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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT OF 1 ENOCH (KEBRĀN 9) AND THE THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF TEXTUAL VARIANTS IN 1 ENOCH 1:9, 14:2, AND 15:11

Introduction

The Book of Enoch holds enormous significance for research on Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity¹.

It is therefore surprising that relatively little attention has been devoted to a detailed analysis of its text. For many centuries, the Book of Enoch was practically unknown to the Western world. Its rediscovery occurred in the 18th century: the Scottish traveler James Bruce in 1773 brought three manuscripts of the Book of

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1. L. M. McDonald, "The Parables of Enoch in Early Christianity," in *Parables of Enoch: A Paradigm Shift*, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Darrell L. Bock (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 347.

Enoch from Ethiopia to Europe². On their basis, the first European translations were made in the 19th century – an English translation by R. Laurence³ and a German by A. G. Hoffmann⁴. This enabled scholars to include 1 Enoch in the academic discourse on intertestamental literature⁵. The first critical edition of the Ethiopic text with a scholarly apparatus was prepared by R. H. Charles⁶, who relied on the small number of manuscripts available at that time.

In modern times, the source base has expanded significantly⁷. Whereas older editions were based on only a few of the most important codices, the latest manuscript surveys have identified the existence of over one hundred and fifty Ethiopic manuscripts containing all or parts of 1 Enoch⁸. This rich manuscript corpus allows for more precise comparisons of textual variants and a better understanding of the process of transmission.

Among the most valuable extant Ethiopic manuscripts of 1 Enoch are, among others: Kebrān 9 (also designated as K-9), dated to the end of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century (considered the oldest complete copy of the work); the codex EMMML 2080 (Ethiopian Monastic Microfilm Library) from the 15th or possibly 14th century; Abbadianus 55 (probably 15th century); and British Museum Orient. 485, from the first half of the 16th century. These manuscripts come from the Ethiopian monastic tradition and formed the basis of the first translations and studies of the text. It should be remembered that the Kebrān 9 manuscript bears marks of later redaction; since it was copied and read in the Church, it may have undergone subtle linguistic or theological adaptations.

Kebrān 9 contains the Ethiopic translation of 1 Enoch divided into traditional parts. The text is arranged into five sections (The Watchers chs. 1–36, Parables

2. Gabriele Boccaccini, “James Bruce’s ‘Fourth’ Manuscript: Solving the Mystery of the Provenance of the Roman Enoch Manuscript (Vat. et. 71),” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 27 (2018): 237–38.
3. Richard Laurence, *The Book of Enoch the Prophet* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1883).
4. Andreas Gottlieb Hoffmann, *Das Buch Henoch in vollständiger Übersetzung, mit fortlaufendem Kommentar, ausführlicher Einleitung und erläuternden Exkursen*, 2 vols. (Jena: Crocker, 1833–38).
5. Gabriele Boccaccini, *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 1–3.
6. R. H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch, Edited from Twenty-Three MSS Together with the Fragmentary Greek and Latin Versions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906).
7. Henryk Drawnel, “An Introductory Bibliography for the Study of 1 Enoch,” *The Biblical Annals* 9, no. 1 (2019): 101–3.
8. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Ted M. Erho, “The Significance of Ethiopic Witnesses for the Text Tradition of 1 Enoch: Problems and Prospects,” in *Congress Volume Aberdeen 2019*, ed. Grant Macaskill, C. M. Maier, and Joachim Schaper, *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 192 (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 416.

37–71, Book of the Luminaries of Heaven 72–82, Dream Visions 83–91, Epistle 92–105) and two appendices: “The Narrative of the Birth of Noah” (chs. 106–107) and “The Second Book of Enoch” (108). The translation most likely arose from the Greek text (as confirmed by Greek loanwords and the lack of a Hebrew original)⁹. At the same time, the structure of the Ethiopic tradition differs from the Qumran discoveries – for example, the Ethiopic version contains the Book of Parables (chs. 37–71), which is missing from the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Ethiopic version does not include the material of the Book of Giants that is present in the Qumran finds. The text of Kebrān 9, as an early witness, constitutes a valuable point of comparison, in contrast to the numerous later copies characterized by partial unification of the text. Although the Hebrew original of 1 Enoch did not survive in the Western tradition, in Ethiopia a continuous transmission of the text has endured since antiquity.

The content of the Book of Enoch is deeply ingrained in Ethiopian doctrine and liturgy. This book is treated as part of the (Deuterocanonical) Ethiopian canon of Scripture, and it is read in the liturgical cycle during feast days. From the perspective of the history of religions, the process of creative reinterpretation of ancient Jewish traditions in the African cultural sphere is fascinating. An awareness of the later Christian reception of 1 Enoch is essential for the researcher: “the Ethiopic version of Enoch — although it originates from Second Temple period tradition — is not itself a text from the Second Temple period”¹⁰. In other words, when interpreting 1 Enoch in terms of the history of Judaism, one must take into account the filter of the work’s later Christian transmission¹¹.

The aim of the present study is to reconstruct selected parts of the 1 Enoch text, taking into account the Ethiopic manuscript tradition of K-9, and to determine the theological implications of the variants that have been identified. This will enable a better understanding of the religious ideas contained in the text and their development. In the further sections of the article, an analysis of three passages (1 Enoch 1:9; 14:2; 15:11) is presented in order to illustrate the methodology and to discuss how textual variants affect theological interpretation.

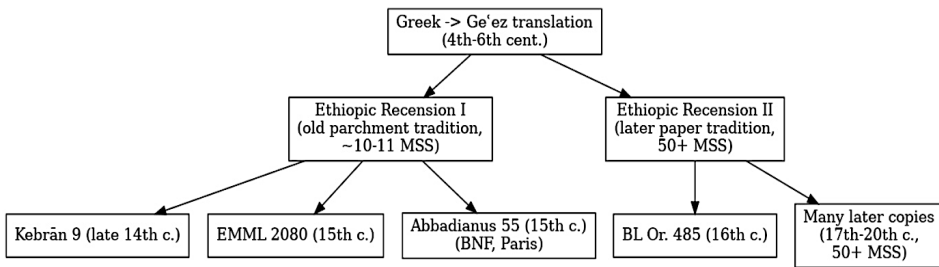
9. James C. VanderKam, “Enoch, Books of,” in *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 543–45.

10. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 16–28; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Origins of Evil in Jewish Apocalyptic Tradition: The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 in the Second and Third Centuries B.C.E.,” in *The Fall of the Angels*, ed. Christoph Auffarth and Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 87–118.

11. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of the Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017), 50–53.

Research Methodology

Classical methods of textual criticism were applied in the textual analyses. A preliminary reconstruction of the *stemma codicum* (family tree of manuscripts) of the Ethiopic 1 Enoch tradition was undertaken. As L. T. Stuckenbruck has shown, the preserved Ge'ez manuscripts can be divided into two main recensions: Ethiopic I – comprising approx. 10 of the oldest parchment manuscripts (including Kebrān 9, EMM 2080, Abbadianus 55) – and the later Ethiopic II, to which belong over 50 more recent witnesses (mostly on paper)¹². It can thus be assumed that from a single Ethiopic archetype of the translation, two principal branches of the tradition emerged: on the one hand, a small group of older codices preserving an archaic state of the text; on the other, a broad stream of later copies that are partially normalized editorially. The proposed *stemma codicum* illustrates this relationship (a schematic divergence of the tradition into two branches).



The relatively few manuscripts in the Ethiopic I line are distinguished by archaic features of the text, whereas the overwhelming majority of younger witnesses form the Ethiopic II line, reflecting a partial normalization of the text over the course of successive copies.

Textual variants were evaluated according to internal criteria, guided by the principle of *lectio difficilior potior* (i.e. the more difficult and less obvious readings were considered original, especially if attested by the oldest manuscripts). External textual witnesses were also taken into account, namely the Aramaic fragments from Qumran, the surviving Greek fragment from Akhmim, and quotations in early Christian literature. This makes it possible to compare vari-

12. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Ted M. Erho, “The Significance of Ethiopic Witnesses for the Text Tradition of 1 Enoch: Problems and Prospects,” in *Congress Volume Aberdeen 2019*, edited by Grant Macaskill, C. M. Maier, and Joachim Schaper, *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 192 (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 417–18.

ants across language traditions (Aramaic, Greek, and Ethiopic) and to identify possible glosses or interpolations.

In the course of analysis, potential marginal glosses (explanations in the margin later incorporated into the text) were noted, as well as secondary variants resulting from theological or stylistic adaptation, and also possible editorial interpolations added by redactors. Attention was also paid to probable corruptions of the text arising from scribal errors (for example, accidental joining or splitting of words). All these phenomena were considered in a comparative context—if a variant appeared only in part of the tradition (e.g. solely in K-9), it was compared with counterparts in other languages to assess its authenticity. In this way it became possible to isolate the original layers of the 1 Enoch text against the backdrop of later additions.

1. Text of 1 Enoch 1:9 – textual criticism and manuscript variants

1 Enoch 1:9: “Behold, [the Lord] comes with myriads of His holy ones to execute judgment upon all, to destroy all the ungodly, and to convict all flesh for all the works of their ungodliness which they have committed in an ungodly way, and for all the harsh words that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

In the available witnesses, this text has been preserved in essentially its full form, though minor lexical variants appear. The table below presents the key differences in the phrase “to execute judgment upon all/[them]”:

Textual variant (transliteration)	Translation	Witness	Manuscript type
kama yegbar fethā lācela k ^w ellomu	to execute judgment on all (of them)	K-9 (Kebrañ 9)	Eth. I (14th/15th c.)
kama yegbar fethā lācelēhomu	to execute judgment on them	most Ethiopic manuscripts (variant given by Charles’s edition)	Eth. II (15th–16th c.)
ποιῆσαι κρίσιν κατὰ πάντων	to execute judgment on all (of them)	Greek text (Akhmim)	4th c. (Greek)

As is evident, the K-9 manuscript contains the additional element *k^wellomu* (“all of them”)¹³, which underscores the universality of the judgment. Most later copies transmit the shorter form without this qualifier. This difference most likely stems from a divergent translation tradition. The Aramaic expression בשר לכל

13. August Dillmann, *Lexicon linguae aethiopicae* (Leipzig: T. O. Weigel, 1865), 807.

(“all flesh” = all people)¹⁴ could have been rendered into Ge‘ez either by attaching a pronoun “their” (*-homu*) to the verb, or by adding a separate word “all” (*k^wellomu*) for emphasis. It is possible that one of the readings is the result of a textual corruption – a scribe could have mistakenly joined or separated the expression during copying. In K-9 the form is written as *lācelēhomu* (with the pronoun “their” suffixed)¹⁵, whereas another manuscript, Abbadianus 55 (according to Charles’s report), gives *lācela k^wellomu* (with an independent “all”) – this points to alternative translation traditions.

Comparison with the Greek translation suggests that the fuller sense of the phrase is “to judge them all” (ἐλέγξει πᾶσαν σάρκα – “to convict all flesh”)¹⁶. Therefore, the variant with *k^wellomu* appears to be a secondary addition by a translator or scribe (added for clarity, functioning as a kind of gloss), or conversely, the shortened variant *-homu* could have arisen by the omission of the repetitive term “all” (following the principle of *lectio brevior*).

An Aramaic fragment from Qumran (4Q201) confirms the content of Enoch’s prophecy known from the Ethiopic translation: the preserved words indicate that “[the Lord will come] with myriads of [His] holy ones, [to execute] judgment upon all and to destroy all the ungodly and...” (the Aramaic text continues analogously; 1 Enoch 1:9 is also partially quoted in Jude 1:14–15). The Aramaic text, however, is incomplete – it is reconstructed on the basis of the quote in Jude 1:14–15 and the Ge‘ez version. The Greek version of 1 Enoch, reconstructed from the Akhmim codex and early Christian quotations, clearly contained the phrase καὶ ἀπολέσει πάντας τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς (“and will destroy all the ungodly”), which is absent in the Epistle of Jude 1:15. The author of Jude apparently quoted Enoch’s prophecy in abbreviated form, omitting the segment about the destruction of the ungodly, whereas the fuller version in 1 Enoch 1:9 contains both the motif of “judgment upon all” and of destroying all the ungodly. Early Christian witnesses confirm this: for example, Pseudo-Cyprian (3rd century) and the so-called Pseudo-Vigilius (6th century) in their writings cite Enoch’s prophecy with the addition *et perdere omnes impios* (“and to destroy all the ungodly”)¹⁷. This indicates that the Christian

14. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, trans. and ed. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 153.

15. Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Classical Ethiopic (Ge‘ez)*, Harvard Semitic Studies 24 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), 191.

16. Frederick W. Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 315, 915.

17. Pseudo-Cyprian, *Ad Novatianum*, ed. W. Hartel, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 3/3 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1871), 115; Pseudo-Vigilius Thapsensis, *Contra Varimadum Arianum*, ed. Benedikt Schwank, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 90 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1961), 145.

tradition knew this verse in extenso – perhaps directly from the apocryphon of 1 Enoch or from an expanded version of the Epistle of Jude itself.

1.1. The phrase *kata pantōn* – syntax and translation

In the Greek text of Enoch's prophecy (and thus in the Jude 1:15 quotation) the expression κατὰ πάντων appears. Literally it means "against all" or "upon all" and is connected with the concept of judgment. In the construction ποιῆσαι κρίσιν κατὰ πάντων, it means "to execute judgment upon all"¹⁸. The preposition κατὰ with the genitive often means "against" in a hostile or accusatory sense (one can speak here of a so-called *dativus incommodi*)¹⁹. Jude 1:14 states literally that Enoch "prophesied to (dative) these," i.e. τοῦτοις, which is understood as "against them" (to the detriment of these ungodly persons). However, in the phrase κατὰ πάντων itself, a genitive plural is used, which in the context of judgment means that the judgment is directed against all (the ungodly) or encompasses everyone²⁰. Syntactically this is a typical usage: the verb "execute judgment" (*krisin poiein*) with κατὰ + genitive of person means to carry out a judicial sentence upon someone. In translations this is rendered contextually depending on the language as "upon all" or "against all." Both versions convey the sense that no one will escape the coming judgment – it is universal in scope.

It is worth noting that in Jude 1:15 we further read καὶ ἐλέγξει πᾶσαν ψυχὴν – "and to convince (prove guilty) every soul [of all their deeds]." Here Greek ἐλέγχω means to expose someone's error, accuse, condemn – hence many translations render it as "to convict" or "to punish" everyone. In Biblical Greek, ἐλέγχειν with a direct object often specifically means "to condemn [for deeds]." Meanwhile, κατὰ πάντων after ποιῆσαι κρίσιν completes the sense, indicating that the judgment is aimed at everyone (the ungodly) or, in effect, that it applies to all. In context, the phrase is unambiguous in apocalyptic literature – it announces that God's judgment will reach all people without exception (implicitly all the ungodly, since the righteous are exempt from wrath; cf. 1 Enoch 1:8). Thus *kata pantōn* emphasizes the universality of the judgment. The phrase with Greek *kata* in Jude 1:15 is undoubtedly a calque from the language of Jewish apocalyptic. It is to apocalyptic literature (cf. 1 Enoch) that we owe the development of the idea that the Lord comes to judge all sinners. The Greek *kata pantōn* condenses this idea into a concise form that the Epistle of Jude adopted and applied in its warning.

18. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 839, 569.

19. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 511.

20. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 782.

1.2. Theological interpretation of 1 Enoch 1:9

The verse 1 Enoch 1:9 carries several important theological implications characteristic of early Jewish apocalyptic²¹. First of all, it emphasizes that God (the Lord) is the Judge of the whole earth, who comes personally (albeit with an angelic host) to execute reckoning. The image of the Lord descending from heaven with myriads of holy ones confirms God's sovereignty over history and the moral order of the universe – wickedness will not remain unanswered (cf. 1 Enoch 1:9). This scene expresses the belief that history is moving toward a moment when God will demand justice²². Theologically, it is a development of the idea of divine judgment already present in the prophets, but here extended to a cosmic and eschatological dimension. God appears as a warrior and judge coming at the end of time. This later influenced imagery such as in the Johannine Apocalypse (Christ coming on a white horse with the armies of heaven; cf. Rev 19:11).

Another important theological message is the universality of the judgment. Phrases like “judgment upon all” and “all the ungodly” and “every flesh” indicate that the foretold judgment is universal in character. In contrast to many older prophecies directed to a specific nation or group (e.g. judgment on Babylon, Egypt, Edom, etc.), here the scope is total – it concerns all humanity. Of course, in the context of Enoch it refers in particular to all sinners (the ungodly); nevertheless, the implication is that no corner of the world and no person will evade moral evaluation. Such universalism was a relatively new thought in intertestamental literature. It is in apocalypticism that the idea first appears that the Day of Judgment will encompass the whole earth and all people, not just Israel or its enemies²³. In 1 Enoch 1:9 we thus see a prediction of universal justice: God will judge both Jews and Gentiles – all who have proven to be ungodly. This vision prepared the ground for later concepts of final judgment in Christianity (e.g. Matt 25:32 speaks of the gathering of all nations before the Son of Man). The universalism of judgment here goes hand in hand with an ethical warning: what matters is the stance of each individual, regardless of ethnic affiliation or status – everyone will have to answer for their deeds and words.

The theology of 1 Enoch 1:9 presupposes a dualistic view of destiny. After a period of history marked by injustice, there will come God's intervention that will restore moral order. For the original audience of this book, it was a hope for

21. Paolo Sacchi, *Tra giudaismo e cristianesimo: riflessioni sul giudaismo antico e medio* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2010), 145–147.

22. George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 20.

23. John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 55–57.

ultimate justice. The experience of persecution or the observed impunity of evil-doers raised the question of the value of righteousness. Apocalypticism responds to this by asserting that God will come and judge everyone according to their works. In 1 Enoch 1:9 the promise indicates that the Lord will not only judge but indeed annihilate all the ungodly – which means the complete removal of evil from the world²⁴. The author of 1 Enoch develops this idea in subsequent chapters, speaking of the cleansing of the earth from the giants (the offspring of the fallen angels) and unclean spirits, and of the triumph of righteousness. Theologically, one can speak here of a consistent eschatology: the fullness of God's Kingdom will be realized only after the act of judgment and the elimination of evil. This conviction strongly influenced later Jewish and Christian thought – the ideas of final judgment, of hell for the wicked and reward (e.g. eternal life) for the righteous have their roots, among others, in Enochic literature.

It is also interesting that 1 Enoch 1:9 emphasizes accountability not only for “works of ungodliness,” but also for “hard (arrogant) words which sinners have spoken against [God].” This draws attention to the moral weight of words – pride and blasphemy are also subject to judgment. Enoch's theology thus stresses complete justice: people will be punished not only for evil deeds but even for defiant words against God. This elaborates on the idea that “by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned” (cf. Matt 12:37) – the idea of accountability for one's words appears here already in intertestamental literature.

In summary, 1 Enoch 1:9 is a short but theologically rich passage. It foretells God's final judgment, which is universal and just, distinguishing the fate of the ungodly (destruction) and the righteous. It highlights the eschatological hope for the restoration of moral order in the world. This passage also serves as a bridge between Old Testament prophetic thought, where “Day of the Lord” predictions are present, and the later New Testament eschatology, where these predictions are read in a messianic key²⁵. For the theology of Second Temple Judaism, 1 Enoch 1:9 is evidence of a developing doctrine of two ages: the present age of injustice and the future age established by God after the judgment. The universality of punishment and salvation present in 1 Enoch indicates that even before Christ there existed a concept of the salvation of a remnant of the righteous and the destruction of the wicked at the end of time – which later became a foundation of Christian eschatological teaching.

24. Annette Y. Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 72–74.

25. Richard H. Hiers, “Day of the Lord,” in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, vol. 2, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 83.

2. Text of 1 Enoch 14:2 – textual criticism and manuscript variants

1 Enoch 14:2: “I saw in a dream what I will now speak with the tongue of flesh and the breath of my mouth, which the Great One gave to men so that they might communicate with it and understand with the heart.”

Chapter 14 of 1 Enoch describes the famous vision of the heavenly palace (throne of glory)²⁶. In the quoted verse, an angel reveals to Enoch that his earthly life will come to an end and that he will not be allowed to remain in heaven any longer. In this sentence, attention is drawn to grammatical nuances related to possessive pronouns. In the Ge‘ez language, such pronouns usually appear as suffixes attached to nouns. Different manuscripts transmit a slightly different placement of these suffixes. Below, two variants are presented:

Variant phrase (Ge‘ez)	Literal translation	Witness
... ba-lesānēya za-segā ... ba-nafas ’af	“... with my tongue of flesh ... with the breath of [the] mouth”	K-9 (Kebrān 9) – suffix “-ya” on “tongue”, none on “mouth”
... ba-lesān za-segā ... ba-nafas ’af-ya	“... with the tongue of flesh ... with my mouth’s breath”	other Ethiopic manuscripts (e.g. Ethiopic II tradition) – no suffix on “tongue”, suffix “-ya” on “mouth”

Enoch states that he speaks with a human, fleshly tongue (*lesān sega* (ልሳን ሰገ), lit. “tongue of flesh”) and the breath/spirit of [his] mouth – in other words, by means of the limited faculties of human speech. The reading in the K-9 manuscript seems to emphasize the personal aspect (“with my tongue”) while keeping “mouth” general, whereas in most of the other copies the emphasis is reversed (speaking with a general “tongue,” but “with my mouth”). It is possible that a scribe in one tradition marked the possessive ending ambiguously, as a result of which in different readings the possessive pronoun was attached to a different part of the phrase. In the broader context, these differences do not change the essential meaning of the passage – Enoch is speaking with human language and voice, which contrasts with the speech of the mighty angels. However, the variant in K-9 (which can be considered a *lectio singularis* for this verse) highlights that Enoch is speaking with his own fleshly tongue, which underscores his human condition in the face of the revelation. This has theological significance, as it is a reminder of the limitation of man in contact with the divine realm. Enoch, though taken up to heaven, still uses human speech, not matching the perfect speech of angels.

26. Mirjam J. Bokhorst, *Henoch und der Tempel des Todes: 1 Enoch 14–16 zwischen Schriftauslegung und Traditionsverarbeitung* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 29–33.

It is worth noting that the original Aramaic phrase could have been “with a tongue of flesh and [with the] breath of [the] mouth,” where possessive suffixes may have been unnecessary – the subject would implicitly refer them to himself. The Greek Akhmim translation rendered “mouth” with a possessive pronoun (*toū stomatos mou*, “of my mouth”), perhaps to avoid ambiguity, whereas “fleshly tongue” (*glōssē sarkinē*) was left without a pronoun, emphasizing rather its kind (fleshly, human) than ownership²⁷.

In the second part of the verse, the Greek and Ethiopic translations are essentially consistent in content: “...which the Great One (i.e. God) gave to men so that they might communicate with it and understand with the heart.” The Greek translation uses the construction: “gave this to men, so that they might speak *en autois* (lit. ‘in them’) and understand with the heart,” where “in them” refers to the aforementioned instruments (tongue and breath). The Ethiopic text conveys this relationship using appropriate forms, for example by adding an explicit conjunction of purpose “so that.” For instance, in E. Isaac’s translation we read “...He gave to man (so that) he could speak with it – and so that they could understand with the heart...”²⁸. Thus, the sense is identical, though the syntax is adapted to the target language. We may surmise that certain variants among the manuscripts concern precisely the conjunctions and modal forms (e.g. adding an explicit “so that” or using different infinitival forms). Nonetheless, the sources uniformly convey the idea of a twofold purpose, because the gift of speech serves communication and understanding with the heart.

It is also worth drawing attention here to certain nuances that grammatical-syntactic analysis reveals. The manuscript variants of 1 Enoch 14:2 provide interesting material for linguistic analysis, especially regarding the grammar of the respective translations. Namely, in the Ethiopic language, possessive pronouns are most often expressed as suffixes attached to nouns. By analyzing the manuscript variants, one can suppose that two forms existed: one with the suffix on the word “tongue,” the other with the suffix on the word “mouth.” The Ethiopic term for “tongue” is *lsān* (ለሰን), and “flesh” is *sāga* (ሰገ, lit. “meat, flesh”). The expression “tongue of flesh” could take the form of a compound, i.e. *lsānā sāga* – which translates as “tongue [of] flesh.” If the pronoun “my” was added, there would be two possibilities: *lsānē sāga* – literally “my tongue [of] flesh,” or *lsānā sāgayē* – theoretically “the tongue of my flesh.” It should be noted, however, that constructions in Ge’ez with the pronoun attached to the second noun are rare.

27. Bokhorst, *Henoch und der Tempel des Todes*, 81.

28. Ephraim Isaac, “1 Enoch (the Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch),” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 269.

The first option is more probable – suffix *-ē* (first person singular) on *lsān*. Meanwhile, “breath of [the] mouth” in Ge‘ez is a phrase with the noun *nāfs* – spirit, breath (or *hayāt* – life-breath) – and the word *’af* – mouth. A possible Ethiopic reconstruction is *bə’nāfs afəya*, where *’af-əya* means “of my mouth” (with suffix *-ya* for first person after a consonant). However, different manuscripts could have distributed these suffixes differently. For example, K-9 might have *lsānē* – “my tongue,” and *’af* – “mouth” without suffix, understood generically, whereas another manuscript might have *lsān* – “tongue” without suffix, and *’af-ya* – “my mouth.”

This analysis clearly shows that the position of the pronoun slightly changes the translation of the text, which can read either “with my [fleshly] tongue and the breath of [the] mouth,” or “with the fleshly tongue and the breath of my mouth.” In both cases Ethiopic links these phrases with the conjunction *wä-* (*ፊ*, “and”), for example: *bəlsānē sāga wä-bä’afəya nāfs*, which we translate literally as: “with-tongue-my fleshly and with-breath-of-mouth-my.” The key point is that the word order in Ethiopic preserves a parallelism of the two parts, similar to the Greek translation, but the forms of the pronouns can differ between manuscripts.

In summary, the text of 1 Enoch 14:2 is well attested in the Ethiopic and Greek tradition, and the Qumran discoveries confirm its antiquity. The minor differences mainly concern the placement of possessive pronouns and synonymous syntactic structures.

2.1. Theological interpretation of 1 Enoch 14:2

The variant reading from K-9 in 1 Enoch 14:2 deepens the anthropological thrust of Enoch’s vision. The prophet, upon ascending to heaven, remains limited by his human nature – he speaks with a human tongue and voice. This highlights the distance between man and the divine realm: even a figure as exceptional as Enoch does not lose his human identity and limitations. The theological consequence is an accentuation of the grace of revelation. God conveys heavenly secrets to Enoch despite the prophet’s human “insufficiency.” At the same time, this points to a peculiar privileging of humanity – Enoch, using a human voice, can hear and then relay the word of God. In this context, several key theological motifs can be distinguished.

The first is expressed by the phrase “tongue of flesh,” which emphasizes Enoch’s corporeality and mortality as a human being. By these words the protagonist of the book makes it clear that what he is about to speak comes from a being of flesh, not from a spirit or an angel. In the context of the entire book, such a depiction of a human unquestionably contrasts him with heavenly beings, which are pure spirits. Here Enoch seems to be saying: “Behold, I, a man of flesh and blood, will

speak.” The hero acknowledges that his prophecy does not stem from any divine nature of his own (for he is a mortal), but from God’s grace. This motif is reminiscent of the prophets’ cry of their own unworthiness. For example, the prophet Isaiah confesses “I am a man of unclean lips” (Isa 6:5), and Moses states: “I am not eloquent... for I am slow of speech and of tongue” (Exod 4:10). Enoch does not complain of a lack of eloquence, but he points to his “fleshly tongue” – that is, a human tongue, which by its natural limitations can only describe what is human. He is faced with the task of describing heavenly things in human words. This implies a certain theology of revelation, namely that God’s mysteries must be “translated” into the language of humans (of flesh). In this way, 1 Enoch 14:2 anticipates a later theological problem: how to express what is divine in a limited human language. We have here a kind of foreshadowing of the incarnation of the word – not yet the Incarnate Word (Jesus) in the Christological sense, but the idea that God’s word comes to people in human form, through the physical speech organs of a prophet.

Another theological motif is the “breath of life” and the pneumatological dimension expressed by the term rendered as “breath of [the] mouth” (Etiopic *nāfs ’af* or *ḥawa ’af*, Greek *pneuma tou stomatos*), which literally means the breath, the exhalation coming from the mouth during speech. In biblical tradition, “breath” or “spirit” is closely related to the concept of spirit (Heb. *ruach*, Gr. *pneuma* can mean both). Hence this phrase also has a symbolic meaning: Enoch’s speech is not just a matter of the mechanics of articulation, but is connected with the spirit in man. In Genesis, God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life (Gen 2:7), making him a living being with a soul. The Midrashim and wisdom tradition develop this theme; for example, Sir 17:5–6 says that God “gave them counsel and tongue and eyes and ears and a heart to think with” and “filled them with knowledge and understanding.” We see a parallel here: humanity received from God language and understanding in order to communicate and comprehend the world. The author of 1 Enoch 14:2 seems to be alluding to this kind of teaching – “the Great One gave men the breath of the mouth so that they might communicate with it and understand with the heart.” This statement has a profound anthropological-pneumatological dimension. It assumes that there is a divine element in man (breath/spirit) by which man is a rational and speaking being. The gift of the “breath of the mouth” can be interpreted as the gift of life and spirit from God. Jewish theology sometimes linked breath with the Spirit of God sustaining life (cf. Job 34:14–15). Here the communicative function is especially emphasized – this spirit/breath allows humans to speak (communicate) and understand (know with their heart). From the perspective of pneumatology, one can discern in 1 Enoch 14:2 echoes of the idea that the Spirit of God given to man grants him the ability to know God. True, the author of 1 Enoch does not

explicitly speak of the Holy Spirit, but the conceptual background (*ruach* as the breath of life and speech) is undoubtedly similar.

The text explicitly also states that the ability to speak and understand is a gift from the “Great One” (i.e. from God). This is an important theological thought, indicating that language – human speech – is not a purely natural ability isolated from God, but something that God has bestowed and intended in His plan. This makes human speech a kind of sacred deposit – the use of words has a moral and spiritual dimension. Since speech comes from God, Enoch now uses it in God’s service (to convey His word). One can see implied here that the misuse of the gift of speech (e.g. in lies or blasphemy) is a betrayal of God’s gift. Within the context of the whole book, the contrast is clear. The fallen angels (Watchers) imparted evil secrets to humans (such as magic and weapons) and spread violence, whereas Enoch – a mortal – conveys God’s word in obedience. The gift of speech makes him a mediator between God and the fallen angels. This is a remarkable reversal of roles, because usually it is angels who instruct humans. The analysis of 1 Enoch 14:2 shows that it is a human who will instruct angels, which is only possible because God so ordained and equipped man with the capacity for speech and wisdom of heart. Theologically, one can thus speak of a high view of human nature: a human being, though fleshly, can, thanks to God’s gift, participate in the spiritual realm and communicate heavenly truths. This is one aspect of apocalyptic theology.

It is also worth emphasizing that the motif of the gift of speech as a gift from God in 1 Enoch 14:2 has an ethical resonance as well. The gift of speech as presented in this book carries a sense of sanctity, because it is given by God. In the context of the entire book, one sees that Enoch uses it to bless and proclaim righteousness, whereas sinners (whether human or angelic) abused words for blasphemy and lies. Thus this verse not only introduces a theophany, but in itself constitutes a lesson on the God–man relationship. It shows the role of the human being as the herald of God’s Word, noting at the same time that an “earthen vessel” (the human body) can carry a divine treasure (revelation) (cf. 2 Cor 4:7).

3. Text of 1 Enoch 15:11 – textual criticism and manuscript variants

1 Enoch 15:11: “The spirits of the giants, who do evil and are corrupt, attack, fight, and destroy [everything] on the earth and cause sorrow. They eat no food, do not drink, are invisible...”

This text is interpretatively challenging due to differences in the Ethiopic transmission. The main difficulty lies in the reading of the final verb. The K-9

manuscript preserves a unique form that is absent from the other Ethiopic manuscripts:

Variant (Ge'ez transliteration)	(Approximate) meaning	Witness
wa-yet'aqafū	"and [in no way] do they stumble / encounter an obstacle"	K-9 (Kebṛān 9) – only known MS with this form
'i-yet'āwaqū	"and they cause torment / create offense" (interpretation ambiguous)	majority of Ethiopic manuscripts (majority variant)

The above verse comes from the portion of 1 Enoch describing the origin of demons – the spirits of the deceased giants (offspring of the fallen angels and human women). It is a key passage on demonology, depicting the activity of evil spirits on earth. The literary context of chapter 15 explains that after the Flood, the souls of the slain giants remain on earth as "spirits of evil" to punish humanity for its sins. In verse 15:11, the author enumerates what these evil spirits do in the world, emphasizing their violence and impurity. However, the text of this verse is difficult to interpret, as evidenced by numerous manuscript variants and divergent translations.

H. Drawnel observes that the two preserved Greek versions (the one cited by George Syncellus versus the Cairo manuscript) transmit slightly different lists of verbs describing the activity of the evil spirits, which led earlier scholars to suspect the text was corrupted and to attempt to "emend" it²⁹. Contemporary scholarship suggests that these differences may stem from the use of different terms already at the level of the Aramaic original.

The primary textual problem of 1 Enoch 15:11 is the reading of the phrase *wa-yet'aqafū*³⁰, which appears in R. H. Charles's translation but is not present in any Ethiopic manuscript — it represents a translator's gloss. All available Ethiopic versions contained the reading *'i-yet'āwaqu* or *'i-yet'awaqu*³¹. The unique reading *wa-'i-yet'aqafū* in the K-9 variant – "[and] they do not stumble (are not hindered by obstacles)" – although not phrased as an explicit negation, aligns with the reading that the Akhmim Greek suggests, upon which Dillmann based his reconstruction³².

29. Henryk Drawnel, "The Mesopotamian Background of the Enochic Giants and Evil Spirits," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 21, no. 1 (2014): 26.

30. Dillmann, *Lexicon linguae aethiopicae*, 964.

31. Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 78.

32. Dillmann, *Das Buch Henoch: Übersetzt und erklärt* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1853), 94–95; Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation*, 32–33.

Unfortunately, interpreting these forms remains very difficult for researchers – as one analysis put it, “textual problems in 1 Enoch 15:11 cause translators to disagree on the meaning”³³. Indeed, comparing translations illustrates the discrepancies: R. H. Charles rendered this passage as “the spirits of the giants [...] cause (people) to fall into error [...] and cause trouble”³⁴, whereas M. A. Knibb translated: “that (they) work evil and are corrupt, and (they) attack [...] and cause sorrow”³⁵. E. Isaac phrased it differently: “the spirits of the giants [...] corrupt, fall, fly into a rage [...] and cause sorrow”³⁶. M. Black proposed: “the malignant spirits [...] inflict injuries, destroy, attack, do battle and cast down to the ground, causing hurt”³⁷. G. W. E. Nickelsburg translated: “the spirits of the giants lead (people) astray, commit violence, devastate, attack, do battle and hurl [objects] to the ground and cause illnesses”³⁸.

Such a wide range of translations stems from attempts to decipher the unclear Ethiopic forms – especially the final verb in the verse. The majority of manuscripts render it as a form from the root *wq*, which can be understood as *’awq* – “to cause.” The meaning of this root is not obvious. For example, R. H. Charles interpreted it as “to cause offense/obstruction”³⁹, others as “to cause sorrow”⁴⁰, or even “to cause illnesses”⁴¹. An interpretation has also been suggested that this form implies the unseen operation of demons – hence some translators render it descriptively as “they act unseen (are invisible)”⁴².

My proposed reconstruction of the flow of thought in 1 Enoch 15:11, based on the latest research, is as follows: “the spirits of the Watchers will fall like destructive storm clouds, in order to crush; competing with each other, they will

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- 33. George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 272; Kelley Coblentz Bautch, “What Becomes of the Angels’ ‘Wives’? A Text-Critical Study of 1 Enoch 19:2,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125, no. 4 (2006): 766–768.
 - 34. R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 201; Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch*, 54.
 - 35. Michael A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A New Edition in the Light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 109.
 - 36. Isaac, “1 Enoch (the Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch),” 16.
 - 37. Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes*, *Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha* 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 174.
 - 38. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 217.
 - 39. R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch: Translated from the Editor’s Ethiopic Text and Edited with the Introduction, Notes and Indices* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1893), 252–253.
 - 40. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, vol. 2, 106.
 - 41. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 272.
 - 42. Tomasz Szałanda, “Zarys demonologii międzytestamentowej, rabinackiej i qumrańskiej,” *Studia Redemptorystowskie* 9, no. 1 (2011): 225.

cause mourning; they will not eat any food nor drink water, and they will act imperceptibly.” The wording rendered here as “act imperceptibly” corresponds to that problematic final clause which other translators have rendered as “cause offense/illness.” Thus it is apparent that the majority variant *’i-yet’āwaqu* is understood in various ways, but generally it is taken as an action performed by the evil spirits (whether misleading people, afflicting them with diseases, or hiding their own presence).

3.1. Ethiopic variants *wa-yet’aqafū* and *’i-yet’āwaqu*

In the K-9 manuscript (1 Enoch 15:11) there appears a reading written as *wa-yet’aqafū*. This is the only known manuscript witness to this form – other Ethiopic manuscripts have at this point a different reading, usually written as *’i-yet’āwaqu* (small orthographic differences are encountered, e.g. spelling with a long vowel ā or without it: *’i-yet’āwaqu* / *’i-yet’awaqu*) (Knibb 1978, 424). The difference seems minor graphically, but significant semantically, as it indicates different verbs: the Ethiopic root *’qf* in the form *yət’aqafū* (K-9 variant)⁴³ (Dillmann 1865, 964) versus the root *’wq* in the form *yət’āwaqu* (majority variant).

Against this backdrop, the K-9 variant *wa-yet’aqafū* stands out both grammatically and in meaning. It contains at the beginning the conjunction *wa* (“and”), just like the preceding verbs in the series, which suggests that it is an equal element in the list. The root *’qf* in Ge’ez means “to stumble, to encounter an obstacle.” And the form *yət’aqafū* can be translated as “they stumble / they trip.” However, since it is preceded by a coordinating conjunction, and the list is describing negative actions or states, many scholars consider that it implicitly carries a negation, i.e.: “they do not stumble.” In other words, *wa-yet’aqafū* is understood as “and [in no way] do they stumble [over anything],” meaning “they do not encounter obstacles.” This reading changes the character of the final clause of the sentence. Instead of another harmful action, it would be a note about the absence of any limitations to these spirits’ activity. It is worth highlighting that this idea fits well with the depiction of demons and finds support in one of the Greek witnesses.

The Greek variant from Akhmim (Akh) appears to convey a similar meaning. Scholars point out that the Greek text of this verse included a statement that these spirits do not encounter obstacles⁴⁴ (Nickelsburg and VanderKam 2004, 33), which corresponds to the sense of *wa-yet’aqafū* (for instance, it might have featured a verb like *typtein* or *proskoptein* in a negative construction: “they do

43. Dillmann, *Lexicon linguae aethiopicae*, 964.

44. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation*, 33.

not strike against anything,” “they do not stumble”)⁴⁵. By comparison, the other Greek witness (from the Syncellus tradition) contains a slightly different list – for example, it uses the verb νεμόμενα (“they rage” or “they roam/devour like animals”)⁴⁶ instead of one of the Ethiopic counterparts, suggesting that variation already existed in the ancient tradition. Nevertheless, the Akhmim Greek variant confirms the K-9 reading, because it conveys a meaning element present in K-9 but absent in the majority of Ethiopic manuscripts. This is a very important textual clue, because it suggests that K-9 may preserve the original wording of the verse, whereas the rest of the Ethiopic tradition lost this element (perhaps through a scribe’s mistake or deliberate adaptation).

3.2. Theological interpretation of 1 Enoch 15:11

Chapter 15 of 1 Enoch establishes the theological genealogy of demons. The giants, born from the union of angels with women, were destroyed (an allusion to the Flood), but their spirits, being of mixed origin (half-angelic, half-human), remained on earth as evil spirits. God announces that “on earth shall be their dwelling” and that they will be called “spirits of evil.” Verse 11 expands on this idea, describing the activity of those demons in the world. Regardless of the textual variant, the overall picture is clear and shows that the spirits of the giants continue the violent and harmful activity of their fleshly predecessors. As H. Drawnel notes, the behavior of the spirits in 15:11 is presented as a continuation of the pre-Flood violence of the giants⁴⁷. The giants were characterized as beasts that destroy the earth – devouring all resources and even people – and sow chaos. Now their spirits, though immaterial, “destroy, oppress, attack” humanity in a similar way⁴⁸.

In this context, attention must be given to the theological significance of the “they do not stumble” variant (from K-9). First, if we accept the reading *wa-yet‘aqafū* (“and they do not stumble [over obstacles]”), the author attributes to the demons a certain negative characteristic – in the sense that something which normally hinders corporeal beings does not apply to them. In the context of a dynamic description (the spirits rush, pounce, fight), the mention that they do not stumble and will not be stopped by obstacles highlights their unbridled

45. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 907, 782.

46. Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. and augm. by Henry Stuart Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), 1173.

47. Drawnel, “Mesopotamian Background of the Enochic Giants,” 17.

48. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 9.

freedom of action. The demons have no bodies, so physical barriers or fatigue do not affect them. They can also move and attack while remaining invisible. Theologically, this implies that their harmful influence is ubiquitous and hard to counter – they are like a gale that reaches everywhere.

Indeed, ancient interpreters already seemed to understand the spirits of the giants as a kind of violent forces of nature⁴⁹. In the Greek tradition they are sometimes compared to clouds: for example, R. Laurence rendered the beginning of 1 Enoch 15:11 as “the spirits of the giants will be like clouds,” suggesting that he understood this passage as a metaphor of demons gliding over the earth like storm clouds⁵⁰. Such a comparison corresponds to the idea that they encounter no obstacles – the clouds/demons traverse space freely. The K-9 variant thus harmonizes with the image of demons as unrestrained evil forces present in the created world.

It is not surprising, then, that later Jewish and Christian tradition adopted this image. For example, in Luke 11:24 Jesus describes an unclean spirit that comes out of a person and wanders through waterless deserts seeking rest. It finds no lasting obstacle anywhere until it decides to return on its own. Similarly, in the Qumran literature, Belial’s spirits of evil “make the sons of light stumble” (1QS III, 20–24) – which implies that these spirits themselves operate without stumbling on their side, but instead cause humans to fall⁵¹. In the Revelation of John, demons are depicted as “spirits... performing signs” who go out to all the kings of the earth (cf. Rev 16:14). No one can stop them. Thus, the motif of the unlimited mobility and elusiveness of demons has strong theological grounding. This portrayal also shows that the present order of the world is marked by the activity of invisible forces of evil that do not obey the normal physical laws or limitations that apply to humans. They do not stumble – in contrast to humans, who can stumble. Undoubtedly, it is humans who fall victim to the snares set by demons.

However, 1 Enoch also provides assurance that this situation is not permanent. The same passage (1 Enoch 15:11) implicitly contains irony regarding God’s punishment. Namely, the evil spirits of the giants are free to roam the world and no human can restrain them. Unfortunately, this apparent freedom is itself part of their punishment: condemned to wander restlessly, they find no peace or satisfaction, forever craving but never consuming (they “eat no food, do not drink”). Their unchecked rampage actually underscores the cosmic scope of evil, which, however, remains under God’s ultimate judgment. The demons’

49. Stuckenbruck, “Origins of Evil in Jewish Apocalyptic Tradition,” 103.

50. Laurence, *The Book of Enoch the Prophet*, 22.

51. Martin G. Abegg, Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol.1: Rule of the Community and Related Documents (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 77.

unhindered movement will eventually lead them to the final reckoning decreed by God. Thus, the variant preserved in K-9 in 1 Enoch 15:11 offers a more vivid reading and a deeper insight into Old Testament demonology. Evil personified in demons is omnipresent, powerful, and ancient, but it originates in a violation of the order established by God – and within that order it will ultimately be judged.

4. Conclusions

Textual analysis of selected passages of 1 Enoch confirmed that the Ethiopic translation tradition is characterized by surprisingly high stability. Despite certain differences and minor copyist variants, no significant interpolations or omissions affecting the theological content were noted. The key religious ideas of the book – the eschatological vision of universal judgment (1 Enoch 1:9), the emphasis on human limitations even for a prophet taken to heaven (1 Enoch 14:2), and the demonology born from the myth of the giants (1 Enoch 15:11) – remain consistent across all witnesses.

Moreover, detailed comparison of variants showed that the oldest known manuscript, Kebrān 9, preserves readings that often turn out to be more original or theologically more significant. The K-9 text highlights certain aspects (e.g. the full extent of punishment for demons or the personal character of Enoch's speech) that became blurred or standardized in later copies. Because of this, Kebrān 9 emerges as an exceptionally valuable textual witness – it constitutes the *textus optimus* for many parts of 1 Enoch and should occupy a central place in research on this book.

A conclusion drawn from the present study is the need to continue work on a critical edition of the Ethiopic text of 1 Enoch with full consideration of the available manuscripts. Previous editions were based on a limited number of codices, whereas today we know of over one hundred and fifty – which creates entirely new research opportunities. It is also necessary to engage more broadly both philological and theological methods: every proposed reconstruction of the text should be evaluated not only in terms of textual criticism, but also for its implications for interpreting the book's ideas. The observations presented here confirm that even minor variants (such as those noted in K-9) can have a significant impact on understanding the theology of the Book of Enoch. Therefore, further studies on the Ethiopic manuscripts of 1 Enoch – combining philological analysis with theological reflection – are indispensable in order to fully utilize the potential of this fascinating apocryphon.

The Book of Enoch, once lost to Western culture, today is again unveiling its secrets thanks to the critical reading of ancient Ge'ez manuscripts. We can expect

that further research will bring an even deeper understanding of both the text itself and the religious world from which it springs.

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Summary

The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch) is a key document in Second Temple Jewish literature and early Christianity, but it has survived in a complete form only through an Ethiopic translation in the Ge'ez language. This article addresses the research problem of reconstructing the original text of 1 Enoch and analyzing the religious ideas contained in it. The study employs classical methods of textual criticism, and the analysis focused on three selected pericopes (1 Enoch 1:9; 14:2; 15:11). The results indicate substantial stability in the textual tradition: no significant interpolations or omissions were found, only minor scribal variants. The oldest known manuscript, Kebrān 9 (dated to the 14th–15th centuries), preserves an exceptionally faithful version of the 1 Enoch text, which makes it especially significant for philological and theological research on this book. In conclusion, the main findings of the variant analysis are summarized, the importance of the manuscript K-9 is emphasized, and the need for a further critical edition of the Book of Enoch using the Ethiopic witnesses is highlighted.

Keywords: Book of Enoch; Ethiopic manuscripts; Kebrān 9; textual variants; exegesis.

KRYTYCZNA ANALIZA ETIOPSKIEGO RĘKOPISU 1 KSIĘGI HENOCHA (KEBRĀN 9) ORAZ TEOLOGICZNE IMPLIKACJE WARIANTÓW TEKSTUALNYCH W 1 HEN 1,9; 14,2; 15,11

Streszczenie

Księga Henocha (1 Henoch) jest kluczowym dziełem piśmiennictwa judaizmu okresu Drugiej Świątyni oraz wczesnego chrześcijaństwa, jednak w całości zachowała się jedynie w etiopskim przekładzie na język Ge'ez. Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy problemu badawczego rekonstrukcji oryginalnego tekstu 1 Księgi Henocha oraz analizy zawartych w nim idei religijnych. W badaniu zastosowano klasyczne metody krytyki tekstualnej, a analiza skupiła się na trzech wybranych perykopalach (1 Hen 1,9; 14,2; 15,11). Wyniki wskazują na znaczną stabilność tradycji tekstualnej. Nie stwierdzono żadnych istotnych interpolacji ani pominięć, odnotowano jedynie drobne warianty tekstualne będące efektem pracy kopistów. Najstarszy znany rękopis, Kebrān 9 (datowany na XIV–XV w.), zachowuje wyjątkowo wierną wersję tekstu 1 Księgi Henocha, co czyni go szczególnie istotnym dla badań filologicznych i teologicznych nad tą księgą. Na zakończenie podsumowano główne wyniki analizy wariantów, podkreślono znaczenie rękopisu K-9 oraz wskazano na potrzebę dalszej krytycznej edycji tekstu 1 Księgi Henocha z wykorzystaniem etiopskich świadectw tekstowych.

Słowa kluczowe: Księga Henocha; rękopisy etiopskie; Kebrān 9; warianty tekstualne; egzegeza.