

# MAN AND SON OF MAN: PROBING THEOLOGY AND CHRISTOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF MOSES AND IN JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITION

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S. Kent Brown and Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

The issue of the anthropomorphic nature of Deity is brought quickly to the fore in the following passage from the Pearl of Great Price: “In the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is [God’s] name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time” (Moses 6:57).

Kindly allow us to set the stage for this remark. In discussing repentance, the prophet Enoch noted “that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence” (Moses 6:57). The obvious point is that uncleanness cannot be permitted in God’s presence, leading Enoch naturally to mention that even God’s name, Man of Holiness, implies this prohibition. Significantly, Enoch then observed that God’s Only Begotten was to be called the Son of Man, presumably a shortened form of a title like Son of the Man of Holiness.<sup>1</sup>

A similar concept, so central to the theology of the Enoch chapters of the Book of Moses, can also be discerned in ancient Enoch pseudepigrapha. As Frederick Borsch has argued at length,<sup>2</sup> the concept of God as “the Man” of whom Enoch eventually becomes a filial “counterpart” stands at the very heart of the pseudepigraphal *Similitudes of Enoch*, as we will discuss in more detail below.

We hasten to add that, in this study, we are dealing with older and younger documents. It firmly appears to us that the roots of the Book of Moses go back to Moses himself. The work bears the old, original title “the words of God” in its first line, an indicator of its hoary age to those who accept this statement at face value. However, in the case of the extant version of the *Similitudes of Enoch*, we meet a document whose composition was not earlier than 105 BCE<sup>3</sup> and perhaps as late as 70 CE.<sup>4</sup> That said, written documents from the ancient world often rested on even older oral and written traditions, something that we can safely assume for the Enoch texts. Even the early rabbis recognized the value of oral information, as we find disclosed in the Mishnah tractate *Pirke Aboth*, where the rabbis claimed that their understanding of the law rested on an oral stream that came to them from Moses.<sup>5</sup>

Having noted this much, we shall attempt to illuminate several things:

- First, we address the question of origins for the *Similitudes of Enoch* and the Book of Moses. We will argue for the firm consensus of scholarship that the *Similitudes* spring from Jewish tradition. We will also explain why we accept that the presence of New Testament language in the Book of Moses does not rule out the possibility that the events it recounts are rooted in a pre-Christian era.
- Second, we want to show that the equivalent of each of the seemingly Christian titles mentioned in Moses 6:57—Only Begotten, Son of Man, Jesus Christ, and Righteous Judge—are described in the pre-Christian *Similitudes*<sup>6</sup> and other Jewish traditions.
- Third, we want to return to the figure of the Son of Man in ancient literature, reviewing in more depth what current biblical scholarship says about this personality, especially since He is mentioned prominently in non-scriptural sources.
- Fourth, we intend to address the anthropomorphic view of God in scripture, specifically in the Old Testament.
- Fifth, we wish to touch on the issue of the nature of the titles used for Deity throughout scripture. Even a quick review shows that a great many titles are applied to God because they are associated with either one of His special

characteristics or an unusual, perhaps even miraculous, occurrence.

- Sixth, we want to single out the parallels in ancient Christian and Jewish literature to the remarkable, almost singular theological position to which Latter-day Saints are committed when we call Deity a Man, whether Man of Holiness, Man of Counsel (Moses 7:35), or some similar title. At the same time, we will flesh out the implications of this statement for the promised exaltation of Enoch and other mortal beings.

### 1. The Question of Pre-Christian Origins of the *Similitudes of Enoch* and the Book of Moses

Some readers are surprised to encounter prophetic references to the name, titles, and aspects of the mission of Jesus Christ in Latter-day Saint scripture that are more detailed than references found in the Old Testament. Although Christians are divided on the issue of how much Old Testament peoples and prophets knew about Jesus Christ, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraces the belief that the details of the plan of salvation, including the life and mission of Jesus Christ, were known to prophets from Adam onward.<sup>7</sup> Non-Latter-day Saint scholar Margaret Barker believes similarly about temple traditions described in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. She writes:

The original temple tradition was that Yahweh, the Lord, was the Son of God Most High, and present on earth as the Messiah. This means that the older religion in Israel would have taught about the Messiah. Thus, finding Christ in the Old Testament is exactly what we should expect, though obscured by incorrect readings of the scriptures. This is, we suggest, one aspect of the restoration of “the plain and precious things, which have been taken away from them” (1 Nep. 13:40) [that is mentioned in the Book of Mormon]. The Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Christ of the Book of Mormon (Mos. 3:8; 3 Nep. 15:5).<sup>8</sup>

In this respect, the *Similitudes of Enoch*—one of five rather loosely related sections of *1 Enoch*—has been a fruitful source for comparison with the Book of Moses overall.<sup>9</sup> We agree generally with the conclusion of one scholar that “the literary connections

between Moses 6–8 and *1 Enoch* are . . . very loose, and more time and attention should be placed elsewhere”<sup>10</sup> (such as on *2 Enoch*, *3 Enoch*, and the *Book of Giants*<sup>11</sup>). However, there are some exceptions to this rule, most notably within the *Similitudes*. Before continuing, it should be stated that while the *Similitudes* stand out in important respects from other portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls (notably in their unique use of the term “Son of Man”), the *Similitudes*’ distinctiveness with regard to messianic expectation from other Dead Sea Scrolls texts and from cotemporaneous mainstream Judaism should not be exaggerated. There is more similarity in general perspectives among different groups of Second Temple Jewish believers than is sometimes acknowledged.<sup>12</sup>

According to James Charlesworth—one of the preeminent contemporary scholars of Jewish pseudepigrapha—the messianic passages in the *Similitudes* “seem to be Jewish but contemporaneous with the origins of Christianity. . . . [The relevant] verses contain neither Jewish polemic against Christian kerygmatic Christology nor peculiarly Christian expressions and ideas.”<sup>13</sup> Renowned Enoch scholar Matthew Black likewise concurs: “The high likelihood is that the parables, like the rest of the Book of Enoch, was an original Jewish work.”<sup>14</sup> The consensus of more recent scholarship also affirms the conclusions of Charlesworth and Black that the *Similitudes* is not the result of Christian influences.<sup>15</sup>

On the one hand, John Collins concurs that “it is doubtful whether a Jewish author would have made such explicit use of the expression ‘Son of Man’ for a messianic figure after that phrase had been appropriated by Christians.” He argues, on the other hand, that “the influence of the *Similitudes* should be recognized in Matthew 19:28 and 25:31 King James Version (KJV), where the Son of Man is said to sit on his throne of glory.”<sup>16</sup> Such texts, along with other hints, provide ample evidence that Jesus’ early disciples were familiar with relevant Jewish traditions and texts that undergird New Testament claims about Jesus’ messiahship. Indeed, such texts were no doubt a significant reason why Jesus’ appearance was accepted by Jewish Christians as the fulfillment of pre-Christian prophecy. To Jewish Christians, the events of the life of Jesus Christ were no surprise but instead represented “the latest and best revelation from Israel’s god in keeping with his ancient promises to

his people.”<sup>17</sup> By way of analogy to the mission of John the Baptist, who saw his mission as the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy to “prepare . . . the way of the Lord” [Isaiah 40:3 King James Version (KJV); Matthew 3:3 KJV], the messianic texts of Second Temple Judaism can be seen as harbingers of the (somewhat different) message of Jesus’ messiahship proclaimed in the Christian gospels. Summing it up, the eminent Enoch scholar George Nickelsburg wrote, “The form of the [*Similitudes of Enoch*] that identifies the exalted figure with Enoch and the closely related tradition in the Wisdom of Solomon testify to a situation in Judaism that may well have facilitated the claim of primitive Christianity that a particular persecuted righteous one had been exalted as the unique Chosen One, Son of Man, and Messiah.”<sup>18</sup>

Going further, if we admit that messianic Son of Man themes in traditions and texts like the *Similitudes* are arguably of pre-Christian origin, what can be said about similar themes that appear in the Book of Moses? Of course, the final answer to the question of the authenticity of the Book of Moses lies in the realm of faith, not scholarship. However, persuasive evidence of threads of antiquity in modern scripture is naturally of interest to believers who respect scholarly research and who appreciate the additional light that such studies bring to their understanding of scriptural texts. In short, as Austin Farrer has expressed it, “rational argument does not create belief . . . it maintains a climate in which belief may flourish.”<sup>19</sup>

Doubting the claim that Enoch in the Book of Moses is a figure of the material past, Colby Townsend has argued that “the explicit use of New Testament language in Moses 6–7 to describe Jesus as the Son of Man ties the Book of Moses to a post-New Testament context.”<sup>20</sup> Of course, in a trivial sense, the statement is actually true: the Book of Moses was produced by a nineteenth-century Christian prophet who was familiar with the New Testament and whose translations are replete with New Testament words, phrases, and themes. But the more meaningful question is how one might reconcile the appearance of New Testament *language* in the English translation of the Book of Moses with the belief that this scriptural work recounts otherwise unknown incidents of ancient history. As it turns out, the idea that Joseph Smith is the author, rather than the translator, of the Enoch material in the Book of Moses is not the

only credible hypothesis available to those who wish to investigate whether its storyline and teachings are consistent with a belief in its ancient origins and divinely revealed nature. Here is a sampling of such options, none of which are mutually exclusive:<sup>21</sup>

1. **Christian source text(s).** If it turns out there are one or more ancient source texts behind the Book of Moses, those sources could well include, as David Calabro has argued, sacred texts from early Christians incorporating elements of ancient Enoch traditions.<sup>22</sup> Of course, it would not be surprising if such redactions drew on New Testament language and themes. Joseph Smith's "translated version of a record made on parchment by John and hidden up by himself" (heading for Doctrine and Covenants 7) provides a relevant precedent.
2. **Deliberate rhetorical strategy.** The use of archaic phrasing familiar to Joseph Smith's Bible-reading contemporaries, perhaps a wholly unconscious part of the translation process,<sup>23</sup> might have helped facilitate the acceptance of modern revelation as authentic scripture on par with the Old and New Testaments. Ben McGuire describes this possibility as a "rhetorical strategy of the text in translation."<sup>24</sup>
3. **Connecting with other scriptural passages.** When the Prophet uses this familiar but sometimes more challenging style of biblical language in modern scripture, it is a direct signal to readers about interconnections with the Old and New Testaments that otherwise might have been difficult to detect, fulfilling the Book of Mormon prediction that old and new revelations would "grow together" as one (2 Nep. 3:12).
4. **Enhancing the understanding of modern, mostly Christian readers.** The use of biblical language in translation may have furthered the objective of making ancient concepts clearer to modern, mostly Christian readers. Hugh Nibley aptly observed that a "translation must . . . be not a matching of dictionaries but a meeting of minds."<sup>25</sup>

Taking all these options into account, it is evident that we cannot rule out—solely because of the presence of New Testament concepts and phraseology—the possibility that the Book of Moses accounts are rooted in pre-Christian traditions. Indeed, as we will now see, passages in the Enochic *Similitudes* and other Jewish texts

provide evidence for analogous titles for the messianic Son of Man that are also expressed in the Book of Moses.

## 2. Analogous Messianic Titles in Moses 6:57, the *Similitudes of Enoch*, and Other Jewish Texts

We will now review the four interlinked titles of Moses 6:57 in light of the *Similitudes*, the Bible, and other ancient texts. While “most of the pseudepigrapha do not contain . . . technical terms [for the Messiah],”<sup>26</sup> let alone equivalents or analogues for the other titles listed in the Book of Moses, it is significant that the *Similitudes* contains material relevant to nearly all of them.<sup>27</sup>

### Only Begotten

The appearance of the term “only begotten” has a long history in Jewish tradition. The story of the “binding” of Isaac (the *Akedah*) in the Hebrew text of Genesis 22 describes Isaac’s relationship to Abraham with the masculine form of the substantive adjective *yaḥid* (*yehidkha* = “thine only [son],” Genesis 22:2, 12, 16, KJV).<sup>28</sup> The feminine form of the same substantive adjective *yehidkha* occurs in Judges 11:34 KJV as a description of Jephthah’s only daughter. Importantly, the corresponding Greek term that translates *yehidkha* in the Septuagint Greek (LXX) version of the Jephthah story is *monogenēs* (“only begotten”). More significantly, *monogenēs* occurs in the Greek version of Psalm 22:20,<sup>29</sup> a psalm widely understood among early Christians as having reference to Jesus. Greek *monogenēs* is the term that appears throughout the New Testament to describe Jesus Christ as God’s “only begotten.”<sup>30</sup> For example, the author of Hebrews explicitly employs *monogenēs* for Isaac in characterizing him as a type of Jesus (Heb. 11:17 KJV).

Further witnessing the wide occurrence of this term, within the writings of the Jewish scholar Philo Judaeus, the terms “only begotten” and “firstborn” (often treated as synonyms) were closely identified with Moses in ancient Jewish tradition. This is because Moses was seen as the preeminent living embodiment of the divine *Logos*, the “word” of God’s power. Going further, Samuel Zinner sees Philo as inferring that in Moses, the Law-giving Word becomes a “nursing-father”<sup>31</sup> to others, specifically including the

righteous patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who are likewise born of God.<sup>32</sup>

Consistent with the spirit of this idea, New Testament authors writing from similar perspectives penned the term “first-born” in the Hebrews 12:23 expression “church of the first-born.”<sup>33</sup> In this context, “first-born” seems to have been interpreted as applying not only to Christ (Doctrine and Covenants 93:1)<sup>34</sup> but also to redeemed mortals who are “entitled [by birthright] to the . . . privileges of first-born sons,”<sup>35</sup> specifically the right to receive “all that [the] Father hath” (Doctrine and Covenants 84:38).<sup>36</sup> Thus, in the conception of New Testament theology, we can say that God made Christ “the firstborn among many brethren,” each having been “conformed to the image of his son” (Rom. 8:29 KJV).<sup>37</sup>

In summary, threads related to the special status and sacrificial role<sup>38</sup> of the “first-born” and “only begotten” son as applied to Old Testament figures such as Moses, to Christ Himself, and eventually to the disciples of Jesus Christ are rooted in concepts that long precede the New Testament.

### Son of Man

In hearing the name-title “Son of Man,” Jews in the first century CE would have thought of texts in the books of Daniel and Enoch. Daniel 7:13–14 KJV records the eschatological vision of Daniel: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man<sup>39</sup> came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Of interest is Matthew Black’s conclusion that the *Similitudes of Enoch* “comes from the same milieu and the same time period as Daniel 7:13–14.”<sup>40</sup>

Significantly, the title “Son of Man,” which is even more prominent in the *Similitudes*<sup>41</sup> than in Daniel, also appears in marked density throughout Enoch’s grand vision in the Book of Moses (Moses 7:24, 47, 54, 56, 59, 65).<sup>42</sup> In addition, and even more remarkably, the related titles “Chosen One” (Moses 7:39),<sup>43</sup> “Anointed One,”<sup>44</sup> and “Righteous One” (Moses 6:57; 7:45, 47, 67)<sup>45</sup>



are featured in both the Book of Moses Enoch account and the pseudepigraphal *Similitudes of Enoch*.

After considering the contentious debate among scholars about the single referent (or multiple referents) of these titles and their relationship to other texts, Nickelsburg and James VanderKam conclude that the author of the *Book of Similitudes* “saw the . . . [multiple] traditional figures as having a *single referent* and applied the various designations and characteristics [to one individual] as seemed appropriate to him.”<sup>46</sup> This is likewise true for the Book of Moses.

### Jesus Christ

The name-title “Jesus Christ,” of course, derives directly from its Greek New Testament equivalent, which might be more clearly translated for modern English-speakers as “Yeshua the Messiah,” “Messiah” referring to one anointed by God. Recalling the applications of the terms “first-born” and “only begotten” to Moses discussed above, we note Raphael Patai’s statement that “rarely is a myth as perfectly prefigured in a tradition many centuries older as is the Jewish Messiah myth in the life of Moses.”<sup>47</sup> However, Patai’s useful collection of texts relating to the Jewish concept of “messiah” also shows how far beyond its pre-figuring in Moses this title extends. The collection demonstrates “messiah’s” breathtaking scope, beginning with the preexistence of the Messiah and continuing with broad application since early biblical times.<sup>48</sup>

In the Dead Sea Scrolls and the rabbinic literature, references to the Messiah as “the future ideal Davidic king”<sup>49</sup> are far more prevalent than in any other era. Importantly, with respect to the *Similitudes* and “in contrast to *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*,” Charlesworth writes that “the Messiah’ [Anointed One] is portrayed as the terrestrial and human messianic king who shall perfectly embody all the dreams attributed to the kings of Israel’s past.”<sup>50</sup> In addition to the symbolic association of this figure with the Davidic monarchy, Shirley Lucass reminds us that the king’s cultic function was linked, as in Hebrews 7, to the earlier “line of Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem/Jerusalem.”<sup>51</sup> Significantly, and consistent with Christian tradition, Charlesworth notes “numerous passages” in the pseudepigrapha in which the Messiah ultimately conquers

Israel's enemies "in a nonmilitary supernatural fashion"<sup>52</sup>—in other words, "with the word of his mouth."<sup>53</sup>

Consistent both with the teachings of Moses 6:57 and Nickelsburg and VanderKam's conclusions that the various titles mentioned in the *Similitudes* refer to a single individual, James Waddell argued not only that the "five specific epithets . . . refer to the same messiah figure"<sup>54</sup> but also, significantly, that the "author(s) of the [book] understood the messiah figure to be distinct from the divine figure who is the one God."<sup>55</sup>



Figure 1. In this lithograph, Enoch is honored as he takes a position on a raised dais. Reputed in Jewish tradition to have invented writing, Enoch holds a book containing Hebrew letters. Angelic beings on each side represent the gifts of prophecy and inspiration.<sup>56</sup>

With respect to longstanding confusion about the unexpected passage in *Similitudes* declaring "that son of man" to be *Enoch*,<sup>57</sup> John Collins argues at length<sup>58</sup> for the conclusion that Enoch is being portrayed only as "a human being in the *likeness* of the heavenly Son of Man, and [the text depicts Him as being] exalted to share his destiny."<sup>59</sup> Likewise, the Ethiopic Christian Church, which accepts the *Similitudes* (along with the rest of *1 Enoch*) as authoritative scripture, maintains this distinction between the heavenly Son of Man and the exalted Enoch. In the Ethiopic interpretation of *Similitudes*, "the heavenly Son of Man was assumed to be Christ, and Enoch, obviously, was not identified [in a literal sense] with him."<sup>60</sup>

As to the appearance of the name-title “Jesus Christ” as written in Moses 6:57, there are precedents for advanced revelation of specific names of later-born individuals—including the name “Jesus Christ.”<sup>61</sup> However, as a possible alternative to the idea that “Jesus Christ” was the translation of a name in the Book of Moses, it does not seem impossible that the name was instead introduced into the text as a type of gloss, intended to remove any doubt for latter-day readers about the identity of this figure. As a third option, it is certainly possible that the authority of an ancient manuscript that refers to Jesus Christ with words analogous to the Hebrew equivalent *Yeshua Ha Mashiah* (*yēšûaʿ hammāšīah*) sits behind Moses 6–7.<sup>62</sup> Any of these three options works against arguments that the use of the name or title “Jesus Christ” in Moses 6 must be an anachronism.

Charlesworth concurs with this understanding of the occurrence of singularly Christian terms, titles, and descriptions in Latter-day Saint scripture. He argues that if some passages “look peculiarly Christian,” this fact need not “vitate the claim that they were written before” the coming of Christ.” Specifically referring to the Book of Mormon, he notes that Latter-day Saints acknowledge that it “could have been expanded on at least two occasions that postdate the life of Jesus of Nazareth”: once as part of Mormon’s abridgment and again at the time it was translated in the nineteenth century by Joseph Smith. “The recognition that the Book of Mormon has been edited on more than one occasion would certainly explain why certain of the messianic passages appear to be Christian compositions.”<sup>63</sup>

Similar possibilities present themselves with the Book of Moses. Although much less is known about its source texts and ancient redaction history, it was eventually translated into English by Joseph Smith in the nineteenth century. Thus, there is nothing barring it from simultaneously containing both deeply ancient content as well as adaptations of that content to improve its comprehensibility to modern readers.

### **Righteous Judge**

Remarkably, the single specific description of the role of the Son of Man given in Moses 6:57 as a “righteous Judge”<sup>64</sup> is also highly

characteristic of the *Similitudes*, where the primary role of the Son of Man is also that of a judge.<sup>65</sup> Reviewing the relevant *Similitudes* passages, Nickelsburg and VanderKam conclude, “If the central message of the [*Similitudes*] is the coming of the final judgment,<sup>66</sup> the Son of Man/Chosen One takes center stage as the agent of this judgment.”<sup>67</sup> We note also that the title “righteous judge” in the broader context of the Joseph Smith Translation anticipates Melchizedek, the “King of Righteousness,” and the typological connections to Jesus Christ evident in Genesis 14:25–40 JST.

Continuing this line of thought, an intriguing study by J. Harold Ellens has observed that the Son of Man figure in Daniel 7–10 and in the *Similitudes* exhibits not only celestial ties that become permanent at the end of time but also that He is a judge and a prosecutor.<sup>68</sup> Significantly, in prominent settings in the Gospels, the roles of judge and prosecutor are precisely the roles that Jesus plays.<sup>69</sup> In the dispute that erupted in the synagogue when Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, Jesus not only took over the meeting but also turned the service into a court of law by asking the question, “Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?” Then He produced the legal proof for the implicit answer to His own question by healing the man’s hand (Luke 6:9–10 KJV; see also Matt. 12:12–13 KJV). Similarly, He and the synagogue leader turned a synagogue service into a law court scene when He relieved the woman who had been bent over for eighteen years, with Jesus taking the role of prosecutor (Luke 13:11–16 KJV). Next, He turned a dinner party into a legal hearing when He healed a man afflicted with dropsy, a scene wherein Jesus stood as prosecutor and judge (Luke 14:1–6 KJV). Now to a finer point. On the occasion that Jesus healed a paralytic, He called Himself “the Son of man” at the moment He revealed Himself as the one who possessed both judging power over sins and otherworldly power to heal a helpless man (Matt. 9:1–8 KJV; Mark 2:1–12 KJV; Luke 5:17–26 KJV). Again, we emphasize that among the titles conferred on the coming Son of Man in the Book of Moses prominently stands this one, “a righteous Judge” (Moses 6:57).

In summary, it is significant that, outside the Old Testament, the Enoch pseudepigrapha (notably including the *Similitudes of*

*Enoch*) are arguably the extant pre-Christian documents of Jewish origin that best prefigure the range of Christological concepts and titles found in the New Testament. Thus, to readers of latter-day scripture, it should not be surprising that Christological themes and concepts also appear in the Book of Moses' account of Enoch. Although the arguments we have presented above do not exhaust the questions that might be raised about references to the name and titles of Jesus Christ in the Book of Moses, we think these preliminary findings deserve more careful investigation instead of hasty dismissal.

### 3. An In-Depth Look at the Son of Man

In ancient literature, there are two senses in which the title Son of Man appears: The first is a generic sense with the meaning "human being." The second is a more formal sense, employed in later Jewish literature, referring to the one who is to come on the clouds of heaven to deliver the righteous from their oppressors and to judge the inhabitants of the earth.<sup>70</sup> In the Old Testament, the expression generally represents the less formal of the two. One thinks immediately of the expression of the Lord when addressing the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:1–8; 3:1–10 KJV). In the case of his work, the prophet was addressed consistently by the Hebrew expression *ben-'adham*, son of man. While there are scholars who argue that it was this Ezekielic concept of the term that stood behind its application to Jesus in the New Testament,<sup>71</sup> it is far more likely that the more formal sense conveyed in Daniel 7:13–14 lies closer to the meaning of Jesus' sayings about the heavenly Son of Man:<sup>72</sup> "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Although most non-Latter-day Saint scholars now accept the point of view that the critical expression is to be translated with the indefinite article "like a Son of man" and not the definite one "like *the* Son of man,"<sup>73</sup> the force is hardly diminished. This Son of

Man was to be given “an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,” plainly underscoring the formal, divinely royal sense of the appellation. It is this notion that stands closer to what we see noted about the Son of Man in both the *Similitudes of Enoch* and the New Testament gospels. Let us now take up the issue of the conception of the Son of Man as it appears in the Enochian literature and then turn to the New Testament.

### **The nature of the Son of Man in the *Similitudes***

According to the account in the *Similitudes*, Enoch saw in a vision “One who had a head of days” (46:1), that is, who was the “Head of days,”<sup>74</sup> which terminology is reminiscent of Daniel 7:13. Additionally, and apparently at the same moment, Enoch is said to have beheld “another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man, and his face was full of graciousness” (46:1). The appearance of this second person led Enoch to ask the accompanying angel about this person’s origin and identity, to which the angel replied, “This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness, with whom dwelleth righteousness” (46:3). Besides describing this Son of Man as One who is the Steward of Righteousness (cf. 39:6–7), the angel characterized Him as a revealer, a divine teacher, by saying that it is He “who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden” (38:2–3). Further, He was chosen for this role by God before His appearance, a feature which gives Him preeminence within the heavenly realm: “The Lord of Spirits hath chosen him, And [his] lot hath the pre-eminence [*sic*] before the Lord of Spirits in uprightness for ever [*sic*]” (*1 Enoch* 46:3).

Moreover, the Son of Man will come as a judge and conqueror of the wicked, especially of rulers guilty of opposing God’s kingdom (see *1 Enoch* 38:3–5; 46:4–8). As we have already seen, He is indubitably the same heavenly figure who is called “the Righteous One . . . whose elect works hang [or depend] upon the Lord of Spirits” (38:2), the “Elect One of righteousness and of faith” whose “dwelling-place” is “under the wings of the Lord of Spirits” (39:6a–7a), even the “Anointed” one or Messiah (48:10; 52:4). Furthermore, a passage reflecting Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 asserts that the Son of Man is to be the “light of the Gentiles” (*1 Enoch* 48:4).<sup>75</sup> Not least, however, is the assertion that “the Son of Man was named In the



presence of the Lord of Spirits . . . Before the sun and the signs were created, Before the stars of the heaven were made” (48:2–3; see also Abraham 3:21–28; Doctrine and Covenants 121:28–32). In fact, because of His special premortal commission by God, the “chosen” Son of Man was then “hidden . . . before the creation of the world” to come forth among the “holy and righteous” to save them.<sup>76</sup>

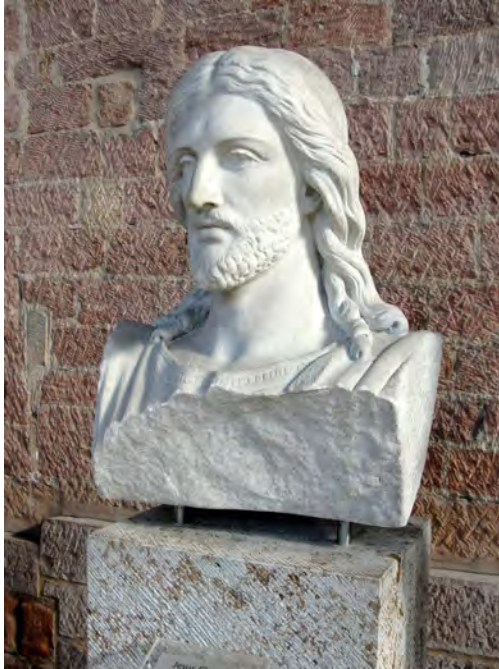


Figure 2. This magnificent bust now stands in the Protestant Church of the Redeemer, which is housed in the former Roman Palace Basilica of Constantine (Aula Palatina), built early fourth century in what is now Trier, Germany.<sup>77</sup>

### **The nature of the Son of Man in the Gospels**

The previously drawn portrait drawn from the *Similitudes of Enoch* and other ancient literature of the Son of Man as the messianic king, whose foreordained destiny was to reveal righteousness and to save His people, accords in its general outlines with the portrait affirmed for the Son of Man in the New Testament:<sup>78</sup>

- First, the Messiah’s ministry was to consist of fulfilling “all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15 KJV), a course of action that would illustrate that the Messiah possessed righteousness

and that it dwelt with Him, a notion found in the *Similitudes of Enoch* (cf. *1 Enoch* 46:3).

- Second, the Son of Man was to be the advocate of the faithful and righteous as well as the judge of the faithless and wicked: “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38 KJV).<sup>79</sup>
- Third, the Savior came as a revealer of truth to those who would receive it. If nothing else, the parables illustrate that Jesus was a bringer of divine truths that were often cloaked lest everyone understand (Mark 4:2–20 KJV). The fact that the risen Jesus spent forty days with His followers implies both that there remained things not fully understood from His earthly ministry and that there was much more to explain (Acts 1:3 KJV).
- Fourth, the Son of Man was to continue as a member of the heavenly court.<sup>80</sup> One recalls the words of Jesus to the Sanhedrin when responding to the question whether he was the Christ: “Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God” (Luke 22:69 KJV).

All these various characteristics, of course, point to the notion that the Son of Man was appointed to His office. We believe it safe to assert that, when compared with the concepts in the *Similitudes of Enoch* (48:2–6),<sup>81</sup> the New Testament too presupposes that the Son of Man had received His commission in the premortal age (see John 17:5 KJV; Heb. 1:2 KJV).

It is at this point that the view of the Son of Man in the New Testament goes beyond that of the book of *1 Enoch*. We noted already that the Son of Man was to come in the glory of His Father and with all His holy angels (Mark 8:38 KJV). But there are more details. The most prominent detail consists of the Son of Man coming both “in the clouds of heaven” and “with great power and glory” (Mark 14:62; 13:26 KJV). These two features do not appear in the Enochian literature but are recorded in chapter 13 of *4 Ezra*.<sup>82</sup> According to this text, a Man who “flew with the clouds of heaven” was to come out of the seas to reprove the wicked nations and to gather out a peaceable multitude who were identified, rather



interestingly, as the ten tribes of Israel (13:3, 37–38, 40). Further, God called this heavenly Man “my Son” (13:37). Moses, Enoch, and Abraham were each called “my son” (cf. Moses 1:4, 6, 7; 6:27; Abraham 1:17). Such notions find their counterparts in the New Testament sayings of Jesus regarding the Son of Man.

But there is more. Jesus spoke repeatedly of what is written concerning the Son of Man: “It is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought” (Mark 9:12 KJV; cf. 9:13 KJV).<sup>83</sup> This emphasis on the suffering of the Son of Man is not found in any written non-canonical source. Yet Jesus regularly referred to such. Why? Because, in fact, such was written of the Messiah, but not under the denomination Son of Man.<sup>84</sup> The suffering, redeeming Messiah was the portrait found in the Servant Songs of Isaiah.<sup>85</sup> It is here that we find the Servant of the Lord who was to suffer and die for His people:

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . .  
He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:4–5 KJV).

In an early version of the *Testament of Levi*, a pre-Christian text preserved in a wide range of ancient manuscripts, we find a prophecy that the translator sees “as an important confirmation that the messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 is ‘not an innovation of purely Christian origin,’ but rather was already ‘the result of previous developments.’”<sup>86</sup> The prophecy follows:

And he will atone for all the children of his generation, and he will be sent to all the children of his people. His word is like the word of the heavens, and his teaching, according to the will of God. His eternal sun will shine and his fire will burn in all the ends of the earth; above the darkness his sun will shine. Then, darkness will vanish from the earth, and gloom from the globe. They will utter many words against him, and an abundance of lies; they will fabricate fables against him, and utter every kind of disparagement against him. His generation will change the evil and [be] established in deceit and in violence. The people will go astray in his days and they will be bewildered.<sup>87</sup>

Even more pointed in its allusions to the suffering servant in Isaiah 53 within a pre-Christian “poetic excursus reflecting traditions within ancient Judaism similar to those later appearing in the *Book of [Similitudes]*”<sup>88</sup> is the Dead Sea Scrolls *Hymn of Self-Glorification*:

[There are no]ne comparable [to me in] my glory, no one [shall be exalted] besides me; none shall associate with me. For I dwell in the[ ] in the heavens, and there is no one [ ] I am reckoned with the gods and my abode is in the holy congregation. [My] desi[re] is not according to the flesh, and everything precious to me is in the glory [of] the holy [habitation]. [Wh]om have I considered contemptible? Who is comparable to me in my glory? Who of those who sail the seas shall return telling [of] my [equa]l? Who shall [ ] troubles like me? Who is like me [in bearing a]ll evil? I have not been taught, but no teaching compares [with my teaching. ] Who then shall attack me when [I] ope[n my mouth?] Who can endure the utterance of my lips? Who shall arraign me and compare with my judgement [Fo]r I am reck[oned] with the gods, [and] my glory with that of the sons of the King.<sup>89</sup>

Though the context and identity of the speaker of this passage is disputed, Richard S. Hess concludes that “the text, as it appears among the Dead Sea Scrolls, demonstrates an awareness of the importance of the suffering servant passage and its close tie to an exalted, perhaps divine, figure. This connection was present before the coming of Jesus and thus served as one source of the Gospel writers’ understanding of His mission.”<sup>90</sup>

Even though Jesus was not the only one in His day to associate the concepts of both the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah with that of the Messiah,<sup>91</sup> it was clearly the Savior’s intent to apply to Himself the full range of attributes associated with these two figures in both scriptural and non-scriptural sources.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, it is in the more formal sense that the term Son of Man is to be understood as applying to Jesus in the New Testament. Additionally, one can see that the mission of the Son of Man was to fall rather neatly into three phases: an earthly ministry, atonement, and heavenly triumph.<sup>93</sup>

All these details demonstrate that the concept of the Son of Man as “a heavenly redeemer figure who stands in close relationship to the God of Israel is not a corruption of Jewish monotheism by Christianity, nor an invention of a Hellenistic or ‘Gentile’ Paul, but is an integral feature of Second Temple Judaism.”<sup>94</sup> Speaking specifically of Jesus’ teachings on this subject, Charlesworth likewise affirms that “*all* three classes of Jesus’ Son of Man sayings—those that depict the Son of Man’s authority, future coming, and present suffering—were *not* invented by the *Church*. . . . Beyond that certainty it is difficult to proceed further; yet, it is conceivable that under the influence of the Enoch traditions,<sup>95</sup> perhaps indirectly through oral traditions, Jesus used the term Son of Man to stress His own charismatic authority that amazed His contemporaries.”<sup>96</sup> Matthew Black eloquently sums up the role that texts such as the *Similitudes* played in preparing the way for teachings that were later taken up in the Gospels: “Enoch weds the coming Son of Man as Judge of all mankind with the lowly figure of the Suffering Servant of the Lord. Clearly, if [the *Similitudes of Enoch*] contains purely Jewish and pre-Christian ideas, it is of immense importance in prefiguring the Gospel Son of Man, by the coalescence of these two prophecies about One who was both the Servant of all, yet Lord of all mankind. Here is a Jewish work that prefigures and shares Christianity’s most cherished beliefs and dearest hopes.”<sup>97</sup>

#### 4. Anthropomorphisms in the Old Testament

To affirm that Deity is a Man makes a theological statement that virtually no Christian theologian is willing to venture.<sup>98</sup> However, it was well attested in the ancient teachings of Judaism<sup>99</sup> and early Christianity.<sup>100</sup> For example, when one looks in the New Testament, one finds not only allusions to but also detailed descriptions of God’s bodily features.<sup>101</sup> Some could argue, of course, that these ideas represent later, deviant developments from an earlier, purer conception of Deity which was divorced—except metaphorically or allegorically—from anthropomorphic ideas. But the evidence always reads the other way. The ancients are understood to have viewed God as possessing human-like traits. It is only modern thinkers who have “freed” themselves from conceptions of an unenlightened past, ignoring the wealth of information which

serves to underscore the idea that God possesses a body. At this point, however, we part company with such observers, since we take seriously the testimony of the ancients.<sup>102</sup>

According to Gen. 1:26 KJV, humankind was created in God's "image" and "likeness," a description that has implications not only for human nature but also for the form and character of Deity.<sup>103</sup> In Latter-day Saint theology, three dimensions of resemblance between God and man stand out:

1. *Physical resemblance.* First, there is the idea of physical resemblance. While Latter-day Saint doctrine allows for wide differences of opinion regarding the origin of man,<sup>104</sup> modern scripture is unequivocal in its teaching that Adam was created "in the image of [God's] own body" (Moses 6:9).<sup>105</sup> The Prophet Joseph Smith spoke very plainly about the meaning of these words: "If the veil were rent today and . . . you would see [God] in all the person, image, fashion, and very form of a man, like yourselves. For Adam was a man formed in his likeness and created in the very fashion and image of God."<sup>106</sup>
2. *Spiritual nature.* Regarding the second dimension, Joseph Smith made it clear that the concepts of "image" and "likeness" applied not only to the physical appearance of Adam and Eve, but also to their spiritual nature which was, in the beginning, "innocent, harmless, and spotless." After the Fall, they were made to dwell in a mortal world where they could, in the process of time and through "the Atonement of Christ . . . and obedience in the Gospel," become sanctified and ultimately "attain to [*sic*] the [full] image, glory, and character of God."<sup>107</sup> This aspiration is echoed in ancient rabbinical teachings,<sup>108</sup> in New Testament passages,<sup>109</sup> and in standard formulations in the Eastern Orthodox Church,<sup>110</sup> as well as among some teachings in the Western tradition.<sup>111</sup> Though admittedly differing in their detailed understanding of such statements, early Christians would have agreed with Joseph Smith in affirming a "double movement" of image and likeness whereby humans "begin like God and, at the same time, they come to be like Him."<sup>112</sup>
3. *Parenthood.* Ancient and modern revelation describes a third dimension of resemblance between God and humans: that of parenthood. Jesus repeatedly used terms "Father"<sup>113</sup> and

“Abba”<sup>114</sup> as He taught and prayed. Paul declared that “we are the offspring of God” (Acts 17:29 KJV), and other scriptures clearly affirm a likeness between the role of “human fathers” and that of God as “the Father of our spirits” (Heb. 12:9 KJV).<sup>115</sup> The parallel between the fatherhood of man and that of God is further reinforced when Seth is described as being “in [Adam’s] own likeness, after his own image” (Moses 6:10; cf. Genesis 5:3 KJV). Although, admittedly, the process by which the spirits of mankind come into being has not been revealed—and moreover conceding that there is some aspect of the spirit’s existence that is without beginning<sup>116</sup>—Latter-day Saint doctrine affirms the fact that “all men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother, and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity.”<sup>117</sup>

Although we can treat the Old Testament pointers to God’s anthropomorphism but briefly here, several avenues of inquiry open before us. We start with the opening chapter of the Bible: Genesis 1:26–27 KJV says that man was created in God’s “image” and “likeness.” The eminent Bible scholar David Noel Freedman argued that the basic likeness between God and man expressed in these verses is meant to describe literal physical appearance:

[W]e note that humanity occupies a unique status in contrast with all of the other created beings on the earth: being made in the image and according to the likeness of God. The basic likeness is in physical appearance, as study of the etymology and usage of both terms shows: *selem* [image] and *demut* [likeness]. These terms are used in cognate languages of statues representing gods and humans in contemporary inscriptions, and certainly the intention is to say that God and man share a common physical appearance. If or when God makes himself visible to human beings, they will recognize their own features, and vice versa. The image is the same, and the basic features are comparable. While God is not human and humans are not divine, they share a common appearance, or physique.

Whenever God is described in the Hebrew Bible, He has features that human beings also have (e.g., Ezek. 1:26–28 KJV). The correspondence is by no means limited to body parts, but extends to the whole makeup of God and humans, including mind and spirit, thoughts and words. We must not press the

resemblances too far, as there are constant admonitions that God is different in profound respects (e.g., Isaiah 55:6–11), but these would hardly be necessary if not for the basic similarities. Only human beings, of all earthly creatures, share image and likeness with the Deity.<sup>118</sup>

A second argument in favor of the idea of an anthropomorphic God has to do with the Old Testament belief that He was somehow visible. One important passage is found in Exodus 24, a scene in which Moses, Aaron, Aaron's two sons, and seventy elders of Israel ascended the holy mount and there, in classical covenantal fashion, ratified the covenant made between Israel and the Lord: "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink" (Ex. 24:9–11 KJV). Please observe here that the text insists that the participants in this scene saw the God of Israel, plain and simple. No apologies are offered (see also Isa. 6:1–11 KJV). Further, in some manner, the experience of seeing the Lord constituted an integral part of the whole covenantal experience.

An additional scenario to which we wish to draw attention occurs in connection with the call of Ezekiel the prophet, wherein he saw the chariot-throne of the Lord and more. After finally noticing the canopy over the heads of the four cherubic beings, Ezekiel observed, "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about" (Ezek. 1:26–27 KJV). In what we consider to be an attempt to avoid the straightforward meaning of the text, the Revised Standard Version translates Ezekiel 1:26 as follows: "And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness *as it were* of a human

form” (emphasis added). But what can be more plain? Simply stated, Ezekiel saw the God of Israel during his call, much like his contemporary Lehi did (1 Nep. 1:8–9). And, like Lehi’s experience, Ezekiel’s view of the divine was intimately linked to his calling as a prophet.

In terms of specific physical features of God, we offer two passages as illustrations, knowing that the list could be extended substantially. The first arises in connection with the call of Jeremiah. Following his initial commissioning, the prophet objected to the Lord’s invitation. As a result, the Lord reassured Jeremiah that he would be delivered from anticipated difficulties and then, Jeremiah said, “the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth,” effectively making the prophet the mouthpiece of God (Jer. 1:9 KJV; cf. Isa. 6:7 KJV; Ezek. 2:7–3:4 KJV; Rev. 10:9–11 KJV). Does not this description maintain a view of a physical, personal God?

The second trait which strengthens the point has to do with God’s speech. For, consistent with what other prophets had experienced (see Amos 3:7 KJV), Jeremiah heard God’s voice. Lest one consider that Jeremiah and the others only thought that they heard a voice, merely hearing it in their mind or the like, one need only turn to the second example to which we shall draw attention: the gathering of the Israelites at the base of Mount Sinai. At the opening of the account of the giving of the Decalogue, it is not clear to the reader whether God’s voice was heard by all Israel, for the text simply says, “And God spake all these words” (Exodus 20:1). But after the recitation of the ten commandments, the text asserts that the people “stood afar off” (Ex. 20:18 KJV). Why? The next verse gives us the answer: “And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (v. 19 KJV). Obviously, the sound of God’s words had frightened the people, for they had heard His voice speaking. And out of fear, they appealed to Moses to be their mediator with the Lord. The simple recognition that, in the experience of ancient Israel, God possessed a voice with which He could speak illustrates the personal, anthropological conception of Deity.

One further notion has to do with Israel’s God building or working with His own hands. While we might point, say, to the

account of creation for an illustration, we suggest the examination of a reference which, in our view, refers to physical activity on the part of the Lord. We refer to the Song of Moses sung after the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian chariot army. Within its verses is written this tantalizing reference to the coming covenantal celebration at Mount Sinai and its repetition at the sanctuaries at Shiloh and in Jerusalem: “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever” (Ex. 15:17–18 KJV).

Please observe that the “place” (which term almost always refers to a sanctuary or holy spot) on the mountain is said to have been made by the Lord. Lest anyone doubt, the matching, complementing phrase of the poetry underscores that this sanctuary had been established by God’s own hands. That is to say, in the view of the Israelites, God Himself had built a special sanctuary atop the holy mount; its sacral quality was thereby assured.

Far from disappearing at the close of the Old Testament era, Jewish traditions about the anthropomorphic nature of God persisted in rabbinic circles for centuries. For example, in an oft-cited story found in *Genesis Rabbah* 8:10, “Adam’s likeness to God is so exact that Adam must be put to sleep so that the angels might worship the right person. . . . In [*Yalqut Shim’oni*] 1:20 on Genesis 2:9 the angels exclaim when they notice Adam’s resemblance to God, ‘Are there two powers in heaven?’”<sup>119</sup> Jewish scholar Jacob Neusner finds it “stunning” that the rabbinical commentators took this idea so literally, averring that even “the angels did not know man from God.” “I cannot imagine,” he says, “a more daring affirmation of humanity.”<sup>120</sup>

We note also the “individual’s close identification with God” in the rabbinical idea that He will “stroll with the righteous in the Garden of Eden in time to come. The righteous will be frightened in His presence, and the Holy and Blessed One will say, ‘Why are you frightened of Me? I am just like you.’”<sup>121</sup>

In summary, the notion of man’s creation in the image and likeness of God, His visibility, the consistent mention of His physical attributes, and the concept of His handiwork all point to



the notion of a very personal Deity, not to an abstraction or essence of some sort.<sup>122</sup> In the view of Professor Cherbonnier, a visitor to the Brigham Young University campus some years ago, it is theologically fatal “to abandon the conception of God as Person, without which the rest of the Bible collapses.”<sup>123</sup>

### 5. The Nature of God’s Names

Insofar as we can investigate, the names attributed to Deity are almost always associated either with one of His special characteristics or with an unusual, perhaps even miraculous, occurrence. Again, not attempting to be comprehensive, we note that in the latter category falls the case of the solemn oath common in the age of Jeremiah: “the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt” (Jer. 16:14; 23:7 KJV). Please notice that the appellation associated with the Lord derives from His specific, supernatural action of delivering Israel from its bondage in Egypt. A second instance connects with the titular phrase mentioned in association with Abraham’s meeting with Melchizedek: “the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth” (Gen. 14:19, 22 KJV). The fact that this titular phrase was repeated twice is significant, for it indicates that this denomination had become frozen in speech and referred to some special act either on God’s part or on his behalf.<sup>124</sup> In fact, the nature of the title points to the action of God’s being enthroned—doubtless in a representative, ceremonial manner—and being awarded possession of all creation in the process of the ceremony. Such celebration of God’s creative acts and His resulting possession of what was created is known from a wide variety of sources.<sup>125</sup>

For a third and final example, one need only look a few verses farther on in the text of Genesis where, speaking to Abraham, God says of Himself: “I am thy shield” (Gen. 15:1 KJV).<sup>126</sup> Within the covenantal setting of this statement, which occurs in a discussion between Abraham and the Lord, the point of the title “shield” must lie in the notions both that God Himself is the guarantor and protector of the covenant and, furthermore, that He will serve as Abraham’s protector. While the basic promises of the covenant to Abraham were to consist of land and posterity (Gen. 15:4, 7; 17:4–8; 22:17 KJV; Abra. 2:3–11),<sup>127</sup> there are always the matters of

the guarantees and penalties in such arrangements, which would extend even to this agreement between Abraham and the Lord.<sup>128</sup>

Concerning titles that were associated with some quality or even characteristic activity of Deity, the Doctrine and Covenants offers a clue about what we seek to explain. In section 19, the Lord speaks of Himself in the following manner: “I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name” (Doctrine and Covenants 19:10).

A second example appears in one of the Elephantine papyri, discovered on Elephantine Island near Aswan and written by a member of the Jewish community that inhabited the island in the 5th century BCE. Employing a shortened form of the name Jehovah, the unknown writer refers to “Yahu, the god, dwelling in the fortress Yeb.”<sup>129</sup> The obvious characteristic of the Deity was that He was believed to inhabit the small Jewish temple constructed within the fortress on Elephantine Island, thus, the epithet.

A third and final instance occurs within the account of Moses’ call. After Moses was commissioned at the site of the burning bush, he took the precaution of asking for a name from the Lord that would be recognized by the Israelite elders and would therefore allow Moses to be accepted as God’s agent. The response is famous: “I AM THAT I AM” (Ex. 3:14 KJV). The question is this: what can we say about this name? The answer is plenty. As George Buttrick reminds us, “In the Bible a name, whether of man, angel, or Deity, sets forth the character of its bearer.”<sup>130</sup> Significantly, the Revised Standard Version translates the name “I AM WHO I AM,” making the whole more personal, as doubtless intended. Moreover, the appellation can be rendered “I am, because I am,” pointing to God’s self-existence. It must also be noted that the tense of the verbs that lie behind this name stand in the Hebrew imperfect, the tense that is timeless in its meaning.<sup>131</sup> Thus, one could translate “I shall be who I shall be” or “I have been who I have been” or the like. When seen in this light, this title points to God’s existence and life in the past, present, and future, thus underlining His eternal character.

## 6. Ancient Christian Parallels from Nag Hammadi

As we noted earlier, the portrait of an anthropomorphic Deity is found repeatedly throughout Jewish and Christian literature. But

such an observation does not bring us full circle to what we seek, namely, a title like Man of Holiness or Man of Counsel in Moses 6:57 and 7:35. Interestingly, it is in the Nag Hammadi collection that we draw the closest to such epithets. For instance, according to the documents known as *Eugnostos the Blessed* and *The Sophia of Jesus Christ*—or *The Wisdom of Jesus Christ*—the father of the Son of Man is known as Immortal Man. Within the theological system of these two texts, there are, according to the classic formulation by Douglas Parrott, “four principal divine beings: the unbegotten Father; his androgynous image, Immortal Man; Immortal Man’s androgynous son, Son of Man; and Son of Man’s androgynous son, the Savior.”<sup>132</sup> Before we proceed further, it is important to note that whereas the text called *The Sophia of Jesus Christ* is certainly a Christian production and depends substantially on *Eugnostos*, the latter document has been judged by some historians to be pre-Christian in its composition.<sup>133</sup> However, if the *Eugnostos* text preceded Jesus’ era, as seems likely, then the portrait of Jesus as the celestial Son of Man in the gospels is not an innovation. And the notion that His Father was called Man is certainly older than the composition of *The Sophia of Jesus Christ* where this idea also appears.

In *Eugnostos*’s writings, the name Immortal Man appears nine times.<sup>134</sup> Two alternative titles, First Man<sup>135</sup> and Man,<sup>136</sup> appear once each. These names underscore the idea that the father of the Son of Man was called Man and that His chief characteristics were His primacy—thus His title First Man—and His everlastingness, all leading to His epithet Immortal Man.<sup>137</sup> There is more.

In a tractate ascribed to Adam’s son Seth and entitled *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, God is referred to as “the Man,”<sup>138</sup> paralleling what we just saw in *Eugnostos* and *The Sophia of Jesus Christ*. Moreover, a fuller title for God appears as “the Man of the Greatness,” an epithet that bears a notable similarity to the term Man of Holiness. The most significant observation in the text is that “the Man of the Greatness” is said to be “the Father of truth,” a clear epithet for God. Furthermore, Deity is also called “the Man of Truth,” presenting another instance of remarkable similarity to a title in Moses: Man of Counsel.<sup>139</sup> The pairings are not difficult to make, Man of Greatness with Man of Holiness, and Man of Truth

with Man of Counsel. What is more, we think it not insignificant to note that the section in the Book of Moses containing the two titles is ascribed to a record of Adam (Moses 6:51–68, esp. v. 57), and the treatise in which appear the two corresponding epithets is ascribed to Adam's righteous son, Seth. In other words, it is in records that come from the family circle of Adam that these almost identical titles for Deity appear. To be sure, similar names occur in texts unrelated to Adamic documents such as that ascribed to God in *Eugnostos the Blessed*. But the names recorded there do not share the notable similarities that those from the Adam/Seth texts exhibit.

### Conclusions

In accord with the six objectives set out at the beginning of this article, we have found ample evidence from pre-Christian sources to buttress the rather daring idea of God as Man of Holiness and Man of Counsel. It was in Moses 6:57, in fact, that the Only Begotten was called the Son of Man because of His sonship to the Man of Holiness. Because of this connection made within the text, we looked first at the figure of this Son of Man as He is described in both biblical and non-scriptural sources. We discovered that the New Testament portrait of the Son of Man drew on ideas at home in Daniel's book, the *Similitudes of Enoch*, and *4 Ezra*, all of which point to the Son of Man as having a divine origin as well as a divinely commissioned role among the earth's inhabitants.

Second, we saw that the biblical record consistently portrays God as possessing anthropomorphic features, so much so that there were physical structures on the earth that were believed to have been built by His own hands.

The third topic took up the issue of associations of the names of Deity with His actions and qualities. There is much in a name, and that proves to be the case all the more in the instance of titles for the Lord.

The last section saw us refer to names of Deity in an early Christian library, which bore notable, even remarkable, similarities to those with which we started in Moses 6–7. What is more, the texts whose titles for God exhibited the closest affinities to one another were the record of Adam quoted by Enoch in the Book of Moses

and the apocryphal record ascribed to Adam's son, Seth. Thus, the circle is completed. Man of Holiness, the father of the Son of Man in the Adam text, is given a similar name in both pre-Christian and early Christian documents that remained totally unknown to the modern world until their discovery in Upper Egypt and subsequent translation.<sup>140</sup>



Figure 3. Viktor Vanetzov (1848–1926), *God of Hosts*, 1885–96.<sup>141</sup>

Further generalizing analogous arguments above relating to “first-born” and “Only Begotten” to apply to mortals, Borsch argues that the title “Son of Man” is meant to be extended to an infinity of successors: “Since the son would ascend to become the Man and thus be the Man as the Son of Man, it is not hard to see . . . how and why the true heavenly one could be called the Son of Man. Logically, then, the new Son of Man [e.g., Enoch] should be called the Son of the Son of Man.”<sup>142</sup> It is not surprising, then, in the aftermath of Enoch’s soul-stretching emulation of “divine pathos” in the Book of Moses, that the prophet is given a right to the divine throne, in likeness of the “Chosen One” of the *Similitudes of Enoch* destined to “sit on the throne of glory.”<sup>143</sup> Says the Enoch of the Book of Moses to God, “thou hast . . . given unto me a right to thy throne” (Moses 7:59).<sup>144</sup>

Significantly, the Book of Moses’ motif of granting access to the divine throne to mortal humans is nowhere more at home than in the pseudepigraphal Enoch literature. For example, in *3 Enoch*, the

seer declares, “the Holy One, blessed be He, made for me a throne like the throne of glory . . . and sat me down upon it.”<sup>145</sup>

Summarizing other ancient literature relevant to this passage, Enochian scholar Charles Mopsik concludes that the exaltation of Enoch is not meant to be seen as a singular event. Rather, he writes that the “enthronement of Enoch is a prelude to the transfiguration of the righteous<sup>146</sup>—and at their head the Messiah—in the world to come, a transfiguration that is the restoration of the figure of the perfect Man.”<sup>147</sup> Following this ideological trajectory to its full extent, Latter-day Saints see the perfect Man (with a capital *M*), into whose form the Messiah and Enoch and all the righteous are transfigured, as God the Father, of whom Adam, the first mortal man, is a type.<sup>148</sup>

This is what Jesus intended His Old World disciples to envision when He taught, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48 KJV), and also what He taught to His New World disciples after His resurrection: “Be perfect *even as I*, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (3 Nep. 12:48).<sup>149</sup> Returning to Moses 6:57, we can see better than ever why, as part of Joseph Smith’s account of Enoch’s vision, God proclaims His primary identity to be that of an “Endless and Eternal” Man, declaring, “Man of Holiness is my name” (Moses 7:35).

Could Joseph Smith have invented such a conception of God and man which would find remarkable parallels in literature yet to be discovered? We shall leave readers to answer this question themselves. For us, we have our answer, and it is that Joseph Smith is what he claimed to be: a prophet of the living God.

### Afterword

The confluences and divergences of Jewish and Christian beliefs about the Messiah have sometimes led to contentious misunderstandings. In this regard, Lucass provides a helpful perspective on why the ideas discussed in this paper may offer a path to continued, respectful dialogue:

If Jesus’ first coming is accepted as the inauguration of the messianic era (based on the acceptance that his messiahship was authentically Jewish . . .), and if at his Second Coming all of the expected conditions of the Age to Come were to prevail,

then there is nothing in this proposition that would jeopardize the integrity of Judaism as it now stands. Effectively, therefore, this invalidates the statement of [Jacob Neusner: “Is Jesus the Christ? If so, then Judaism falls. If not, then Christianity fails.”<sup>150</sup> We hope that our broader conception of the issue will allow] a move away from the assertion and denial that has plagued dialogue from the “parting of the ways” (ca. 70 CE), opening up fresh possibilities and a new foundation on which dialogue can be built.

Admittedly, however plausible this may be, it cannot wipe out 2,000 years of persecution, mistrust, and hatred. Even so, if [this] premise . . . is accepted—namely, that the messiahship of Jesus as portrayed in the New Testament can be rooted in antecedent Jewish tradition—then I believe that . . . this will provide a bridge to dialogue that has hitherto not existed.<sup>151</sup>

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## Discussion

**Jo Ann H. Seely:**

Thank you so much, Professor Brown, for that great presentation. So one thing that I was thinking about during this presentation is, as you so wonderfully laid out for us, there's a lot of anthropomorphic language in the Book of Moses and in the Old Testament as well, like Son of Man, Man of Counsel, even "weight," as you talked about today. What do you think led to the gradual abandonment of anthropomorphisms in the Christian tradition?

**S. Kent Brown:**

When I began to read early Christian literature, particularly the long five books of Irenaeus, I thought Irenaeus was embarrassed by the literalism of scripture. He began to maneuver things so that the literal character of scripture didn't shine out so brightly. He was followed by others, of course, both in the Latin tradition and in the Greek tradition, thinkers who were imbued with philosophy and who didn't think they could sell their religion to their very bright, very capable, very educated friends without taking away some of this literalistic language that God and man look like each other. And I think that's where the break began—sometime in the second century. Irenaeus, of course, was late in that second century. But during the second century, Christians began to undo the connectors, the links to their literalistic biblical past.

**Jo Ann:**

Which is a great loss, because we learn so much from that language.

**Kent:**

Yes.

**Jo Ann:**

Okay, Jeffrey, how about for you? How would you respond to those who believe that seeing the Book of Moses as a wholly 19th century



document doesn't diminish its value as scripture in any significant way?

**Jeffrey M. Bradshaw:**

Well, I think the thing that stands out most to me is that the Prophet of the Restoration, Joseph Smith, testified that he saw, interacted with, and (I think most vital for those of us who believe that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a divine organization, not just one made by man) gained keys from heavenly messengers. If we start to dismiss those messengers as literal characters and think of them as metaphors, which the early Christian church got into—or if we start to dismiss Joseph Smith's statements about what they said and did and what God spoke to him—then we lose anything that connects us in any literal way to the Lord and His Restored Church.

So to me, the testimony I have of Joseph Smith, and of those who visited and spoke with him and gave him keys, is invariably connected with the idea that the records he produced, and always claimed at face value that these were authentic records, were not just metaphorical encounters, and the ancient evidence to me is a great witness of that to me, just from a purely academic point of view. So I think we know then, with the combination of those testimonies, that it can't be a fully 19th century work.

**Jo Ann:**

Okay, well I have a question for both of you to respond to, because both of you have such depth of experience and scholarship in the Pearl of Great Price. What has been your most surprising discovery or find in your studies of the Book of Moses?

**Kent:**

My first discovery was in the first line, which is, I believe, the ancient title to this thing: "the Words of God." If we flip over to the Book of Abraham, the first line is, "In the land of the Chaldeans." If we go to the first line of the *Similitudes of Enoch*, it's "the words of Wisdom." Those are the incipit titles that point to an ancient text that I'm looking at: not titled in modern style but titled in

the ancient fashion. And so that was my first little clue that I was looking at an old document.

**Jo Ann:**

That's fantastic. And it also points to the value of words.

**Kent:**

Yes.

**Jeff:**

I always think the most interesting thing is the thing that I'm working on at a given moment. But I have to say that one of the most striking things to me was when I started to realize the depth to which not only the temple ritual seems to be *related* to the Book of Moses (but in terms of concepts and teachings) but also that the stories of the temple are woven *into* the Book of Moses to a great degree, including illustrations of each of the covenants that are associated with the temple. That was a complete surprise to me and a testimony to me, both of the temple ordinances we have and their antiquity as well as the Book of Moses and its relationship to those ordinances.

**Jo Ann:**

Okay. One last question: in light of your presentation and your studies, what's your opinion about what we learn about the translation process of the Joseph Smith translation for the Book of Moses? Just things that you have observed and that are significant for us to know.

**Kent:**

The translation process, of course, I think is still unknown to us in a broad sense. Even though Joseph sat with an open Bible, reading from the Bible, accompanied by a scribe who was making notes and so on, for him to produce this thing is still beyond my ability to grasp. He must have been flooded with inspiration. I have been flooded with inspiration a few times, but to think that it stayed

with him hour after hour after hour as he worked on the texts of scripture is somehow beyond my ability to grasp. So I can't answer.

**Jeff:**

I've always been struck by the difference that many people pointed out between Joseph Smith's effort to compose just the title of his 1832 journal on his own and then struggling with a few words that would describe the record that he was going to produce compared to, as Kent was saying, this flooding of inspiration that he experienced, especially during the translation of the first chapters of Genesis. And of course, Kerry Muhlestein and others described the great flow of revelation that occurred during such a short span of time. It's more than I can comprehend.

Joseph Smith was reluctant talk about the details of the translation of the Book of Mormon. I remember the occasion when he was with his brother Hyrum and some intimate friends and they said, "Now that we're here together, you can talk about how you translated the Book of Mormon." Even in the presence of people who themselves freely spoke about what instruments the Prophet purportedly used, what he saw when he looked into those instruments and all the outward details—even in the company of his closest friends, who he knew were loyal and understood heavenly things—Joseph Smith was reluctant to say more than it was by the gift and power of God. So it's a great mystery, I think, for all of us, a divine mystery.

*S. Kent Brown is an emeritus professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University and is the former director of the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. Brother Brown taught at BYU from 1971 to 2008. In the world of documentary films, he was the executive producer for Journey of Faith, Journey of Faith: The New World, and Messiah: Behold the Lamb of God, all productions of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute at BYU. His most recent book is The Testimony of Luke which deals historically, culturally, and doctrinally with each verse in Luke's Gospel (2015). He has finished the manuscript for a commentary on the New Testament Epistle to the Ephesians. In Church service, he was president of the BYU Thirteenth Stake, president of the Jerusalem District, a counselor in the presidency of the Central Eurasian Mission, president of the Izmir branch in Turkey, and most recently an institute teacher. He and his wife, Gayle, are the parents of five children and the grandparents of twenty-five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.*

*Jeffrey M. Bradshaw (PhD, Cognitive Science, University of Washington) is a Senior Research Scientist at the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC) in Pensacola, Florida ([www.ihmc.us/groups/jbradshaw](http://www.ihmc.us/groups/jbradshaw); [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffrey\\_M.\\_Bradshaw](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffrey_M._Bradshaw)). His professional writings have explored a wide range of topics in human and machine intelligence ([www.jeffreymbradshaw.net](http://www.jeffreymbradshaw.net)). Jeff has been the recipient of several awards and patents and has been an adviser for initiatives in science, defense, space, industry, and academia worldwide. Jeff has written detailed commentaries on the Book of Moses and Genesis 1–11 and on temple themes in the scriptures. For Church-related publications, see [www.TempleThemes.net](http://www.TempleThemes.net). Jeff was a missionary in France and Belgium from 1975–1977, and his family has returned twice to live in France. He and his wife, Kathleen, are the parents of four children and fifteen grandchildren. From July 2016–September 2019, Jeff and Kathleen served missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo Kinshasa Mission office and the DR Congo Kinshasa Temple. They currently live in Nampa, Idaho.*

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## Notes

1. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 742–43; Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 142–44.
2. Borsch, *Son of Man*, 55–88.
3. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” 1:7.
4. Collins, *Scepter*, 196–97; Brand, “1 Enoch,” 2:1362, 1447n9. For detailed discussions of issues in dating the work, see Boccaccini, *Enoch and the Messiah*, 415–96.
5. See, e.g., Lieber, *Pirkei Avos Treasury*, 1:1, 6–13.
6. It is important to note that, of the Aramaic fragments of 1 Enoch found at Qumran, none of those identified preserve any of the *Similitudes*. Even so, as Bruce assures us, this segment is doubtless pre-Christian (*New Testament History*, 131).
7. Temple themes were advanced in Jewish and early Christian traditions, with even the Garden of Eden being seen as a proto-temple. Michael Morales traces the continuity of temple themes from the time of Creation into the Mosaic era. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*. See also Bradshaw, “Tree of Knowledge”; Bradshaw, *Creation, Fall*; Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch, Noah*; Calabro, ““This Thing Is a Similitude.””
8. Barker, “Joseph Smith,” 79–80. Shirley Lucass concurs and, noting the increasing acceptance of this, writes,

Philo introduced the idea of the Logos figure as an intermediary, whilst the *Memra* of the *Targumim* provides another example. . . . The suggestion that Jesus is Yahweh, although ancient in itself, is beginning to be rediscovered and reprised. For Christianity, it presents no conflict of interest, even though it may initially cause surprise. (Lucass, *Concept of the Messiah*, 192–93).

This observation is also acknowledged by Idel:

In some instances, the Messiah has been conceived also as the representative of the divine in this world. The very fact that the phrase *meshiah Yhwh* recurs in the sources shows that special connection between him and God. This nexus could sometimes be stronger and richer, as it later became in Christian theology and in the ecstatic Kabbalah and Sabbateanism, or less evidently, in some other cases in Jewish sources, though such a view is found also in the rabbinic literature, where the Messiah is described as one of the three entities designated by the *Tetragrammaton*. (Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 41).

9. James Charlesworth laments, “It is distressing to find that most publications on the messianisms of *1 Enoch* are vitiated by the failure

to perceive the heterogeneous nature of the ‘five books’ within *1 Enoch* and the equation of ‘the Messiah’ with other messianic titles.” Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 4:134n45.

10. Ben Tov, “Book of Enoch.” The eminent Latter-day Saint historian Richard L. Bushman has likewise concluded that the principal themes of “Laurence’s 105 translated chapters do not resemble Joseph Smith’s Enoch in any obvious way.” Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 138. See also Woodworth, “Extra-Biblical Enoch Text,” 190–92.
11. On the relationship between the Book of Moses account of Enoch and the *Book of Giants*, see Bradshaw, “Moses 6–7 and the *Book of Giants*.”
12. As Ellens has observed,

References to the messianic expectation and eschatological judgment at Qumran in the *Rule of the Community* is a correlate of the Son of Man ideology in the *Parables [Similitudes] of Enoch*. Thus, while the Dead Sea Scrolls do not name or title a Son of Man, they present the same messianic theology of eschatological judgment which is presented more concretely in the *Parables*, where it is given the name, title, and messianic character of the Son of Man. Thus, it certainly seems that it is precisely this figure who is the Son of Man throughout [the *Similitudes*] and the messianic suffering servant Son of Man in the Jesus story, that is the suffering servant-Royal Messiah at Qumran, and the judge and savior in 11QMelch. (Ellens, “Dead Sea Scrolls, 349; cf. Bertalotto, “Qumran Messianism.”)

Going further, Craig A. Evans concludes after a review of key Old Testament scriptures bearing on the topic,

This brief overview of the interpretation of Gen. 49:10 KJV, Num. 24:17 KJV, and Isa. 10:34–11:5 KJV in late antiquity documents the relatively unified and cohesive messianic expectation held by many Jews, even when members of rival and, at times, antagonistic groups. That is not to say that there was no diversity or that all Jews embraced messianism. But sometimes the diversity of Jewish messianism is exaggerated in critical scholarship, leaving the impression that no two groups held common views. In fact, many Jews in late antiquity longed for the coming of a king, anointed by the Lord, in fulfillment of scripture. (Evans, “Messiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 93.)

13. Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 113. See, e.g., Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 166, 187.
14. Black, “Strange Visions.”
15. E.g., Brand, “1 Enoch,” 1360, 1361–1362; Collins, *Scepter*, 196. Even some who doubt the early dating of the *Similitudes* as a whole express

cautious confidence in it as a witness of a pre-Christian apocalyptic Son of Man tradition. For example, L. Arik Greenberg calls a statement by Reginald H. Fuller “one of the most brilliantly honed concessions to the critics of the early dating of [the *Similitudes*], while pointing out the persistent value in it.” Fuller wrote, “While . . . we cannot be sure that the *Similitudes* themselves antedate the Christian era, we may tread them with some degree of confidence as evidence for a tradition in Jewish apocalyptic which is pre-Christian” [Fuller, *Foundations of New Testament Christology*, 168].

16. Collins, *Scepter*, 196.
17. Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement,” 28. Fredriksen’s full statement is given as a question: “Would the participants at [the moment of Paul’s ministry], whether they were Jews or Gentiles, think of Christianity as anything other than the true form of Judaism, or as the right way to read Jewish scriptures, or as the latest and best revelations from Israel’s god in keeping with his ancient promises to his people?” In support of her affirmative answer to this question, Fredriksen notes that this “list of identifiers is, of course, a paraphrase of Romans 15” (Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement,” 376n8).
18. Nickelsburg, “Salvation without and with a Messiah,” 64. See also Nickelsburg, *Ancient Judaism*; Capes *Israel’s God*; Chester, “Messiah and Exaltation.”
19. Farrer, “Christian Apologist,” 26.
20. Townsend, “Translation as Expansion, 57n35.
21. See Bradshaw, foreword to *Name as Key-Word*, ix–xi.
22. Calabro, “This Thing.”
23. See Gardner, *Gift and Power*, 276.
24. Benjamin L. McGuire, “Book of Mormon.” See also Gardner, *Gift and Power*, 192–195, 205–225.
25. Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, 52.
26. Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 121. Only five Jewish works within the fifty pseudepigraphal documents surveyed by Charlesworth contain explicit messianic ideas or titles, though a few more “employ messianic titles other than ‘the Messiah’ and its derivatives” (Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 123).
27. See Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch*, 36, 78–79, 117, 153–54.
28. In addition to Genesis 22:2, 12, 16 KJV, the masculine form *yāḥīd* occurs in Jeremiah 6:26 KJV; Amos 8:10 KJV; Zechariah 12:10 KJV; and Proverbs 4:3 KJV.
29. Brenton, *Septuagint with Apocrypha*, 710: “Deliver my soul from the sword; my only-begotten (*monogenēs*) from the power of the dog.”

By way of contrast, the term used in the Hebrew text of Psalm 22:20 KJV (*yāḥīd*, literally “my only one” [see, e.g., Abegg, *Scrolls Bible*, 751 n. b.; Marks, Hammond, and Busch, *English Bible*, 1:977 n. 22:20]) is

translated variously and with more difficulty in English Bibles as “my life” [Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, 751], “my precious life” [Dennis et al., *English Standard Version*, 965], or “darling” in the King James Version of the Bible—the latter two renderings preferring to prioritize the sense of emotional attachment conveyed by the term *agapētos* (beloved) over the literal biological relationship stressed in the term *monogenēs* (only begotten). Similarly, the *Septuagint*’s choice of the word *agapētos* instead of *monogenēs* in the Greek translation of the Hebrew *yāhîd* in Gen. 22:2, 12, 16 KJV emphasizes Abraham’s unique love for his only son Isaac and is paralleled in the Greek New Testament’s choice of *agapētos* instead of *monogenēs* to emphasize the Father’s unique love for His only begotten Son. For more on this topic, see Griehs, “God’s Only Begotten Son.”

Incidentally, the *Septuagint* (agreeing with a Dead Sea Scroll found at *Naḥal Hever*) also provides a reading of an earlier verse in the same Psalm that is meaningful to Christians: “They pierced my hands and my feet” (Brenton, *Septuagint*, 710, Psalm 21:16; Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Scrolls Bible*, 519). The eminent Hebrew Bible translator Robert Alter notes that “the received Hebrew text [for that phrase]—literally ‘like a lion my hands and feet’ makes no sense.” So he translates the phrase as “they bound my hands and feet,” admitting that there is “no ancient textual warrant for this reading” (Alter, *Hebrew Bible* 3:68n17).

30. See, e.g., John 1:14; 3:16, 18 KJV; 1 John 4:9 KJV.
31. Samuel Zinner, personal communication to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, August 17, 2018. See Philo, “On the Migration of Abraham,” 255.
32. “God having sown and generated an excellent offspring” (Philo, “On the Migration of Abraham,” 266). According to Samuel Zinner, this refers to the idea that, in addition to the preeminent Moses, Isaac is the *Logos*, born of God, as are also Abraham and Jacob (Zinner, personal communication, August 17, 2018). See also Philo, “On the Unchangeableness of God,” 3:13.
33. Cf. Doctrine and Covenants 76:54, 67, 71, 94, 102; 77:11; 78:21; 88:5; 93:22; 107:19.
34. See also Matt. 1:25 KJV; Luke 2:7 KJV; Col. 1:15 KJV.
35. The full passage reads as follows:

**And church of the first-born which are written in heaven** (καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς). This forms a distinct clause; “and to the church,” etc. For ἐκκλησία *assembly* or *church*, see on Matthew 16:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:1. The “myriads” embrace not only angels, but redeemed men, enrolled as citizens of the heavenly commonwealth, and entitled to the rights and privileges of first-born sons. Πρωτότοκος *first-born* is applied mostly to Christ in New Testament. See Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15, 18; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 1:5. Compare Hebrews 11:28, and

L. 2:7. Properly applied to Christians by virtue of their union with Christ, “the first-born of all creation,” “the first-born from the dead,” as sharing His sonship and heirship. See Romans 8:14–17, 29. The word also points to Christians as the true *Israel* of God. The analogy is suggested with the first-born of Israel, to whom peculiar sanctity attached, and whose consecration to himself God enjoined (Exodus 13:1, 11–16); and with the further application of the term *first-born* to Israel as a people, Exodus 4:22. The way was thus prepared for its application to the Messiah. There seems, moreover, to be a clear reference to the case of Esau (ver. 16). Esau was the first-born of the twin sons of Isaac (Genesis 25:25). He sold his birthright (πρωτοτοκία), and thus forfeited the privilege of the first-born. The assembly to which Christian believers are introduced is composed of those who have not thus parted with their birthright, but have retained the privileges of the first-born. The phrase “church of the first-born” includes all who have possessed and retained their heavenly birthright, living or dead, of both dispensations: the whole Israel of God, although it is quite likely that the Christian church may have been most prominent in the writer’s thought.

**Which are written in heaven** (ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς). Ἀπογράφειν, only here and L. 2:1, 3, 5, means *to write off* or *copy*; to enter in a register the names, property, and income of men. Hence, ἀπογραφή *an enrolment*. See on L. 2:1, 2. Here, inscribed as members of the heavenly commonwealth; citizens of heaven; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8, etc. See for the image, Exodus 32:32; Psalm 69:28; Isaiah 4:3; Daniel 12:1; L. 10:20. (Vincent, *Word Studies*, 4:553)

36. Cf. Luke 15:31 KJV.
37. See also Philippians 3:21 KJV.
38. See, e.g., Levenson, *Death and Resurrection*.
39. Aramaic *bar ʿēnāš* = Hebrew *ben-ʾādām* as in Psalm 8:5 KJV (v. 4 in the Masoretic Text).
40. Black, “Strange Visions.”
41. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 46:2–4, p. 153; 48:2, p. 166; 60:10, p. 233; 62:5, 7, 9, 14, p. 254; 63:11, p. 255; 69:26–27, 29, p. 311; 70:1, p. 315; 71:14, 17, p. 321. Many articles and books have been devoted to the idea of the “Son of Man” in the *Book of Similitudes*. As a small sampling, see Waddell, *Comparative Study*; Casey, *Solution*; Borsch, *Son of Man*; Borsch, *Christian and Gnostic*.
42. Interestingly, Brant Gardner observes that although

“Son of Man” appears eighty-seven times in the New Testament, . . . it appears only once in the Book of Mormon, in spite of the many times that Joseph Smith used New Testament phrases or verses in

his translations of the Book of Mormon. That single occurrence is a quotation from Isaiah 51:12 (2 Nephi 8:12). Why is this title never used? I believe that it is because Book of Mormon peoples never experience the Messiah as the “Son of Man,” or as a human. They experience him only as a God. They experience him only as a God—either as Yahweh in heaven, or as the resurrected and clearly more-than-man Messiah in Bountiful. (Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness*, 1:222)

Similarly, “the apostle Paul never uses the term ‘son of man’ (the term would have been meaningless to his Gentile audience),” though “a number of Pauline texts indicate that he was aware of Synoptic traditions about the coming son of man preserved in both Mark 13 and Q (1 Thess. 4:15–17 KJV; cf. Mark 13:26–27 KJV; 1 Thess. 5:2 KJV; cf. Matt. 24:42–44 KJV and Luke 12:37–40 KJV; cf. also 1 Thess. 5:3–17 KJV with Luke 21:34–36 KJV). Moreover, his references to Jesus’ function as judge in God’s behalf may well derive from this son of man tradition, although his operative title in these contexts is ‘Lord’” (Nickelsburg, *Judaism*, 110–11. See, more generally, 104–12).

43. Cf. Moses 4:2. See Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 39:6, p. 111; 40:5, p. 130; 45:3–4, p. 148; 49:2, 4, p. 166; 51:5a, 3, p. 180; 52:6, 9, p. 187; 53:6, p. 194; 55:4, p. 198; 61:5, 8, 10, pp. 243, 247; 62:1, p. 254.
44. In other words, “Messiah.” See Moses 7:53; Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 48:10, p. 166; 52:4, p. 187.
45. See Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 38:2, p. 95; 53:6, p. 194. The term also appears by implication in 39:6, p. 111; 46:3, p. 153; 49:2, p. 166; 62:2–3, p. 254.
46. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 119; emphasis added. The entire discussion is on pp. 113–23. Cf. Charlesworth, *Jesus within Judaism*, 39; Collins, *Scepter*, 213–14. For more on the debate surrounding this title, see Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch*, 191 endnotes M7–16.
47. Patai, *Messiah Texts*, xxix–xxx.
48. Importantly, Patai includes a collection of sources on Messiah ben Joseph in Patai, *Messiah Texts*, 165–70. See also Hatch, “Messiah ben Joseph”; Tvedtnes, “Joseph Smith”; Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 113–14, 133–34n35.
49. Levine and Brettler, *Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 3n1. On the Messiah as the son of David in the Old Testament and rabbinic literature, see Isaiah 11:1 KJV; Jeremiah 23:5 KJV; and ibn Chaviv, *Ein Yaakov*, Sukkah 52a, p. 228; Sanhedrin 97a, pp. 661–62.
50. Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 113.
51. Lucass, “Concept of the Messiah,” 190. Lucass also writes:

Both Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and Psalm 22 *do* reflect the role of the king/  
Anointed in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Servant figure of Isaiah

being a “type” of the king whose whole closely resembled that of the king, a role which, in turn, was found to reflect that of the surrounding cultures, the practice of *sacral* kingship and the central role played out in the New Year festival. It was also demonstrated from the Psalms that at this festival the king was “abandoned” by Yahweh and his followers, that he underwent a form of cultic humiliation, followed by a ritual in which he battled with Yahweh/Israel’s enemies (physical and spiritual) in the form of the Chaos Waters. He subsequently “descended to the underworld,” was rescued by Yahweh (resurrected) and was enthroned, whereupon he became “Son of God”/Yahweh. A comparison with the New Testament revealed that each of these points is reflected in Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection. Furthermore, Jesus’ role is referred to frequently in terms of the Servant’s role in Isaiah. . . .

Whilst it may be claimed that Rabbinic Judaism jettisoned the idea of a suffering messiah (although that fails to account for the Messiah ben Joseph and the Rabbinic doctrine of vicarious suffering as atonement, as well as the messianic interpretation of the Suffering Servant passage of Isaiah 52:13–53:12), it is no longer possible to claim that the messiahship of Jesus is “un-Jewish” because he suffered, died, and was resurrected. . . .

Peter’s message about Jesus . . . was not relayed as an innovation but as fulfillment of prophecy: “What God foretold by the mouth of the prophets that his Christ should suffer he thus fulfilled” (Acts 3:18). . . . The important thing here is that Jewish disciples were demonstrating from the Hebrew scriptures to other Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, and that it was necessary for him to suffer, die, and rise from the dead (Acts 17:1). [Lucass, “Concept of the Messiah,” 197–99.]

While the foregoing ideas relating to kingship have been critiqued as excesses of myth-ritual concepts popular among scholars in former decades, Robert Oden, among others, has outlined necessary qualifications whereby such excesses can give way to more balanced scholarship (Oden, *Bible without Theology*, 64–70). For a comparative study of the ancient Near Eastern rituals of kingship and the Bible and their relevance for Latter-day Saint temple worship, see Bradshaw and Head, “Investiture Panel at Mari.”

52. Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 115.
53. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 17:24, p. 2:667. Cf. 17:22 p. 2:668 of the same volume.
54. Waddell, *Comparative Study*, 48.
55. Waddell, *Comparative Study*, 49.



56. William Blake, *Enoch*, 1806–07, lithograph, 21.6 cm x 30.9 cm (8.5 in x 12.1875 in), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, New York, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/426771>.
57. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, “1 Enoch 2,” 321.
58. Collins, *Scepter*, 197–203.
59. Collins, *Scepter*, 203; emphasis added. Cf. the analogous account from Old Babylon that has been termed “the Exaltation of Marduk” (Clifford, *Creation Accounts*, 93]. The epic ends with the conferral upon Marduk of fifty sacred titles, including the higher god Ea’s own name, accompanied with the declaration, “He is indeed even as I.” [Speiser, “Creation Epic,” 7:140, p. 72]. See Bradshaw and Head, “Investiture Panel,” 11.
60. Collins, *Scepter*, 202.
61. See, e.g., 2 Nep. 3:15, 25:19.
62. Compare the figures of Joshua the (anointed) High Priest in Zech. 3 KJV and the Messiah/Anointed One in Dan. 9:25–26 KJV.
63. Charlesworth, “Messianism,” 124–25.
64. Compare John 5:27 KJV. For a comparison of the claims of Jesus in this verse to related ideas in the Old Testament (Moses, Daniel) and the pseudepigraphal literature, see Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1:651–52. We also see Jesus Christ referred to as “the Lord [*ho kyrios*]” and “the righteous judge [*ho dikaios kritēs*]” in 2 Tim. 4:8 KJV.
65. See, e.g., Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 69:27, p. 311: “and the whole judgment was given to the Son of Man.”
66. See Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 49–50.
67. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 119.
68. Ellens, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 345–49.
69. S. Kent Brown, *Testimony of Luke*, 314, 662–65, 688–92.
70. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 15–17; Fitzmyer, “Aramaic Language,” 8, 20; Dan. 7:13–14 KJV; Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 37–71, pp. 87–332. For more on this distinction, see Collins, *Scepter*, 202.
71. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 15–16.
72. Collins, *Scepter*, 195–96.
73. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 16; emphasis added; Bruce, *New Testament History*, 130; the Revised Standard Version.
74. Bruce, *New Testament History*, 131.
75. The Servant Songs in Isaiah are four, including Isaiah 42:6 KJV and 49:6 KJV. The passages in question, all of which speak of the servant to come, are 42:1–4 KJV, 49:1–6 KJV, 50:4–9 KJV, and 52:13–53:12 KJV. They were first isolated as units belonging together by Bernhard Duhm in Eissfeldt, *Old Testament*, 333–36, 340–41. It was Jesus who applied both expectations (the Servant prophesied by Isaiah and the Son of

- Man known from other sources) to Himself (see Bruce, *New Testament History*, 132, 175–76).
76. *1 Enoch* 48:6–7; see also John 1:5 KJV; Bruce, *New Testament History*, 132–33. For additional passages in the *Similitudes* that “may presage descriptions of the Christian Messiah,” see Black, “Strange Visions.”
  77. Gustav Kaupert, *Jesus Christ*, 1880, stone sculpture, Aula Palatina, Trier, Germany. Photograph taken by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, October 13, 2012. For more on the interesting history of this bust, see Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch, Noah*, 117, caption to figure M7-8.
  78. The question still persists whether Jesus called Himself such. We do not wish to enter a lengthy discussion concerning the historical Jesus, specifically whether the Jesus of history ever applied the title Son of Man to Himself or whether such a connection was attributed only by members of the later Christian community (Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 17–21). Briefly, we believe that the Jesus of history is to be found in the accounts of the gospels, including John, and that Jesus applied the title Son of Man to Himself. See the judicious remarks on this subject by Bruce in *New Testament History*, 174–75.
  79. See also Bruce, *New Testament History*, 175.
  80. See Bradshaw and Bowen, “By the Blood.”
  81. See Collins, *Scepter*, 211 for an affirmation that the Son of Man was seen as preexistent in the *Similitudes* and *4 Ezra*.
  82. The dating of *Fourth Ezra* (*2 Esdras*) has raised questions. Bruce M. Metzger has summarized the evidence, concluding that it was composed between 100 and 120 CE (in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:520; see also Bruce, *New Testament History*, 133). Because this text was authored in a period when Christians and Jews had separated from one another, the Ezra document would not have been influenced by anything from a Christian text but rather represents an independent witness of the sort of expectation to which Jesus referred.
  83. See also Bruce, *New Testament History*, 175–76. The New Testament itself attests a climate of uncertainty and speculation at the time of Jesus regarding *several* prophetic figures whose comings were anticipated by His people. For example, the Gospel of John reports that “priests and Levites from Jerusalem” were sent to ask John the Baptist which one of three such figures he was (see John 1:19–23 KJV): the Messiah (see Borchert, *John 1–11*, 127), Elijah (see Malachi 3:1 KJV; 4:5–6 KJV; cf. *Sirach* 48:10–11), or “that prophet”—the latter usually either associated with the “Prophet . . . like unto [Moses]” mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15 KJV (see Acts 3:22 KJV; 1 Maccabees 4:46; Testament of Benjamin 9:2. Utley, “Beloved Disciple’s Memoirs, 4:24; Seely, “Prophet Like Moses”) or else with Moses himself. Borchert (*John 1–11*, 127–28) notes the possible significance that the Dead Sea Scrolls’ *Manual of Discipline*

(*Rule of the Community*) mentions three similar eschatological figures: “the prophet . . . and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel” (Martínez, “Rule of the Community,” 9:11, pp. 13–14).

After Herod beheaded John the Baptist, he feared that Jesus might be John “risen from the dead” (Mark 6:14–16 KJV). Then, as now, mapping biblical prophecy to precise timeframes, circumstances, and individuals is a notoriously risky business. As a Danish parliamentarian once obtusely opined, “It is difficult to make predictions, especially about the future.” (Danish, “*Det er vanskeligt at spå, især når det gælder Fremtiden.*” Verified in quoteresearch.)

With specific respect to Isaiah 53, the lack of a settled interpretation at the time of Jesus for the identity of the righteous servant is witnessed in the question the Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip: “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” (Acts 8:34 KJV). Even Jesus’ disciples, to whom He explained that He must needs “suffer many things . . . and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt 16:21 KJV), failed to recognize these events as Messianic necessities. When a horrified Peter rebuked Jesus, saying, “Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee” (Matt. 16:22 KJV; see also Mark 9:31–32; 16:10–11 KJV; John 20:9 KJV), the Lord was obliged to forcefully disavow His chief apostle’s error with these words: “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me” (Matt. 16:23 KJV).

Though mapping scriptural prophecies to specific events typically carries risks, both ancient and modern Christians affirm with confidence that Jesus Christ is the Servant of Isaiah 53. When the Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip, “Of whom speaketh the prophet?” the reply was unequivocal: “Philip . . . began at the same scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus*” (Acts 8:35; emphasis added; see also Bock, “Isaiah 53,” 133–44).

Moreover, as Mikeal Parsons insightfully argues, Luke’s account of Philip’s reply to the eunuch in Acts 8 “is given content by the precursor text in Luke 24” (Parsons, “Isaiah 53,” 117). When the resurrected Jesus spoke to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, He was doubtless alluding in part to Isaiah 53 when He said, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that *the prophets have spoken*: Ought not Christ *to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*” (Luke 24:25–26 KJV; emphasis added). Likewise, when the Lord spoke to the Apostles, He said, “All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in the prophets*, and in the psalms, concerning me. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ *to suffer, and to rise from the dead* the third day: And that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in his name” (Luke 24:44, 46–47 KJV; emphasis added).

One of the most important scriptural sermons on Isaiah 53 was given by Abinadi in Mosiah 15–16 (see Welch, “Isaiah 53,” where it is argued that not only Abinadi but also earlier Nephite prophets knew and used Isaiah 53). The identity of the Servant he describes is made clear when he teaches plainly, “God himself shall come down among the children of men. . . . And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God” (Mosiah 15:1, 2). “In addition, Matthew, [John,] Peter, and Paul apply various verses of Isaiah 53 to Christ. Modern Apostles of the Restored Church of Jesus Christ, such as James E. Talmage, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Bruce R. McConkie, have also stated that Jesus is the subject of Isaiah 53” [Matt. 8:17 KJV; John 1:29, 12:38 KJV; Acts 3:13, 4:27, 30, 10:36, 43 KJV; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2:21–25 KJV; Rom. 4:25, 5:29; 10:15–16, 15:21 KJV; 1 Cor. 2:9, 5:7, 15:3 KJV; 2 Cor. 5:20 KJV; Heb. 9:28 KJV; 1 John 3:5 KJV. For more on Isaiah 53 as it appears or influences these and other related passages, see Wilkins, “Isaiah 53”; Evans, “Isaiah 53.” And more recently, President Russell M. Nelson has taught the same truth (Nelson, *Teachings*, 20).

84. Scholars have brought forth impressive pre-Christian evidence about a suffering and atoning Messiah (see, e.g., Hengel and Bailey, “Effective History of Isaiah 53,” 146). However, the most impressive examples of the Servant of Isaiah 53 being understood in Jewish tradition messianically come from the *Targum*, the *Talmud*, and the later rabbinic literature (see Brown, “Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah 53,” 62–64, 79–83; Buksbazen, “Of Whom”). A sampling of examples include the following:

- The *Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel* (composed between 70 and 135 CE) for Isaiah 52:13 reads, “Behold my servant Messiah shall prosper; he shall be high, and increase and be exceedingly strong” (Maher, ed., *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Genesis, 52:13*). One of the most interesting features of the *Targum* is how it bifurcates the figure of the Servant—ascribing the descriptions of the Servant’s exaltation in the passage to the Messiah while applying the descriptions of the Servant’s suffering and death to the wicked, “with some application of the text to the nation of Israel as a whole” (Brown, “Jewish Interpretations,” 62). According to Jostein Adna, the Targumist starts as follows:

from the possible identification of the Lord’s Servant with the Messiah (cf., e.g., Zech. 3:8 KJV; *Targum Jonathan Zech. 3:8*)” and “becomes convinced that the prosperous and exalted figure in Isaiah 52:13 can be none other than the Messiah. The change in the Hebrew text from the third person singular in 52:13 to the second person singular in verse 14 (“many were astonished at *you*”) further persuades him that all

statements of suffering and death in 52:14 and 53:3-9 must apply to others than the Servant-Messiah (the Gentiles, the wicked in Israel, etc.). Hence, he is able to render Isaiah 52:13-53:12 in keeping with the typical Jewish view of a triumphant Messiah, who judges the people and the wicked and rules over God-fearing and law-keeping Israel. . . . Inasmuch as it takes up all the eschatological mediator functions in itself [e.g., temple building, instruction in the law, intercession], the picture of the Messiah in *Targum of Isaiah* 53 presents an analogy to that of the New Testament, though it must immediately be added that the New Testament description of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ places the accent on very different features. (Adna, “Servant of Isaiah 53,” 189, 224);

- The *Babylonian Talmud* Sanhedrin 98b (codified in the 6th century CE) asks, “The Messiah—what is his name? . . . The rabbis say, ‘the leprous one’: Those of the house of Rabbi say, ‘the sick one,’ as it is said, ‘surely he hath borne our sickness’” (Isaiah 53:4 KJV);
- *Midrash Rabbah*, speaking with reference to Ruth 2:14, explains: “He is speaking of the King Messiah: ‘Come hither draw near to the Throne; and eat the bread,’ that is the bread of the kingdom: ‘and dip thy morsel in the vinegar.’ This refers to his chastisements, as it is said, ‘But he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities’” (see Isaiah 53:5 KJV. Compare Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, 8:64);
- *Midrash Tanhuma* applies Isaiah 52:13 and 53:3 to King Messiah [Townsend, *Midrash Tanhuma*, Toledot 20, pp. 1:166; Berman, *Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu*, Toledot 14, pp. 182–83];
- In the *Yalkut Shimoni*, a thirteenth-century compilation of earlier commentary, it reads, “‘Who art thou, O great mountain?’ (Zech. 4:7 KJV). This refers to the King Messiah. And why does he call him ‘the great mountain?’ Because He is greater than the patriarchs. As it is said, ‘My servant shall be high and lifted up and lofty exceedingly.’ He will be higher than Abraham, who says, ‘I raise high my hand unto the Lord’ (Gen. 14:22 KJV). Lifted up above Moses, to whom it is said, ‘Lift it up into thy bosom’ (Num. 11:12 KJV). Loftier than the ministering angels, of whom it is written, ‘Their wheels were lofty and terrible’ (Ezek. 1:18 KJV).”

Although the identification of the Servant as the people of Israel rather than the Messiah or some other individual is attested in one account from the early third century (see Marksches, “Jesus Christ as a Man,” 285, citing Origen’s *Contra Celsum* 1:55, pp. 420–421), there is currently no evidence that this identification took hold firmly (and, eventually, decisively) among authoritative commentators until much later.

Indeed, Walther Zimmerli and Joachim Jeremias go so far as to say that “there is not to be found a definitely non-messianic exegesis of Isaiah 53 in the rabbinic literature of the first millennium” (Zimmerli and Jeremias, “The Servant of God,” 76). Buksbazen (“Of Whom”) explains the historical context for the change from an individual (typically messianic) identity to a corporate identity of the Servant in Isa. 53 as the result both of tragic historical conflicts with Christians coupled with ambiguities in prophetic descriptions:

Many of the ancient rabbis were aware of the seemingly divergent elements in the Messianic prophecies. One stream of thought spoke of the suffering Messiah (Isa. 50:5-7 and 53 KJV). The other described a triumphant Messiah who will subdue the rebellious nations and establish His kingdom (Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 KJV). To resolve this problem, the rabbis have resorted to the theory of the two Messiahs, the suffering one, called Messiah ben Joseph, who died in battle against Edom (Rome). He is followed by the triumphant Messiah, Messiah ben David, who establishes His kingdom of righteousness after defeating the Gentile nations [Epstein, *Talmud*, Sukkah 246. See also Klausner, *Messianic Idea in Israel*, 483–501].

Another attempt to resolve the seeming contradiction of a suffering and triumphant Messiah is mentioned in *Pesikta Rabbati* (Braude *Pesikta Rabbati*, 35–36, pp. 669–83). According to this, the Messiah ben David suffers in every generation for the sins of each generation. Other rabbinical authorities sought to find a solution to this puzzle in various ingenious ways, which did not commend themselves to most Jewish people.

Some rabbinical authorities have postponed the solution of this and all other perplexing questions until the coming of the prophet Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, who will make all things clear [see Neusner, *Mishnah*, Baba Mesia, e.g., 1:8 III K, p. 530; 3:4 II G, p. 535].

In the New Testament this problem is solved by the doctrine concerning the first advent of the suffering Christ, followed by His triumphant Second Coming (e.g., Matt. 23:39 KJV; John 14:3 KJV; Acts 1:11 KJV; 1 Thess. 4:14–17 KJV).

Not coincidentally, debate with Christians seems to have been an important factor in leading an increasing number of Jewish scholars (starting as early as the third century) to disavow previous traditions that had supported the idea that selected mortals, notably including Jacob (see Heschel, *Heavenly Torah* 343), Moses (see Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, 342, 343), Elijah (Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, 354; contrast Doctrine and Covenants 110:13), and Enoch (see Heschel, *Heavenly*

*Torah*, 349) had ascended to heaven. Gordon Tucker and Leonard Levin explain that the intensified rabbinical opposition was

with good reason, for a safe ascent to heaven, it would seem, could be successfully accomplished by someone who is, at least in part, of heaven. Thus it is that the idea of the ascent of a human to heaven brings close on its heels the idea of a descent to earth of a heavenly being. The latter, of course, is *the* central tenet of Christianity. This is not the first time we have seen parallels between Akivan ideas in the second century and roughly contemporaneous ideas characteristic of early Christians (and especially Jewish Christians). Nor is this the first (or the last) time we see controversy over Akivan views being raised and energized by that very parallelism (Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, 341–42, translator’s introduction to chapter 18).

85. See Luke 24:26 KJV; Bruce, *New Testament History*, 175–77. Isa. 53:13 KJV opens the last of Isaiah’s four “servant songs,” the others being Isaiah 42:1–9; 48:16–49:12; and 50:2–51:16 KJV. Although there are mentions of a “servant” or “servants” elsewhere in Isaiah that explicitly identify the nation of Israel as the referent [e.g., Isa. 41:8; 44:1 (cf. vv. 2, 21); 45:4; 48:20; 54:17; 56:6; 63:17, 65:8 ; 65:13 (cf. vv. 14, 15); 66:14 KJV], it requires extraordinary exegetical pains to see the occurrences in the four servant songs themselves as referring to corporate Israel rather than to a distinct individual who is sent to serve the Israelites (Brown, “Jewish Interpretations.” See, e.g., Isa. 42:1; 49:5 (cf. vv. 6, 7); 50:10; 52:13; 53:11; 49:3 KJV. Isa. 49:6 KJV is quoted by Simeon in Luke 2:32 KJV concerning the infant Jesus Christ during the time of His mother Mary’s purification). As a result, there has been and continues to be a “strong critical preference for an individual rather than a collective interpretation” (Blenkinsopp, “Isaiah 40–55,” 355) of the Servant in the servant songs. The view of the Servant as an individual rather than a collective is also the one expressed in the *Similitudes of Enoch* and *4 Ezra*. According to Collins, “the collective interpretation is not clearly attested in Jewish sources until Ibn Ezra” (Collins, *Scepter*, 211).

Although scholars differ on the identity of the righteous Servant, they generally agree that Isaiah 49, 50, and 52–53 refer to one individual. Some, however, identify the Servant of chapter 42 with King Cyrus the Great of Persia (see, e.g., Blenkinsopp, “Isaiah 40–55,” 209–12. Cf. Isa. 42:1–4; 44:28; 45:1 KJV), who, according to the Bible (Ezra 1:1–4 KJV), freed the Jews from Babylonian captivity and supported their efforts to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple.

In 1956, Christopher R. North provided a survey listing fifteen individual candidates for the servant, none of whom “has survived scrutiny.” Many scholars today see the “most attractive solution” for the identity of the Servant as being either the author of these passages



Himself or one of His disciples (Collins, *Scepter*, 355–56). However, most Christians, from an early date, have pointed to these passages as important prophecies of the mission of Jesus Christ. Additional witnesses in the Book of Mormon further justify this identification in the eyes of Latter-day Saints.

One of the biggest problems with an interpretation that identifies an ordinary individual rather than a unique “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8 KJV; cf. Moses 7:47) as the Servant is Isaiah 53’s description of what might otherwise be seen as “an arbitrary and unjust way of administering justice” by redirection of the consequences of sin from others to the Servant as a “positive act of God” (Collins, *Scepter*, 120): “*the Lord* hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6 KJV; emphasis added); “it pleased *the Lord* to bruise him; *he* hath put him to grief” (Isa. 53:10 KJV; emphasis added). Though intercession for the people is not an unexpected role for a prophet, the depiction of the death of an individual as an actual vicarious guilt offering (see Isa. 53:10 KJV) is found nowhere else in scripture.

All that said, though Moses’ career as a prophet can be mapped to Isaiah 52–53 and undisputedly paralleled to that of the Savior in many respects, even to the point of “atoning for the sins of his people (verbal stem *kpr*) and even offering his life to God (Ex. 32:30–34 KJV), . . . [Moses] does not die, not at that point at any rate, and we are not told that his sufferings had a salvific effect on others” (Collins, *Scepter*, 119). It seems, therefore, that if Moses was a model for the servant of Isaiah 52–53, he served as a type rather than as the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy.

86. Welch, “Isaiah 53,” 308. See Martínez, “Messianic Hopes,” 137. While *Similitudes* and *4 Ezra* arguably associate the messianic Son of Man with the “Servant” of Isaiah as an individual rather than as a collective, Collins observes that “in neither document . . . does the Son of Man figure undergo suffering” (Collins, *Scepter*, 211).
87. Martínez, ed., “4QAaronic Text A,” fragment 9, column 1, lines 1–7, p. 270.
88. Miller, “Self-Glorification Hymn,” 324. See also the discussion in Ellens, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Son of Man*, 349–52.
89. DParry and Tov, *Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 4Q491, frg. 11, col. i, lines 12–18, p. 287.
90. Hess, “Messiahs Here and There,” 108.
91. See Bruce, *New Testament History*, 176.
92. The question will naturally arise whether both figures—the Son of Man and the suffering Servant of the Lord—were to be thought of as corporate personalities represented by all or part of Israel. Evidence exists that such a view was held by the ancients (see Bruce, *New Testament History*, 132–33). But there can be no doubt that Jesus personally intended to

apply both expectations to Himself. It has also been argued that Daniel, cryptically describing the events just before the resurrection, foresaw a time of terrible suffering “such as never was since there was a nation . . . and at that time thy people shall be delivered” (Dan. 12:1 KJV) and was speaking of the sufferings of the Messiah. On the same grounds, a case can also be made that the allusion to Dan. 12:1 KJV in Mark 13:19 KJV should also apply to the death and suffering of Jesus Christ (see Bolt, *Cross from a Distance*, 102–3, as well as the wider context of discussion provided in Bradshaw, “Standing in the Holy Place,” 98–99).

93. See Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man*, 26–75.
94. Lucass, “Concept of the Messiah,” 190.
95. *1 Enoch* chapters 62–63, 69.
96. Charlesworth, *Jesus within Judaism*, 42. See Mark 1:22, 7:37, 11:18 KJV; Matt. 7:28 KJV; Luke 4:32, 19:48 KJV; John 7:46 KJV.
97. Black, “Strange Visions.”
98. E.g., Origen, “De Principiis,” I.i, pp. 242–245. For a contrasting view, see Cherbonnier, “In Defense of Anthropomorphism”; Benz, “Imago Dei.”
99. See, e.g., Smith, *Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 86–93; Hamori, “When Gods Were Men.”
100. See, e.g., Paulsen, “Divine Embodiment.” One group of fourth-century desert monks became so incensed at Theophilus of Alexandria’s assertions of God’s incorporeality that they rioted and threatened to kill him. In response, he wrote a letter telling them to continue believing “a literal reading of Scripture, that God had bodily parts” [Shirts, “The Resurrection of Christ,” citing Clark, “New Perspectives,” 147].
101. The Topical Guide in the Latter-day Saint edition of the KJV Bible, “God, Body of—Corporeal Nature.”
102. The notion of God’s honor or respect in the Hebrew Bible (Hebrew *kabod*) is always associated with His heft. It is a small step to the affirmation that God’s weightiness points to Him possessing a body. See Moshe Weinfeld, “*kabod*,” in Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 7:23, 25, 27. In the Second Temple literature, passages such as those found in the *Similitudes* are at home among many extracanonical witnesses of Jewish messianic traditions in Moses 6:57 that cannot be explained away simply as Christian influences. Such Jewish influences, independent of the Old Testament, become visible in the ancient Galilean synagogue art found, for example, at Beit Alpha and Sepphoris. The mosaic at Beit Alpha, which mixes Hellenistic images with Jewish, clearly against Jewish law, was discovered in 1929 as members of the kibbutz Beit Alpha were digging water channels for irrigation. The initial excavation of the ancient synagogue took place later that year under the direction of Eleazar L. Sukenik. The Sepphoris synagogue came to light in 1993

while workmen were building a parking lot to accommodate visitors to the site. See Gutmann, "Beth Alpha," 299–300; Meyers and Meyers, "Sepphoris," esp. 535 and the bibliographies cited in each summary article.

103. Friedman, ed., *Commentary on the Torah*, 16–17. See also David Noel Freedman, "The Status and Role of Humanity," 16–17, 22–25, quoted in Bradshaw, *Creation*, 122–24.
104. Sorenson, "Origin of Man,"; Bailey et al., *Science and Mormonism*.
105. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*: "in the likeness of the presence of the Lord" (in Etheridge, *Targums*).
106. Joseph Smith, quoted in Larson, "King Follett Discourse," April 7, 1844, 200. See Bradshaw, *Creation*, 130, endnotes 2–28. Note that "the sense in which the Father's body is like a human body must be qualified" (Ostler, *Attributes of God*, 352). "Latter-day Saints affirm only that the Father has a body, not that His body has Him" [Blomberg and Robinson, *How Wide the Divide?*, 88]. See Bradshaw, *Creation*, 48, 537.
107. Joseph Smith, Andrew F. Ehat, and Lyndon W. Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, July 9, 1843, 231; cf. Madsen, "Latter-day Saint View of Human Nature," 105; Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Presidents*, 52.
108. See, e. g., Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, 192–93.
109. E.g., Rom. 8:14–19 KJV; 2 Pet. 1:3–4 KJV.
110. For example, as formulated by Lossky, "God became man in order that man might become god." He elaborates: "Fascinated by the *felix culpa*, we often forget that in breaking the tyranny of sin, our Savior opens to us anew the way of deification which is the final end of man' (Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 134). This teaching, he asserts, was "echoed by the Fathers and theologians of every age," citing as examples Irenaeus, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, and Gregory of Nyssa (Lossky, *In the Image*, 81, 97; Gregory of Nyssa, "Great Catechism," 5:495. For more extensive discussions of this topic, see Norman, "Deification, Early Christian"; Gross, *Divinization of the Christian*. See also Ostler, *Of God and Gods*, 391–426].

The modern *Orthodox Study Bible* interprets this view quite conservatively, however, saying,

We do not become like God in His nature. That would not only be heresy, it would be impossible. For we are human, always have been human, and always will be human. We cannot take on the nature of God (Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, cited in Gross, *Divinization*, 180. See also pp. 257, 272). . . .

Historically, deification has often been illustrated by the example of a sword in the fire. A steel sword is thrust into a hot fire until the sword takes on a red glow. The energy of the fire interpenetrates the sword. The sword never becomes fire, but it picks up the properties of fire. (Sparks and Gillquist, *Orthodox Study Bible*, 1692)

111. For example: “The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God” (Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 155; see also the discussion of Emerson’s views in Brodhead, “Prophets in America,” 22–24). Though it is impossible to “know what Lewis meant fully (and certainly what he understood and intended) by these statements” (Millet, “C. S. Lewis on the Transformation of Human Nature,” 152), his descriptions of mankind’s potential seem to resonate in significant ways with Latter-day Saint beliefs. For example, as he wrote in another place,

The command “Be ye perfect” (Matt. 5:48 KJV) is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we were “gods” (John 10:34–36 KJV) and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him—for we can prevent Him, if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said. (Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 176)

112. Faulconer, “Adam and Eve”; cf. Moses 4:28; Irenaeus, “Against Heresies,” 5:6:1, pp. 531–32. See Bradshaw, *Creation*, 23, endnote 0–20.
113. Matt. 5:16–48; 6:1–32; 7:11–21; 10:20–33; 11:25–27; 15:13; 16:17–27; 18:10–35; 23:9; 26:29–53 KJV; Mark 11:25–26 KJV; Luke 6:36; 9:26; 10:21–22; 11:2–13; 12:30–32; 15:12–29 KJV; John 5:17–45; 6:27–65; 8:16–56; 10:15–38; 12:26–50; 14:2–31; 15:1–26; 16:3–32; 17:1–25; 20:17–21 KJV.
114. Aramaic “father”—see Mark 14:36 KJV; cf. Rom. 8:15 KJV; Gal. 4:6 KJV. Barney et al. note, “The popular notion that this was a diminutive form with the intimate connotation of ‘daddy’ in our culture is not correct” (Barney, *Footnotes to the New Testament*, 1:250).
115. See Barker, *Zondervan NIV Study Bible*, Hebrews 12:9, p. 1913; cf. Bruce, *Hebrews*, Hebrews 12:9, p. 341. See Bradshaw, *Creation*, 24 endnote 0-21.
116. Doctrine and Covenants 93:23, 29–30, 33; Godfrey, “History of Intelligence”; Hyde, “Intelligences”; see Bradshaw, *Creation*, 540.
117. Smith, Winder, and Lund, “Origin of Man,” ; see Bradshaw, *Creation*, commentary 2:27-b, p. 115; Endnote 0-22, p. 24.
118. Freedman, “Humanity,” 16–17.
119. Philip B. Munoa, “Four Powers in Heaven,” 101. See also Orlov, “The Glory of the Invisible God; Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*.

120. Neusner, *Confronting Creation*, 63. See also Freedman, "Humanity," 16–17.
121. *Sifra Behukotai* 111b, cited in Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, 192.
122. Madsen, "Can God Be Pictured?"
123. Cherbonnier, "Anthropomorphism," 163.
124. Skinner, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 270–71; Anderson, "God, Names of," 2:407.
125. Gaster, *Thespis; Eliade, Cosmos and History*, 3–92.
126. See also Skinner, *Critical and Exegetical*, 278.
127. Skinner, *Critical and Exegetical*, 276.
128. G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," 1:716–21.
129. Pritchard, "Petition for Authorization," 491–92.
130. Buttrick, *Interpreter's Bible*, 1:874.
131. Gesenius, Kautzsch, and Cowley, *Hebrew Grammar*, 125n1; Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 100.
132. Parrott, "Eugnostos and the Sophia," 206. L. Arik Greenberg advances considered arguments for a formulation that differs in important respects from that of Parrott (Greenberg, "Separate Son of Man," 160–67).
133. Parrott, "Eugnostos and the Sophia," 206–07. Though some scholars advocate for an original Greek text no earlier than the end of the first century [e.g., Meyer, *Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, 274], Parrot's conclusions about dating are still cited today by other scholars (e.g., Greenberg, "Separate Son of Man," 160–61).
134. Parrott, "Eugnostos and the Sophia," 214–16 [4]; 219 [1]; 221–24 [4].
135. Parrot, "Eugnostos and the Sophia," 78:3, p. 215.
136. Parrot, "Eugnostos and the Sophia," 8:31, p. 216.
137. Cf. Moses 7:35; Doctrine and Covenants 19:10–12.
138. Gibbons and Bullard, "Great Seth," 52:36, p. 331; the same title appears in Codex III's version of The Gospel of the Egyptians, 59:3, but it may refer to Adam (Böhlig and Wisse, "Gospel of the Egyptians," 202). In this latter instance, the Son of Man is mentioned directly afterward, implying a relationship between the two: "The Man exists, and the Son of the Man."
139. Gibbons and Bullard, "Great Seth," 331.
140. Robinson, introduction to *Nag Hammadi Library*.
141. Viktor Vanetzov, *God of Hosts*, 1885–96, oil on canvas, WikiArt, accessed January 31, 2017, <http://www.wikiart.org/en/viktor-vasnetsov/god-of-hosts-1896>.
142. Borsch, *Son of Man in Myth*, 152n4. Additional context is provided by Borsch in this more complete citation (Borsch, *Son of Man in Myth*, 152–53, 152n4):

[We are] reminded . . . of the king who is thought to ascend to the heavenly realms, falls down before his god, is raised up by the priest, calls out to the god and is proclaimed to be the counterpart and ancestor, that one who was before the Creation, he who can be thought now to have an existence in heaven, the first of kings, the Man, or (emphasizing the idea of a counterpart) the Son of Man. The earthly king mounts to the throne of his primeval (now heavenly) ancestor [i.e., the heavenly “Adam.” See Bradshaw, *Creation*, 603–5] and becomes him, or, if you will, becomes his representative. The Son of Man, who is to be the king-Man, is now named and enthroned. . . . We would therefore conclude that in this conception of the Son of Man, whom Enoch becomes, aspects of the language and imagery from the ancient enthronement rites of the royal Man are given a new life. . . .

Originally the idea seems to have been that the true heavenly one was the Man, his counterpart being his son. Yet, since the son would ascend to become the Man and thus be the Man as the Son of Man, it is not hard to see, as we have pointed out earlier, how and why the true heavenly one could be called the Son of Man. Logically, then, the new Son of Man should be called the Son of the Son of Man, but few would bother with such a nicety in this context (though the later gnostics . . . appear to have taken up this aspect of the matter and to have spoken of a Man and a Son of Man and even a third in this sequence).

For a discussion of more recent research, briefly describing both critiques (Casey, *Solution*) and new extensions to Borsch’s arguments (Waddell, *Comparative Study*), see Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch, Noah*, 190–91 n. M7-14. For related Latter-day Saint teachings relating to the terms “Ahman” and “Son Ahman” to refer to God and the Son of God (Jesus Christ), see Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch, Noah*, 78. For an insightful essay that untangles some of the confusion about the role of Jesus Christ as both a Father and a Son, see Gardner, *Second Witness*, 1:214–22. On the weakening of this concept in some strands of Second Temple Judaism in the interests of preserving the idea of strict monotheism, see Bauckham, “The ‘Most High’ God.”

143. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch* 2, 45:3, p. 148.
144. Note that Enoch is not given the divine throne but rather is granted a promissory *right* to receive it at some future time. See Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath and Covenant*, 55, 69.
145. See Alexander, “3 Enoch,” i3 *Enoch* 10:1, 3, pp. 263–64.
146. According to Alexander, “what Enoch has done others may do as well. . . . What is involved is little short of the deification of man” and the reversal of the Fall of Adam (Alexander, “From Son of Adam to Second God,” 111–12; cf. 106).

147. Mopsik, *Le Livre Hébreu d'Hénoch*, 214 (cf. Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch Noah*, 89 endnote M7-14. Cf. Collins, *Scepter*, 203):

Enoch . . . is a human being in the likeness of the heavenly Son of Man, and is exalted to share his destiny. According to *1 Enoch [Similitudes]* 62:14 and 71:17, other righteous human beings, too, will enjoy length of days with *that* Son of Man. Enoch is first among the earth-born righteous. He must still be distinguished, however, from his heavenly counterpart.

148. McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism*, 147. See Moses 5:24, 32; John 17:12 KJV. See Bradshaw and Larsen, *Enoch, Noah*, 90 endnote M7-15.
149. For an insightful discussion of the Greek word *teleios*, translated as “perfect” in Matthew, see Welch, *Sermon at the Temple*, 57–62; Welch, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 116–20.
150. Neusner, *Jews and Christians*, 49.
151. Lucass, “Concept of the Messiah,” 209.



