EVIDENCE OF 1 ENOCH 10:4 IN MATTHEW 22:13?

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As is well known, some Christian authors at least were familiar with certain themes and motifs from the Enochic tradition and probably even from Enochic literature itself and this from very early on. There are not only the allusions and citations in Clement of Alexandria or Origen, but also some New Testament authors prove to have had access to this literature or the traditions reflected in it. The most famous instance is of course the explicit reference to 1 Enoch (1:9) in Jude 14–15. In the margins of NA27, one finds several other possible parallels and allusions. In the following, I propose to have a new look at a passage in the Gospel of Matthew that does not figure in this list, but that has been linked to 1 Enoch by a few commentators and in a couple of specific studies.

I

Matthew’s version of the Parable of the Marriage Feast (22:1–10), which most probably stems from Q (Q 14:16–24), not only contains a very harsh and provocative verse that is not attested in the parallel in Luke (v. 7), but also continues beyond the original parable to include the story of the confrontation between the king-host and the guest with no wedding garment (22:11–14). At the order of the king, the man

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is bound hand and foot and cast into the outer darkness (13 δήσαντες αὐτοῦ πόδας καὶ χείρας ἐκβάλετε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξῶτερον).³

In the Book of the Watchers (1 En. 10:4a), it is told that Raphael, as second of the archangels, receives an identical command by the Lord to bind Asael by his hands and his feet and throw him out into the darkness.⁴ The various versions of 10:4a run as follows (for A see below):

Gp Καὶ τῷ Ῥαφαὴλ εἶπεν Δῆσον τὸν Αζαὴλ ποσὶν καὶ χερσίν, καὶ βάλε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σκότος
Gs Καὶ τῷ Ῥαφαὴλ εἶπε Πορεύου, Ραφαὴλ, καὶ δῆσον τὸν Αζαήλ· χερσὶ καὶ ποσὶν συμπόδισον αὐτὸν, καὶ ἐμβάλε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σκότος
E “And secondly the Lord said to Raphael, ‘Bind Azaz’el hand and foot (and) throw him into the darkness!”

The description of the judgement that Raphael has to execute goes on in 10:4b–6 and is followed in 10:7–8 by a positive counterpart on

³ The variant reading ἄρατε αὐτὸν κτλ. (D it sy) is retained by H. von Soden in his edition (Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments [Berlin: Duncker, 1902–1913]), and of course by F. Blass, Evangelium secundum Matthaeum (Leipzig: Teubner, 1901), 79, and by A. Merx, Das Evangelium Matthaeus (Berlin: Reimer, 1902), who calls it “die vernünftige Anordnung, wenn man Jemand hinauswerfen will” (299), which as a matter of fact explains why it is most probably the secondary reading. See also J. Wellhausen, Das Evangelium Matthaei (2d ed.; Berlin: Reimer, 1914), 107.


1 Enoch 10:4 is preserved in the Ethiopic version (E) and in a double version in Greek, in the codex Panopolitanus (Gp) and in the Chronography of George Synkellos (Gs). There also exists a scrap of the Aramaic (A), which will be dealt with below. The issue of which text of 1 Enoch to cite is a notoriously difficult question as the Aramaic is mostly too fragmentary, and none of the versions can claim to represent the original all throughout. I will cite both Gp and Gs when available and Isaac’s translation of E, which renders the text of the oldest known manuscript, but while also noting relevant variants. See E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in OTP 1:5–89. The Greek is cited according to the edition of M. Black, Apocalypse Henochi graece (WVTG 3; Leiden: Brill, 1970). The whole dossier of texts is now collected again by Bhayro, Asael Narrative, 55–115 (94). Bhayro edits E according to the seventeenth-century manuscript EMML 6686 that resembles the one used by M.A. Knibb for his edition (see the comments on 45–49 [47]).