THE ADAM TRADITION
ON THE POLEMICAL NATURE OF 2 (SLAVONIC) ENOCH: A REPLY TO C. BÖTTRICH

In one of the recent issues of the Journal for the Study of Judaism Christfried Böttrich offered his criticism of my article dedicated to the polemical developments in the shorter recension of the Melchizedek legend of 2 Enoch.

In his critical response C. Böttrich denied the possibility of any polemics not only in the Melchizedek story but also in the whole text of the Slavonic apocalypse. He stated that “polemics are not heard elsewhere in the narration; the picture of a still unified archaic mankind has no place for them.”

Böttrich’s strong negative reaction to the possibility of polemics in the Slavonic apocalypse must be understood in the context of his own scholarship. If such polemical developments do indeed exist, they pose

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2 All Böttrich’s criticism rests on his single erroneous assumption that 2 Enoch 71:32–33, which I used in my argument, represents an interpolation. This assumption is simply incorrect. There is nothing Christian in these two verses. They are presented in both recensions in all major MSS of 2 Enoch. A simple comparison of two recensions provides additional proof that it is not an interpolation. In the shorter recension an interpolation in 71:34–36 is absent. If 71:32–33 also belongs to this interpolation it is difficult to explain why these verses are still preserved in the shorter recension. It should be noted that previous translators A. Vaillant and F. Andersen did not consider 2 Enoch 71:31–32 as an interpolation. Cf. A. Vaillant, Le livre des secrets d’Hénoch: Texte slave et traduction française (Paris: Institut d’études slaves, 1952), 80–82; F. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch”, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (2 vols.; ed. J.H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1985 [1983]), 1.208 note p. It is unfortunate that Böttrich did not read my other article on the same subject (A. Orlov, “‘Noah’s Younger Brother’: Anti-Noachic Polemics in 2 Enoch,” Henoch 22.2 (2000) 259–273) where I further develop my argument about the polemical nature of the Melchizedek story of 2 Enoch on the materials of the longer recension. In this article I demonstrated the important role that 2 Enoch 71:31–32 play in the anti-Noachic polemics of the Slavonic apocalypse.