used to refer to them in Daniel 10.²¹² John Collins argues for Michael and not a messianic figure because nowhere else in Daniel is there a reference to a messianic figure but other places in Daniel mention the angelic figures of Michael and Gabriel and attribute human features to them. He also argues that the “Son of Man” figure in *1 Enoch* 46:1 is said to have the face of an angel and he argues that the “Son of Man” in the Synoptic Gospels is repeatedly associated with angels (Matt. 13:41; 16:27; 24:31; 25:31; Mark 8:38; 13:27, 41; Luke 9:26).²¹³ A point of contention with these passages is that they put Jesus as the “Son of Man” as the key figure who will come with his angels at the end of days. The immediate context in Daniel points to this figure most likely being an angelic figure.

²¹⁰ Reynolds indicates that the “one like a son of man” is depicted with features that God is often associated with in other Old Testament passages. He also indicates that there is no ascent or descent language associated with this figure which draws one to conclude that this figure was already in heaven. He also says that there is a kingly nature to this figure due to the nature of the language use of kingdom and dominion. This language also leads one to see messianic implications in the text as well. See Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 29-33.

²¹¹ J. Harold Ellens extensively argues for the “one like a son of man” to be a human figure and not a divine figure. He rejects Collins’ argument of the “son of man” being presented as an angelic figure. See J. Harold Ellens, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 146-50.

²¹² Grabbe, “Son of Man,” 181-82.

²¹³ John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, Second Edition, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 101-04.

However, New Testament interpretation of this passage very emphatically links the figure in Daniel 7 to Jesus as the “Son of Man” who will come in the clouds with his angels. The Gospels did not just make a giant leap from the Danielic “one like a son of man” to Jesus’ self-titling as the “Son of Man” but there would have been at least two centuries of development of thought concerning the identity of the “Son of Man” in Early Judaism. This development of Jewish thought is bridged by the *Parables of Enoch* and the book of *4 Ezra* which indicates that the “Son of Man” tradition was still vibrant in late first century AD Jewish circles apart from Christian influence. These two documents will support the notion that John’s Jewish audience would have had a well-developed idea of a heavenly messianic figure who was also identified as the “Son of Man.” Associated with this figure were theological themes of judgment, resurrection, and salvation which John’s Jewish audience would have had preconceived ideas about how these topics worked themselves out and how they related to the coming Messiah.

Judgment in Daniel

The eschatological and apocalyptic nature of the second half of Daniel opens to various judgment scenes and occasions. Daniel 7 opens with a scene where four beasts are present which represent the four major empires of the earth. Just prior to the “one like a son of man” establishing his dominion over the whole earth, judgment was to come on these four beasts. These four beasts are seen to be judged by God and their dominion is stripped away.²¹⁴ There is

²¹⁴ Reiser argues that 7:9-10 opens up to a heavenly courtroom scene which is similar to the scene in *1 Enoch* 14:15-23 where God presides over a college of judges and the angels are seen as associate members. Reiser notes that the scene in Daniel is fragmentary and does not give a full picture of what all is taking place in the courtroom scene. He also says that the judgment scene is over just as quickly as it began and there is a swift verdict with no defense allowed for the beasts. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 39.

Reynolds brings out the contrast represented between the beasts being represented as animals and the “one like a son of man” as a human-like figure that receives dominion. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 28-29.

also an implicit judgment in 12:1-3.²¹⁵ Although 12:1-3 is not a descriptive judgment scene, there is an implied judgment in the resurrection scene when Daniel is shown that some will awake to “everlasting contempt” (v. 3).²¹⁶ This passage comes just prior to the description of historical events outlined in chapter 11 with the inference that the deeds of this evil king will ultimately be punished. Chapter 12 is mainly present to give hope to the nation of Israel to those that fell victim to not only the evils of the king presented in chapter 11 but also the evils of the four beasts of chapter 7. Israel was being given the hope that some would awake to “everlasting life.” Although the judgment scenes of Daniel are not as explicit as other Second Temple documents, the theme of judgment is closely associated with the figure of “one like a son of man.” This association will become even more explicit in the *Parables of Enoch* and *4 Ezra* which associate the heavenly messianic “Son of Man” with coming judgment and the judgment scenes are much more explicit and quite specific in various passages. Therefore, it is very likely that John’s Jewish audience would have had various images and preconceived ideas when Jesus makes multiple allusions to Daniel 7 and 12 in John 5. His audience would have not only been very familiar with Daniel but it is highly likely that they would have also been familiar with the *Parables of Enoch* that would have caused greater imagery links as Jesus gives his own teachings of his self-identification as the “Son of Man” as messianic judge.

Ellens notes that although the “one like a son of man” is given power and dominion over the evil empires, the text of Daniel 7 never indicates that right to judge is given to this figure unlike the figure in the *Parables*. See Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 147.

²¹⁵ Nickelsburg sees this passage as a forensic judgment scene. See Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 11-27. However, Reiser argues that this passage does not contain the typical elements of a forensic judgment scene. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 40-41.

²¹⁶ Chester gives two reasons for the importance and development of the resurrection in Jewish belief: first it is an affirmation of physical resurrection and second it depicts human transformation into an angelic or supra-human mode. Daniel 12 represents the beginnings of the development of this Jewish belief in a resurrection which will be later nuanced in other Early Jewish texts. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 159-68.

THE PARABLES OF ENOCH (*1 ENOCH* 37-71)

Messianic expectation is a common theme in New Testament background studies. One question that needs to be addressed is whether or not the sources one uses for background study are valid. One of the issues in Second Temple Jewish sources is dating and background of specific sources. The dating and background to the *Parables of Enoch* are no exception. In fact, the debate for the dating of the *Parables of Enoch* is even greater because of its high potential to impact New Testament messianic expectation. There are many dating and background issues that have been raised within this debate. The main goal in this section will be to focus on a positive case for a range of date for the *Parables of Enoch* and to only answer objections as needed to support this positive case. This section will seek to argue for a late first century BC to an early first century AD composition of the *Parables of Enoch* and build a case for a Herodian background to the issues contained within.

Dating and Background

Issues in Dating the *Parables of Enoch*

J.T. Milik argues for a third century AD composition of the *Parables of Enoch*. He bases his dating on the fact that the fifth book of the Sibylline Oracles dates to the third century AD since the latest element in it falls in the reign of Caracalla who was killed in AD 217.²¹⁷ Milik makes this connection based upon the similar themes shared between the *Parables* and the books of the Sibylline Oracles written in the third century.²¹⁸ Another indicator he brings out is the

²¹⁷ J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 94.

²¹⁸ Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 92-98.

Christian elements throughout.²¹⁹ He claims that the *Parables*, as well as many other early Jewish documents, contain Christian variants and Christian interpolations. However, these do not necessarily signify a late Jewish or Christian authorship. It has been the task of translators and text critics to discern what was likely to be original and what was added or changed later. Another evidence on his side is that the *Parables* are not a part of the *Enoch* corpus discovered at Qumran. Since Milik published this volume, many Second Temple scholars have challenged his dating of the *Parables*. Suter notes that there is almost a universal consensus to the rejection of Milik's conclusions but this does not mean that there is not still debate to the dating of the *Parables*.²²⁰ Isaac maintains that the current dating of the *Parables* first Century BC (105-64 BC²²¹) and many other scholars propose something in between. One can see by this gap in the dating that there is about a 300-400 year spread to the placement of the dating.

Milik was not without reason to want to give the *Parables* a much later date. There are many issues present that have caused an ongoing debate concerning the dating of the *Parables*. Milik's main argument for a later date and Christian composition was because it was not found in the library of Qumran. Milik boldly states, "In conclusion, it is around the year A.D. 270 or shortly afterwards that I would place the composition of the Book of Parables."²²² Charlesworth notes that for many years, many researchers thought that this was the consensus among Enochic

²¹⁹ Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 97.

²²⁰ David W. Suter, "Enoch in Sheol: Updating the Dating of the Book of Parables" in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, Ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 415-17. Suter indicates that current scholarship puts the dates of the *Parables* between 50 BC and 117 AD. Suter puts the *Parables* tradition parallel to the Son of Man tradition in the gospels (440-42). His basic conclusion is that neither tradition directly influenced the other.

²²¹ E. Isaac, "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol. 2. James H. Charlesworth Ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 7.

²²² Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 96.

scholars but he says that this was in fact the complete opposite of the case. In fact, Charlesworth proclaims that “in 1977 during a congress of specialists on 1 Enoch, no one agreed with Milik that the work is Christian.”²²³ Charlesworth completely rebuts the idea that the *Parables* are a Christian work as he argues, “There is no obvious “Christian” thought in these chapters. Jesus is never mentioned and there is no allusion to him. The Son of Man is certainly not Jesus. The Son of Man is revealed, in the final scene, to be none other than Enoch.”²²⁴ Thus, Charlesworth identifies the *Parables* as thoroughly Jewish and predating any Christian writing.

Another issue in dating the *Parables* is that the earliest copies are only preserved in Ethiopic and early medieval copies.²²⁵ No manuscripts have been found to date in the original Aramaic and there are no early Greek translations like there are for many of the other early Jewish Pseudepigraphal works. Charlesworth offers his evidence for Jewish origins as he says, “It seems obvious that this text derives from an earlier Aramaic text. Hence, one eye should be on the Ethiopic text and another on the putative Aramaic original.”²²⁶ This is another reason why Milik leans toward a later composition date. However, Charlesworth and others have argued persuasively that a lack of external evidence should not bring one to conclude that the dating of the *Parables* should be a late composition. The majority consensus remains that it is a completely Jewish work dating somewhere in the late first century BC to the early first century

²²³ James H. Charlesworth, “Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?” in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, Ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 451.

²²⁴ Charlesworth, “Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?” 455.

²²⁵ Charlesworth, “Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?” 452.

²²⁶ Charlesworth, “Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?” 452.

AD. Internal evidence paired with historical events in this era point one toward a pre-Christian dating.

Suter identifies nine obstacles that hinder a consensus dating of the *Parables* that remain even after the dismissal of Milik's dating hypothesis. They are listed as follows:

1. The absence of the *Parables* at Qumran.
2. Is 1 En 56:5-8 a historical reference or an apocalyptic myth?
3. Does 1 En 56:7 require a date before the destruction of Jerusalem?
4. Are the hot springs in 1 En 67:4-13 a reference to Herod the Great at Callirrhoe?
5. The identity of the kings and mighty.
6. The implications of social context for the question of date.
7. The affinity of the *Parables* to other literature.
8. The influence of the *Parables* on the New Testament.
9. Identifying the dating traditions behind the *Parables*.²²⁷

These dating issues will not be completely resolved in this essay since there is still debate between many of the *Parables* scholars to the nature of resolution for each of these points. However, several of these will be considered in more depth to build a case for composition dating prior to the ministry of Jesus.

Nickelsburg and VanderKam bring to light their own set of issues in dating the *Parables* which mirror many of the concerns voiced by other scholars in the debate as to the dating of the *Parables*.²²⁸ One of the things that they point out that makes the *Parables* the most difficult to date is that there is no survey of Israel's history within which to place its contents as there is with other apocalypses such as Daniel 7-12, *1 Enoch* 85-90, *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*.²²⁹ Alongside this contention they identify the fact that there are only a few identifiable historical allusions and

²²⁷ Suter, "Enoch in Sheol," 417.

²²⁸ George W.E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 37-82* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 58-60.

²²⁹ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 59.

these only comprise a few verses of the entire *Parables*.²³⁰ One allusion is possibly the invasion of the Parthians and Medes in 56:5-7 and the other 67:5-13 which may allude to Herod the Great's visit to the hot springs in Kallirrhoe in an attempt to cure his health issues. These two allusions are some of the main pieces of internal evidence that scholars use to push for an early dating of the text. Charlesworth adds several more textual allusions that he will tie to Herod the Great's reign which adds to the persuasiveness of the argument of a late first century BC to early first century AD composition of the *Parables*.²³¹ Nickelsburg and VanderKam also deal with its absence from Qumran which is why some scholars date it to after AD 68 which was the destruction of the community by the Romans. They also bring out issues on how the *Parables* compare to other Jewish texts as well as the Synoptic Gospels and other early Christian literature. These dating issues will be considered in more depth to see just how much of an issue each one truly is. It is likely that the dating debate of the *Parables* will continue for many more decades unless a definitive archeological find finally settles the matter. However, clear concise answers to various dating issues plus a cumulative case for various historical allusions within the *Parables* will provide one with ample support to show that the *Parables* contributed to the first century AD Jewish Messianic expectation.

The Absence of the *Parables* at Qumran

The absence of the *Parables* at Qumran became one of the defining reasons for Milik to conclude that the *Parables* was a much later Christian composition. However, this absence has not hindered the most influential *Parables* scholars from dating this book during the Herodian

²³⁰ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 59-60.

²³¹ Charlesworth, "Composition Dating," 457-65.

dynasty. Nickelsburg and VanderKam note, “This absence is worth noting since the Scrolls preserve the MSS. of the Book of the Watchers, the Book of the Giants, the Book of the Luminaries, the Epistle of Enoch, and the story of Noah’s death.”²³² There may be several reasons for its absence from Qumran. It is possible that the *Parables* postdates Qumran. It is possible that this document was rejected by the Qumran Community due to not fitting with their nuance of Enochic Judaism. Greenfield and Stone give a more developed argument to why one cannot necessarily give a late date to the *Parables* just because it is absent from Qumran.²³³ There are also other books that are not present at Qumran which maintain pre-Christian dates such as Esther, Judith, The Testament of Moses, and the Psalms of Solomon. Thus, one cannot argue for a later date just because it is absent from the library at Qumran. Nickelsburg and VanderKam state, “The Parables’ absence from Qumran can just as well reflect a bifurcation of the Enoch tradition prior to the “foundation” of “the Qumran Community” and indicate the parables were composed in a Jewish setting apart from Qumran.”²³⁴ It is also possible that since the *Parables*’ place of composition was Galilee²³⁵ and manuscripts did not circulate down to Qumran prior to its destruction. Regardless of the reason, to date no copies or fragments of the *Parables* have been discovered at Qumran. Charlesworth takes a different direction to one of the possible reasons that the *Parables* have not been discovered at Qumran. He notes that, “Over one

²³² Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 60.

²³³ Jonas C. Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, “The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes,” in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 70 (Jan-Apr 1977), 51-66.

²³⁴ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 60.

²³⁵ This is the location of composition that Charlesworth argues for. See Charlesworth, “Composition Date,” 452.

hundred fragments remain unidentified within the Qumran corpus.”²³⁶ Related to this, he identifies the fact that only ten to twenty percent of the entire Qumran corpus that was likely placed in the caves prior to the destruction of the community is available for study.²³⁷ Thus, it is a possibility that the *Parables* were placed in the caves but did not survive in any form to this day as other documents have.

Elements for Dating the *Book of Parables*

One of the internal evidences that most *Parables* scholars mention to date this work is the reference in 56:5-8 concerning the invasion of the Parthians and the Medes. Verse five specifically mentions these two nations by name which is the only specific mention of a nation by a proper name in the whole *Parables*. The debate is whether this passage is a specific reference to the Parthian invasion of 40-39 BC²³⁸ or just an apocalyptic tool to reference another historical event.²³⁹ The issue is that names are given but there are no historical details given in the *Parables* which would further explicate this mention of the Parthians and Medes. Suter notes that many *Parables* scholars fall somewhere in the middle of this debate and say that this passage is a vague allusion to the historical event which happened within a generation or so of the

²³⁶ Charlesworth, “Composition Date,” 456.

²³⁷ Charlesworth, “Composition Date,” 456. Greenfield and Stone also come to similar conclusions based on the fact that there is only a small fraction of documents that has survived. See Greenfield and Stone, “Enochic Pentateuch,” 55-57.

²³⁸ Bampfylde argues that this is a precise reference to the actual historical event that took place in 40-39 BC. See Gillian Bampfylde, “The Similitudes of Enoch: Historical Allusions,” in *JSJ* 15 (1984), 15-16, 22-28.

²³⁹ Suter leans toward this passage as being apocalyptic myth since the description in the passage does not meet with the insignificance of the actual Parthian invasion and because some Jews actually invited the Parthians into the area. See Suter, “Enoch in Sheol,” 421-22; also see D.W. Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (Missoula: Scholars, 1979), 12, 24, 176-77.

author.²⁴⁰ Perhaps this historical allusion alone is not enough to establish a date, but this allusion paired with other possible historical allusions allows one to firmly argue for an early first century AD dating at the latest and likely prior to the ministry of Jesus.

The Identity of the Kings and the Mighty

The reference to the kings and the mighty in the *Parables* is rather vague and does not seem to allude to a specific group of kings. This vagueness is another feature that has allowed for the dating to be placed by many scholars into various places in history. However, Nickelsburg and VanderKam note, “A substantial amount of scholars see this passage as an allusion to the last days of Herod the Great, when the ailing king unsuccessfully sought relief from the terminal illness in the hot springs of Kallirrhoe.”²⁴¹ If this is the case, then this would push the dating to no earlier than 4 BC since his death resulted shortly after these attempts at healing. However, it is also not likely that the author would have written too much after this date because this singular event would not have remained very significant for long since there were so many more Herodian and Roman events of significance that happened in the first half of the first century AD after the death of Herod the Great. The main pattern with apocalyptic writing is that the event purported is fresh in the mind of the writer especially when it deals with such an obscure event such as Herod’s visit to a hot spring.

The Influence of the *Parables* on First-Century Jewish Texts

The two main Jewish texts with likely influence from the *Parables* are *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*. Nickelsburg and VanderKam note that the *Parables* and *4 Ezra* contain the threads of

²⁴⁰ Suter, “Enoch in Sheol,” 422.

²⁴¹ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 61.

elements from Daniel 7, Davidic royal ideology, and Second Isaiah's Servant theology.²⁴² They continue in their parallels to the extent that they conclude that, "These parallels indicate that *4 Ezra* is dependent on the *Parables* or that the *Parables* and *4 Ezra* are dependent on a common eschatological tradition that combined in one transcendent figure elements proper to the Davidic king, the Deutero-Isaianic Servant, and Daniel's 'one like a son of man.'"²⁴³ *Second Baruch* also seems to be dependent on this tradition especially since it shares much in common with *4 Ezra*.

The Setting of the *Parables*

Allusions and other dating factors place the setting of this book within the Herodian era. The tendency of apocalyptic literature was to write in reaction to negative historical events showing that the judgment of God would be upon the one's causing suffering. Concerning the setting of the *Parables*, Nickelsburg and VanderKam note, "This is a time of violence and oppression and of an angry and frustrated consciousness of class distinction, which looks for resolution in the coming judgment."²⁴⁴ They give three complaints against the rich and powerful which were the persecution of the righteous (*1 En.* 47), the excess taxation (53:2), and the seizure of property.²⁴⁵ Horsley notes the heavy amount of taxation that Herod imposed upon the Jews during his reign which would have caused a high amount of Jewish unrest and revolts at times.²⁴⁶ Concerning the seizure of land, Charlesworth argues at length for the allusion of Herod

²⁴² Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 61.

²⁴³ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 61. Nickelsburg and VanderKam provide five parallel passages of dependence on a Son of Man/Servant tradition.

²⁴⁴ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 63.

²⁴⁵ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 63.

²⁴⁶ Richard A. Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes: Resistance and Apocalyptic Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 170-73.

seizing the property of the Jews represented throughout the *Parables*.²⁴⁷ Charlesworth adds one more interesting piece to the Herodian era background. He picks up on the references to those “who possess the earth” (38:4; 62:3-6) and the possession and rulership of the dry ground (48:8; 62:9; 63:1-10). He notes that Palestine at one time was characterized by areas of swamps and marshes and areas of dry ground. The dry ground would have been the place of vineyards and farms. This reflects the taking of the lands from the Jews that happened in the Herodian era due to high taxation. By the end of the Herodian era many of the Jews lost their land and in essence became tenant farmers. This would reflect the judgment pronounced upon the kings and the mighty that possess the dry land. Charlesworth makes this a new piece of his argument that places the dating within the Herodian era.²⁴⁸

The overall picture that the author of the *Parables* seeks to produce is that the kings and the mighty will receive their just judgment at the coming of the Son of Man for the wrongs that they did against Jews (63:12). In addition to these complaints from the Jews, there is also a notion that the *Parables* spoke against the detestable religious practices of the kings and the mighty. The *Parables* indicates that these rulers practiced idolatry and denied the reality of the Lord of Spirits (41:2; 45:1; 46:7; 60:6; 65:6). Nickelsburg and VanderKam note that it is possible that the author has many of the building projects of Herod in mind such as the various cities erected in honor of the Caesars and temples and monuments erected in honor of various gods and goddesses.²⁴⁹ With an early first century AD date in mind and Galilee as a place of composition, the linking of the references in the *Parables* to aspects of the reign of Herod come into greater

²⁴⁷ Charlesworth, “Composition Date,” 458-65.

²⁴⁸ Charlesworth, “Composition Date,” 458-65.

²⁴⁹ Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 64.

focus and help one better understand how great the desire was of the Jews to have a the Messiah come and swiftly rectify the situation and bring judgment upon the wicked and salvation to the righteous. This would be the frame of mind of many of the Jews as they look to Jesus as a possible Messianic figure to deliver them from the oppressive forces.

The Eschatological Themes of the *Parables of Enoch*

God as a figure of divine judgement is commonplace all throughout Second Temple literature in the same way that God was the one who is the Judge throughout the Old Testament. Waddell notes that the earlier Enochic literature, which predates the *Parables of Enoch*, puts the place of divine judge only in the hands of God.²⁵⁰ Waddell identifies three aspects of judging which are, “the divine figure engages in judgment, executes judgment, and sits on the throne of his glory, an act which is almost always connected to the role of judgment in [the *Parable of Enoch*].”²⁵¹ Collins brings out that it is clear throughout this work that the final place of the righteous and the wicked are clearly determined.²⁵²

The *Parables* present a messianic figure that is given the place of judgment. The author bestows a couple of different titles on this figure such as ‘The Righteous One’ (1 En. 38:2), ‘The Chosen One’ (45:2-3; 51:3; 55:4; 61:8; 62:1-3), and ‘The Son of Man’ (62:5; 69:27-29). Each of these references are associated with an aspect of judgment and much of this refers to an

²⁵⁰ James A. Waddell, *The Messiah: A Comparative Study of the Enochic Son of Man and the Pauline Kyrios*, (London, T&T Clark: 2011), 41.

²⁵¹ Waddell, *The Messiah*, 41.

²⁵² John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). 181.

eschatological judgment.²⁵³ Waddell notes nine different instances of a messianic figure on the throne in heaven spelling out judgment (1 En. 45:1-3; 51:3; 55:4; 61:8; 62:2; 62:3; 62:5; 69:27; 69:29).²⁵⁴ Interestingly, this is the same place that a divine figure sits in judgment in two other places in the *Parables* (47:4; 60:2). De Silva notes how the author weaves together imagery from both Daniel and Isaiah to come up with the ideal messianic figure.²⁵⁵

The Messianic figure is seen as the one who sits upon the throne of glory (45:3) which is where he will spell out judgment for the righteous and the wicked (45:5). The Son of Man is seen alongside the Ancient of Days (46:1) and both sit on the same throne of glory.²⁵⁶ He also has a preexistent nature with the Ancient of Days (48:5-6). He is one that will judge the secret things of men (49:1-4; 61:8-9). He is the one that will judge heavenly beings (61:8) and mighty men on the earth such as kings (48:8-9; 62:1-2). Part of this judgment is salvation for the righteous (38:1-6) and there is a transformation on the earth to make it a blessing for the righteous (45:3). Overall, The *Parables* give the clearest representation of the place of judgment given to the Messiah. This is significant because much of the Early Jewish literature examined shows that the

²⁵³ Shirley Lucass emphasizes the fact that these titles do not represent different figures but refer to the same figure and these titles also reference the Anointed of Hebrew Scripture. See Shirley Lucass, *The Concept of the Messiah in the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 146-48.

²⁵⁴ Waddell, *The Messiah*, 90-91.

²⁵⁵ De Silva, *Jewish Teachers of Jesus*, 135. Lucass confirms this notion and says that the conflation of the two messianic figures brings much more detail to the definition of the Messiah and it is highly likely that the Jews by the time of Jesus would have had a detailed view on what the Messiah “Son of Man” would have looked like and what his function was. See Lucass, *The Concept of the Messiah*, 149-53.

Grindheim brings out just how ideal this figure is by showing how he manifests a variety of divine characteristics and qualities that are usually attributed to God. See Grindheim, *God’s Equal*, 162-63. Reynolds goes into further detail of these divine characteristics. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 47.

²⁵⁶ Walck notes that 46:1 is strikingly similar to Daniel 7:13. This passage would have been very familiar to the author and his audience. See Leslie W. Walck, *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 58-61.

place of judgment remains with God. This text indicates a changing view concerning messianic thought that was developing at the end of the first century BC and on into the first century AD.

Judgment

Judgement upon the wicked is announced at the very beginning of the first parable (38:1). The judgment is upon sinners because of their sins and part of their fate is to be driven from the face of the earth. The recipients of judgment are consistent throughout. Those that are the focal point of judgment are the “kings and mighty” (38:5; 46:4-6; 48:8-10; 53:1-56:8; 62:1-12). The identity of the kings and mighty is not given, but the trend in apocalyptic literature was to refer to those that were immediately on the mind of the author. Current circumstances dictated the specific people that were being talked about were likely the Herodians and all those in power associated with this reign.

The judgment portrayed in the *Parables* is a final judgment. From the very beginning of this text there is a notion that the unrighteous will no longer be given a chance to repent “for their life will be at an end (38:6).” In a way, the *Parables* are being given as a warning to the unrighteous giving them an opportunity to repent before it is too late (50:2). Those that do repent will receive mercy and will be numbered among the righteous because they repented (50:3), but those that do not repent will not be given any more chances to repent. Boccaccini says, “According to the Book of Parables, the righteous are saved according to God’s justice and Mercy, and sinners are condemned according to God’s justice and mercy; but those who repent will be saved by God’s mercy, even though they should not be saved according to God’s

justice.”²⁵⁷ He also points out that this is the last opportunity for repentance in the Enochic judgment timeline in the *Parables* and after this no more opportunity will be given. This opportunity is given just prior to the final judgment. Boccaccini also notes that this forgiveness is not given by the Messiah but by God.²⁵⁸

Judgment is based on a weighing of one’s deeds (41:1; 43:2). One of the deeds weighed which seems to carry the most weight is the denial of the name of the Lord of Spirits (41:2; 45:1-2). This seems to be the common trait of the kings and the mighty, but it is not limited to just the kings and mighty. The same fate is on all who deny the name of the Lord of Spirits. Another of the deeds weighed is taking the name His name in vain (60:6). These are all sins that the kings and the mighty have perpetuated since in their strength and pride find no reason to worship God.

The place of fate for the kings and the mighty is described as a deep valley that will consume them (53:1-2). This is a place with burning fire (54:1) which is designed for no one to escape forever. This is also a place that the rebellious angels will receive punishment (54:5-6; 55:3-56:3).²⁵⁹

Possession of the land is a theme that comes up throughout the *Parables*. For the Jews, their theology is closely tied to the land. This reference is to a specific plot of land, namely the land that was promised to Abraham (Gen 12:7; 13:14-15; 15:7; 17:8). This is the land that the

²⁵⁷ Gabrielle Boccaccini, “Forgiveness of Sins: An Enochic Problem, A Synoptic Answer,” in *Enoch and the Synoptics: Reminiscence, Allusions, Intertextuality*, Eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Gabrielle Boccaccini (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 161.

²⁵⁸ Boccaccini, “Forgiveness of Sins,” 161. He makes this distinction in his article to show the difference between this tradition and the synoptic tradition where Jesus, the Son of Man, forgives sins (Mark 2:1-10).

²⁵⁹ Nickelsburg ties this angelic judgment back to 1 Enoch 6-11 where the angels are condemned for passing secret heavenly knowledge to men. This continues to be the reason for angelic judgment in the parables, see George W.E. Nickelsburg, “Salvation without and with a Messiah: Developing Beliefs in Writings Ascribed to Enoch,” in *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, Eds. Jacob Neusner et al. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), 56-57.

Israelites eventually took possession of and divided to all twelve tribes accordingly as recorded in Joshua. Eventually, Israel and Judah were dispossessed from the land, but a portion eventually returned under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah and once again possessed the land. During the Herodian era, famine and high taxes caused many Jews to either sell their land for survival or their land was taken from them due to delinquency.²⁶⁰ Thus, there would have been bitterness and resentment toward those that unlawfully took the land from them. Therefore, there is no surprise that part of the judgment mentioned is a rightful repossession of the land by the righteous. One of the final results of the judgment is that the kings and the mighty will no longer be the ones who will possess the land (38:4; 48:8-9; 62:1-8; 63:1, 12; 67:12). The land itself is tied to the eschatology of the *Parables* and this land will be returned to the righteous who will dwell in it forever and the doers of iniquity will be punished and cast out.

Another reason for judgment upon the kings and the mighty is because of how they persecuted the righteous.²⁶¹ The unrighteous were the ones that shed the blood of the righteous (47:1-2) and a day of reckoning was upon those that persecuted the righteous (47:4). This kind of persecution and crying out for vindication is especially seen in 1-2 Maccabees where the indication is that those persecuted for the sake of righteousness will receive their reward at the final resurrection and their persecutors will receive just punishment. In a way, the *Parables* spell out in detail what will happen to the righteous and the sinners in this last day. The persecuted righteous are vindicated and the sinners are utterly destroyed from the face of the earth.

²⁶⁰ Charlesworth argues that this talk concerning the kings and the mighty and the possession of the land is one of his indicators that the Herodian Era and events lay in the Background of the *Parables*. See James H. Charlesworth, "Can We Discern the Composition Date of the Parables of Enoch?" in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, Ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 458-65.

²⁶¹ Nickelsburg compares the persecuted righteous ones in the *Parables* to the suffering servant of Isaiah 52-53, see George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, Expanded Edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2006), 93-98, 110-11.

The final judgment will be an edict given by the Messiah against the kings and the mighty and all sinners (62:5-6) and he will hand them over to the angels for their just punishment (62:11).²⁶² One of the reasons that these angels are being judged is because they were the ones that descended upon the earth and caused human beings to sin and be led astray (64:2).

Messianism

The eschatological Messiah revealed in the *Parables* is a heavenly Messiah.²⁶³ However, Waddell notes that the Messiah in the *Parables* is a human figure also.²⁶⁴ There is no indication that his judgment will take place on the earth nor is there any indication that his presence will be known on the earth prior to the resurrection. In fact, the revealing of the identity of the Messiah does not come until the very end of the *Parables*. These parables are given as a warning to the inhabitants of the earth that there will soon be a final day when the Messiah is revealed and then he will judge between the righteous and the sinners. Nickelsburg ties the “Son of Man” to Psalm

²⁶² Reiser notes that chs. 61-63 represent the most extensive description of judgment. This judgment contains forensic features but the verdict of the wicked has already been determined. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 66-69.

²⁶³ Grabbe notes that the representation of Messiah as a heavenly figure is a key difference of the *Parables* compared to much of the rest of Second Temple sources that see the Messiah as an earthly figure, see Lester Grabbe, “‘Son of Man:’ It’s Origin and Meaning in Second Temple Judaism,” in *Enoch and the Synoptics: Reminiscence, Allusions, Intertextuality*, Eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Gabrielle Boccaccini (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 184-85. Grabbe also gives a more complete survey of Jewish views of the Messiah in the Second Temple Era and most represent an earthly Messiah, see *Judaic Religion in the Second Temple Period: Belief and Practice from the Exile to Yavneh* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 271-91. Lucass reasons that the shift to viewing the Messiah as an exalted heavenly figure may have come due to the Hasmonean usurpation of the high priesthood and the change in calendar. These two things saw a corruption in the earthly anointed one and the Temple which also corrupted the Day of Atonement as no longer effective which caused the hope to be placed in a heavenly redeemer. See Lucass, *The Concept of the Messiah*, 154-55.

²⁶⁴ James A. Waddell, *The Messiah: A Comparative Study of the Enochic Son of Man and the Pauline Kyrios* (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 49-51.

2 which would thus link the “Son of Man” in the *Parables* to a Davidic Messiah.²⁶⁵ He makes this link based on wording between the two sources and links found in Isaiah.²⁶⁶

The Messiah is a character that makes appearances all throughout the *Parables*. There are a few titles that the Messiah is referred to by such as the “Righteous One,” “Chosen One,” “Son of Man,”²⁶⁷ and “Messiah.” Each title refers to the same individual and by the end of the *Parables*, Enoch is the one identified as the Son of Man (71:14). Thus, the narrator of the *Parables* is the Messiah.

The Messiah is one that God is waiting until the final judgment to finally reveal (62:7; 69:26).²⁶⁸ There is also a possible indication that the Messiah is pre-existent and remains hidden by God until the time of Judgment (48:2-3, 6; 62:7).²⁶⁹ The Messiah makes his first appearance in the midst of the righteous as one that is about to bring judgment on the sinners and this judgment will come once the Messiah begins to reveal the secret things that are to come (38:2-3).

²⁶⁵ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 285.

²⁶⁶ Grabbe notes that the author of the *Parables* in chs. 46-48 alludes to the servant of the Lord texts in Isaiah 42:1-4 and 49:1-6. He also alludes to the Davidic oracles of Psalm 2 and Isaiah 11. Grabbe says that these references leave no doubt that the author of the *Parables* directly links the Son of Man to the OT promised Messiah. See Grabbe, “Son of Man,” 183-84.

²⁶⁷ Grabbe gives a helpful essay on the meaning and origin of the “Son of Man.” He contributes etymological explanations as well as how it is used in early Jewish texts and how the definition grew as it was used by the New Testament and other early Christian texts. See “Son of Man,” 169-97.

²⁶⁸ Collins gives discussion to this topic and the whole idea of a heavenly Messiah in more detail in, John J. Collins, “The Heavenly Representative: The ‘Son of Man’ in the Similitudes of Enoch,” in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism*, Eds. John J. Collins and George W.E. Nickelsburg (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 111-33.

²⁶⁹ Grabbe takes the position that the *Parables* represent the Messiah as pre-existent, see “Son of Man,” 184. However, VanderKam argues against the notion of the Messiah represented as pre-existent, see James C. VanderKam, “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 31-37,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 179-82.

Lucass argues for a pre-existent son of man and indicates that the “Son of Man” is just now being revealed by God and stands as a mediator between man and God. See Lucass, *The Concept of the Messiah*, 148-49.

The Messiah is the key figure in the judgment of the sinners, kings, and mighty. He is also the key figure that announces reward and eternal life for the righteous. God is the one that bestows this responsibility upon the Messiah as all judgment is handed down to him.²⁷⁰

One of the most astonishing developments in the *Parables* is that the Messiah will sit on the throne of glory (45:3; 51:3; 55:4; 61:8; 62:2-3, 5; 69:27-29 cf. Dan. 7:9-14).²⁷¹ This is the same throne on which the Lord of Spirits sits (47:3; 60:2). This is juxtaposed to the thrones that the kings and the mighty will be dispossessed of (46:4-5; 55:5). The author develops in much greater detail the place that the Son of Man takes in Daniel 7.²⁷² The *Parables* represent just how far the Danielic tradition grew over the course of one to five centuries (depending on the date one assigns to both works). By the first century AD, one can see that the messianic tradition of a divine judgment figure was well established.

The Messiah is described as one that has righteousness in him (46:3).²⁷³ It is because of this exceeding righteousness that he is given the heavenly place of honor and the ability to judge

²⁷⁰ Grindheim notes that although the role of judge is handed to him, he is not independent in his judgment but acts on behalf of God. See Sigurd Grindheim, *God's Equal: What can we Know about Jesus' Self-Understanding in the Synoptic Gospels?* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 99.

²⁷¹ Black notes that the Messiah taking the divine judgment throne is a particularly significant shift in Early Judaism which has particular importance for the gospels where Jesus equates himself with this Messianic figure who will one day be the one who judges the righteous and the unrighteous, see M. Black, "The Messianism of the Parables of Enoch: Their Date and Contribution to Christological Origins," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism* Ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 150-55.

²⁷² Grabbe contends that the development of "the Son of Man" in the *Parables* is a much more in depth development from the Daniel 7 account, but the *Parables* are still dependent on Daniel 7 for the origins of the tradition. See "Son of Man," 183-84. Nickelsburg closely associates the Son of Man in the *Parables* with Daniel 7. He places both texts next to each other just to demonstrate how closely they are tied together, see *Salvation and Messiah*, 58-59.

²⁷³ Walck interestingly notes that the righteousness "dwells" in the Son of Man but in the OT righteousness did not "dwell" in an individual. Righteousness is seen to "dwell" in the city or a field or used metaphorically but not in an individual. See Walck, *Son of Man*, 76.

the unrighteous. It is this Messiah who will physically remove the kings and the mighty from their thrones (46:4-5).²⁷⁴ He will crush and destroy them in his strength until they are no more.

The Messiah is the one who is handed the place of Judgment after he is seated on the throne of Glory (61:8; 69:27). This is an interesting position for anyone other than God since He is the one all throughout the Old Testament who spells out judgment upon the unrighteous. He shares neither his judgment position nor his throne with anyone. This Messianic tradition in the *Parables* will open up the followers of Jesus to be more accepting of Jesus taking this position (John 5:22). Part of the judgment responsibilities of the Messiah will be to slay the sinners and cause the unrighteous to perish from his presence (62:2-3).²⁷⁵ Once the kings and the mighty recognize the Messiah for who he is they will bow their faces in terror (62:5) and will “bless and glorify and exalt him who rules over all (62:6).”

Resurrection

The *Parables* attest to a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous (51:1). It is at the resurrection that the Messiah will take the throne and divide out the righteous to inherit the new earth (51:2-5).²⁷⁶ In the resurrection it is the angels that gather the righteous (61:1-5). The resurrection is significant because it marks the beginning of the final judgment, and it is at the

²⁷⁴ Oegema interprets this passage as a Messiah as not only an end-times judge but as a warrior-Messiah with military characteristics. See Oegema, *The Anointed and his People*, 144-45.

Chiala notes that 46:1-4 alludes directly to Daniel 7 in both features and structure. This indicates that later Early Jewish interpretation of Daniel viewed the figure in Daniel 7 as messianic. See Abino Chiala, “The Son of Man: The Evolution of an Expression,” In *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables*, edited by Gabriele Boccaccini, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 159-62.

²⁷⁵ Walck notes that the author in 62:1-3 continues his use of Daniel 7 allusions but also alludes to Isaiah 11:2-4 in reference to the identity of the Son of Man. See Walck, *Son of Man*, 101-02.

²⁷⁶ Chester notes that 51:1-5 is a clear allusion to Daniel 12:3 but this passage gives much more detail of the resurrection and final judgment event as opposed to the vagueness of Daniel 12. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 63.

resurrection that the Messiah is revealed, and judgment commences which marks the end of the possibility of the unrighteous to repent.

Soteriology

Salvation in the *Parables* is eschatological. The reason that salvation is needed is because of the oppression of the kings and the mighty. Salvation for the righteous came at the hands of the Messiah who had a dual judgment role of punishing the sinners and rewarding the righteous. One thing that Nickelsburg brings out is that “The text never states why they have been chosen or what deeds or characteristics make them righteous or holy.”²⁷⁷ However, in the typical Jewish mindset, the righteous would be those Jews that maintained the law and did not compromise for the sake of gaining favor and power as some Jews had done. Those Jews that compromised were listed among those that would ultimately receive judgment in the last days, but those that held fast to the Law and did not compromise with the gentiles were ones that would receive reward which included eternal life and a restoration of the land that was unlawfully taken from them. Regardless of what qualifies them for salvation, “the Son of Man is the vindicator and savior of the righteous.”²⁷⁸

The narrator speaks to the fact that he has been given eternal life (37:4). Eternal life is also in view for the righteous (58:3). This declaration comes prior to the telling of the three parables. The inference may be that eternal life may be granted to those that heed the message of the parables and follow the path of righteousness. The Messiah is the one who is given the ability

²⁷⁷ Nickelsburg, “Salvation and Messiah,” 57.

²⁷⁸ Nickelsburg, “Salvation and Messiah,” 58.

to see into the secret ways of the righteous and way their deeds to determine if they are worthy to receive eternal life (61:8-9).

Part of the vision reveals the final resting place for the righteous (38:4). The author describes it as a dwelling place that they will live eternally in the presence of the Messiah and the Messiah will rule over the righteous in a spirit of righteousness (39:4-8). Part of this salvation is that the righteous will be the “mighty” which shows a role reversal (39:7). The current place of the mighty’s reward is on the earth, but this will be stripped from them and returned to the righteous which they will inherit forever. However, this reality is not yet realized because the narrator gives a sense of longing for this to come to pass (39:8).

Part of this salvation has a new heaven and a new earth in view (45:4-5). The righteous will inherit the new earth and the Messiah will dwell on the earth with them (v. 5). This will also only be a dwelling place for the righteous because sinners will never step foot on this new earth but will be destroyed from the earth (vss. 5-6). Not only will the Messiah dwell with the righteous but the presence of God will also be in their midst (vss. 5-6). This harkens back to the Garden of Eden where the presence of God was with men (Gen. 2). This also looks forward to the new heavens and new earth presented in Isaiah 65. The contents of this place include an inexhaustible “spring of righteousness” and many “springs of wisdom” from which the righteous will drink (48:1). It will be a place of worship of the Lord of Spirits (48:5).

THE SON OF MAN IN 4 EZRA

Although *4 Ezra* is typically dated to the late first century to early second century AD, it provides coherence and additional evidence to the argument that the Jews had specific beliefs concerning the “Son of Man” as a messianic judge figure. This document paired with Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch* indicate that this was an established Jewish tradition in the late first

century BC and throughout the first century AD. Thus, it is highly likely that John's Jewish audience would have been very familiar with the idea that the Messiah could potentially be the heavenly "Son of Man" figure from Daniel instead of or possibly in addition to the conquering Davidic king that was seen in the *Psalms of Solomon*. It is then needed to examine what *4 Ezra* says about the "Son of Man" as Messiah and his role in judgment.

The phrase "Son of Man" is not present in *4 Ezra* but there are clear allusions throughout the text that connect directly to the apocalyptic visions in Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch*. It is likely that the reason "Son of Man" is not used in this text is because the author does not want the description of his figure to be confused or conflated with how the Gospels use the title to refer to Jesus since the Gospels would have likely been circulated throughout the area by his writing and his audience would likely have been familiar with this title used in direct reference to Jesus. Thus, the author likely wanted his audience to see that he was directly referring to Daniel and the *Parables*. There is no doubt that the author was well acquainted with these two texts as will be indicated below. The vision of chapters 11-13 follow along with the events outlined in Daniel 7. In *4 Ezra* 11:1 and following, there is an eagle representing the Roman empire rising from the sea and in Daniel 7:3-4, there is a great beast with wings like eagles rising from the sea which also represents an evil empire. In *4 Ezra* 12:3, the whole body of the eagle is destroyed by fire which corresponds to the beast being destroyed and given over to burning fire in Daniel 7:11. In *4 Ezra* 13:1-2, there is a man rising from the sea which corresponds to the "one like a son of man" coming in the clouds. Another interesting development in *4 Ezra* is in 7:28-29 where the Messiah is referred to in terms of sonship to God. Also associated with this messianic figure is judgment, salvation, and resurrection. Ultimately, the messianic figure presented in *4 Ezra* acts on behalf of God and it is God himself as the one bringing about this judgment.

Judgment and Messianic expectation in *4 Ezra*

Associated with the messianic figure in *4 Ezra* is his role in judgment and how it relates to God's overall role in judgment.²⁷⁹ There are two main passages that deal directly with the messiah and his immediate role in eschatological events, 7:26-44 and 12:31-34. Intertwined in the judgment scenes are two different visions concerning the same messianic figure.²⁸⁰ Chronologically, 12:31-34 should be placed right after 7:28 because these verses add a few more details to what the reign of the Messiah will entail. They indicate that the Messiah, who is from the lineage of David, will be revealed at the end times and will sit on a judgment seat to judge the wicked nations, especially the evil Roman Empire, and reestablish the Jewish people to reign with him. This messianic kingdom will be established for four hundred years (7:28).²⁸¹ At the end of his reign, the Messiah will die as will the population of the earth and the earth will rest for seven days after which will be a resurrection of the dead which will give way to the final Day of Judgment presided over by God himself (7:29-33).²⁸² These passages reveal just how imminent the Jews believed the messianic kingdom would come and be established. They believed that the Messiah would swiftly come in and purge the earth of evil nations, especially the Roman

²⁷⁹ VanLandingham indicates that the judgment passages the Deuteronomic formula for blessings and curses when speaking to whether one will be judged as righteous or wicked since the same theme of Judgment according to one's deeds follows in this text as it does throughout Second Temple texts. He also argues that this text gives a good representation of late first century AD Judaism concerning eschatological judgment. See VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification*, 151-52.

²⁸⁰ Ellens notes that this figure is given similar features as God in the OT such as extinguishing enemies with a fiery breath, associated with clouds, and melt humanity with a distinctive voice. See Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 166.

²⁸¹ Reynolds notes that the description of the Messiah in *4 Ezra* alludes directly to Isaiah 11. This figure is also one that executes God's end times judgment and is described with features typically given in descriptions of God in the OT. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 52-54.

²⁸² Reiser notes that the judgment here is done without any favor or mercy but solely based upon one's deeds which is keeping the Law. See Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 115-16.

Empire. These passages also indicate that there was a Jewish belief that the Messiah would partake in some form of eschatological judgment.²⁸³ This belief follows a similar course for the messianic expectation not only from Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch*, but also the messianic expectation that is seen in the *Psalms of Solomon* and various Qumran documents. *Fourth Ezra* indicates that the Jewish idea of the messianic figure purported in the *Parables of Enoch* was not just a rogue sectarian idea about the Messiah to come, it was likely a belief that was known by John as well as his Jewish audience. These documents would have likely influenced their beliefs about what the Messiah would look like. This messianic expectation is evidenced by the fact that this same tradition was being used in apocalyptic Jewish literature a century or so after the *Parable* were written.

TESTAMENT OF ABRAHAM

The *Testament of Abraham* is a document that speaks directly to the eschatological idea that God appointed another as judge over mankind. There is much debate as to the dating and provenance of this document since there are not any internal historical indicators that would lead one to more definitively date it. There is also debate as to whether this is a Jewish document (with possible Christian interpolations) or a Christian document written with Jewish elements to mirror apocalyptic and testamental literature of the era. The majority of commentators lean towards the original document being a Jewish work because “it seems very unlikely that a Christian work dealing with the subject of death would make no reference to the role of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection in securing eternal life, or would place Abel (13.2) rather than Christ

²⁸³ Chester notes that this figure, although plays a key eschatological role, it is rather limited. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 347.

in the role of heavenly judge.”²⁸⁴ Due to historical ambiguity, commentators place the composition of the original document anywhere between 200 BC to AD 100. This document is being considered in this study because if it is a Jewish document within this time frame, it gives direct support to the fact that John’s Jewish audience would have had a preconceived belief about the idea that God would give the responsibility of judging mankind to another. Thus, when Jesus says “For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22),” it would have been a statement that would have disagreed with his audience’s eschatological beliefs concerning the judgment role of the Messiah.

Chapter 13 in the *Testament of Abraham* opens up to an eschatological judgment scene which depicts three different judgments. The first judgment is done by Abel as the judge over all creation (13:2), then a judgment of the gentiles by the twelve tribes of Israel (13:6), and the final judgment done by God (13:7). The passage that is pertinent to this study is:

Do you see, most holy Abraham, the terrible man sitting upon the throne? This is the son of the first created Adam, who is called Abel, whom the wicked Cain killed, and he sits thus to judge all creation, and examines righteous men and sinners. For God has said, I shall not judge you, but every man born of man shall be judged. Therefore he has given to him judgment, to judge the world until his great and glorious coming (13:2-4).

This passage indicates, at the least that by the end of the first century AD, that there was a Jewish belief that God would or has already placed the judgment of mankind into the hands of another other than himself. Thus, it is likely that there would have been those in John’s Jewish audience that would have understood Jesus’ statement in John 5:22 and would have not given second thought to this statement’s claim.

²⁸⁴ Docherty, *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, 116.

Chester argues that the figure of Abel should be understood as the ‘one like a son of man’ from Daniel 7. See Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, 71-73.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In addition to the eschatological expectation of judgment and the Messiah considered in chapter two, Early Jewish beliefs also developed concerning the “one like a son of man” from Daniel 7. Although the identity of this figure in Daniel is debated, the *Parables of Enoch* and later *4 Ezra* reveal that Early Jewish belief by the beginning of the first century AD interprets the Danielic “one like a son of man” as the Messiah. The “Son of Man” in the *Parables* is an exalted figure who receives eschatological role of judge which is passed to him by God. This figure engages in judgment, executes judgment, is even given the throne of God to do so. Just like in other Early Jewish texts judgment is based on works in the present life and the final judgment has been predetermined. The verdict of the judgment is either punishment or eternal life which is ultimately determined at the resurrection. Again, this text was written to give hope to the righteous to persevere in the midst of the tyranny of the kings and the mighty who oppressed the people and received their reward in this lifetime. The righteous would receive their reward upon death and ultimately in the resurrection when they were granted eternal life and they would watch as the wicked received their just punishment for their evil works in the present life.

Fourth Ezra and the *Testament of Abraham* are included to show continuity of belief in the first century AD that a messianic figure would receive the role of eschatological judge and that the beliefs about the “Son of Man” in the *Parables* is not an isolated belief. Although these two documents are brief, they contain similar eschatological themes of judgment and the end-times.

The Early Jewish beliefs explicated in chapter two combined with the beliefs surrounding the “Son of Man” tradition in this chapter give a fairly full picture of what John’s Jewish audience would have believed and what imagery would have come to mind as he presents Jesus

using certain terms and phrases pertaining to judgment, his role as judge, the use of his self-designation as the “Son of Man” and its relation to his claim as the one who has received the right to judge, the resurrection, and other surrounding eschatological themes. Jesus’ teachings will challenge and reinterpret every eschatological belief of John’s Jewish audience. Jesus’ teachings concerning judgment and his role in it will reveal just how radical his teachings would have been to an Early Jewish audience.

CHAPTER 4: JESUS AS MESSIANIC JUDGE IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of John seeks to present Jesus in a different light than the rest of the gospels. John not only wants to show his audience that Jesus is the promised Messiah to come but also that he is the divine Son of God. John's high Christology places much more emphasis on the divinity of Jesus than the other Gospels which comes out throughout the Gospel in Jesus' discourses and his actions. One aspect of Jesus' messianism and claim of divinity which is often overlooked is Jesus' claim as messianic judge in light of Early Jewish belief. As it has been seen in chapters two and three, there is an established precedent that shows that a claim to be the messianic eschatological judge was not a far-fetched notion for John's Jewish audience, but there is in Early Jewish texts already an established messianic tradition that would allow for God to pass his authority to judge to another. It should not be misunderstood that since there is this tradition that it undermines Jesus' divinity. The Gospel of John makes it quite clear that Jesus claims equality with the Father and does what he sees his Father doing which is why the Jewish leaders sought to kill him and not because of his messianic claims.

One of the main things that John presents Jesus doing is redefining most if not all of the expected aspects of the Messiah as they relate to judgment. Early Jewish literature indicates an eschatological judgment, but Jesus presents the time of judgment in both the present and also in the last day. Later Early Jewish texts place the person who judges as the Messiah or one who receives the right to judge from God. Jesus identifies himself as this expected messianic judge, but this role is redefined by Jesus since he is not the conquering Messiah expected by the Jews who was seen as a conquering Davidic warrior king or a heavenly "one like a son of man" who was going to defeat and judge the enemies of God and set up an eternal kingdom.

The teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John are in the context of his Jewish audience who would have had their own preconceived beliefs and expectations concerning the coming Messiah and his possible role in the eschatological judgment. This chapter will seek to identify the various audiences of Jesus throughout the Gospel of John and their eschatological and messianic beliefs that were present and represented in John. It is probable that John had similar Jewish audiences in mind when he penned his Gospel. One also needs to clearly understand how Jesus represents himself as the “Son of Man” in John in light of what his Jewish audience would have already believed because this will much more clearly show just how radical Jesus’ teachings were compared to the beliefs of his audience. Directly related to the “Son of Man” is Jesus’ redefined role as the imminent and eschatological messianic judge. By the first century AD, there would have been an established Jewish tradition that the expected Messiah would partake in the eschatological judgment in one form or another. John presents Jesus as expressing his own teachings on this belief which contrasts with the preconceived beliefs of his Jewish audience who were looking for immediate eschatological judgment upon the arrival of the Messiah. This chapter will seek show how the teachings of Jesus concerning his self-identification as the “Son of Man” and messianic judge were radically different from the beliefs and views of his Jewish audience.

THE AUDIENCES REPRESENTED IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Understanding John’s Jewish audience and the beliefs that the various sects and social groups had will help one better and more clearly understand the intensity and radical nature of the teachings of Jesus. The Jewish audiences represented in the Gospel of John were likely similar in nature to whom John was writing. The modern interpreter will greatly benefit from knowing and understanding how these nuanced Jewish audiences would have understood John’s

presentation of Jesus' teachings. Most commentators consulted for this study interpret the teachings of Jesus in light of Christian belief and Old Testament interpretation. Only a handful of commentators (though the number is increasing in recent scholarship) consider Jesus' teachings in light of Early Judaism and Early Jewish beliefs. This study will seek to go even further and carefully consider what John's immediate Jewish audience would have been thinking upon hearing or reading John's presentation of Jesus' use of certain key words and phrases concerning his role as Messiah and judge. This study will also consider just how radically different Jesus' teachings would have been to John's audience's beliefs on these topics. This section will seek to provide brief background to the various Jewish sects and social groups with special note on those groups that held to certain distinct eschatological or messianic beliefs.

The "Jews"

The Gospel of John uses the designation "the Jews" typically to refer to Jewish leadership while other places John identifies the leadership as Pharisees and chief priests (7:32, 45; 11:47, 57). Jesus' use of the term is used in a somewhat negative fashion often to warn his audience against the hypocritical teachings of the Jewish leadership and to show a distinction between true and false believers. John identifies the "Jews" as those that were opposed to Jesus and his teachings (5:16-18; 6:41; 7:1 8:48-58; 10:31).

Pharisees

The Pharisees were one of the more predominant religious sects of Early Judaism and the predominant sect identified in the Gospel of John as a part of Jesus' audience.²⁸⁵ They likely have their origins during the time of Ezra with the main concern to separate themselves from all

²⁸⁵ For further discussion on the Pharisees' history and beliefs see VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, 187-89; Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds*, 202-206; Josephus, *Antiquities* and *Jewish War*.

types of impurities as regulated in the Torah. Concerning what Josephus wrote about the Pharisees, J. Julius Scott says, “The Pharisees maintained a simple lifestyle; they were affectionate and harmonious in their dealings with others, especially respectful to their elders, and quite influential throughout the land of Israel—although at the time of Herod they numbered only about six thousand.”²⁸⁶ The Gospel of Mark reveals not only their strict adherence to the Law, but also their strict adherence to the “hedge” that was placed around the Law so that they would not accidentally or unknowingly break the Law. Mark 7:3-4 says, “For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, *thus* observing the traditions of the elders; and *when they come* from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.” This is just one example of their strict legalistic practices. The Gospels reveal special concern for keeping the Sabbath and the regulations surrounding its keeping. One of the harshest critiques of Jesus by the Pharisees is their accusation that Jesus does work on the Sabbath which is mainly found in his Sabbath healings (cf. Matt. 12:10-12; Mark 3:1-4; Luke 6:6-9; 13:10-16; 14:1-5; John 5:9-16; 9:14-16). Doctrine was also quite important to the Pharisees. Apart from strict views concerning the Torah, they had developed beliefs concerning immortality, the resurrection, messianic expectation, eschatological views, divine sovereignty, and beliefs about angels, demons, and spirits.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Outside of a few references in the New Testament, Scott gets the majority of his information concerning the Pharisees from Josephus’ *Antiquities* and *Jewish War*. Here Scott references *Antiquities* 13.10.5; 17.2.4; 18.1.3; and *Jewish War* 2.8.14. See J. Julius Scott Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 203.

²⁸⁷ There are a few Early Jewish texts that are possible Pharisaic composition which would inform their eschatological and messianic beliefs: *Testament of Moses* and *Psalms of Solomon*. See also Acts 23:8. Also, due to their learned nature, the Pharisees likely studied and were quite familiar with the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal documents composed by the time of Jesus’ Ministry.

However, apart from a few documents linked to pharisaical composition, their religious and doctrinal beliefs are not well articulated and developed. The amount that is present in these sources paired with their interactions with Jesus indicates that they would have understood the implications of Jesus' teachings in these areas. Jesus would have used words, phrases, and beliefs that the Pharisees would have been familiar with. Jesus will use their understanding and challenge these beliefs which is evident from his teachings and their response to these teachings.

Sadducees and Chief Priests

Although the Sadducees are not mentioned in the Gospel of John by name, the Synoptic Gospels identify them as part of the audience paired with those that were present with the Pharisees (cf. Matt. 16:1; 22:23, 34; Mark 12:13, 18). It is possible that John's reference of the chief priests is referring to the Sadducees since the Sadducees identified themselves as coming from priestly lineage.²⁸⁸ Religiously, the Synoptic Gospels and Acts give a representation of their beliefs, especially in connection to saying that there is no resurrection (Matt. 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 23:8 this passage also shows their denial of angels and spirits). The Sadducees were literalists who only accepted the teachings of Moses in the Torah and thus rejected other teachings including the Prophets.²⁸⁹ Although they would have rejected the traditions developed from non-Sadducean literature that came out of the Early Jewish writings, it is likely that they would have been familiar with the beliefs that came out of them.

Also see Stephen M. Wylen, *The Jews in the Time of Jesus: An Introduction*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 142; James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 188; Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds*, 205-06.

²⁸⁸ Wylen notes that they were priestly and aristocratic. See Wylen, *Jews in the Time of Jesus*, 138-39. See also VanderKam, *Early Judaism*, 189; Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds*, 206-07.

²⁸⁹ See Wylen, *Jews in the Time of Jesus*, 138-39; VanderKam, *Early Judaism*, 190-91; Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds*, 208.

The Samaritans

John 4 represents Jesus' encounter with the Samaritans. This chapter also contains some of their religious views regarding worship (4:20) and messianic expectation (4:25). The Samaritans originated from the Jews left in the land after the Assyrian conquest and the foreigners imported into the land by the Assyrians. Inevitably, they intermarried and there also resulted a syncretistic religion of Yahwehism and the religion of the foreigners. From the return from exile to the time of Jesus' ministry, there had been several centuries of dissent and conflict between the Jews and the Samaritans in political, social, cultural, and religious aspects.²⁹⁰ Religiously, the Samaritans held to only the Torah which was modified from the traditional Masoretic text of the Jews. They also held Moses in very high esteem and reverence even beyond what was seen by the Pharisees and Sadducees.²⁹¹ Thus, the messianic expectation of the Samaritans would have surrounded around the prophecy from Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15 and 18 that a prophet like him would be raised up from their own countrymen.²⁹² This follows with the woman's statement in 4:25 when she says, "when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." Other than this encounter in John 4, there is no other indication in the Gospel of John that Samaritans were again part of Jesus' audience, but this passage does indicate that the Samaritans had a certain messianic expectation. Interestingly, this is also one of the two places that Jesus

²⁹⁰ James D. Purvis brings out many of the points of contention between the Samaritans and the Jews in "The Samaritans and Judaism" in *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 81-98.

²⁹¹ Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds*, 196-200.

²⁹² Novenson brings out the distinction between Judean beliefs concerning the "Prophet" and Samaritan beliefs, especially as they relate to the "Prophet" as messianic. See Matthew V. Novenson, "Jesus the Messiah: Conservatism and Radicalism in Johannine Christology" in *Portraits of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, Edited by Craig Koester (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 112-14.

directly identifies himself as the Messiah as opposed to the indirect manner with the Pharisees, chief priests, and the crowd.

The Crowd and the Disciples

The crowd and the disciples represent the Jewish people who were not necessarily identified with a certain Jewish sect or cultural group. These Jews would have included farmers, fishermen, carpenters, merchants, etc. from which came Jesus' disciples and the majority of his followers. These were the commoners of Jewish Society and likely did not have extensive educations like the Pharisees and the chief priests. However, the Gospel of John indicates that the crowd even had certain eschatological and messianic views which were likely taught in the Synagogues on the Sabbath. There is no religious consensus by which the common Israelite in Jesus' audience can be measured. In fact, in terms of messianic expectation of the "crowd," there are about four to five messianic views expressed with some of them clearly having closer ties to the messianic expectation of Early Jewish literature than to Old Testament expectation. Interestingly, other than Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus, all of the statements of messianic expectation in the Gospel of John come from the common Jew and not the religious elite.

MESSIANIC EXPECTATION REPRESENTED IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Messianic expectation was at an all-time high at the time of Jesus' ministry. This was also the case by the time of the writing of the Gospel of John. John's Jewish audience would have been searching diligently for the Messiah. It is likely his audience would have been familiar with the claims of Christianity by this period. The Jews in John's audience would have had similar messianic expectations as the audiences represented in the Gospel. This expectation is evidenced by the Early Jewish literature that was produced in the late first century BC through

the mid second century AD. The Gospel of John not only concerns itself with messianic expectation as it relates to Jesus, but also records specific Jewish messianic beliefs that John represents in Jesus' audiences throughout the Gospel. This section will specifically consider those passages in John which exhibit someone in Jesus' audience espousing an Early Jewish belief about the coming Messiah that was present in the Old Testament and Early Jewish literature. This section will not only give light to the messianic expectation of his audience but argue that his audience had a wide range of messianic expectations and would have expected the Messiah to say certain things and make certain claims. Jesus' distinction about his own messianic role is nuanced in his teachings and it is the radical nuances that Jesus' audience react to and not the expected claim.

Messiah as Prophet

One of the messianic expectations represented in the Gospel of John is that the Messiah was the "Prophet" whom Moses prophesied would come after him (Deut. 18:15, 18).²⁹³ As it was seen above in the section on the Samaritans, the expectation of the Messiah to be the "Prophet"

²⁹³ Cf. 1QS 8:15-9:11. This passage specifically mentions the "Prophet" as one with the "Anointed of Aaron and Israel," thus a possible third messianic figure in view at Qumran.

Richard Bauckham gives an extensive survey on those identified themselves as a prophet in the first century AD. He gives four common characteristics: they claimed to be prophets, they took their followers into the desert, they promised their followers "signs," and they spoke of liberation and deliverance. This is why John the Baptist's and Jesus' audience ask him certain questions because they were seeing if Jesus matched up to their standard of messianic expectation of the "Prophet." See Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 212-225. See also Jörg Frey, *Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Narration*, (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), 30-31.

Williams notes that references to the "Prophet" as an eschatological figure in Early Jewish literature is quite limited. He says that this prophet in Early Jewish literature is seen as speaking oracles concerning cultic regulations (cf. 1 Macc. 4:46; 14:41). See Catrin H. Williams, "Jesus the Prophet: Crossing the Boundaries of Prophetic Beliefs and Expectations in the Gospel of John" in *Portraits of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, Edited by Craig Koester, (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 94-95.

flows naturally from their strict adherence to the Torah alone (cf. 4:25).²⁹⁴ The beginning of John 6 records the sign of the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish. This sign is purposefully performed in the like manner of God providing Manna to the Israelites in the wilderness which is evidenced by Jesus' words to the crowd in 6:32 where Jesus references Moses giving bread out of heaven. In 6:14, it appears that the crowd perceives the sign as similar to the sign Moses proclaimed to the people through God that Jesus truly is the "Prophet" who is to come into the world. Williams notes that it was likely a Jewish expectation for a prophet like Moses to come and perform signs similar to the signs performed by Moses and securing liberation from Rome (cf. *Ant.* 20:97-98, 168-70; *J. Wars.* 259-63).²⁹⁵ Interestingly, the crowd then seeks to make Jesus king by force which conflates both the prophetic expectation and kingly expectation of the crowd.²⁹⁶

Another aspect of the "Prophet" from Deuteronomy 18 that the people pick up on is his ability to teach things that he has not learned but were taught to him by God. In John 7:15, the Jews say, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" The Jews would have been aware of who studied at their schools and the implication is that Jesus has knowledge about things that he should not have knowledge about since he did not attend any of the rabbinic schools. The confession of the people at the end of his teachings is that he is the "Prophet"

²⁹⁴ Keener notes that Samaritan belief would have seen the "Prophet" like Moses as a ruler and a teacher and not just as a prophetic figure. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 619-20.

²⁹⁵ Williams, "Jesus the Prophet," 100-01.

²⁹⁶ See Keener's discussion on the Jewish expectation of the "Prophet" to have both a prophetic and kingly role; *Gospel of John*, 669-71. Keener points out that the reaction of the crowd to make Jesus king by force was something that was typical in this era of those that claimed to be prophets or identified themselves as a prophet. Novenson notes that Jewish tradition saw Moses in a prophetic and kingly manner. See Novenson, "Jesus the Messiah," 114-15.

because of the words they were hearing him say and paired with this is the confession of others that he is the Christ (7:40-41).

Messiah as King

A kingly Messiah from the line of David is also an expectation seen on the lips of the crowd in the Gospel of John.²⁹⁷ The first instance is seen from the confession of Nathanael in 1:49 as he says, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.” Interestingly, this comes right after a prophetic utterance that Jesus speaks to Nathanael which like 6:14-15 seen previously, the Jews were potentially looking for a Messiah as both Prophet and King. Also, in the context of the Messiah see as the “Prophet” (7:40) are those in the crowd saying that the Messiah was to be from Bethlehem of the line of David which also indicates an expectation of a kingly Messiah.²⁹⁸ John 7:43 indicates that there was division in the crowd concerning Jesus. This indicates that there were multiple Jewish views concerning the expectation of the Messiah and possible conflation of views as well. A similar scenario happened when the Jews were asking John the Baptist if he was the one to come (see 1:19-21).

Messiah as Coming from God

One of the Messianic expectations that is seen in a few of the Early Jewish texts is that the Messiah would have heavenly or unknown origins.²⁹⁹ This view of the Messiah is potentially

²⁹⁷ Cf. Sir. 45:25; 47:1-22; *Ps. Sol.* 17; 4Q161, 11-21; 4Q174; 4Q285; 1QSb 2:22-5:29; 1QM 5:1-2; 11:6-7; A ‘king from the sun’ – *Sib. Or.* 3:652-56.

²⁹⁸ Keener notes that John’s emphasis seems to be on Jesus’ divine kingship which is different from what the crowd would have expected concerning the kingship of the expected Messiah. See Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, Vol. 1, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 487-88.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Daniel 7-9; *1 Enoch* 37-71, 90:37-38; *Test. Mos.* 10; *Ps. Sol.* 17; *4 Ezra* 7, 12.

in view when Nicodemus confesses that he believes that Jesus is a teacher that comes from God because of the signs that he performs. In one aspect, this follows with the Mosaic prophecy of the “Prophet” receiving his teachings from God, but the context of John 3:1-21 moves toward the Enochic tradition of heavenly knowledge being revealed to and through the “Son of Man.” This is further evidenced by John the Baptists words later in the chapter as John says concerning Jesus’ origins that “He who comes from above is above all” (3:31). The crowd gives an interesting belief concerning the Messiah in 7:27 when they say, “whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.” The interesting thing is that just a few verses down, the crowd says that the Christ will come from Bethlehem of the line of David (7:42). Both 7:27 and 7:42 indicate that there were differing opinions concerning messianic expectation in Jesus’ audience, but the text also indicates that the crowd likely knew each other’s messianic opinions because of the debate and division concerning Jesus as the Christ (7:43).

Messiah/Son of Man as Living Forever

One last piece of messianic expectation exhibited in the Gospel of John pertains to their belief of the Christ as the “Son of Man” who is to remain forever (12:34).³⁰⁰ This proclamation comes right after Jesus indicates the kind of death that the “Son of Man” was going to die (12:23-24, 32-33). The interesting thing is that the crowd says that their teaching about the Christ

Bauckham gives two possibilities of a hidden Messiah: he will be a man who will not be known as Messiah until God reveals him to be or he is revealed when he comes from heaven. See Bauckham, *Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*, 232-33.

³⁰⁰ *1 En.* 37:4 sees God granting Enoch, later identified as the “Son of Man,” eternal life. The author of the *Parables* directly references the Messiah as ‘The Righteous One’ (1 *En.* 38:2), ‘The Chosen One’ (45:2-3; 51:3; 55:4; 61:8; 62:1-3), and ‘The Son of Man’ (62:5; 69:27-29).

Bauckham points to the eternal dynasty promised to David in 2 Sam. 7:12-13 (cf. *Ps. Sol.* 17). See Bauckham, *Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*, 235-36. See also, Köstenberger, *John*, 385-86.

remaining forever comes from the Law but this teaching more closely follows the Enochic tradition of the “Son of Man” given an exalted status from God (cf. *1 Enoch* 62:6).³⁰¹ This belief follows with the previous belief of the Messiah having a heavenly origin because a heavenly origin would indicate the Messiah having supernatural characteristics which would have included immortality and eternity.

THE SON OF MAN IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

There is a long standing “Son of Man” debate concerning the origin of its use in the Gospel of John.³⁰² Although there is merit to entering the conversation, this study is concerned with how Jesus used this title in relation to how John’s Jewish audience would have had preconceived ideas and beliefs about the “Son of Man” and his identity. The extent of this debate will be considered as it pertains to helping one understand how Jesus used the title in the Gospel of John. One of the things revealed concerning this debate is the fact that after Daniel, the *Parables of Enoch* is the only document until the composition of the Gospels that uses the title “Son of Man.” Thus, there is heavy reliance in scholarship upon this document in the “Son of

³⁰¹ *4 Ezra* 7:28 indicates that the Davidic Messiah would have and established earthly kingdom for four hundred years before he dies. This indicates a possible Jewish belief raised in John 12:34. The “forever” may just indicate a belief in supernaturally long life.

³⁰² Common interpretations of the Johannine origins the “Son of Man” include: (1) a reinterpretation of the Synoptic tradition (See Maurice Casey, *The Solution to the ‘Son of Man’ Problem*, (London: T&T Clark, 2007)); (2) OT background of Dan. 7 combined with Ps. 8, Prov. 30:1-4, and Ezekiel (See Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary*, Translated by John Vriend, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 93; Robert Rhea, *The Johannine Son of Man*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017)); (3) a Gnostic redeemer myth (see Rudolph Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971)); (4) a reflection of heavenly man speculations (see C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); A. J. B. Higgins, *The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)); (5) a combination of Dan. 7, the *Parables of Enoch*, and other Early Jewish texts (see Francis J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1978); Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); Ellens, *Son of Man in John; et al.*); (6) understood as representing Jesus’ humanity only where, for example, Jesus has the right to judge mankind because he is the perfectly righteous man (C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, Second Edition, (London: S.P.C.K., 1978), 262).

Man” debate. Despite this fact, much can be gleaned from the *Parables* and possible influence upon Early Jewish belief concerning messianic expectation in regard to the figure of the “Son of Man.” The *Parables of Enoch* show the Messiah as a distinct figure from God. De Silva notes:

While the Parables of Enoch provide the closest comparative text for the study of Jesus’ conception of the Son of Man, it is difficult to demonstrate direct dependence. Jesus seems to know and to draw upon the traditions about the Son of Man known from the Parables of Enoch but not necessarily upon those particular texts directly.³⁰³

Both judge from the same throne but the author does not conflate the two as the same divine being. Jesus does. One shocking thing for the Jewish leaders to hear was Jesus’ redefinition of who would receive the judgment of condemnation. Jesus points the finger at them and says that they were the ones who stand condemned unless they believe in the Son of Man.³⁰⁴ The religious leaders would have been the ones that saw themselves as ‘the righteous’ who would have had an automatic pass at the final judgment. They were the ones that remained faithful to God in the midst of Roman sovereignty and followed the Law meticulously and even all the religious traditions. Chapter three of this study has only sought to show the presence of the “Son of Man” tradition in the first century AD and define what those beliefs would have been and how these beliefs would have been in the mind of John’s Jewish audience when shows Jesus teaching

³⁰³ De Silva, *Jewish Teachers of Jesus*, 139.

³⁰⁴ De Silva gives a helpful summary of how John uses the title Son of Man for Jesus and some of the implications that it brings. He says, “The phrase “Son of Man” also figures prominently in speech attributed to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. These include suffering Son of Man sayings, though in the peculiar Johannine idioms of “lifting up” the Son of Man (John 3:14; 8:28), of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man (6:53), and of the hour of the Son of Man’s “glorification” (12:23; 13:31). In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus’ conversation partners are prepared to speak of the Messiah also as the Son of Man: “We heard from the Law that the Messiah remains forever, and how can *you* say that it is necessary that the Son of Man be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” (12:34). When Jesus asks the man born blind, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” John writes as though the latter would know the title independently as one more way of speaking about the Messiah: “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” (9:35–36). The Son of Man also has the eschatological role familiar from Parables of Enoch and the Gospels (especially Matthew), as he is “given authority to execute judgment” by God (5:27). Distinctive among the Gospels is John’s emphasis on the Son of Man as a preexistent being who has first descended from heaven to enter the realm of human beings and moves forward toward ascending again to heaven (3:13; 6:62) (De Silva, *Jewish Teachers of Jesus*, 135).”

concerning his role as the “Son of Man” and eschatological judge. The “Son of Man” saying in 5:27 must be understood in the overall context of how the “Son of Man” is presented and defined throughout John. Francis J. Moloney rightly notes that the thirteen uses of “Son of Man” in John need to be understood synchronically as he says, “The meaning of the expression in any one of them should be guided by the meaning of the other 12.”³⁰⁵ Thus, this section will take the overall picture of the “Son of Man” in the Gospel of John and show how that relates to Jesus’ claim as the eschatological judge in John in relation to how John’s Jewish audience would have understood the roll of the “Son of Man.”

John represents Jesus using specific phrases, concepts, and beliefs in his teachings that would have resonated with his audience. The ways in which Jesus uses the title “Son of Man” throughout John would have sounded familiar to John’s Jewish audience. However, Jesus will take a concept or belief from Early Jewish thought and give his own definition and interpretation of the “Son of Man” as it relates to himself which is often a radical and completely unexpected conception that departs from the Danielic and Enochic traditions developed in Early Judaism. In fact, Ellens notes nine stark contrasts between the presentation of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables* and the Gospel of John:

1. John’s Son of Man is not a man who begins his career on earth and is swept up into heaven by a whirlwind, as Enoch is. Instead, he is a divine figure whose journey begins in heaven (1:1-5), and is carried out on earth, both characteristics more like Daniel’s Son of Man than Enoch’s.
2. John’s Son of Man descends to earth to carry out his divinely designed function (1:14). This function is not to judge as in Daniel, *I Enoch*, and the Synoptic Gospels (5:27-47), but as a savior (3:12-18).
3. In John, as in Mark, Matthew, and Luke, he reveals himself on earth to be the Son of Man: to Nathanael and his companions (1:51ff), to his disciples and the crowd (12:28), and to all humanity whom he will draw to himself (12:32). In *I Enoch* he is announced the Son of Man by a special celestial decree from God to the angelic host in heaven.

³⁰⁵ Francis J. Moloney, “The *Parables of Enoch* and the Johannine Son of Man” in *Parables of Enoch: A Paradigm Shift*, Edited by Darrell L. Bock and James H. Charlesworth, (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 279.

4. John's Son of Man is not raised to supra-angelic status, as in *I Enoch* and the Synoptic Gospels, since in John he begins and remains superior to the angels, namely, divine.
5. Moreover, he does not become angelomorphic; he manifests however as anthropomorphic (1:14, 17ff.), as in Daniel, despite the fact that in John he is really theomorphic (Jn 1:1).
6. John's Son of Man inherently knows all the wisdom and secrets of God, whereas Enoch needs to be given a celestial tour to be taught the mysteries he must reveal.
7. John's Son of Man conveys these heavenly mysteries to humankind for the enlightenment and salvation of the whole world (1:4-5, 9-13), whereas Daniel and *I Enoch* he does so only for executing the eschatological judgment.
8. In John he awaits no *eschaton* or final judgment, since for the Son of Man in John, as in Daniel, the judgment is already past. However, Enoch is commissioned to judge the world at some future time and hence to bring in the *eschaton*, as is the Son of Man in the Synoptic Gospels.
9. John's Son of Man is restored, in the end, to heavenly status by God himself (John 17), whereas Enoch is at best assigned to the angelic host and, though it is unclear, perhaps reassigned to earth in carrying out the final judgment (*I En.* 70-71), as in the Synoptic Gospels.³⁰⁶

These contrasts pertain to how Jesus used the title "Son of Man."

The key argument that Ellens contests in his section "*The Parables of Enoch and the Gospel of John*" is that the author of the Gospel presents his account as an aggressive apologetic against an Enochic "Son of Man" tradition within the Judaism of his immediate audience.³⁰⁷ He argues that the Gospel author is presenting the correct interpretation of the Danielic "Son of Man" tradition and the Gospel acts as a means to point out the false contentions of the Enochic tradition. Ellens presents his case but unfortunately, he does not expand his argument much beyond his eight points listed above. Although this is plausible, an aggressive apologetic against Enochic Judaism does not fully fit with John's overall purpose for writing which is to argue for believing in Jesus' true identity (cf. John 20:31). Instead of an aggressive apologetic, it seems that John is presenting the teachings of Jesus with words and phrases for which they already had definitions for within their traditions. These remain in the background as John presents Jesus as

³⁰⁶ Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 161-62.

³⁰⁷ Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 156-164.

radically redefining their preconceived beliefs concerning the true identity of the “Son of Man.” Instead of arguing against the Jewish traditions of his audience, John’s main intent is to argue for the true identity of Jesus and to do this John must define Jesus by redefining the traditions that they were familiar with.

The main contention that this study has with Ellens’ above points are with points two and eight concerning the role of the “Son of Man” as judge and the timing of the judgment as seen in contrast between John and the *Parables*. The problem with point two is that John presents Jesus as taking on the role as a judge and not just the savior of the world. Jesus’ role as judge may not be an active one in the Gospel of John but his role as judge is certainly there in a passive sense. In John 3:12-18 and 5:27-47, Jesus speaks concerning condemnation as a verdict that has already been passed upon those that do not believe. Jesus is taking on a role as judge but not in the active eschatological sense as seen in the *Parables*. However, Jesus does mention the eventual eschatological judgment that is to come which would have greater similarities to the judgment described in the *Parables*. Thus, one of the functions of Jesus’ coming actually does bring judgment, just not in the way that John’s Jewish audience would have expected. The Gospel of John is not necessarily refuting this idea of eschatological judgment found in the *Parables*, but John is redefining it for his Jewish audience to show a distinction between Jesus’ imminent and eschatological role as judge.

The issue with point eight is that John 5:25-29 speaks to both an imminent (see also 3:16-20) and eschatological judgment. Jesus speaks of a judgment that is presently taking place and not just a judgment that has already happened in the past. Although the past tense is used in 3:17-21 concerning those condemned, the acts of unbelief and

rejection which brings the condemnation is something taking place in the present. In 5:25-29, the eschatological judgment is clearly mentioned by Jesus as he speaks about his bifurcated judgment role. Thus, Ellens' point that John represents the judgment as something that is past does not follow with how John presents Jesus' future role as eschatological judge.

This study will reveal these stark contrasts in the teachings of Jesus and the beliefs of John's Jewish audience. This study will seek to expand upon Ellens' list above and flesh out in more depth how these contrasts work themselves out throughout the "Son of Man" sayings of Jesus. The overall push will be to demonstrate how John's Jewish audience would have understood his presentation of the "Son of Man" sayings as they relate to his roles as Messiah and judge. John indicates that Jesus purposefully makes these contrasts in order to help his audience truly understand how one obtains eternal life and avoids both the imminent and eschatological judgment of condemnation. Most notable will be the beliefs of Jesus' religious audience who considered themselves as "righteous" and among those that would receive God's mercy and eternal life based on their keeping of the covenant and good deeds.³⁰⁸ One of Jesus' points that he will emphatically make is that those who saw themselves as righteous are the very ones that will receive condemnation.

John 1:51

The "Son of Man" saying in John 1:51³⁰⁹ comes in the immediate context of Jesus's conversation with Nathanael and his confession of Jesus as the Son of God and the King of

³⁰⁸ Identity of the righteous: Sir. 2:15-17; 23:27; *1 En.* 94:1-4; 99:10; 103:99; 104:12; Identity of the wicked: Sir. 41:18; 5:4-7; 10:7, 12; *1 En.* 94:8; 96:4-5, 8; 99:2; 102:9; *Jub.* 23:17-18, 22.

³⁰⁹ Many Scholars and commentators assert that 1:51 is interpolated into the text because of Semantic difficulty and clumsiness of the narrative flow from 1:43-2:11. It is argued that the original context might be

Israel. Both titles have messianic implications both in the Old Testament and in Early Jewish texts.³¹⁰ Nathanael's confession reveals that he was familiar with Early Jewish messianic expectations. As it has been previously discussed, his and others' confessions indicate that the commoners in Israel and not just the religious elite had specific views on what the coming Messiah would look like. This passage comes right after John the Baptist identifying Jesus as 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (1:29) and the confession causes the two of John's disciples to follow Jesus. Also, part of the context is the story of Jesus' first miracle being performed at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (2:1-12) which follows from Jesus' response to Nathanael in 1:50 that he would see 'greater things than these.'³¹¹

The "Son of Man" saying itself is reminiscent of Jacob's dream of a ladder in Genesis 28:10-17.³¹² In both passages there is an avenue presented as provided by God between heaven and earth.³¹³ Burkett says, "the Son of Man is the reality depicted by Jacob's ladder, the

borrowed from Mt. 16:27-28 which has the context of the resurrection or second coming where the context of angels about to glorify the "Son of Man" would be more appropriate. The interpolation here is to reinforce the divine identity of the incarnate Logos of the prologue. See Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 34-37; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII: Translation with an Introduction and Notes*, (Garden City, NY: 1966), 88ff; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel John: A Commentary*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 488-91; Leon L. Morris, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 150-52; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Second Edition, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 18-30; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 48-63.

³¹⁰ Reynolds notes the strength and significance of Nathanael's and Phillip's messianic claims and how each one has understanding and origin in Early Jewish Literature and the OT. See Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 90-92.

³¹¹ Moloney shows how this saying is in the context of revelation and in the context of Pentecost this looks forward to the revelation of the "glory" which is revealed in 2:1-11. He also argues that John 1:19-2:11 is better understood being read parallel to Ex. 19:7-19. See Francis J. Moloney, "The Parables of Enoch and the Johannine Son of Man" in *Parables of Enoch: A Paradigm Shift*, Edited by Darrell L. Bock and James H. Charlesworth, (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 279-80.

³¹² Ridderbos says that the presence of the angels and Jacob's ladder indicates that the "Son of Man" has heavenly powers at his disposal. See Ridderbos, *Gospel of John*, 94.

³¹³ Thompson argues that this verse depicts God disclosing heavenly secrets. See Marianne Meyer Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 53.

connection between God’s household on earth and God in heaven.”³¹⁴ In John 1:51, the “Son of Man” is the access point by which mankind is able to enter heaven and receive eternal life. Ellens asserts that the main use of the “Son of Man” used here is that he is a heavenly figure naturally associated with the heavenly realm.³¹⁵ Heaven will be opened to mankind through the “Son of Man” and he will reveal heavenly mysteries. Both of these are similar characteristics of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch*.

John 3:13-14

The context of the “Son of Man” sayings in John 3:13-14 is the centerpiece of the conversation that Jesus has with Nicodemus. This passage specifically identifies Nicodemus as a Pharisee.³¹⁶ It is likely he was familiar with many of the Early Jewish texts or at least the eschatological speculations that came from them which would have included the “Son of Man” figure in the *Parables of Enoch*. This is the only instance in John where the title is used twice by Jesus in back to back sentences. This passage also reveals a multitude of information associated with the “Son of Man.” In this passage, the “Son of Man” is the revealer of heavenly

³¹⁴ Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 119.

³¹⁵ Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 39. Keener asserts that the “Son of Man” here is being depicted as a figure greater than Jacob or any of the other patriarchs because the angels here are dependent upon Jesus as the mediatorial figure. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 488-91. See also Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 92-95.

³¹⁶ See above discussion of beliefs of Pharisees.

knowledge,³¹⁷ having a heavenly origin,³¹⁸ an exalted figure,³¹⁹ a judge,³²⁰ and the savior of the human race. Other than the savior of the human race, which is one of Jesus' key redefinitions of the Jewish understanding of the "Son of Man," these are common features of the "Son of Man" in the *Parables* but the contrast that Jesus brings out will be explored in greater depth later in this chapter on the section on the judgeship of Jesus.

John 3:13 has in mind the incarnation of the heavenly *Logos* from 1:1-18.³²¹ This references the heavenly origin and preexistent nature of the Son of Man.³²² This also maintains

³¹⁷ Keener references *4 Ezra* 4:5-9, 21 showing that there was an Early Jewish tradition regarding heavenly and earthly wisdom. Earthly wisdom can be barely figured out and heavenly wisdom has not been obtained. See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 559-60.

Ellens asserts that the "Son of Man" as revealer of heavenly things follows with what has already been said in John thus far concerning the heavenly origin of the *Logos* and the "Son of Man" as the mediatorial figure in the Jacob's ladder allusion. He also notes that in *1 Enoch* wisdom's search for a dwelling place on earth was unsuccessful which contrasts with Jesus' role as a revealer of heavenly wisdom as successful. See Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 44-46. Also see Thompson, *John*, 84.

Ridderbos argues that it is not about the knowledge of the heavenly things to earth but the reference to the ascent and descent itself refers to the divine work of redemption to be accomplished by the "Son of Man." He says ascents does not refer to receiving knowledge from heaven but understood as the Son's participation in divine glory. See Ridderbos, *Gospel of John*, 135-36.

³¹⁸ Cf. Dan. 7-9; *1 En.* 37-71.

³¹⁹ Cf. *1 En.* 62:9

³²⁰ Cf. *1 En.* 45:3; 51:3; 61:8; 62:1-9; 63:11; 69:27

³²¹ Burkett argues that understanding the origin and meaning of 'the Son of the Man' in 3:13 helps one understand how it is used in the rest of the Gospel of John. He finds the origin of this title in Proverbs 30:1-4 and goes to great lengths to show the connection. See Burkett, *Son of Man in John*, 76-92, also 51-75, 93-111. Although Burkett builds a substantial case for his argument, he misses many of the implications and origins of other aspects of the motif that are developed in Early Judaism and thus a fuller picture of the "Son of Man" in the Gospel of John is missed.

³²² Cf. *1 En.* 48:5-7 and 62:13-14. These two passages in the *Parable* show a somewhat implicit salvific nature of the "Son of Man" as opposed to the Johannine "Son of Man" which is quite explicit in the role the Jesus attributes to himself as the "Son of Man." See Reynolds, *Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 46.

the allusion to Jacob's ladder in 1:51.³²³ The heavenly origin of the "Son of Man" also alludes to the Early Jewish interpretation of the Danielic "one like a son of man" as seen in the *Parables of Enoch*. Although Nicodemus may not have been familiar with how Jesus used "Son of Man" in 1:51, this would have conjured up imagery and beliefs concerning the "Son of Man" from the *Parables* that he would likely have been familiar with.

The implications of the use of "Son of Man" in 3:14 look toward crucifixion, exaltation, and salvation. The close proximity of verse 13 with 14 indicates that the heavenly knowledge revealed by the "Son of Man" is the fact of his crucifixion was the culmination of his earthly glorification and the key piece of salvation of humankind.³²⁴ The notion of crucifixion in this verse is further supported by how the crowd responds to his statement in 12:32 when he says that he will be "lifted up" to indicate the kind of death that he would die.³²⁵ The crowd negatively

³²³ Keener argues that the allusion to Jacob's ladder follows with 3:13 because it maintains Jesus as the "Son of Man" as the bridge between heaven and earth and the avenue for mankind to the heavenly and eternal world. See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 561-63.

Moloney argues that the "ascent" and "descent" references have their origins in Jewish myth where it was believed that certain individuals ascended to heaven such as Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah. One could not have heavenly wisdom revealed to them unless they had ascended to heaven. He argues that the ascent and descent language here has to deal with the revelation of heavenly wisdom and the unique place of Jesus as the "Son of Man" to do so. See Moloney, "The Parables and Johannine Son of Man," 281-82. See also Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 127. Reynolds also highlights the various ascent myths but make the distinction that the "Son of Man" is different from the Patriarchs and Prophets because his origins are heaven and not an earthly ascent of one into heaven. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 106-08.

Kruse argues that this is polemical and Jesus speaks in a manner that he rejects the Jewish belief of heavenly revealers. See Colin G. Kruse, *John*, Revised Edition, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 119.

³²⁴ See Moloney, "The Parables and Johannine Son of Man," 282.

Keener notes that 3:14 is likely looking toward a dual meaning of "lift up." He also notes that *Wis. Sol.* 16:6 interprets the serpent as salvific and Jesus in like manner is using the same language for himself as one who will save all who look upon him and believe both in his crucified and glorified forms. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 564-66.

³²⁵ Tenney notes that the Aramaic term for "lift up" has a dual usage of lifting in exaltation from a low or bowed position or to lift up and crucify; see Merrill C. Tenney, *Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 49. Ellens also notes that there would have been a long deep tradition of this term being used with crucifixion; see

responds saying that their belief was that the Son of Man was supposed to remain forever. Exaltation of the “Son of Man” is further evidenced by Jesus’ use of “Son of Man” in 12:23 where Jesus says now the hour of his glorification. Part of his reference looks toward his crucifixion and eventual resurrection and ascension. These three aspects of Jesus’ teaching become the redemptive aspect of Jesus’ teachings as his one of his main identities as the “Son of Man” and are a main piece of the heavenly knowledge that Jesus is teaching Nicodemus.³²⁶ Jesus also references Numbers 21:6-9 where God sent serpents into the camp as a judgment against Israel for their sins. The people grumbled and God commanded Moses to forge a bronze serpent to be “lifted up” in the camp and anyone that was bitten could look at the serpent and be saved. The illustration that Jesus is conveying is that the Israelites were “already” judged for their sins. The only thing that the Israelites had to do was look up at the serpent and they would be “saved.” In John 3:14, Jesus speaks of himself in a similar manner. All mankind is “already” condemned but the one who looks to the Son and believes will be saved (3:14-18).

Ellens shows just how impactful the “Son of Man” sayings are in this passage as they directly relate to the message portrayed as he says:

The Son of Man is not simply a man acting for humanity. Jesus’ impending death is not to be just a saving human act of obedience to God, but rather it is God acting. God gives and sends (3:16-17). Consequently, those who really understand the Son of Man discern God, because Jesus, as Son of Man, is God acting. He has his origins outside the realm of humanity. John uses the themes of descent (3:13) and sending (3:17) to communicate the crucial Christological truth of preexistence in order to express clearly this divine heavenly reality.³²⁷

Ellens, *Son of Man*, 51. Reynolds also notes this dual meaning but says that the majority use is ‘exalt’ in the OT and NT. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 117-18.

³²⁶ For further discussion on the redemptive event of the crucifixion and resurrection as the intended kerygmatic message of the text see George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 50-51; Leon Morris, *The Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 198-200.

³²⁷ Ellens, *Son of Man in John*, 47.

It is no mistake that John represents Jesus using “Son of Man” twice in back to back sentences and places the statement in the very center of his conversation with Nicodemus so that his use of this title encompasses so much and such deep meaning. The use of “Son of Man” in 3:13-14 encompasses all of the rest of how Jesus will use the title in other more specific ways.³²⁸

John 5:27

The “Son of Man” usage in 5:27 is in the midst of a response to Jewish leadership on the nature of true judgment which contrasts the judgment that the Jews were passing on Jesus for healing on the Sabbath and judgment for how he spoke about his relationship with the Father. In 5:27 Jesus directly identifies himself as the “Son of Man” and directly indicates that all judgment has been given to him because he is the “Son of Man.”³²⁹ This “Son of Man” saying gives direct reference to the Danielic “one like a son of man” and the Enochic “Son of Man” as chapter three indicates that God passing the right to judge to the “Son of Man” was an Early Jewish messianic expectation.³³⁰ The Jewish leadership of Jesus’ audience would have understood the messianic implications of not only this statement but also the words and phrases that he used to further define his own role as messianic judge. Jesus uses the surrounding context to acknowledge that

³²⁸ Reynolds argues for an apocalyptic understanding of these “Son of Man” sayings with direct connection to Daniel 7:13. He says that 3:13 draws one’s attention to Jesus being the “Son of Man” as a preexistent heavenly being and as a revealer of heavenly wisdom and 3:14 links his role in salvation and judgment. See Reynolds, *Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 104-130.

³²⁹ Moloney argues that the context in this passage is a significant representation of realized eschatology. See Moloney, “The Parables and Johannine Son of Man,” 284.

³³⁰ The use of this “Son of Man” saying is the only anarthrous use in the Gospel of John. Some commentators argue that this anarthrous use indicates a direct link to Daniel 7:13 since Daniel’s “one like a son of man” is anarthrous (see Maloney, *Gospel of John*, 183; Morris, *Gospel of John*, 283; Keener, *Gospel of John*, 654; Thompson, *John*, 131; Köstenberger, *John*, 189; Michaels, *Gospel of John*, 319-20), while others say that this is just stylistic and follows with John’s representation of Jesus as the “Son of Man” (see Ellens, *Son of Man*, 55-56; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 77). Reynolds notes that judgment and the “Son of Man” in Early Jewish belief were very closely knit together. The main Jewish expectation of the Danielic “one like a son of man” was of one in a judgment role. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 139-40.

he knew what their messianic beliefs were concerning judgment and the role of the Messiah in judgment. He also challenges their beliefs with his own teachings about his role as messianic judge that would have been radically different from their preconceived beliefs.

John 6:27, 53, 62

The three “Son of Man” sayings in John 6 come in a discourse to his disciples and to the Jewish people. This discourse comes right after Jesus performed two miracles of the nature of something that only God could do, feeding over five thousand people with five barley loaves and two fish and walking on water.³³¹ The sayings in 6:27 and 53 continue the theme of eternal life surrounding the “Son of Man” sayings in John 3:13-14. John 6:27 is a statement made because the crowd had followed him to the other side of the sea.³³² Interestingly, this is also in the context of the messianic expectation of the crowd that came out right after the feeding of the five thousand where the crowd believed him to be the “Prophet” and were going to forcefully make him king (6:14-15).³³³ Jesus takes this opportunity to teach the crowd about his true purpose of coming as the “Son of Man” which goes beyond performing signs which was to give eternal life to all who believe. Right after Jesus’ statement in 6:27 the crowds ask Jesus what works of God

³³¹ Burkett links the “bread from heaven” teaching to Sirach 24:21 which says concerning the nature of wisdom, “Those who eat me will hunger again, those drink me will thirst again.” He also links this discourse to Sirach 15:3, Proverbs 9:5, Isaiah 55:1-3 and 10-11 which are in addition to the manna allusions from Exodus.

³³² Reynolds makes an observation that the *Parables* mention that the righteous will eat with the “Son of Man” after they receive their salvation and the kings of the earth are judge (*1 Enoch* 62:14). He says that this may or may not have been a piece of Early Jewish tradition but it is possible that the sharing of a meal with the self-proclaimed “Son of Man” may have conjured up this imagery in the minds of Jesus’ audience. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*,

³³³ McGrath makes connections not only to the Eucharist but also to the Mosaic imagery that the Jews would have been familiar with. Jesus’ self-portrayal as “Son of Man” in this passage directly reflects his ability to come down from heaven and give heavenly wisdom. He reveals God and does so in a way that is far superior to Moses. See James F. McGrath, *John’s Apologetic Christology: Legitimation and Development in Johannine Christology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 174-78, 222.

they must do. Jesus responds similarly as he did in 3:19-21 and 5:29 as to the nature of good versus evil deeds and says that the good deed that is needed is belief in the one sent by the Father (6:29). The notion of one being judged according to deeds and the one deed Jesus associates with the “Son of Man” is belief.³³⁴ John 6:53 continues the theme of obtaining eternal life through belief in the “Son of Man” but this saying comes toward the end of this discourse when the teaching gets intense and cause many to leave him based upon his teaching being too hard for them (6:60).³³⁵ Throughout chapter 6, part of what John is doing in his argument is linking Jesus to Moses and in fact a better Moses. Köstenberger shows how 6:52-58 mimics the Israelites grumbling and striving with Moses in the wilderness.³³⁶ Thus, John links Jesus’ “Son of Man” saying with Moses and the “Prophet” to come which conflates two different messianic expectations of his audience. The last “Son of Man” saying in this discourse is directed toward his disciples who are having difficulty digesting Jesus’ teachings. This phrase is also in the context of the “Son of Man” and his words as the giver of life but the phrase itself alludes back to the allusion of Jacob’s ladder in 1:51 and 3:13 which not only see the “Son of Man” as the mediator between heaven and earth, but 6:62 specifically mentions his ascension which looks toward his crucifixion and eventual exaltation.³³⁷ Jesus’ statement in 6:62 quite possibly references the Jewish belief that other’s such as Enoch, Abraham, and Moses have ascended into

³³⁴ Keener points out that works-based faith was a key part of Early Jewish Soteriology. He notes that Jesus redefines this notion to a faith-based system of salvation which would have been a foreign concept to the Jewish people. See Keener, 676-79.

³³⁵ Ellens argues that this passage shows emphatically that Jesus as the “Son of Man” is a heavenly figure who descended to the earth to provide salvation and that only in him is spiritual nurture, vitality, and life. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 65.

³³⁶ Köstenberger, *John*, 215.

³³⁷ Ellens notes that 6:62 refers directly to the role of the “Son of Man” as the divinely exalted one and universal savior. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 68.

heaven. It appears that Jesus' force here is a rejection of this notion. His rhetorical question concerns a matter of what it would take his followers to actually believe such as his ascension.³³⁸ Thus, Jesus' question concerning the "Son of Man" has in mind a Jewish belief that his audience would have been familiar with but his intentions here are completely in the context of belief. The emphasis in Jesus' words also seems to indicate that the disciples' witness of his ascension will be the ultimate proof to them that Jesus truly is the heavenly "Son of Man." His ascension will be the final piece that will show his disciples that he is who he says he is.

John 8:28

The "Son of Man" saying in John 8:28 both looks back to Jesus' judgment discourse and his teaching about being the light of the world and it looks forward to his eventual crucifixion due to the "lifting up" language used.³³⁹ In 8:24 and again in 8:28, Jesus makes two "I am" statements which link his identity with divinity and in 8:28 there is an "I am" directly associated with the "Son of Man." The purpose is to not only link his role as "Son of Man" to his messiahship, but also directly to his divinity. This self-identity culminates in 8:58 when Jesus explicitly identifies himself as "I am" in a similar manner to how God revealed himself to Moses (cf. Ex. 3:14-15).³⁴⁰ Interestingly, there is an accusatory tone in 8:28 as he is talking to the

³³⁸ See Moloney, "The Parables and Johannine Son of Man," 283-84

³³⁹ Keener notes the double entendre in the term showing that by the Jews lifting Jesus up to crucifixion they would also be lifting him up to be glorified. This lifting up would reveal his divinity. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 745.

³⁴⁰ Reynolds brings out multiple connections to Jesus' statements about his identity in John 8 with various "I am" passages throughout the OT that link Jesus' characteristics to God's. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 165-67.

Pharisees and says, “When *you* lift up the Son of Man” (italics mine).³⁴¹ This is the prophetic proof that he is giving them to show the truth and accuracy of his words in this passage just prior to his statement about the “Son of Man.”³⁴² This saying is also linked to the theme of salvation that has already been seen in the previous “Son of Man” sayings and their contexts. This passage is also in direct connection to his judgment discourse in chapter 5 which directly associates the “Son of Man” with the imminent and eschatological judge. The “Son of Man” that the Jews will be judging and “lifting up” to crucify and kill will be the one who will judge them according to their deeds and unbelief.³⁴³

John 9:35

The “Son of Man” saying in John 9:35 is seen in the second encounter that Jesus has with the man born blind. John 9:1-7 is Jesus’ initial encounter with the man born blind and becomes a continuation of his teaching about himself being the “light of the world” and being made free from sin upon belief in the Son (8:12-47).³⁴⁴ Jesus’ healing of the man born blind then becomes a teaching illustration and a parable to the Pharisees about their spiritual blindness and how they remain in their darkness and sin because of their refusal to believe in the Son. The “Son of Man”

³⁴¹ Michaels notes the startling nature of this statement since instead of having a passive sense like the previous verses, this has an active and accusatory sense. See Michaels, *Gospel of John*, 491-92.

³⁴² Burkett argues in depth for the direct connection of the “I am” statements of Amos 8:11-12, Isaiah 55:10-11, and Psalm 107:20 to Jesus’ “I am” statements in John 8:21-29 and how Jesus’ self-identification as “I am” is directly linked to his “Son of Man” statement in both essence and purpose and with direct identification as God and as the one sent by God. See Burkett, *Son of Man in John*, 142-60. This would also reinforce all the more Jesus’ statement of his role as judge which links God’s role as judge in the OT with the Messiah’s role as judge in Early Jewish expectation.

³⁴³ Ellens links this “Son of Man” saying to Isaiah’s suffering servant. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 73. See also, Köstenberger, *John*, 260; Kruse, *John*, 93.

³⁴⁴ Burkett equates the “Son of Man” in this passage to the “Son of God” who is the light begotten from the light of God. See Burkett, *Son of Man in John*, 164-67.

saying in 9:35 deals directly with belief in the “Son of Man” for Jesus directly asks the man born blind (now healed) if he believes in the “Son of Man.” The man born blind demonstrates his willingness and desire to know who the “Son of Man” is so that he can believe in him.³⁴⁵ This question originally stems from the Pharisees investigating who healed the man and him not knowing the identity of who healed him. Interestingly, Jesus gives two responses to the man who formerly was blind for he says, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you (9:37).” Jesus uses verbs for both seeing and hearing. Originally, the man had only heard the voice of Jesus but now he also sees Jesus. Another interesting piece is that this is the only “Son of Man” saying in John where Jesus directly identifies himself as the “Son of Man.”³⁴⁶ This self-identification causes the former blind man to worship Jesus.³⁴⁷ This seems out of place but the *Parables of Enoch* also indicates that the “Son of Man” receives worship from the kings and the mighty (see *1 En.* 62:9). The former blind man has the right reaction to the “Son of Man” as opposed to the reaction that the Jewish leaders should have had.³⁴⁸ This follows with the trend already seen in John of Jesus only directly identifying himself as the Messiah to the least likely people (See 4:25-26). Just like the previous “Son of Man” sayings, this saying is directly associated with belief that leads to salvation (9:35-38) and unbelief that leads to judgment (9:39).

³⁴⁵ Reynolds asserts that the theme of Johannine belief throughout the Gospel overlaps with recognition of the apocalyptic “Son of Man” in 9:35. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 180.

³⁴⁶ Beasley-Murray notes that the emphasis of this saying is to show that Jesus as the “Son of Man” is not just the eschatological judge but also as the one who mediates salvation. See Beasley Murray, *John*, 159.

³⁴⁷ Reynolds notes that the word translated as ‘worship’ is the same word used in John 4 during his conversation with the Samaritan women regarding the true nature of worshipping God. See Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man*, 181.

³⁴⁸ Ellens brings out that the Pharisees end up being their own judges because they have opportunity to see the divine will but behave as if blind to it and this follows what Jesus said previously about not coming to judge but that the actions of each person cause them to be condemned already. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 76.

John 12:23, 34

The “Son of Man” sayings in John 12:23 and 12:34 are contained within the same context of Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem and the final week just prior to his crucifixion. John 12:23 comes right after two Greeks come to Philip seeking Jesus. This is a major turning point in the Gospel of John because Jesus proclaims that the “hour” for which he came “has come” (12:23). The saying in 12:23 encompasses the themes of crucifixion, exaltation, and judgment that have been seen throughout previous “Son of Man” sayings. This passage sees some of the most explicit connections to these three themes as compared to the implicit and indirect references in previous sayings. Crucifixion and salvation are seen in 12:24-26 when Jesus gives a parable about a grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying in order for it to bear much fruit (12:24).³⁴⁹ This statement not only pertains to Jesus’ death and resurrection, but he also applies this parable to those that believe in the Son of Man will have spiritual rebirth and bear spiritual fruit. Crucifixion and salvation are also seen in 12:32 when Jesus again says that the “Son of Man” will be lifted up and draw all men to himself which causes the reaction of the crowd to ask the identity of the “Son of Man” their confession of Early Jewish messianic expectation that the “Son of Man” would remain forever (12:34).³⁵⁰ Exaltation in this passage is paired with the voice of the Father rumbling from Heaven confirming to Jesus that the Father’s name is glorified and will be glorified again (12:28-30) because of the works of the Son. Judgment is seen in 12:31 and

³⁴⁹ Köstenberger notes that rabbinic literature uses the imagery of a grain of wheat as an illustration for the eschatological resurrection. See Köstenberger, *John*, 378.

³⁵⁰ Ellens links the crowd’s understanding of linking the “Christ” as “Son of Man” to a Davidic figure for he argues that the crowd makes the link between the “Christ” and the “Son of Man” spontaneously. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 78-80. However, Ellens seems to completely disregard the direct link of the “Messiah” to the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch* which the crowd would have likely been familiar with this Enochic tradition.

Keener roots the idea of the Messiah remaining forever in the OT, especially Is. 9:6 and Ps. 110:4. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 881.

a stark contrast is given by Jesus concerning what he has said thus far concerning judgment which is that he did not come into the world to judge the world but that through him the world might be saved (cf. 3:17; 8:15). However, there is still an indirect sense in which Jesus says judgment has already come upon those that have chosen not to believe (cf. 3:18-19; 9:39). One interesting feature contained in the context here is the presence of two Greeks, gentiles, seeking Jesus. This links this passage to the “Son of Man” sayings in 3:13-14 which are in the immediate context of John 3:16 which indicates that salvation is for the world and not just for the nation of Israel. Thus, the “Son of Man” in John is linked to the salvation of the Gentiles and not to their judgment and destruction as seen throughout Early Jewish texts.

John 13:31

The “Son of Man” saying in John 13:31 is spoken to his disciples and initiates his final discourse to his disciples in the upper room just prior to his crucifixion. The saying comes right after Jesus says that one of the disciples would betray him (13:21) and identifies that one as Judas (13:26-27). Right after Judas leaves Jesus says, “Now is the Son of Man Glorified and God is glorified in Him” (13:31).³⁵¹ This statement has the same exaltation language that was seen in 12:23 as it was associated with the voice coming from heaven of the name of the father being glorified. This saying is also in close approximation to Jesus being lifted up in his crucifixion. Later in John 14 Jesus also uses salvation language showing how he is the way to the father (14:6) and he is going back to his Father to prepare a dwelling place for them (14:2-3).

³⁵¹ Ellens argues that the emphasis of this saying shows that the “Son of Man” is directly identified with or as God. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 84.

Summary

The “Son of Man” in the Gospel of John surrounds many different characteristics that follow with the Danielic and Enochic traditions such as being the Messiah, judgment, exaltation, heavenly origins, preexistence, and heavenly knowledge. John would have been well aware of the Enochic beliefs of his audience which is why he chose to present his own role as Son of Man in this manner. He purposefully used verbiage and imagery that they would have been familiar. The “Son of Man” would have been a messianic motif that his audience would have been well familiar with and as it was seen above, even the crowd, the common Jew, would have had beliefs formed about the identity of the “Son of Man” by the time Jesus starts using the title for himself. However, John represents Jesus completely redefining each and every preconceived characteristic of the “Son of Man” that his audience would have had from their Enochic tradition. This section not only shows that John knew what the beliefs of his audience were concerning the “Son of Man,” but it also gives a robust definition of how he shows how Jesus sought to redefine the “Son of Man” as it pertained to himself. Eschatological judgment as imminent is one of the primary characteristics associated with the coming of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch* and this would have likely been in the minds of his audience as he claims that he Father has given him all judgment because he is the “Son of Man” (John 5:22, 27). Although Jesus keeps his role as judge in the forefront of his redefined role of himself as the “Son of Man,” the above study reveals that his role as “Son of Man” encompasses so much more than what Early Jewish belief allowed for. Jesus’ main teaching on his role as the “Son of Man” switched from judgment to salvation which included not just the salvation of the Jews but the salvation of the entire world which meant the hated Gentiles of the *Parable of Enoch* were included in the realm of salvation.

JESUS' TEACHINGS ON JUDGMENT AND JUDGESHIP IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Jews believed that the primary role of the Messiah was to judge wicked men according to their evil deeds and reward the righteous for their good deeds and faithfully keeping the covenant.³⁵² John's Jewish audience had good reason for wanting judgment to come upon their enemies as it has been seen in chapters two and three. Regardless of whether the Jewish belief was in a kingly Messiah from the line of David or a heavenly Messiah that looked like the Danielic "one like a son of man," this messianic figure's primary responsibility was to bring judgment upon the enemies of God and salvation to the Jews. The coming of the Messiah meant that they were in the eschatological age and final judgment was about to take place.³⁵³ Therefore, it is no surprise that Jesus addresses the belief that the Messiah would take on the role of messianic judge. Although Jesus uses familiar verbiage and imagery concerning the Messiah's role as judge, he redefines that role, redefines who would receive judgment, and redefines the Jewish view of good and evil deeds. The exposition of key passages below will demonstrate just how radically different Jesus' teachings about judgment and his role as judge were as they relate to the beliefs of his audience, especially in relation to their beliefs concerning their messianic expectations of the "Son of Man" as eschatological judge.

John 3:10-21

To the first century Jew, there would have been much about Jesus' teachings in John 3:10-21 that would have sounded familiar concerning the "Son of Man" and his role in

³⁵² Cf. *Sirach* 16:12, 14; 17:23; 28:1; *Ps. Sol.* 2:7, 16, 34; 17:8; *Wis. Sol.* 3:10, 18; 4:19-5:14;

³⁵³ Cf. *Ps. Sol.* 17 *I Enoch* 37-71; 90; *Sib. Or.* 3:652-56 1QH VI, 12; II, 8-9, 13; V, 8-9; 1QpHab VIII, 1-3; 11QMelch; 4Q285;

judgment.³⁵⁴ This will also be the case with the other passages considered in this section. Jesus' teachings indicate that he was familiar with Early Jewish belief concerning judgment and the Messiah which is evidenced in key words and phrases that he uses which would have directly alluded to certain Early Jewish beliefs. Knowing Early Jewish beliefs on judgment and messianic expectation helps one to better understand the nuanced complexities of Jesus' teachings about judgment and his role in it. It also helps one to understand why Jesus said what he said and just how radically different his teachings would have been to John's Jewish audience.

Much of the verbiage that Jesus uses in the Gospel of John alludes to the language of Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch* but one also needs to keep in mind the views of judgment expressed in other Early Jewish sources because these give a more holistic view concerning the Jewish beliefs of John's Jewish audience (see chapter two). The context of John 3:10-21 is when Nicodemus visits Jesus at night to inquire from Jesus who he is and by what authority he teaches what he does (John 3:1-2). In this context, Nicodemus is Jesus' immediate audience and as it has been previously indicated, he was a Pharisee who would have likely studied or been familiar with many of the texts explored in chapters two and three. The discourse that results is not at all the direction that Nicodemus thought the conversation would end up. Nicodemus would have entered the conversation with his own views on the "Son of Man," judgment, and salvation, but Jesus will challenge and redefine each of these beliefs which will be evidenced in this discourse.

In John 3:12 Jesus indicates a contrast between earthly knowledge and heavenly knowledge.³⁵⁵ Early Jewish belief indicates a few things concerning the revelation of heavenly

³⁵⁴ Cf. *1 En.* 45:3; 51:3; 61:8; 62:1-9; 63:11; 69:27.

³⁵⁵ Burkett argues that heavenly knowledge refers to the fact that no human has yet experienced the heavenly aspect of eternal life. See Burkett, *Son of Man in John*, 78-87. However, by not considering Early Jewish implications of heavenly and earthly wisdom he misses the fuller picture of how Nicodemus would have likely understood his statement.

knowledge to mankind. One belief was that one of the sins of the fallen angels was their revelation of heavenly knowledge to mankind and this event impacted humanity and the earth even to the extent that the cosmos no longer followed their God given pattern.³⁵⁶ There were also Jewish ascension myths surrounding various patriarchs and prophets and these individuals would have had heavenly knowledge revealed to them. Also, certain Jewish texts made a distinction between heavenly and earthly wisdom indicating the unattainability of heavenly wisdom. Concerning how this relates to the “Son of Man” mentioned in 3:13-14, the *Parables of Enoch* show that the Enochic “Son of Man” received a revelation of heavenly knowledge.³⁵⁷ One main aspect of Jesus’ teachings throughout the Gospel of John is their heavenly source. Jesus only teaches what he has received from the Father (cf. 8:38). Early Jewish belief indicates that one of the expectations of the Messiah was that he would have heavenly knowledge revealed to him. The heavenly knowledge revealed in this passage deals with salvation and judgment and the role that the “Son of Man” plays in both of these (3:14-21).

The focus of Jesus’ discourse moves into his teaching on salvation and judgment (3:14-21). In order to understand the full force of Jesus’ teachings on salvation and judgment, one must first know early Jewish views on these topics. The main Jewish view on salvation gleaned from

Thompson poses that the earthly things that Jesus refers to are the things that were spoken of just prior to this statement and the heavenly things are those that come after this statement. See Thompson, *John*, 83-84. See also George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Second Edition, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 49-50.

Michaels interprets heavenly and earthly knowledge as metaphor or parabolic due to how Jesus uses parable and metaphor in the Synoptics to reveal the hidden things of God. See Michaels, *Gospel of John*, 193-94.

³⁵⁶ Cf. *1 En.* 6-11; 68-69.

³⁵⁷ Cf. *1 En.* 41-44; 51:3; 59-61; 71:1-4.

Keener references *4 Ezra* 4:5-9, 21 in regard to the Jewish tradition concerning earthly and heavenly wisdom as opposed to a response to the Gnostic tradition. He points out that this likely references *Wis. Sol.* 9:15-16. See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 559-60; See also Thompson, *John*, 83-84.

Early Jewish texts is that the righteous who kept the covenant and who practiced good works were those that would receive God's mercy at the final judgment and granted eternal life.³⁵⁸ Jesus also presents his own teachings on judgment according to deeds. (3:19-21; cf. 5:29). The Pharisees and chief priests of Jesus' audience would have been among those that would have seen themselves as righteous and among those that would receive the mercy of God in the last day and be granted eternal life. They would have based this upon the fact that they strictly adhered to the Law of Moses and even went above and beyond the keeping of the covenant by following all the traditions passed on to them put into place so that they would not break the covenant. They would also have seen their good works outweighing all the rest of their fellow Jews. Jesus also teaches concerning good deeds that secures one eternal life, but his teaching would be shocking and unlike any belief that his Jewish audience would have held. Jesus speaks of only one "good" deed that one needs to inherit eternal life, belief in the "Son of Man." As it has been seen previously, Jesus' self-identification as the "Son of Man" is also redefined and completely unlike what the Jews would have expected. This "Son of Man," as Jesus identifies, is not just the expected Messiah but the incarnate deity himself that has the right and ability to grant eternal life.

For the Jews, judgment would be upon those that practiced evil deeds.³⁵⁹ The receipt of judgment was especially designated for those Gentile kings and nations that persecuted the Jewish people such as the Seleucids in the second century BC and the Romans in their present day. Later texts indicate that judgment would also be upon apostate Jews who forsook the

³⁵⁸ Cf. *I En.* 40:9; 58:3-4; 71:15 see also concerning the reward of the righteous *I En.* 62:14-16; *Ps. Sol.* 3:12; 14:9.

³⁵⁹ *Ps. Sol.* 2:34-35, 38; 13:9-11; 14:4-7; 15:13-14; *Wis. Sol.* 3:18; 5:1; 4:20-5:14; 11:9; 12:22; 16:5-14; *I En.* 11:7; 22:8-14; 45:3-6; 47:3-4; 51:3-5; 61:8; 62-63; 69:27-29; 95:5; 100:4-5; 104:5; 1QH IV, 20-21, 26; VI, 18-19, 29-30; 1QM XI, 16; 11QMelch; CD VII, 9, 11-12; VIII, 1-2; XIX, 6-16; 1QS II, 7-8; IV, 12-13.

covenant for positions of power and supporters of institutions that contradicted the Law. The presence of the Messiah is often associated with the coming eschatological judgment whether the role of judge was God himself or the messianic figure. Inevitably, his coming would inaugurate the eschaton and final judgment. Thus, John's Jewish audience would have expected the Messiah to teach about judgment, salvation, and other eschatological themes as they relate Jesus' self-identification as the "Son of Man." However, Jesus will take their known Jewish beliefs and redefine them in a radical way that would have been completely unexpected. The revelation of the "Son of Man" meant eschatological judgment (*Parables*), but Jesus makes a contrary statement saying that the "Son of Man" did not come to judge (3:17; cf. 8:15; 12:47) but to save. The implication is that Jesus would have been well familiar with the eschatological judgment beliefs of his audience which is why Jesus explicitly states that his role as the "Son of Man" is not judgment but salvation. He also defines "evil" deeds as unbelief.

There are a few elements of judgment that are brought out in this passage. These elements are the one who judges, the mode of judging, the place of judgment, and the recipients of judgment and why they are being judged. These are the elements that frequently come up in the various passages with a few of the passages adding an element or having a different or added aspect of judgment. The term 'judge,' as far as eschatological judgment is concerned, is not explicitly used in this passage this way, but there are implications in this passage that show the above elements of divine judgment.³⁶⁰ The one who judges the world is the Son (3:17) but interestingly, the focus does not start off with condemnation but with salvation. For the Jews, the

³⁶⁰ D.A. Carson notes that the verb *krino* can be translated as 'judge' in this passage but the context here and other places used in John shows it in the adverse sense of the word which causes a better translation as 'condemn' (*The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 206). Beasley-Murray notes a dual meaning of 'separation' and 'condemnation' (Beasley-Murray, *John*, 51).

world would have represented the Gentiles, those not part of the covenant, and the Gentiles in Jewish thought were already condemned. The salvation of the world was something contrary to Jewish belief. The Jews believed that judgment was to come upon the Gentile nations, especially those that directly oppressed Israel.³⁶¹ The salvation of the world would have been one of the farthest things from the minds of the Jews. Jesus turns the tables and shows that the desire of God is not to condemn the world (Gentiles) but to save the world. For Nicodemus, this would likely have been a foreign concept since the salvation of the world was the last thing he would have expected a teacher of Israel to have as the foremost priority for the sending of the Messiah. The Messiah was supposed to be the one to conquer the world and cause all the nations to submit to him and judge the world because of their sin. Jesus turns the Jewish notion of the Messianic Judge on its head as he redefines the purpose of the Messiah.

The mode of judgment is also in view. Jesus places belief in him as the determining factor of who will be saved and who will be condemned. Jesus is also judging in the present tense in this passage when he talks about the one that does not believe is *already* condemned (3:18).³⁶² There is an imminent judgment present, but it is passive. Jesus keeps with his word that he did not come to judge. This also keeps with a Jewish belief of one's fate being sealed upon death and with the belief of one being judged according to deeds.³⁶³ Here Jesus presents the belief that the only "good" deed one needs to inherit eternal life is the belief in the name of the only begotten Son of God and anything else would be considered an "evil" deed which would

³⁶¹ This is a prevalent theme in the *Ps. Sol.*, esp. 2, 17, and 18, *The Parables*, and *4 Ezra*.

³⁶² Carson notes that this is the reason for the mission of the Son, because the world already stands condemned (*John*, 207).

³⁶³ Keener notes that most Jews would have believed that judgment was mostly designated for the final judgment and not in the present tense. The emphasis in this passage is that there is a sense in which there are aspects of the final judgment that are already taking place. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 571-74.

have garnered judgment, especially the deed of unbelief. There is also an aspect that judgment does come into the world with the coming of Messiah just not a judgment expected by the Jews. Unbelief causes one to be judged already.³⁶⁴ In Jewish thought, the pervasive method of judgment, as for the earthly aspect, was something done by the Messiah in his conquering of the nations and vindication of Israel and not something that had “already” happened.³⁶⁵ In the place of eschatological judgment, condemnation was not supposed to happen until the last judgment. The “already” nature of this judgment shows that there is an aspect of present judgment as eschatological. The end times judgment has already begun with the coming of the Son in the world.

The recipients of condemnation and salvation are not defined in the same way that the Jews would have viewed this. For the Jews, salvation was for the Jews and those proselytes that entered the faith. However, Jesus opens up salvation to whomever in the whole world (3:16). This goes against all Jewish nationalistic beliefs of salvation. There is also a contingency that Jesus places on salvation, it is for the one who believes in the Son and not based on righteousness and the deeds that people do nor is it based on one’s Jewish nationality. Another thing that Jesus does is redefines good and evil deeds. Those who do evil are ones that love the darkness and hate the light (3:19-20).³⁶⁶ They are also condemned because they do not believe in

³⁶⁴ Beasley-Murray brings out the importance of Jesus’ judgment being in the present tense as opposed to future judgment (Beasley-Murray, *John*, 51).

³⁶⁵ Travis says that there is a deterministic feel to the passage yet also a stress on human choice and responsibility. See Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God*, 266. See also Keener’s argument for how the Jews would have understood the tension between God’s predestination and human responsibility; *Gospel of John*, 572-74.

³⁶⁶ Fitzmyer surveys similar themes in Qumran literature compared to those in the Gospel of John such as creation, dualism, the Spirit of Truth, love of community members, and other parallels. His assertion is that the similarities link the Gospel of John to a thoroughly Jewish background. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Qumran Literature and the Johannine Writings” in *Life in Abundance: Studies of John’s Gospel in Tribute to Raymond E. Brown*, Edited by John R. Donahue, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), 117-33.

the Son (3:18).³⁶⁷ Thus, evil is redefined as one who does not believe in the Son and good is redefined as one who has put their faith in the Son.³⁶⁸ The evil deeds that the Jewish leaders expected to bring condemnation would be blatant things such as murder, theft, adultery, idolatry, etc. On the other hand, Jesus says that the evil deed that causes condemnation is unbelief and rejection of the Son. Believing in the Son brings salvation and no longer condemnation. “The criterion for judgment is not righteousness or good works, but faith.”³⁶⁹ This also has nothing to do with a place in the Abrahamic covenant as a Jewish native. Carey notes that eschatological views of John repeatedly mention views of judgment and the afterlife but the way to get to eternal life is through the Son.³⁷⁰ This is a completely different view of salvation than just maintaining one’s righteousness and good works. Although Jesus redefines good and evil deeds, he does not change the Jewish belief that all men will be judged according to their deeds. John presents Jesus as wanting to make sure that his audience truly understands what good deed garners one eternal life and not condemnation.

Richard Bauckham also considers a comparative study between how light and darkness were understood at Qumran compared to how it is used in the Gospel of John. He argues that the uses between the two sources are completely dissimilar and the sources at Qumran are not needed to understand John in an Early Jewish context because there is enough information from other Early Jewish sources to argue for an Early Jewish background to John. See Bauckham, *Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*, 125-36. Although this may be the case, understanding Jewish ideas concerning their own understanding of light and darkness will help one better understand the mindset of Jesus’ audience when he gives his own definition of light and darkness and how they relate to his overall role as messianic judge.

³⁶⁷ J. Ramsey Michaels notes that the condemnation of those that do not believe is self-inflicted and God has no need to judge one that is self-condemned (*The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 203-04).

³⁶⁸ Michaels notes the explicit dualism in 3:18 to show an obvious distinction between the two categories (*John*, 204).

³⁶⁹ Michaels, *Gospel of John*, 204.

³⁷⁰ Greg Carey, *Ultimate Things: An Introduction to Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005), 118.

In John 9:1-41 Jesus uses a real-life illustration of a man born blind to show how the “Son of Man” came into the world to save and to judge. In 9:37 Jesus directly identifies himself as the “Son of Man” to the former blind man who immediately believes and proceeds to worship Jesus.³⁷¹ Jesus’ responds and says, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind (9:39).” Köstenberger notes that the judgement referred to here is a division of humanity into believers and unbelievers.³⁷² In the Jewish mindset, Jesus’ response would make sense because this was one of the primary objectives of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch*. However, Jesus also indicates what that judgment practically and spiritually looks like which is indicated in the second half of that statement and in 9:41 when he says, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.” This statement is directed right at the Pharisees who would have expected the “Son of Man” to judge mankind according to their sins but they would have seen themselves as righteous and ones that did not sin or at least their good deeds far out weighing their sins. They also considered the man born blind as the sinner and one that would receive punishment because of his sin (9:34). However, Jesus completely reverses the recipients of judgment. The Pharisees, who saw themselves as righteous, are the ones who are “blind” and in their sins and will be the ones that receive the judgment that Jesus says that he, the “Son of Man,” came into the world to execute.

³⁷¹ Beasley-Murray notes, “προσααητησβν is commonly translated, “he worshiped him”, but this is doubtful, κννέω means “to kiss,” its extension in προσκυνάω reflects the Eastern custom of prostrating oneself before a person and kissing his feet, especially of one viewed as belonging to the supernatural world, e.g., a deified king.” See Beasley-Murray, *John*, 159.

³⁷² Köstenberger, *John*, 295.

John 5:21-30

Jesus' teaching about judgment in John 5:21-30 is contained within a much longer monologue (5:19-47). In order to understand what prompts this monologue, one must first consider the context of the events that just took place. These events took place in Jerusalem in an area of the city that would have been well known and received a lot of traffic. John tells the reader that these events took place on the Sabbath. All four Gospels make it a point to show that Jesus purposefully healed on the Sabbath in order to make a point about the nature of his identity and also to use the Sabbath healing to make a point regarding the hypocrisy of the Jewish leadership (cf. Matt. 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-3:6; Luke 6:1-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-5; John 9:1-34). The healing in John 5 serves the same purpose. The focus of Jesus' teaching comes as a response to the reaction of the Jews in 5:18 which says, "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God." Jesus' response shows that the Jews are being portrayed as illegitimate judges of Jesus. In the Synoptics, Jesus argues that it is lawful to do "good" on the Sabbath. None of Jesus' actions actually broke any of the Levitical laws. Thus, the Jews were acting as illegitimate judges of Jesus and seeking to put him to death for breaking a law that he did not actually break. Their other accusation was that Jesus was making himself equal with God. John 10:33 reveals that the Jews considered this as blasphemy and was why they were seeking to kill him. Claiming to be equal with God was not something that was covered under the Levitical law of blasphemy and in 10:34-36, Jesus will argue the contrary that the Scriptures do indicate men were said to be gods and yet there was no contention with this passage (cf. Ps. 82:6). Thus, John 5:18 shows two illegitimate reasons that the Jews were seeking to judge Jesus. The remainder of chapter 5 is a monologue in which Jesus claims to be the

legitimate judge of all mankind both imminent and eschatological and provides four witnesses to prove this legitimacy.

The interesting thing about this passage is the amount of courtroom language that comes out of it. Morris notes that the emphasis of this passage is heavily on the comparison of the Son to the Father and that Jesus' claims eventually show his oneness with the Father and believing in the Son is equated to believing in the Father.³⁷³ Jesus is seen to be both witness and judge and the Father is also witness and judge. Jesus is on trial and the Jewish leaders are also on trial. Jesus is acquitted based on testimony and the Jewish leaders are condemned based on testimony.

John 5 is the main passage in John where Jesus speaks the most concerning his role as judge. The context of this passage starts with Jesus healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. This healing would have gone unnoticed since the gospels are full of healings, but John makes it a point to tell his reader that it was the Sabbath on which Jesus healed this individual and strict Jewish law forbade doing work on the Sabbath. This was the first thing that caused the Jews to want to persecute Jesus (5:16) but the thing that made them want to kill him was because Jesus was calling God his own Father (5:17-18). The rest of this discourse contains Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders of how he does have authority from the Father to do the things that he is doing and say the things that he is saying.³⁷⁴ Woven in this discourse is also a divine claim which Evans notes as he says:

When Jesus claimed that he was "one" with the Father he was in fact claiming to be equal to God (John 5:18). In many places Jesus claims the prerogatives normally associated with God himself. Jesus will raise and judge the dead (5:28–29). He is able to grant eternal life (5:21; 10:28). No one but God can do these things. Accordingly, when Jesus says, "I and

³⁷³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 275-298.

³⁷⁴ Carson shows that there is a stark difference in Jesus' response compared to other Sabbath responses since John writes that 'Jesus answered them.' He also notes that the verb used is in the aorist middle instead of the aorist passive which is in keeping with John wanting this passage to keep with the feeling of a legal proceeding (*John* 247).

the Father are one,” he surely means that he is equal to God. His accusers, therefore, are at least partially correct; Jesus has made himself God.³⁷⁵

One thing that should be noted is that the Jewish leaders were seeking to kill him prior to his claim as Messianic Judge and John does not indicate any more response from this section or from other parts of John that the religious leaders were seeking to kill him for a claim as messianic judge. The thing that they wanted to kill him for was claiming that God was his Father which was equating himself with God and would have been seen as blasphemy by the Jewish leadership of Jesus’ audience and blasphemy was punishable by death (cf. Lev. 24:16). What Jesus does claim about judge was already in the messianic traditions and expectations which Jesus was claiming for himself as he claims to be the Son of Man (5:27) but also claims divine status as Son of God when speaking about the final judgment (5:25). Thus, Jesus conflates the two titles into one person, himself. Köstenberger notes:

John also believes that God is a God of judgment and that this judgment will be executed in and through his Son, Jesus Christ (John 5:22-27, 30). John believes that Jesus, the crucified, buried, and risen one, will one day come again to bring about God’s final judgment of unbelievers (5:28-29). In this way John identifies God, the Life-Giver and Judge of humankind, with Jesus as one in character and purpose (5:26; 10:30).³⁷⁶

The exposition of John 3:16-21 expounded upon a few different elements that make up the office of messianic judge. John 5:16-47 also reveals the same elements of judgment. However, Jesus also adds to this his role in the final resurrection (5:21, 25, 28-29). The Jews would have associated that final resurrection with the coming of the Messiah, but Jesus makes these four radical statements in this passage indicating that he himself has to power of

³⁷⁵ Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 335.

³⁷⁶ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John’s Gospel and Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 280.

resurrection just like the Father. Thus, Jesus indicated that the “Son of Man” encompasses way more than what was ever expected by his Jewish audience, coequal with the Father. This goes back to the Jewish leaders reasoning for seeking to kill him.

Jesus starts his defense by telling the Jewish leaders that the only thing that Jesus does is what he has already seen his Father doing which includes raising the dead and judging (5:19-22).³⁷⁷ The reason he says this is because Jesus just finished telling them that he is at work on the Sabbath in the same way that his Father is at work on the Sabbath. The interesting thing about judgment here is that the Father is not the judge but the Father has passed judgment to the Son (5:22).³⁷⁸ Keener argues that Jesus’ claim as judge would have shocked many of his hearers.³⁷⁹ However, the context of this passage and all of the other passages concerning Jesus’ claim as judge does not see this reaction of his audience. The only thing that his audience is “shocked” by is Jesus calling God his Father. Thus, Jesus’ claim of the father delegating judgment to the “Son of Man” would line up with Early Jewish tradition that God designates another with authority to judge. This verse identifies who will be judging and the rightful place of judge falls in line with Enochic tradition. Jesus even identifies himself as the “Son of Man” which is one of the titles given to the Messiah in the *Parables of Enoch*. Jesus uses the Enochic tradition in this discourse that his audience would have been familiar with to redefine his role as the “Son of Man” as imminent and eschatological judge. John 5:27 directly links the role of eschatological judge to

³⁷⁷ Kruse notes that apprenticeship imagery is being used in 5:19-20 where a son would learn his exact trade from his father. See Kruse, *John*, 174. See also, Ridderbos, *Gospel of John*, 192.111

³⁷⁸ Cf. *1 En.* 61:5-8. Ellens references *T. Ab.* 13:2-3 where judgment is given to Abel to judge mankind which reinforces the force of Jesus’ statement in this passage. See Ellens, *Son of Man*, 56-57. Köstenberger notes that other than the *Parables* as the most explicit representation and the *Ps. Sol.* 17 of the Messiah enacting God’s judgment on his enemies, the Messiah remains in the background as far as judgment is concerned. See Köstenberger, *John*, 187-88.

³⁷⁹ Keener, *Gospel of John*, 651-54.

the “Son of Man.” This reference is the most direct link to the Danielic “one like a son of man” and especially the Enochic “Son of Man.” As it was seen in chapter three, the expectation of John’s Jewish audience was that God would pass the role of eschatological judgment to the “Son of Man.” However, as it was seen above, Jesus completely redefines what the expected “Son of Man” was supposed to look like. One of the main redefinitions that Jesus gives the “Son of Man” in this passage is that the eschaton is not being inaugurated at this time, but this is a time for salvation for all who believe in the “Son of Man.”

Life and death are also themes in this passage that help redefine the role of Messianic Judge. In Jewish thought, the judging of the living and the dead or the just and the unjust was designated to the final judgment. In part, Jesus shows himself in this role when he speaks concerning the final resurrection of the dead which ushers in the final judgment of those that have done what is good and those that have done what is evil (5:28-29). Another interesting thing to note here is that Jesus claims to have the power of resurrection. Resurrection was something that was closely associated with the “Son of Man” in both Daniel and the *Parables of Enoch* but the “Son of Man” nor any other messianic figure associated with the final resurrection at the last judgment ever instigate the resurrection. Early Jewish tradition always puts the power of resurrection only with God at the final judgment. Jesus not only makes a claim to have the right of the eschatological messianic judge, but he also teaches that he has the eschatological power of resurrection which was something that would be strictly something that only God himself could do. Thus, this is another claim from Jesus of one more aspect of divinity that he claims for himself.³⁸⁰

³⁸⁰ Carson notes that the Old Testament view of Resurrection was something designated to God and Jesus claiming this power takes this all important divine quality upon himself (*John*, 252-53).

This passage not only puts Jesus in an eschatological role as judge but also in a present tense role as judge. Jesus says that the time is ‘now’ that the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and will receive life (5:25). Carson notes that it is the voice of God in the Old Testament that gave life (Is. 55:3).³⁸¹ This section hearkens back to John 3 where Jesus talks about being born of the Spirit (3:5-6) and the place of salvation being given to those that believe in the Son (3:16-18). Jesus again repeats the place of good and evil in the place of judgment (5:29). The place of good are those that hear the voice of the Son and believe. Those who hear are the ones brought from death to life which reflects back on spiritual rebirth (cf. Eph. 2:1-10). Köstenberger rightly notes, “in an important sense, God’s judgment was already brought about by the light’s coming into the world in the incarnation of the Son (1:14). This coming of the light into the world, in turn, confronts people everywhere with the decision of whether to embrace the light or to go into hiding and persist in darkness.”³⁸² This also speaks against where the Jewish leaders thought that life resided which was in the Law of Moses (5:39) but Jesus shows them that it is this very Law that condemns them because the Law spoke about Jesus and the Jewish leaders did not believe him even though he was standing right in front of them (5:39-40, 45-47). The receivers of condemnation are the Jewish leaders because they did not listen to the mode of judgment which is the voice of Jesus. Believing the voice of Jesus becomes the means of salvation. These Jewish leaders are among those who have already been condemned (3:18).

The dialogue in John 8 has similar judgment themes as John 5 and is yet another passage where he is responding to the Pharisees accusation that his testimony about himself is not valid. Bultmann points out the irony of their dialogue as he says, “at the very moment when they think

³⁸¹ Carson, *John*, 256.

³⁸² Köstenberger, *A Theology of John’s Gospel and Letters*, 468-469.

they are passing judgment on him, he becomes their judge.”³⁸³ This passage hearkens back to chapters 3 and 5 where Jesus is talking again about light and darkness and testimony and judgment. Just like chapter 5, Jesus again uses courtroom language showing that the Father’s testimony and his testimony are enough to prove the true nature of his statements about himself. Jesus appeals to the highest possible witness, his Father (8:18). In this passage Jesus makes two statements about judgment, the Jews and his which he places in stark contrast with each other. His statements about judgment show that he does not judge by earthly standards but by heavenly standards (8:15-16).³⁸⁴ Jesus continues this contrast between himself and the Jews in 8:21-30 where Jesus indicates that he is from above and his claim that the Jews are from below and Jesus will then say that the ultimate proof that his statements about himself are true will be seen when the Jews lift up the “Son of Man” in crucifixion (8:28). This statement about judgment seems like an out of place statement because of what has been examined about where Jesus does claim to be a judge who passes judgment. Michaels thinks that this statement is better understood with the insertion of ‘by myself’ showing that Jesus is not alone in judgment but judges according to how the Father judges.³⁸⁵ However, one must also take into consideration that Jesus does not have to pass judgment because those who reject Jesus have already condemned themselves. Thus, Jesus has no reason to condemn them. The passage itself starts off with Jesus claiming to

³⁸³ Bultmann, *John*, 350.

³⁸⁴ Keener notes that Jesus was making this statement around the time of the Day of Atonement when his Jewish audience would particularly be contemplating God’s judgment. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 741.

Beasley-Murray notes the stark contrast of Jesus as the “authentic” and rightful judge compared to the Pharisees’ superficial judgment. See Beasley-Murray, *John*, 129.

³⁸⁵ Michaels, *John*, 480-81.

be the light of the world and those that follow him never walk in darkness (8:12).³⁸⁶ This again reiterates Jesus' redefinition of those who do good and those who do evil and by what standard all men will be judged. This would indicate that there are those who are walking in darkness, thus already condemned. Jesus also shows that his judging lies in contrast with how the Pharisees judge, which is by human standards, and how Jesus claims to judge, which is according to God's standards. The Pharisees would have judged according to one's works as to whether or not one would be saved, and Jesus has already stated that he is the standard by which men are saved.

Jesus also pronounces a judgment upon the Pharisees when he says that they will die in their sins (8:24). This caused them to react even more by asking Jesus who he was (8:25) and Jesus reiterates that this is something he has been spelling out to them from the beginning (8:26). The interesting thing is that even through this dispute many of the crowd were believing in Jesus during his conversation with the Pharisees. Thus, John is showing that Jesus is the one judging in the present. The crowd is seen as doing what is good and the religious leaders what is evil. Later in the passage Jesus shows the contrast even deeper between himself and the religious leaders as he comes back at them and judges them further by saying that the devil is their father (8:42-47). It is also in this chapter that Jesus makes his most controversial claim to being God in his 'I am' statement which links what he says directly to how God revealed his name to Moses (8:58). This claim gives Jesus even greater precedent of being seen not only as Messianic Judge but also the divine source of all judgment.

³⁸⁶ Carson explains how Jesus' statement is likely in association of the Feast of Tabernacles where light was common place every evening of the celebration and the imagery of light is often tied to God's salvation in the Old Testament, thus Jesus claiming to be the place of salvation (*John*, 337-39).

Keener brings one's attention to the "light of the world" with reference to Jesus' mission to save the world (cf. 3:16). See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 739.

John 12:20-36

This is an intriguing passage because it serves as a transitional point in Jesus' ministry and is the last piece of his public teaching ministry. The rest of Jesus' teachings in the Gospel of John will be directed towards his disciples as he prepares them for his crucifixion and departure from this world. This final piece is initiated by the coming of some Greeks who were seeking Jesus.³⁸⁷ However, John does not record Jesus' interaction with the Greeks but only Jesus' statements upon the information that some Greeks were seeking him. The presence of the Greeks as a culmination of Jesus' ministry causes the reader to recall Jesus' words in John 3:16 that he came to save the entire world which included Gentiles and not just Israel only.³⁸⁸ As it has already been seen, John's Jewish audience expected judgment to come upon the Gentiles but the presence of the Greeks here is in the context of salvation, not judgment. John shows that Jesus is again using his audience as a practical teaching tool of what he initially taught in John 3 and 5 concerning those that are saved and those that are already condemned. As it was seen above in the "Son of Man" section, there is a "Son of Man" saying directly associated with the Greeks seeking Jesus. There is exaltation language directly associated with Jesus' death and crucifixion which is completely contrary to the Jewish belief concerning the exalted and eternal position of the "Son of Man." This is evidenced by the crowd's statement in 12:34 where they say, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" As it was seen above, the crowd had various

³⁸⁷ Bruner notes that "the hour has come" in verse 23's reaction of the Greeks seeking Jesus is in the perfect tense and shows a completed action. He also links this to "it is finished" (which is also in the perfect tense as two endcaps to Jesus' passion week which mark the beginning and end of Jesus' redemptive work. See Bruner, *Gospel of John*, 713.

³⁸⁸ Keener links the coming of the Greeks to the implication that their arrival interprets the importance of all humanity coming to know him for who he really is. See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 872-81.

messianic beliefs and one of those beliefs stems from the exalted and eternal figure of the “Son of Man” in the *Parables of Enoch*. Thus, a Messiah that came to die by crucifixion made no sense to the Jewish mindset (cf. Matt. 16:22-23 Peter’s response to Jesus saying that he must suffer many things), especially since the “lifting up” of one being crucified was an accursed position (cf. Gal. 3:13).³⁸⁹

In the context of the Greeks seeking Jesus, John presents Jesus making one of his final statements about judgment which John’s Jewish audience would have had preconceived beliefs about. Jesus says, “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out (12:31).”³⁹⁰ For the Jews, judgment upon this world was a good thing for them because it meant their vindication and restoration. The Jews looked forward to the day that the Messiah would come and cast out the ruler of this world.³⁹¹ This is a major piece of the judgment passages in various Jewish texts such as the judgment on the “kings and the mighty” in the *Parables* and the judgment of the nations wrought out by the warrior Messiah in *Psalms of Solomon* 17. John’s audience may have associated the coming of the Greeks seeking Jesus (John 12:31) with what

³⁸⁹ Burkett notes that the possible connection of “lift up” to Isaiah 52:13 where glorification is seen in one’s death. He also shows how this connection of terms connects the “Son of Man” in John to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. See Burkett, *Son of Man in John*, 126-28.

³⁹⁰ Barret emphasizes the place of crucifixion that ultimately brings judgment upon the world and is also the place of Jesus’ ultimate glorification. See Barret, *John*, 426-27. It seems that Barret, as well as others, does not make much in connection to the coming of the Greeks and judgment.

³⁹¹ The *Parables* indicate two different ruling entities that will receive judgment. The Son of Man in the *Parables* is the one that will judge heavenly beings (61:8) and mighty men on the earth such as kings (48:8-9; 62:1-2).

Keener indicates many different possibilities that “the ruler of this world” might refer to such as an angelic or demonic figure such as Belial, prominent pagan deities, and the emperor. His main argument is that this is referring to Satan being defeated and dislodged from his authoritative position. See Keener, *Gospel of John*, 879-80. Thompson notes that in the DSS it is Belial that stands against the “prince of lights” (CD 5:18; 1QM 13:10; 15:2-3; 27:5-6) (*John*, 271). Bruner completely links “the ruler of this world” to the devil who receives his final judgment verdict because of the work of Jesus that overcame the power of the devil over this world up to this point in history. See Bruner, *Gospel of John*, 717-18.

they believed the Messiah's purpose was. Jesus shows instead that there is a direct connection of the Greeks to his plan of salvation. Instead of on the Gentiles, this judgment is on the rulers of this world. Interestingly, the Gospel of John only uses this term to refer to Jewish rulers and not to Gentile rulers as it relates to how this term is applied to a human figure (cf. 3:1; 7:26, 48; 12:42). Thus, one of the implications of this statement is that the Jewish rulers are the ones being judged because of their unbelief. This stands opposite to a Jewish view of the Gentiles as the recipients of the Messiah's judgment. There is also indication in the Gospel of John that the "ruler of this world" is referring to Satan as the one being judged (see also 16:8-11 for further context). The judgment of the rebellious angels was also one of the entities that would receive judgment as seen throughout Early Jewish literature (cf. *1 Enoch* 1-36). However, the main emphasis throughout the Gospel of John concerning imminent judgment are those that have already been judged because they do not believe in the Son. Jesus also indicates that this judgment comes when the "Son of Man" is lifted up or crucified which shows a contrast in the expected form of judgment from the Messiah. Thompson says, "With the death of Jesus, it might appear that the forces of evil have conquered, that those who betrayed Jesus have won. But in fact, by means of Jesus' death, the "ruler of this world" is judged, overthrown, cast out."³⁹² Regardless of whether the "ruler of this world" is spiritual or earthly rulers (or possibly both), it was expected that the Messiah or "Son of Man" would judge them. Jesus' claim to judge them as the "Son of Man" was expected but it is the means of judgment through defeat and death that would have been unexpected in the mind set of John's Jewish audience.

³⁹² Thompson, *John*, 271.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Early Jewish eschatological beliefs of John's Jewish audience are key to better understanding the intensity and radical nature of Jesus' teachings on his identification as the Messiah and his role as imminent and eschatological judge. Represented in the Gospel of John, Jesus' audience varied from the religious elite to the commoner. The chief priests were the religious elite who were literalists who strictly held to a literal interpretation of the Torah and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Pharisees were the most predominant religious sect in the first century AD and are the main representation of Jesus' audience. Their main concern was to not break the Levitical Law and even built a "hedge" around the Law in order to not break the Law. They had well developed eschatological beliefs and also would have likely been familiar with the views of the other Jewish sects and the Early Jewish literature produced in the Second Temple era. The Pharisees were seen as Jesus' main opponents, especially in relation to him doing or saying things that they considered unlawful or blasphemous. The Samaritans also only adhered to the Torah and had their own views concerning Yahweh worship and messianic expectation. It was seen that they expected a prophet like Moses to arise and teach them all things. The last group represented in this study was the crowd and the disciples. This group was the common everyday people who are identified to have a conglomeration of views, but it is quite evident from their words that they had developed messianic and eschatological judgment views. Jesus would have been quite familiar with each of his audiences and the dialogues and monologues reflect this. Jesus spoke to his audiences with verbiage that they would have already had definitions for and preconceived beliefs.

Each sect and social group of Judaism held to a nuanced view of messianic expectation and how the Messiah related to the eschatological judgment. Chapters two and three indicate that

messianic expectation was not only at an all-time high during this era, but there were also numerous views on what the Messiah would look like and the extent of his role in the eschaton. By the first century AD messianic expectation was very well nuanced in a few of the later Early Jewish texts. The three predominant views represented in the Gospel of John were that he Messiah would be a Prophet who also took on a kingly and teaching role, the promised Davidic king who would come in and defeat the Israel's enemies, and the heavenly "Son of Man" who would be handed the right to judge between the righteous and the wicked. In some of the passages in John, some of the roles were conflated and it was observed that the people had multiple expectations concerning the Messiah. Overall, the Gospel of John demonstrates that John's Jewish audience had robust and well-developed beliefs concerning judgment and the expected Messiah.

John's representation of Jesus as the "Son of Man" is a major piece of how he presents Jesus as the rightful eschatological messianic judge. Chapter three represents the rise of the Early Jewish belief surrounding the development of the "Son of Man." John's Jewish audience would have likely had well developed beliefs surrounding the messianic expectation of the "Son of Man." This is evident in the verbiage that John uses and a few of the responses of the audiences he represents in his Gospel. The main thing that John does is show that Jesus redefines most if not all of his audience's preconceptions surrounding the "Son of Man." A few of the redefinitions include the focus of his exaltation was in his crucifixion which was also the place of belief to receive eternal life, Jesus as the revealer of heavenly knowledge, and his role as imminent and eschatological judge where Jesus claims to not have come to judge which was contrary to the Jewish belief that the main role of the "Son of Man" was the eschatological judge. The modern interpreter of the Gospel of John is well served to fully understand Early Jewish

beliefs surrounding the “Son of Man” in order to better understand the radical nature of Jesus’ teachings concerning the redefinition of his self-identification as the “Son of Man.”

Early Jewish literature reveals that eschatological judgment was a major piece of Jewish belief throughout the Second Temple era and some documents place judgment as the central theme or devote major portions to the theme. As messianic expectation intensified, a shift was seen in the diminished role that God would take as the eschatological judge and it shifted to a messianic figure being given the right to judge. John 5:22 and 27 reveals that Jesus was well aware of this role and says that he is now one taking on this role. However, it was seen that Jesus completely redefines Early Jewish preconceptions concerning the role of the Messiah as the eschatological judge. Jesus indicates that his current role as judge is not to judge or at least judge in a manner that was expected by a first century Jewish audience. He indicates that there is an “already” aspect of judgment that surrounds belief in his person and work, but there is also a coming eschatological judgment of the righteous and the wicked which is initiated at the final resurrection which is instigated by the Son. Another piece of judgment that would have been shocking to John’s Jewish audience were the recipients of judgment. The religious leaders would have seen themselves as among the righteous who would receive God’s mercy and granted eternal life. However, John shows that Jesus indicates that they are the ones who stand condemned and it is the unexpected groups of people that receive eternal life such as the Samaritans and the Gentiles. John uses Jesus’ teachings to radically redefine his Jewish audience’s preconceived beliefs concerning Jesus’ role as the messianic judge. Again, the modern interpreter of the Gospel of John will highly benefit from knowing John’s Jewish audience’s beliefs about judgment and the messianic judge because they demonstrate the intensity and radical nature of Jesus’ eschatological teachings.

In conclusion, it is evident that John's Jewish audience, had well developed messianic beliefs concerning the role that the Messiah would take in judgment. John's verbiage in the Gospel of John indicates that he was quite familiar with the various beliefs of his audience. John uses familiar terms and definitions to define the true role of the "Son of Man" in imminent and eschatological judgment. The beliefs of John's Jewish audience reveal to the modern interpreter just how radical his redefinitions would have been to them. These differences aid the interpreter in showing the robust nature of Jesus' teachings about himself as they relate to all aspects of his person and work in the Gospel of John. When one knows and understands the contrasts, they will have a greater appreciation for what Jesus taught concerning his own person and work.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF THIS STUDY

Judgment is a common theme throughout many of the Second Temple documents. This study explored the Early Jewish texts which had the topic of judgment as one of their major themes. The role of eschatological judge throughout the Old Testament and earlier Second Temple sources is revealed to be God. However, late first century BC and first century AD Jewish documents see a shift and a greater expectation of a messianic figure taking on a more active role as the eschatological judge or taking on certain aspects of eschatological judgment and this is a role delegated to them by God. Thus, by the time Jesus begins his ministry, there was an embedded Jewish expectation that the coming of the Messiah would not only initiate the eschaton but that the Messiah would also participate in the eschaton in a judgment role.

Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus teaches concerning his own role as imminent and eschatological judge. The Gospel of John also reveals that Jesus' immediate Jewish audience had various messianic expectations which would also reflect the beliefs of John's Jewish audience. John wrote on topics that would have been familiar to his Jewish audience and would have used familiar terms and phrases when defining Jesus' messiahship. Chapters two and three sought to indicate the extent of the beliefs that his Jewish audience would have likely been familiar with concerning messianic expectation as it relates to judgment and the role of judge. More specifically, chapter two considered the criteria of deeds by which Early Jews believed they would be judged, the identity of the righteous and the wicked, the extent of the judgment, and messianic beliefs and his role in the eschatological judgment, if present. This chapter observed that eschatological and messianic beliefs become more nuanced with greater involvement of the Messiah within the half century or so prior to the ministry of Jesus which indicates that the Jews

would have had well-formed eschatological and messianic beliefs by the time Jesus started his ministry. This chapter also observed the belief that the coming of the Messiah meant that the eschaton was upon them and final judgment was very near. John's Jewish audience would have had or known about certain beliefs that the Messiah would act as judge in some capacity. All of these themes and beliefs are reflected throughout the Gospel of John and have been thoroughly explored throughout chapter four of this study. Thus, John presenting Jesus as the messianic judge would not have been a foreign concept to his Jewish audience.

Chapter three primarily focused upon the identity of the "Son of Man" in Early Jewish belief and what John's Jewish audience would have associated with his representation of Jesus' self-proclamation as the "Son of Man" in the Gospel of John. One of the objectives of chapter three was to demonstrate that there was an established Early Jewish tradition and beliefs concerning the "Son of Man" which would have already been present by the start of Jesus' ministry. This is evidenced in the Gospel of John as the represented audience reveals their own rebuttal to Jesus' teachings about the "Son of Man" (cf. John 12:34). Chapter three indicates that the Early "Son of Man" tradition follows the Danielic tradition of the exalted "one like a son of man" in Daniel 7:13-14. This is evidenced in the *Parables of Enoch* (1 Enoch 37-71) and *4 Ezra*. This study concludes that the *Parables* were of great significance in helping shape what John's Jewish audience would have believed about the "Son of Man." It is likely that both John and his Jewish audience would have been familiar with these teachings due to many of the similarities found in John's presentation of Jesus' teachings compared to the themes found in the *Parables*. One of the main pieces of information from the *Parables* that informs this study is that the *Parables* speak to the fact that God passes judgment to the "Son of Man" (*1 Enoch* 61:5-8) and this is a claim that Jesus makes for himself in the Gospel of John (John 5:22, 27). This figure in

the *Parables* is also seen to be the Messiah and Jesus closely associates the “Son of Man” with messianic expectation throughout his teachings in the Gospel of John. John’s Jewish audience would have been familiar with the traditions and beliefs concerning the “Son of Man.” They would have had a basis for when Jesus proclaims himself to be the “Son of Man” and teaches theological themes that would have been closely associated with the “Son of Man” that had already been established prior to Jesus’ ministry.

Chapter four first considered the identity of the audiences that John represents in his Gospel and their relevant eschatological and messianic beliefs. The audiences would likely be similar to John’s immediate Jewish audience. The background information aids the modern interpreter to understand Jesus’ teachings through this particular Jewish mindset. Each social group inevitably had their own beliefs concerning various theological topics, but it was concluded that the different Jewish sects and social groups were familiar with the views that the others held. This meant that John’s Jewish audience would have understood the theological implications of Jesus’ teachings since Jesus uses similar vocabulary to teach what he was seeking to convey about himself.

John represents Jesus as having the right to judge because he is the “Son of Man.” Thus, this study explored the full implications of Jesus as the “Son of Man” as understood in the Gospel of John. It was observed that John represented a contrast of Jesus’ teachings of himself as the “Son of Man” with what would have been believed by his Jewish audience. John nuanced them in a way that would have caused his audience to reevaluate their own messianic expectations. The conclusion drawn is that John’s representation of Jesus as the “Son of Man” would have been radically different from the preconceived beliefs of John’s Jewish audience. Not only were Jesus’ teachings about the “Son of Man” radically different but his teachings

about his role as judge were also unexpected, especially when he claims that the “Son of Man” did not come to judge since Jewish belief saw the revelation of the “Son of Man” directly associated with the final judgment. Another radically different aspects of judgment that Jesus taught was judgment according to deeds where the only deed that led to eternal life was belief in the Son as opposed to a weighing of good and evil deeds. Jesus also indicated that those that believed themselves to be righteous were lost. He taught that salvation was for the world which went against Jewish nationalistic beliefs. Overall, chapter four sought to show just how radically different John’s representation of Jesus’ teachings were compared to the preconceived beliefs of his Jewish audience. These conclusions will aid the modern interpreter of the Gospel of John to see Jesus’ teachings in light of the beliefs of John’s first Jewish audience.

The purpose of this study was not just to demonstrate just how radical Jesus’ teachings were concerning his role as messianic judge in light of the beliefs of his immediate audience, but to argue that knowing the views of John’s Jewish audience on any given theological theme will help one understand and interpret Jesus’ words more fully. This study has sought to consider how John’s immediate audience would have heard and possibly reacted to the words of Jesus. This study also reveals that Jesus’ teachings would have been quite radical to the ears of John’s Jewish audience. John represents Jesus using the vernacular and familiar Jewish beliefs, but his teachings would have been unlike anything else that would have been taught by any of the other religious leaders. This leads to the hermeneutical implications which argue for a more amplified and illuminated way to interpret the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John.

HERMENEUTICAL IMPLICATIONS

One of the hermeneutical implications of this study is to amplify the meaning and demonstrate the benefit of hearing Jesus’ teachings from the perspective of John’s initial Jewish

audience. His Jewish audience would have had centuries of traditions and beliefs which would have influenced how they would have heard and understood Jesus' teachings and ultimately how they would have responded to his words. The modern interpreter starts to understand why it was so difficult for Early Jews to accept the teachings of Jesus. In essence, his teachings were radically different from the traditions and beliefs that were common to many Early Jews. Although the meaning of the text does not change, having a sufficient understanding of Early Judaism will illuminate nuances in Jesus' teachings that are easy to miss if one is not familiar with the beliefs of a first century Jewish audience. When one understands the beliefs of John's Jewish audience, he will start to better understand why Jesus says some of the things that he says. In some cases, Jesus completely argues against a certain belief and in others he nuances it in a different direction, thus redefining how something was originally understood. However, if one is not familiar with the said Jewish belief, then he will miss out on Jesus' full implications of his teachings. Thus, understanding the beliefs of John's Jewish audience will add hermeneutical amplification and illumination to the interpretation of the Gospel narrative.

Another hermeneutical implication of this study is it helps one understand the words of Jesus in their first century AD Jewish context. Jesus did not teach in a vacuum. Jesus used words and phrases and taught concepts that would have been familiar to his audience. The eschatological topics such as judgment, resurrection, salvation, messianic expectation, and others had deep rooted backgrounds in Judaism. These beliefs were mainly rooted in the Old Testament, but there are many nuances that were influenced by many of the surrounding nations and their cultures which do not find their origins in the Old Testament. This study has sought to reveal just how vast the depths of Early Jewish beliefs on the topics of judgment and messianic expectation actually span. Jesus' teachings spoke on topics that first century Jews would have

been quite familiar with. Thus, when Jesus claims that all judgment was passed to him because he is the “Son of Man,” Early Jewish literature reveals that this would not have been a foreign concept to them. Their own Jewish traditions allowed for God to pass judgment to a messianic figure. From this example and the many others in this study, one can clearly see that having a background in Early Judaism helps one to understand Jesus’ teachings in their Early Jewish context.

WHY STUDY SECOND TEMPLE LITERATURE?

Background Information

Second Temple literature provides immensely valuable background information for NT biblical studies.³⁹³ Over the past thirty years, especially, there has been a significant influx in Second Temple Jewish and Christian Studies. The trend in NT interpretation has been to get its biggest portion of background information from the Old Testament and a few other historical texts that help fill in some of the gaps. This is where study of Second Temple literature needs to come in and not just surface level but deep study. The goal is to get the interpreter to see the usefulness of Second Temple literature to NT study.

³⁹³ Two key sources are a good starting place for Jewish texts that stand behind various NT passages. For a focus on Gospel studies, see Darrell L. Bock and Gregory J. Herrick Eds. *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005). This book gives the Gospel passage and title and then quotes the entirety of the Jewish text that relates to it. The editors also include historical sources such as Josephus as well as Rabbinic literature that informs certain aspects of the Gospels. Evans provides lists and descriptions of texts that inform NT study and he also provides extensive bibliographies of secondary sources which aid the interpreter regarding the given ancient text. One of the most helpful features is a list of NT passages and verses with possible parallels to various ancient texts (342-423). See Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Study: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005).

Theology and Religious Belief

Theological and religious belief is one of the main background features that is helpful to understanding the Jewish setting of Jesus' day.³⁹⁴ One of the main things this helps with is understanding what a first century Jewish audience believed while reading or hearing the teachings of Jesus. Understanding the beliefs of the original Jewish audience will queue the interpreter in understanding why Jesus says some of the things that he does. Also, Jesus would have known many of the beliefs from these texts which becomes evident in much of his teaching. Thus, an understanding of Second Temple literature will help the interpreter have a fuller understanding of what Jesus was teaching the people and the interpreter will be able to give a more informed interpretation of the text.

Most of the theological themes in the teachings of Jesus have a parallel in Jewish literature. However, Jesus also presents many of his teachings that are going to have a radically different nuance than what his contemporary Jewish teachers were teaching. Most of the time, this difference of nuance is not very noticeable from the NT text alone. Jewish literature aids the interpreter to see this difference.

Interpretive Keys

Until recently, many if not most interpreters have largely ignored the impact that Second Temple Jewish literature has had on the development of the NT. One of the reasons that interpreters have ignored this body of literature is because both Jews and Christians consider this

³⁹⁴ There are several introduction to Second Temple Judaism books that will aid the interpreter with theological background information, see Susan Docherty, *The Jewish Pseudepigrapha: An Introduction to the Literature of the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014); George W.E. Nickelsburg and Michael E. Stone, *Early Judaism: Texts and Documents on Faith and Piety* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009); James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

material non-canonical (and for good reasons).³⁹⁵ Although it is not inspired scripture, this does not mean that it is not extremely useful in helping one to understand inspired scripture. One of the goals of hermeneutics is to understand the text as fully as possible and to understand everything in it and surrounding it before seeking to establish a final interpretation.

Unfortunately, many books on hermeneutics still do not treat the usefulness of Second Temple literature in the interpretation of the New Testament.³⁹⁶ The Gospels alone are not enough to understand the rich dynamic that lies behind much of the teachings in the Gospels concerning resurrection and eternal life. This is one place that Jewish texts can play a major role in helping the interpreter better understand the gospels.

An Example of Further Study: Sheol, Hades, and Hell

One of the disconnects between the OT and the NT is the place where the dead end up. The OT is quite vague on the afterlife. Those places in the OT that interpreters say point to a belief in the afterlife often read into the text something that may not have been intended by the original author. This is another place that Second Temple literature is extremely helpful in understanding the development of the concept of ‘hell.’ Second Temple literature is especially helpful when seeking to understand what Jesus meant when he said there was a place with

³⁹⁵ This is probably the main excuse that I have heard to why fellow students will not even consider reading any of this body of literature. In fact, I have heard people call it ‘heresy’ even though they are completely ignorant to its contents.

³⁹⁶ Although the following texts aid the interpreter in proper biblical hermeneutics, they do not give much if any treatment to the usefulness of Second Temple literature for NT interpretation, see, William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017). The latest edition does give more attention to Second Temple Background. Also, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012. Osborne is one of the few that does give treatment to the influence of Second Temple literature, see, Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), 158-172.

“weeping and gnashing of teeth” and what he meant with his references to “Gehena” or “Hades.”³⁹⁷

The New Testament concept of hell is not as explicitly described as it is in Second Temple Jewish literature. This is likely the case because a first century Jewish audience would have had a preconceived picture of hell as it is described in Second Temple literature. The problem comes in New Testament interpretation when the interpreter does not know what that picture is.

Second Temple Literature sees a significant increase in the development of the doctrine of hell. Russell says that one of the biggest changes between the OT and Second Temple era is a radical change in the survival of the individual soul or spirit after death.³⁹⁸ There is a greater certainty for the Jew what will happen to him when he dies.³⁹⁹ Overall, Second Temple literature provides the backdrop for Jesus’ teachings on hell which greatly help the interpreter understand what Jesus meant and what a first century Jewish audience understood. It is likely that Jesus did not go into much detail about hell and what eternal punishment looked like because he did not have to. A study of the Second Temple Background of hell compels the interpreter to understand just how serious Jesus was when telling his audience what was waiting for those who did not put their faith in him.

³⁹⁷ Papaionnou gives a very thorough and in depth treatment on the background of the references in the NT on the place that the unrighteous dead go upon death, see Kim Papaionnou, *The Geography of Hell in the Teaching of Jesus: Gehenna, Hades, the Abyss, the Outer Darkness Where There is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013). He gives critical OT and Second Temple texts that help inform NT interpretation concerning this doctrine (3-26).

³⁹⁸ D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200BC-AD 100* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 358-9.

³⁹⁹ Oesterley notes that Sheol is the typical place in the Apocrypha as a place where the soul goes upon death, but these are earlier Second Temple writings that have not yet seen the deep developments witnessed by the Jewish audience of Jesus, see W.O.E. Oesterley, *An Introduction to the Books of the Apocrypha* (Berkeley, CA: The Apocryphile Press, 2006), 100-01.

The study of Second Temple Jewish literature is an absolutely essential part of NT interpretation. The interpreter can only gain in their understanding of the NT through a deep study of Second Temple sources. One thing that is still lacking in this field is more focused work on drawing the parallels between Jewish literature and New Testament passages and themes. Unfortunately, this study can only do so much due to its constraints. Thus, a more comprehensive work will need to be completed to explicitly show the parallels and differences between the two. Present scholarship does well at descriptive works but often falls short to move toward interpretation of NT passages in light of Second Temple texts and this understanding the words of Jesus in light of how a first century Jewish audience would have understood his words.

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