In recent years there has been a growing number of publications devoted to Noachic traditions. Even though the book of Noah is not listed in the ancient catalogues of the apocryphal books, the writings attributed to Noah are mentioned in such early materials as the Book of Jubilees (Jub. 10:13 and Jub. 21:10).

* I am indebted to Professor Michael Stone for his useful comments and criticism of this work. All errors that remain are, of course, my responsibility alone.


2 F. García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic,* 24.

3 "Noah wrote down in a book everything (just as we had taught him regarding all the kinds of medicine..."


4 "...because this is the way I found (it) written in the book of my ancestors, in the words of Enoch and the words of Noah.


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significant sacrificial pattern for future generations. Unless Noah, the Bible does not attest to any ongoing tradition of animal sacrifices. When Jub. mentions the offerings of Adam and Enoc, it refers to them as incense sacrifices.

Noah thus can be regarded as the originator of the official ongoing tradition of animal sacrifices. He is also the first person to have received from the Lord the commandment about the blood. As M. Stone observes, Noah's connection to the sacrificial cult and to instructions concerning the blood was not accidental.

In 2 Enoc, however, the role of Noah as a pioneer of animal sacrificial practice is challenged by a different story. We learn in this text that immediately after Enoc's instructions to his sons during his short visit to the earth and his ascension to the highest heaven, the firstborn son of Enoc, Methuselah, and his brothers, the sons of Enoc, constructed an altar at Archuza, the place where Enoc had been taken up. In 2 Enoc, chapter 69 the Lord appeared to Methuselah in a night vision and appointed him the priest before the people. Verses 11-16 of this chapter describe the first animal sacrifice of Methuselah on the altar. The texts says that the people brought sheep, oxen, and birds (all of which have been inspected) for Methuselah to sacrifice them before the face of the Lord. Further, the text gives an elaborate description of the sacrificial ritual during which Methuselah slaughters with a knife, "in the required manner", sheep and oxen placed at the head of the altar. All these sheep and oxen, of course, are tied according to the sectarian instructions given by Enoc earlier in the book. It is apparent that Methuselah's role in the animal sacrificial practice conflicts with the canonical role of Noah as the originator of animal sacrificial tradition.

The text poses a more intensive challenge to Noah's unique place in the sacrificial tradition.

12 On that day, as he was leaving the Garden of Eden, he burned incense as a pleasing fragrance - frankincense, galbanum, stacte, and aromatic spices. "Jub. 7:27. He burned the evening incense of the sanctuary which is acceptable before the Lord on the mountain of incense." Jub. 4:25. J.C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 2.20 and 2.28.
15 The text of 2 Enoc defines this place as the center of the world, "the place Archuza, i.e. in the center of the world, where Adam was created." Vaillant, 116. Compare with Ezek 48:20-21 where the Hebrew word מפרן "special property of God" applies to Jerusalem and the Temple. Cf. J.T. Milik, The Books of Enoc (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 114; C. Büchler, Weissachts, Meschterschik, Uebkull (WUNT R.2.50; Tubingen: Mohr, 1992) 199.
17 Andersen, 198-9.
18 It should be stressed that both the longer and the shorter recensions of 2 Enoc include all significant points of the anti-Noachic polemics. There is no substantial difference between the recensions in the representation of these materials. During my analysis I have used illustrations from both
sificial tradition by indicating that before his death Methuselah passes his priestly/sacrificial duties to the younger brother of Noah—the previously unknown Nir. Chapter 70 of 2 Enoch recounts the last days of Methuselah on earth before his death. The Lord appeared to Methuselah in a night vision and commanded him to pass his priestly duties on to the second son of Lamech, Methuselah’s grandson Nir. The text does not explain why the Lord wanted to pass the priestlyhood to Nir instead of Noah (Lamech’s firstborn son), even though Noah is also mentioned in the dream. The text only tells about the response of the people to that request: “Let it be so for us, and let the word of the Lord be just as he said to you”. Further, the book tells that Methuselah invested Nir with the vestments of priestlyhood before the face of all the people and “made him stand at the head of the altar”. He also taught him “everything that he would have to do among the people.”

The text offers a detailed description of Nir’s sacrifice during which he commanded people to bring sheep, bulls, turdolaves, and pigeons. People brought them and tied them up at the head of the altar. Then Nir took the sacrificial knife and slaughtered them in the front of the face of the Lord. The important detail here is that immediately following the sacrifice the text offers the formula in which the Lord is proclaimed to be the God of Nir. This title apparently stresses the patriarchal authority of Nir: “and all people came merry in front of the face of the Lord, and on that day they glorified the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, (the God) of Nir”.

Noah as an Originator of Sacrificial Instruction

The teaching about sacrifices comes from ancient times and is connected with Noah both in Juk 21 and in the Levi document (Mount Athos) §57. Juk 21:10 refers to the sacrificial traditions written “in the words of Enoch and in the words of Noah”. The first part of this statement about Enoch as the originator of sacrificial instruction comes from equal proportions.

19 Lamech died before Methuselah. According to Gen 5:26-31, after Lamech was born, Methuselah lived 782 years... Lamech lived a total of 777 years.

20 This priestly succession from Methuselah to Nir is an apparent violation of all the norms of traditional succession. Cf. the traditional view in Juk 7:38-39: “For this is how Enoch, your father’s father, commanded his son Methuselah; then Methuselah his son Lamech; and Lamech commanded me everything that his fathers had commanded him. Now I am commanding you, my children, as Enoch commanded his son in the first jubilee.” J.C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 2:49-50.

21 Andersen, 197-203.
22 Andersen, 202-03.
23 Andersen, 202.
24 Государя Бога венчать и земле Народа. Vaillant, 74.
25 Andersen, 202.

30 Anti-Noachic polemics fully agrees with 2 Enoch’s story. The text offers a lengthy account of Enoch’s sacrificial prescriptions to his sons during his short visit to the earth. These instructions have a form of sacrificial halakhah. The halakhic character of these commands is reinforced by the specific Slavonic vocabulary which employs the term закоп ("law") in reference to these sacrificial regulations. The text stresses that “he who puts to death any animal without binding it, it is an evil law,” he acts lawlessly with his own soul”. Clearly, the passage speaks not about secular legal prescriptions, but about the halakhic precepts. The Slavonic word закоп commonly used to denote a binding custom or a rule of conduct in the community, in some instances, carries forward a much more restricted, technical meaning; it sometimes refers to the Mosaic Law and serves as an alternate designation for "halakha."

Enoch’s sacrificial precepts occupy an important place in the narrative of 2 Enoch. Some of these sacrificial rules, however, have an apparent sectarian flavor. In chapter 59, Enoch offers Methuselah, as well as his brothers — Regim, Zipam, Akhazukhan, Kharimmon — and the elders of all the people, some instructions in animal sacrifices. These halakhah include the following guidelines:

1. Enoch commands his sons to use clean beasts in their sacrifices. According to his prescriptions, "he who brings a sacrifice of clean beasts, it is healing, he heals his soul. And he who brings a sacrifice of clean birds, it is healing, he heals his soul."

2. Enoch teaches his sons that they should not touch an ox because of the "outflow."

3. Enoch’s prescriptions address the issue of the stoning sacrifices. He suggests that "a person bring one of the clean animals to make a sacrifice on account of sin, so that he may have healing for his soul.” Although the blood is not mentioned in these sacrificial prescriptions of Enoch, the text uses extensively the term "an animal soul." Enoch commands his sons to be cautious in dealing with animal souls, because those souls will accuse man in the day of judgment.

4. Enoch also teaches his sons to bind sacrificial animals by four legs:

28 закопае. Vaillant, 58.
29 закопае. Vaillant, 58.
31 Andersen, 185.
32 The terminology of this prescription is unclear. For a detailed discussion of the passage cf. Andersen, 184-5.
33 Andersen, 184.
34 Andersen, 185.
... he who brings a sacrifice of clean beasts, it is healing, he heals his soul. And he who brings a sacrifice of clean birds, it is healing, he heals his soul. And everything which you have for food, bind it by four legs; there is healing, he heals his soul. He who puts to death any animal without binding it, it is an evil custom; he acts lawlessly with his own soul.

S. Pines draws attention to this unique practice of tying together four legs during animal sacrifices. On the basis of a passage in the Mishna (Tanid, 31b) which states that each of the forelegs of the sacrificial animal was tied to the corresponding hind leg, Pines notes that the tying together of all four legs was contrary to the tradition. He gives one of the two explanations found in the Gemara of the Babli that this disapproval sought to prevent the imitation the customs of the heretics, minim (the authors of Mishnaic sacrificial prescriptions considered the practice of tying together all four legs to have strong sectarian overtones). In his final conclusion, Pines suggests that "it may have been an accepted rite of a sect, which repudiated the sacrificial customs prevailing in Jerusalem. It might be conjectured that this sect might have been the Essenes, whose sacrificial usage differed according to the one reading of the passage of Josephus from those practiced at the Temple."

As we can see, 2 Enoch depicts Enoch as the originator of the sacrificial instruction. Although some of these instructions are not necessarily canonical, the role of Enoch in the sacrificial tradition fully agrees with Jub. 21:10a. On the other hand, 2 Enoch is completely silent about Noah's role in these sacrificial instructions. He is referred to neither as the originator of these instructions nor as their practitioner. While the text speaks several times about the future role of Noah as a "procreator" of the postdiluvian race, it is silent about his place in the priestly/sacrificial tradition. We might expect that Noah, then, will have an opportunity to do his part after the Flood, but the text, leaves out any significant role for Noah in the post-diluvian priestly/sacrificial tradition. The duty of the priestly successor is given to Nir's "son" - Melchisedek, who "will be the head of the priests" in the postdiluvian generation. Noah's role is less prominent. According to the Slavonic Enoch, he

He will be preserved in that generation for procreation."

Noah and Divine Revelations

In the Bible and the Pseudepigrapha, Noah is portrayed as a recipient of divine revelations, given to him both before and after the Flood. In Gen 6:1-31 and Gen 7:1-5, God speaks to Noah about the Deluge and the construction of the ark. The evidence for the direct communication between God and Noah is further supported by 1 Enoch 67, Jub. 5, and the Genesis Apocryphon 6-7. According to the Pseudepigrapha, Noah also enjoys various angelic revelations. In 1 Enoch 10:1-3, an angel Asuryal warns Noah about the upcoming destruction of the earth. Jub. 10:1-14 records an angelic revelation to Noah about evil spirits and healing herbs which he wrote in a book and gave to Shem, his oldest son. Scholars also believe that in 1 Enoch 60 it is Noah who was described as a visionary.

These traditions depict Noah as the chosen vessel of divine revelation who alone found favor in the sight of the Lord in the antediluvian turmoil.

These details and emphasis on the direct communication between the Lord and Noah are challenged by the information about Noah found in 2 Enoch. As has been shown earlier, in the Slavonic Enoch Noah keeps a low profile. Although Noah is the firstborn of Lamech, he is portrayed as a family man, a helper to his prominent younger brother Nir, who assists him during the troubles with Scthnnim and Melchisedek. While Nir is a priest surrounded by the crowds of people, Noah is a timid relative whose activities are confined to the circle of his family. After Melchisedek's situation was settled, Noah quietly "went away to his own place."

In contrast to this modest role of Noah, Methuselah and Nir are pictured as priests of the Lord who have dreams/visions in which the Lord gives them important instructions about priestly successions and future events. It sharply contrasts with the absence of any indication of the direct revelations of the Lord to Noah.

43 Andersen, 209.
44 J.C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 2.60.
45 Kvanvig argues that "in 1 Enoch 60, 1-10:24-25 Noah is described as a visionary (as in 4Q[Mea A]) and in a vision he is warned about the coming catastrophe. His description of the flood hero as a visionary had its parallel in both Astr-Iasis and Benoissos' version of the flood story when the flood hero is warned in a dream." Kvanvig, 242.
46 Cf. Gen 6:8 and Jub. 5:5 - "He was pleased with Noah alone." J.C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 2.33.
47 Andersen, 206-7.
48 2 Enoch 73, which attests to such a revelation, is a later interpolation represented only by the manuscript R and partly (only one line) by Ramb. Cf. M.I. Sokolov, 'Materialy i zametki po starinskoi slavianskoj literature. Vypusk treeti. VII. Slavianskaja Kniga Enola Pravednego,' Tezisy, latinskiy pe-rovod i izdelenie. Posmrtnyj trud avtora prigozov k zadaniyu M. Sperandio. CO/DR 4 (1910) 1, 80 and 155. Our analysis of anti-Noachic polemics strengthens the hypothesis that 2 Enoch 73 is a later addition, foreign to the original body of the text. For the discussion about chapter 73 cf. Vaill- lant, xxii; Andersen, 212.
We therefore learn about the Flood and Noah's role in it from Methuselah and Nir's dreams. In 2 Enoch chapter 70 the Lord appears to Methuselah in a night vision. The Lord tells him that the earth will perish but Noah, the firstborn son of his son Lamech, will be preserved in order that "another world rise up from his seed." The account of the Lord's revelation to Methuselah about the Flood and Noah in 2 Enoch 70:4-10 might belong to the "original Noachic tradition. It shows some similarities to the account of Enoch's revelation to Methuselah in 1 Enoch 106:15-19. The affinities, however, should not be exaggerated.

A symmetrical parallel to Methuselah's dream in 2 Enoch 70:4-10 is Nir's night vision, in 71:27-30. In this short dream, which also describes in almost identical terms the future destruction of the earth, one important detail is missing: Noah is absent from this revelation, and his place is now occupied by Melchisedek, who according to the Lord will not perish during the Flood but will be the head of the priests in the future. This revision which substitutes one survivor of the Flood for another fits perfectly in the pattern of anti-Noachic polemics of the Slavonic Enoch. The important role of Noah as the "bridge" between the antediluvian and postdiluvian worlds is openly challenged.

Noah as a Bridge over the Flood

M. Stone stresses that "the sudden clustering of works around Noah indicates that he was seen as a pivotal figure in the history of humanity, as both an end and a beginning." He also points out that the Pseudepigrapha from Qumran, which ascribe the priestly teaching to Noah, stress Noah's role as the "bridge" between the antediluvian and postdiluvian worlds in the following passage:

The Birth of Noah

It has been shown that in the course of anti-Noachic polemics, the elements of Noah's story are transformed and his traditional roles are given to other characters. It is therefore no surprise to see that some details of Noah's birth in 2 Enoch are transferred to a new hero—the future postdiluvian priest, Melchisedek.

56 Another challenge to Noah's role as a carrier of antediluvian traditions over the Flood is the theme of Enoch's books. From 2 Enoch 33:8-12 we learn that the Lord commanded his angels Arioikh and Mariok to guard Enoch's books, so "they might not perish in the impeding flood." Andersen, 157. This motif of the "secret" books by which antediluvian wisdom reached postdiluvian generations plays a prominent role in the Mesopotamian flood stories. Cf. P. Gerlo, "La légende d'Hétoum dans les apocryphes et dans la Bible: origine et signification," ASR 46 (1998) 9-13.
57 This story is supported by the lengthy priestly genealogy which also includes Enoch, Methuselah, and Nir, Noah, of course, is not presented in this list. Cf. "Therefore honor him (Melchisedek) together with your servants and great priests, with Sir, and Enoch, and Amilam, and Prazam, and Malecill, and Serokh, and Aruson, and Alecm, and Enoch, and Mehusalam, and me, your servant Nir. And behold, Melchisedek will be the head of the 13 priests who existed before" 71:39-33. Andersen, 208.
58 Andersen, 208.
59 Andersen, 211.
60 Andersen, 207.
The birth of Noah occupies an important place in the Noachic traditions. In *1 Enoch* 106-107 and in the *Genesis Apocryphon* 2:5, Noah is portrayed as a wonder-child. *1 Enoch* pictures him with a glorious face and eyes like the rays of the sun. He was born fully developed; and as he was taken away from the hand of the midwife, he spoke to the Lord. These extraordinary qualities of the wonder-child lead his father Lamech to suspect that Noah's birth was angelic in origin.

In the context of anti-Noachic polemics of *2 Enoch*, this prominent part of Noah's biography finds its new niche. Here again we have the polemical rewriting of the Noachic narrative when the peculiar details of Noah's story are transferred to an another character, namely, to Melchisedek.

Scholars noted previously that Melchisedek's birth in *Slavonic Enoch* recalls some parallels with the birth of Noah in *1 Enoch* and in the *Genesis Apocryphon*. The Melchisedek narrative occupies the last chapters of *2 Enoch*. The content of the story is connected with the family of Nir. Sothonim, the wife of Nir, gave birth to a miraculous child "in her old age", right "on the day of her death". She conceived the child, "being sterile" and "without having slept with her husband". The book tells that Nir the priest had not slept with her from that day that the Lord had appointed him before the face of the people. Therefore, Sothonim hid herself during all the days of her pregnancy. On the day she was to give birth, Nir remembered his wife and called her to himself in the temple. She came to him, and he saw that she was pregnant. Nir, filled with shame, wanted to cast her from him, but she died at his feet. Melchisedek was born from Sothonim's corpse. When Nir and Noah came to bury Sothonim, they saw the child sitting beside the corpse with "his clothing on him". According to the story, they were terrified because the child was fully developed physically. The child spoke with his lips and he blessed the Lord. The unusual child was marked by the sign of priesthood. The story describes how "the badge of priesthood" was on his chest, glorious in appearance. Nir and Noah dressed the child in the garments of priesthood and fed him the holy bread. They decided to hide him, fearing that the people would have him put to death. Finally, the Lord commanded His archangel Gabriel to take the child and place him in "the paradise Eden", so that he might become the high priest after the Flood. The final passages of the short recension describe the ascent of Melchisedek on the wings of Gabriel to the paradise Eden.

The details of Noah's birth correspond at several points with the Melchisedek

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42. Andersen, 207.
43. Delcor, 129.
44. George Nickelsburg observes that the miraculous circumstances attending Melchisedek's conception and birth are reminiscent of the Noah story in *1 Enoch*, although the suspicion of Nir is more closely paralleled in the version of the Noah story in the *Genesis Apocryphon*. George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981) 188.
46. Andersen, 205.
my breath in my breast. 67 She swears that the seed was indeed of Lamech: "I swear to you by the Great Holy One, by the King of the heaven[...]] ... [that] this seed comes from you, [...], and not from any foreigner nor from any of the watchers or sons of heaven[.]." 68 In 2 Enoch Sothonim does not explain the circumstances of the conception. She answers Nir: "O my lord! Behold, it is the time of my old age, and there was not in me any (adorol) youth and I do not know how the indecency of my womb has been conceived." 69

Their fathers were eventually comforted by the special revelation about the prominent future role of their sons in the postdiluvian era. It is noteworthy that this information is given in both cases in the context of the revelation about the destruction of the earth by the Flood.

1 Enoch 106:16-18 - "And this son who has been born unto you shall be left upon the earth, and his three sons shall be saved when they who are upon the earth are dead."

2 Enoch 71:29-30 - "And this child will not perish along with those who are perishing in this generation, as I have revealed it, so that Melchisedek will be... the head of the priests of the future."

One cannot fail to note a host of interesting overlaps between the birth of Noah in the Pseudepigrapha and the birth of Melchisedek in 2 Enoch. It is not difficult to notice that the author of 2 Enoch wants to diminish the extraordinarity of Noah's person and transfer these qualities to Melchisedek. The text therefore can be seen as a set of improvisations on the original Noachic themes.

Noah's Son

Shem b. Noah plays a prominent role in Noachic traditions. 71 According to Jubilees, Shem is Noah's choice in the transmission of his teaching. From Jub. 10:13-14 we learn that "Noah wrote down in a book everything... and he gave all the books that he had written to his oldest son Shem because he loved him much more than all his sons." 72 Because of his unique role in the Noachic tradition, Shem b. Noah is also one of the targets of the anti-Noachic polemics of 2 Enoch. This debate takes its place in the last chapters of the book which are connected with the Melchisedek legend.

The previous exposition shows that the Melchisedek story is closely connected with Nir's family. Even though Nir is not the biological father of Melchisedek, he later adopts him as his son. In 2 Enoch chapter 71 Nir says to the Lord: "For I have no descendants, so let this child take the place of my descendants and become as my own son, and you will count him in the number of your servants." 73 In this instance of Nir's "adoption" of Melchisedek we have again an anti-Noachic motif.

In Targumic and rabbinic literature Melchisedek is often attested as the oldest son of Noah - Shem. The identification of Melchisedek and Shem can be found in Tg. Ps.-J., Tg. Tg. Neof., Gen. Rab. 43.1; 44.7; Tg. R. Nat. 2, Pirke R. El. 7; 27, and b. Ned. 32b.

The basic message of the passages from the Targums and rabbinic literature is the building up of the priestly antecedents of Melchisedek (Shem) in the context of the transmission of this priestly line to Abraham. 74 In these texts Shem b. Noah (Melchisedek) represents an important link in the passing of the Noachic priestly/sacificial tradition to Abraham. This prominent motif of the succession of the Noachic priestly/sacificial tradition by the tradition of Abraham and his descendants, including Isaac and Levi, can be found already in Jub. 21 and in the Levi document from Anthas.

In contrast, the text of the Slavonic Enoch attempts to build an alternative to the traditional Targumic/rabbinic line of interpretation, which serves as a parallel to the official Noah-Shem line. Previously unknown Nir, the young brother of Noah, plays an important theological role in this shift. The substitution of Noah's "fatherhood" to Nir's "fatherhood" is one more facet of the complicated anti-Noachic polemics in the text of 2 Enoch.

Conclusion

The goal of our research was to show the existence of anti-Noachic polemics in 2 Enoch. To understand the reasons of the suppression of the Noachic traditions in the text would require another lengthy investigation. However, some conclusions can be made at this stage of the research.

1. The foregoing survey testifies to the existence of anti-Noachic polemics in 2 Enoch. 75

69 Andersen, 205.
70 Andersen, 208.
72 J.C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 2.60.
73 Andersen, 209.
74 Cf. for example b. Ned. 32b: "R. Zechariah said on R. Ishmael's authority: The Holy One, blessed be He, intended to bring forth the priesthhood from Shem, as it is written, 'And he [Melchisedek] was the priest of the most high God' (Gen 14:18). But because he gave precedence in his blessing to Abraham over God, He brought it forth from Abraham; as it is written, 'And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God' (Gen 14:19). Said Abraham to him, 'Is the blessing of a servant to be given precedence over that of his master? Straightway it [the priesthhood] was given to Abraham, as it is written (Ps 110:4), 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' which is followed by, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek' (Ps 110:4), meaning, 'because of the word of Melchisedek.' Hence it is written, And he was a priest of the most High God, [meaning that he was a priest, but not his seed.'] The Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nederein (London: Soncino Press, 1936) 98-9.
Enoch. The analysis shows that these polemics seem to be based on the "original" Noachic materials which demonstrate some distant parallels with the fragments of the Book of Noah found in 1 Enoch, Jub., and the Genesis Apocryphon. 73

2. The anti-Noachic debates involve a substantial rewriting of the "original" Noachic motifs and themes. The details of the Noah "biography" are rearranged and transferred to other characters, including Methuselah, Nir and Melchizedek.

3. It appears that the main target of the anti-Noachic polemics is the Noah-Abraham priestly connection. It explains why Melchizedek (who in Targumic/rabbincic traditions represents the important link in the passing of the Noachic priestly/sacrificial tradition to Abraham) becomes the center of the fierce anti-Noachic debates in 2 Enoch. The fact that Abraham and his progeny are completely absent in 2 Enoch further supports the hypotaxis. In this Slavonic apocalypse the Lord is named as "God of your father Enoch," 74 - the familiar title which in the Bible is connected with Abraham and his descendants.

4. The anti-Noachic polemics could be also triggered by the prominence of the Adamic tradition in the Slavonic Enoch, 75 where "the high priesthood is traced back ultimately to Adam." 76 In the Pseudepigrapha and the Qumran writings, the Adamic and Priestly-Noah traditions often compete with and suppress each other. In the Adamic tradition, the source of evil is traced to the fall of Adam and Eve in Eden. In contrast to that, the Noachic tradition bases its understanding of the origin of the evil on the Watchers story. In this story descended Watchers corrupt human beings by passing to them various celestial secrets. By those mysteries the humans multiply evil deeds upon the earth. 77 This Noachic motif seems to be challenged in 2 Enoch, where the Lord keeps His utmost secrets from the angels. 78

5. It is evident that 2 Enoch contains a systematic tendency to diminish or defocus the priestly significance of the Noachic tradition. These anti-Noachic revisions take place in the midst of the sectarian debates about the sacrificial practice and the priestly succession. 81

73 It is possible that some traces of the polemics with Noachic tradition can be found already in early Enochic documents, including booklets of 1 Enoch, where Enoch often "substitutes" Noah in Noachic narratives. Such tensions between Enoch and Noah can be rooted in certain Mesopotamian "prototypes" common for both characters. Cf. P. Grelot, "La légende d'Hénoch dans les apocryphes et dans la Bible: origine et signification", ISR 46 (1958) 189-91.

74 Cf. 2 Enoch 69:2, 69:5, and 70:3 - "I am the Lord, the God of your father Enoch." (Borm, Die Heiligen Geschichten, Valint, 68.)


77 1 Enoch 16:3.

78 Cf. Andersen, 143.

81 As A. Rubinstein notes, "it is hard to escape the impression that the purpose of the account is to build up the priestly antecedents of Melchizedek." A. Rubinstein, "Observations on the Slavonic Book of Enoch," JJS 15 (1962) 3. P. Secchi adds that the Melchizedek story gives "the impression of a work that develops an Enochic priestly tradition in the midst of the problems of first-century Jewish thought, with particular reference to the relation between the function of Enoch and those of Melchizedek." P. Secchi, Jewish Apocryphic and Its History (ISPSS 20, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 234-5.