ENOC AND NOAH:

Conflation, Dissociation and Parallelism of Protagonists

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Enoch and Noah in the Hebrew Bible

The question of parallelism of the figures of Enoch and Noah in the Hebrew Bible and parabiblical literature is a rather curious one. On the one hand, there is so little known on the figure of Enoch in the book of Genesis, that implying a parallelism with another biblical figure seems somewhat dubious. This is not to say that we know much more about the figure of Noah: other than his name and genealogy we are told of his righteousness, of the flood and its implications, and of the obscure event of his drunkenness. We hardly know anything regarding the manner in which he was righteous, or any personal details about his life, as is often the case with the biblical portrayal of its protagonists. ¹ Still, Noah does have 102 verses dedicated to his

narrative in Genesis, in contrast to Enoch, who has only four. In light of this discrepancy it is quite notable that those four verses do bear some material that leads to affinities with Noah, and that gave way for later exegetes to draw on this point and elaborate on a special relationship between these two figures.²

The starting point on which a parallelism between Enoch and Noah may be drawn includes three factors of the narrative in Genesis: the phonic resemblance of their names; their genealogy and finally (perhaps also most decisively) the phrase “to walk with God” (משאולות אמ אמאלותם).

Names: That the names of Enoch and Noah sound similar might seem self-evident.³ However, a sound scholarly argument for this case requires both reverting to the Hebrew, as well as some degree of caution, recognizing that the exact pronunciation of words in biblical times has not been preserved. The names in Hebrew, אֵנוֹךַ and נוֹהַו respectively, show that the two names do indeed share two letters,

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or two consonants. However, names can share consonants and still not sound similar to the native speakers of a language. We have some evidence that certain dialects, accents and ways of pronunciation of biblical times have been lost over the course of history.\(^4\) The similarity of consonants provides us with some assurance, but considering the importance of order in the biblical system of roots,\(^5\) perhaps that would have been significant enough to eliminate the similarity of words with different orders of consonants in biblical times.

Asserting that the names of Enoch and Noah would sound the same to a contemporary of the texts under discussion is plausible, however, since we have the play of words on Noah's name in Gen 6:8 (and Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord). The brevity of this verse emphasizes the play on words that gives the verse its force. This play on sound is using precisely the metathesis of consonants \(nh\) and \(hn\) required to establish that a phonic resemblance between the names of Enoch and Noah could have been noticed or implied in antiquity.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) See Kugel,

\(^6\) Another possibility to establish that such a play on sounds is taking place would be to assume that the soft pronunciation of \(z\) would sound similar to \(n\), as it is in modern Hebrew. This would hypothetically allow for the names of Enoch and Noah to sound the same or even rhyme. This suggestion, however, is harder to validate, since although there is evidence for a fall of a guttural pronunciation of the \(n\) in antiquity, it does not get mixed with \(z\), but rather with \(k\), \(z\) and \(n\). See b. Erubin 53b; E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (trans. A. E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910; 2nd edition), 76-82. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, there is no biblical variant that is based on the assumption that a scribe confused a \(n\) with a \(z\). See Emanuel Tov, *The Textual Criticism of the Bible. An Introduction* (Biblical Encyclopaedia Library 4; Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1997; 2nd ed.), 187-214 (in Hebrew).
Genealogy: This factor of similarity might seem at first more dubious than trying to associate the names of Enoch and Noah. Indeed, the two are related, as Enoch is Noah's paternal great-grandfather. However, this argument is not that strong, since most biblical protagonists, certainly in the book of Genesis, stem from the same genealogy. The significance of this similarity is therefore not the mere fact that they belong to the same genealogical line, nor that their births are reported in just ten verses apart from each other (Gen 5:18, 28).

The significance lies in where they stand in the genealogy, and the way they are reported. Enoch is the seventh generation after Adam, and Noah is the tenth. The significance of both these numbers in biblical narrative cannot be overstated, and is so widespread and known, that it is probably unnecessary to discuss here.\(^7\) In addition to the fact that they both stand in significant positions within the genealogy, they also stand out in the way the narrative reports of them. In Gen 5, Enoch and Noah are the only ones to have expansions beyond birth and lifespan. Enoch's life is briefly told, with the emphasis that he walked before God (vv. 22, 24). Noah is given a *midrash shem* (an explanation of his name), and great hopes are attached to his birth (v. 29).

These two features together point to a significant role that each of them plays in ante-diluvian history. Although Enoch's role is rather limited in the biblical narrative itself, it is clear that the account in Genesis gives ample reasons to develop traditions placing both Enoch and Noah as prominent roles in history as was done in Second Temple literature.

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Walking before God: Enoch and Noah are the only ones to be said walking (with) the God (Gen 5:22, 24, 6:9). The form has the verb "to walk" coupled with the archaic form of "with"). The more common construct is "walk before". The fact that Enoch and Noah have a unique construct applied only to them in describing their relation to God is certainly something that would not have escaped later exegetes notice. Furthermore, since the text seems to imply that Enoch was rewarded for walking with God (Gen 5:24), it could be said that Gen 6:9 is foreshadowing a reward for Noah, too. Noah is of course rewarded by being the sole survivor of the flood (along with his family that survives because of his deeds). He is not said to have been taken by God, but this may have been expected in light of Gen 5:24. Modern scholarship has also retrieved the Mesopotamian origins of the flood narrative in Genesis, in which curiously the hero of the flood does gain eternal life. In other words, Gen 5:24 and 6:9 do not solely raise the expectation that Noah would gain eternal life. This would also be the expectation of an audience acquainted with either the Atrahasis or the Gilgamesh epic, and its omission is surprising, to say the least.

Prototypes of Enoch and Noah in the ancient Near East

The description of Enoch being taken by God has been usually understood to mean not simply an untimely death, but a description of ascension, or at least of

8 is more commonly used in the Hebrew Bible as the particle of the accusative. Kautzsch, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, 300-301, 362-6.
9 Gen 17:1, 24:40, 48:15; 1 Sam 2:30, 35; 2 Kgs 20:3; Isa 38:3; Ps 56:14, 116:9. Cf. also Zec 10:12 ("walk in His name"); Ps 26:3 ("walk in faithfulness to you"). God is said to be walking in or among the people of Israel: Lev 26:12; Deut 23:15; 2 Sam 7:7 (=1 Chr 17:6). See also Gen 3:8; 2 Sam 7:6 for God's walking or roaming.
dwellling with God. This concept has been elaborated, most notably in the Book of Enoch.

The implication that Enoch gained eternal life is similar to the Mesopotamian flood heroes.\footnote{The Epic of Gilgamesh, tablet XI, lines 189-96. See James B. Pritchard, Ancient near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969; Third edition with supplement), 951} The implication of this similarity is that the mythic elements of the Mesopotamian flood heroes somehow dissociated and recapitulated in two different figures of the biblical text. This is not to say that someone purposefully and consciously decided to divide these into two figures, but that in the transmission, transition and modification of mythological elements into the Hebrew Bible, this is the sort of process that occurred, as often happens with the adaptation and evolution of myths. Thus the element of the sole survivor of the flood disintegrated from the element of the one that God gave eternal life, and was reformulated as two different stories. This is the first point where the implied parallelism of Enoch with Noah in the Hebrew Bible is significant: if these figures were a dissociation of two elements embodied in one figure in renowned ancient myths, it is quite striking that at the same time these elements developed separately, there still remained a notion of some relation between the two, as reflected in the figures of Enoch and Noah.

A further point of interest in the attempt to track the evolution of myths into the Hebrew Bible is the hypothesis that the biblical figure of Noah is in itself a conflation of two figures: the flood survivor and the viticulturist. The main problem with this hypothesis is that unlike the elements of the flood hero that is coupled with the one who gains eternal life, there is no evidence for a mythological viticulturist. Not only
no evidence for a conflation of the two, but there are no ancient Near Eastern traditions of the discovery of wine known to us.

The main reason for this suggestion is the wording in Gen 9:20 "Noah, man of the soil, began and planted a vineyard." The epithet "man of the soil" bears a notion of introducing a new figure into the narrative, and characterizing his essence briefly.\(^{11}\) It would be appropriate to link this story to Noah's exit of the ark, as many commentators have done.\(^{12}\) Instead, the text introduces Noah, as if the readers have not been reading about him for the past three chapters. Therefore, despite the fact that there is no extant evidence of an ancient Near Eastern hero of viniculture, it seems quite likely that this story was separate and attached to the hero of the flood only later.

This hypothesis, admittedly speculative, raises several questions: Since the sign of this being a new narrative is textual, one might argue that this was a narrative in a document that did not include a story of the flood. However, since the flood plays such a major role in the mythology of the region, and seems to be quite popular, assuming such a document is implausible. The other options are that the protagonist of Gen 9:20-27 had another name, and was later conflated with Noah for one reason

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\(^{11}\) Gunkel, *Genesis*, 79-80. The closest examples are Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1-2), Noah himself (Gen 6:9) and Jacob and Esau (Gen 25:27). On the latter see Claus Westermann, *Genesis - a Commentary* (trans. John J. Scullion; Continental Commentary; vol. 2: 12-36; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985), 414-5. Chronologically later narratives often report the lineage of the figure as a way of providing information. Cf. Ex 2:1; Num 16:1; Ju 13:2; 1 Sam 1:1, 9:1-2; Es 2:5 (contrast Ruth 1:1, where only the town is provided, with no lineage).

\(^{12}\) Rashi, for example, adds on Gen 9:20 that Noah planted a grapevine and a shoot of a fig tree that he took with him upon entering the ark, explaining how Noah could start planting immediately. See also Gen 9:28, where the biblical text itself notes this as a major marking-point in Noah's life.
or another;\textsuperscript{13} or, that Noah was in fact the name of the viticulturist, conflated with the Mesopotamian flood hero. In short, the wording of Gen 9:20 should be understood as an oral tradition of the viticulturist's narrative, which was preserved when this narrative was conflated with the flood narrative, in an early stage of editing the Genesis narrative.

Allow me to sum up the conclusions up to this point: We find in ancient Near Eastern literature a myth of a flood, whose hero gains eternal life. To this figure I add a supposed hero of viticulture (probably not Mesopotamian), of which we know nothing about, save the fragmentary echoes preserved in the narrative of Noah's drunkenness in the Hebrew Bible. The flood hero was split in the Hebrew Bible into two figures, preserving the element of the flood in the figure of Noah, but attaching the element of eternal life to Enoch. In addition to this split, the flood hero was conflated with the viticulturist. To be sure, I do not intend this to be such a technical process of "cut and paste" as it sounds. This is a simplified description of an evolution of traditions as far as is possible to reconstruct based on the extant texts.

One significant point that rises from this suggestion is the significance of the parallelism of Enoch with Noah in the Hebrew Bible. It seems to preserve a primordial memory of them being one and the same, by reflecting their similarities. Here, too, I do not imply or suggest a deliberate action of an author or editor. It is impossible that someone would want to dissociate the hero of the flood from immortal life and at the same time leave traces of such a tradition. Rather, I am employing here a Lévi-Straussian understanding of myth, suggesting that even when one seeks to

dissociate these elements and distribute them between two figures, some enigmatic streaks of connection remain.

The Lévi-Straussian model does not work perfectly well, since the model refers to a relation that exists when a myth travels from one paradigm to another. Lévi-Strauss proposed a formula to describe the relation that is retained with the transposition of the paradigm, as follows: 

$$F_x(a) : F_y(b) \sim F_x(b) : F_{a^{-1}}(y)$$

The "a" in the formula signifies a term, and "a-1" is not a lesser degree of that term, but rather its opposite. The "x" and "y" are functions, and the purpose of this formula is to convey an inversion of terms and relations.

Thus, in applying this formula to the evolution of the Flood narrative, the main problem is that in one story we have only one figure, which embodies both elements (survival of the flood and eternal life), while the biblical narrative dissociates these two narratives. The relation between Utina-pishtim and Gilgamesh cannot be likened to the relation between Enoch and Noah.

I am not keen on pushing this paradigm too strongly, since there is no point in denying it will not fit the Lévi-Straussian model. It is interesting to note, however, that if we take the term of eternal life that is embodied in Utnapishtim, it is reversed in the next evolitional stage of the myth. It is perhaps not surprising then that the motif of the sage whose advice people seek (embodied in Utnapishtim) shows up once more

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in the Second Temple portrayal of Enoch, the protagonist in which the eternal life element was embodied instead of the flood-protagonist.

**Enoch and Noah in Second Temple Literature**

The brief account of Enoch's life in Genesis implies a lost tradition, which would have been more elaborate than the one preserved.\(^{15}\) However, this does not mean that the expanded tradition found in the pseudepigraphic books of Enoch necessarily resembles the tradition that Gen 5:22-24 alludes to.\(^{16}\)

From the Second Temple literature that has reached us, it can be said that by this period, Enoch is a well-established figure, while Noah is still rising in importance, but not as significant as Enoch.\(^{17}\) The main source for the study of Enoch in this period is 1 Enoch. The book, which is comprised of several compositions (commonly divided

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into five), has a few mentions of either Noah or the flood, as part of Enoch's visions.\(^\text{18}\) Thus, even though this has come to be known as the Book of Enoch, the understanding is of an axis of Enoch and Noah, in which both play a significant role in primordial history, and in rectifying the sins of the earth ensued by the fall of the watchers.\(^\text{19}\) In 1 Enoch 65:4-67:3 there is a shift in voice, and Noah speaks in the first person. Noah is the one who realizes that destruction is near, and seeks to save himself and mankind (65:3). Thus he is elevated to an equal of Enoch.\(^\text{20}\) Similarly, in the Book of the Watchers, Noah is sent an angel to instruct and warn him of what is to come (1 Enoch 10:1-2).

In the telling of Noah's birth (1 Enoch 106-107) the strong connection between Enoch and Noah and its significance becomes apparent: It is Enoch who reassures Lamech and Methuselah that Noah is Lamech's son. Enoch is the one who gives Noah


his name (1 Enoch 106:18), unlike the biblical narrative where it is Lamech (Gen 5:29). Enoch also prophesies the role Noah is to play in the flood.  

In addition to these explicit statements there is also a thematic issue that ties them together. Enoch is assumed to be deified. Having been taken by God, he has various visions, including both the heavens and the future history of mankind, and dwells in the ends of the earth. Noah, like Enoch, is supposed to be deified. His appearance upon birth seems angelic to his father, and although he is reassured that his son was not conceived by angels, it does not change the fact that he bears the qualities of an angel. Noah is also understood to be deified in the Vision of the Animals, since he is said to be transformed ("It was born a bull but became a man").

In the book of Jubilees, Noah describes how he received from Enoch rules concerning crop:

"For this is how Enoch, your father's father, commanded his son Methuselah; then Methuselah (commanded) his son Lamech. And Lamech commanded me everything that his fathers had commanded him. Now I am commanding you, my children, just as Enoch commanded his son in the first jubilees."

Noah thus explicitly states the twofold nature of his relation with Enoch. Enoch is his instructor, and Noah's role is significant as the sole survivor of the flood: he is the only one who can transmit the divine knowledge after the flood. But he does not suffice at referring to Enoch as the source and authority of his knowledge. He also

21 "He and his sons will be saved from the corruption of the earth" (1 Enoch 106:18). Translation based on Nickelsburg VanderKam. 1 Enoch, 166.
22 1 Enoch 89:1 (Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 1 Enoch, 123).
models himself after him, stressing that he is commanding as Enoch commanded his son (rather than simply saying, "as I was commanded by my father" for example).

Thus the subtle parallelism between Enoch and Noah in the book of Genesis, is elaborated and spoken out in Second Temple literature. Furthermore, in Genesis the connection was enigmatic, since it was discernible, but its purpose remained obscure. In 1 Enoch and Jubilees the connection between Enoch and Noah bears a clear purpose, framed in a conceptual and theological context.

This purpose is to establish an alternative source of transmission than the one offered in the biblical text. In the Hebrew Bible the origin of the laws are in the revelation in Siani, and the main mediator is Moses. One problem with such a view would be that the pre-mosaic patriarchs would have not been able to observe the Torah, which was not yet given. But what makes this more problematic is not the merely that Abraham did not observe the Sabbath, so to speak, but that various figures are said to engage in cultic rituals, most notably in offering sacrifices.

This was apparently a major concern for various exegetes in antiquity, who seek to solve this by making all figures said to offer sacrifice to be priests. Thus Noah, who offers a sacrifice after leaving the ark, is said to be a priest. If he is a priest he has to have a source of knowledge for the sacrificial laws. This is the implication of the text of Jubilees and other texts that relate to this issue.

In brief, the figures of Enoch and Noah are elevated in Second Temple literature in fitting with the few hints that the narrative in Genesis provides. The theme of Enoch and Noah does not only respond to the mysterious connection of these figures in Genesis, but also to other issues, such as priesthood, the cause of the Flood, and the
source of knowledge. The narrative also bears eschatological implications, since the flood is clearly conceptualized as a prototype for the punishment in the End of Days.24

On a literary level of analyzing the development of a tradition, we may say that the figure of Noah the viticulturist has been divorced from the protagonist of the flood, while the protagonist of the flood has been reunited with the theme of deification. Enoch and Noah are not merged, but Noah becomes Enoch's equal in many ways, and in some ways might even surpass him. There is no evidence to support that the story of Noah and the wine was purposely toned down, denied or polemicised against. It is more likely that it was simply not developed, since it did not serve the purposes of the authors of 1 Enoch and Jubilees.25


25 Indeed, the fact that it does appear in Jubilees (7:7-7:17), alongside significant favorable views of him strengthens the possibility that there was no notion against this story. The narrative in Jubilees even expands the implications of tribal / ethnic relations that followed from this story. The other two sources of Second Temple literature that addresses Noah's drunkenness is the commentary on Genesis from Qumran (4Q252, ii, 5-7). This scroll does not preserve glorifying traditions of Noah as found in 1 Enoch, Jubilees or the Genesis Apocryphon, and follows the biblical story more straightforward. As a result, the appearance of a certain story otherwise unattested in the Dead Sea Scrolls, does not bear much significance for this discussion. For the commentary on Noah and the Flood in 4Q252 see Florentino García Martínez, "Interpretations of the Flood in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in Interpretations of the Floods (ed. Florentino García Martínez and Gerard P. Luttikhuizen; Themes in Biblical Narrative - Jewish and Christian Traditions 1; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 90-92, 99-108. See in the same volume, J. T. A. G. M. Van Ruiten, "The Interpretation of the Flood Story in the Book of Jubilees," 70-71. For the debate on the genre of the scroll, see Moshe J. Bernstein, "4Q252: From Re-Written Bible to Biblical Commentary," JJS 45.1 (1994): 1-27; George J. Brooke, "The Genre of 4Q252: From Poetry to Pesher," DSD 1.2 (1994): 160-79. See also papers by George J. Brooke, Moshe J. Bernstein and Ida
Enoch and Noah after the Second Temple

The fascinating relation between the figures of Enoch and Noah seems to have been cut off after Second Temple. The most important traditions, of 1 Enoch and the book of Jubilees were not carried into either rabbinic Judaism or Early Christianity (save, of course, the preservation of these texts in the Ethiopic Church). The traditions developed in the Second Temple literature were grounded in an intricate framework of issues that concerned those authors. The traditions themselves did not survive without the theology that served as the fertile soil on which they grew.

Thus we find isolated traditions that resonate some of the themes that appear in Second Temple literature, but not as developed or interrelated as they are found in the Second Temple. Most interesting is the fact that most of these traditions are rather late. The most striking example is the deification of Enoch and his unification with Metatron, an important angel in rabbinic literature. However, though this might


See Michael Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (Aramaic Bible 1b; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 37 and further bibliography there; Andrei A. Orlov, *From Apocalypticism to
resonate with Enoch's ascension and implied deification in 1 Enoch, it appears only in Targum pseudo-Jonathan and Hekhaloth literature, both works which cannot date earlier than the fifth century, and are probably later.\(^{27}\)

Other traditions of Enoch are concerned with the notion that he did not die, presumably in light of a polemic with Christians regarding the possibility of resurrection. This is most clearly seen in Genesis Rabbah, where heretics approach R. Abbahu saying that they "do not find death (mentioned for) Enoch".\(^{28}\) The polemic nature of this passage is heightened by describing Enoch as fickle, "sometimes righteous, sometimes wicked", quite in contrast to the biblical report.

The only rabbinic text that echoes the role Noah had in Second Temple is the one mentioning him being born circumcised in Abot de Rabbi Nathan 2. This, again, resonates to some degree with the general notion of something magical in his appearance, and is possibly attested in 4Q536.\(^{29}\) However, the fact that Noah is mentioned in Abot de Rabbi Nathan together with twelve other figures, gives ample reason to doubt whether this can be viewed at all in the context of the birth narratives

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\(^{28}\) Gen. Rab. 25. 5.

\(^{29}\) For the argument that 4Q534-6 is about Noah, see García Martínez, "Interpretations of the Flood in the Dead Sea Scrolls," 94-5. See also idem., "4QMess ar and the Book of Noah," in his *Qumran and Apocalyptic - Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran*. (STDJ 9;Leiden / New York / Köln: Brill, 1992), 1-44.
of the Second Temple period. Most significantly, neither the Enoch traditions, nor the ones of Noah, seem to relate to each other.

The first connection between Enoch and Noah in rabbinic literature is found in the rather late Pirque Rabbi Eliezer of the ninth century. This is a fascinating occurrence, for it not only revives the relation between Enoch and Noah, but also picks on the theme of the nature of this relation, describing Enoch transmitting to Noah astronomical knowledge.\(^{30}\) The transmission begins with Adam, who gives it to Enoch, from him to Noah, who transmits the knowledge to Abraham and so forth. The focus is not on Enoch and Noah, but this theme is curious enough to suggest a resurfacing of an old tradition through some channel, obscure as it may be.\(^{31}\)

As for Early Christianity, we find some connections between Enoch and Noah, but as in Pirque Rabbi Eliezer (and with Noah only in Abot de Rabbi Nathan), they are usually grouped with others. Their significance in many of these writings is twofold: on the one hand, they are righteous people who lived before Abraham, and are therefore uncircumcised gentiles. This plays an important role when arguing that the Bible recognizes gentiles as righteous. More important, they are understood as prototypes of Jesus; Enoch for being translated, and Noah for being saved, especially considering that his salvation involved wood (of the ark) and water, which are taken to be prototypes of the cross and of Baptism.\(^{32}\) These themes can be found already in

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\(^{30}\) The same tradition is reduplicated in 11\(^{th}\) century Moshe ha-Darshan’s compilation *Bereshit Rabbati*. See Ch. Albeck (ed.), *Midraš Berešit Rabbati ex libro R. Mosis Haddaršan* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1940), 229-230.


the New Testament, but a telling example of them can be found in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*:

> God would not have made Adam uncircumcised would not have had respect to the gifts of Abel when, being uncircumcised, he offered sacrifice and would not have been pleased with the uncircumcision of Enoch, who was not found, because God had translated him. Lot being uncircumcised, was saved from Sodom, the angels themselves and the Lord sending him out. Noah was the beginning of our race; yet, uncircumcised, along with his children he went into the ark.

Later on Justin interprets the appearance of Noah with Daniel and Job in Ezekiel 14 as referring to Enoch, Noah and Jacob. The explicit association of wood, water and Christ is the main theme of chapter 138 of the dialogue.


34 Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, XIX. This is paralleled in Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses*, Book IV, Chap. XVI. This theme raises the possibility that the Abot R. Nat. is actually an anti-Christian polemic, stressing that exemplar figures of the Bible were actually circumcised (in other words, that it is more concerned with whether or not they were circumcised more than whether they were born circumcised). However, Abot R. Nat. has 13 people listed, most of which are post-Abrahamic, so at least the list as we have it today does not have this polemic as its main focus.

Eusebius mentions the significance of transmission of knowledge in pre-Mosaic times, which seems to be one of the incentives of the Enoch and Noah traditions in the Second Temple period, as discussed above.

Moses himself too found many things, which were going down and coming by tradition from mouth to ear, from one generation to another; and he put them into his book, although he left out many things which could not be comprised (in it). For that which is said of Abraham, that he was enjoining his children and his household to keep the commandments of the Lord, is older than the laws of Moses by four hundred and thirty years. For these commandments, which Abraham was enjoining his household (to keep), were received by him, as it were by tradition, from Shem; and Shem too received them from his father Noah; and Noah received them from Enoch; and Enoch received them from Adam; and Adam received them from his Lord.36

This text, of course, resonates not only with the Second Temple motifs, but with the later Pirqei Rabbi Eliezer mentioned above. These are two very different traditions, with no apparent connections between them, in which an echo of a Second Temple tradition surfaces with no traceable channel. Unlike Justin, who parallels Noah with other figures based on scripture (Ezekiel 14) and their merit, Eusebius picks up a biblical notion of genealogy and couples it with the Second Temple notion of transmission.

Perhaps the most striking similarity in this context is Tertullian's discussion of the book of Enoch. Not only is he acquainted with some version of the book of Enoch,37 but he uses transmission as proof for its authenticity:

37 Origen also shows acquaintance with the Book of Enoch. See (Origen, Commentary on John, book 6, 25).
I am aware that the Scripture of Enoch, which has assigned this order (of action) to angels, is not received by some, because it is not admitted into the Jewish canon either. I suppose they did not think that, having been published before the deluge, it could have safely survived that world-wide calamity, the abolisher of all things. If that is the reason (for rejecting it), let them recall to their memory that Noah, the survivor of the deluge, was the great-grandson of Enoch himself; and he, of course, had heard and remembered, from domestic renown and hereditary tradition, concerning his own great-grandfather's "grace in the sight of God," and concerning all his preachings; since Enoch had given no other charge to Methuselah than that he should hand on the knowledge of them to his posterity. Noah therefore, no doubt, might have succeeded in the trusteeship of (his) preaching; or, had the case been otherwise, he would not have been silent alike concerning the disposition (of things) made by God, his Preserver, and concerning the particular glory of his own house.  

After examining all the evidence, however, it is hard to argue for a parallelism of Enoch and Noah that is a continuum of the Second Temple traditions in either rabbinic literature or Early Christian writings. The scattered evidence of a connection here and there does not reflect continuity, but quite the opposite. The polemic nature of the discussion is polemicizing with Christian views, not with Second Temple traditions.

In conclusion, this paper has attempted to track the evolution of a myth from its ancient Near-Eastern setting, into its derivatives in rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity. The argument, in short, is that some elements of the ancient Near-Eastern myth of the Flood were transposed into undercurrent motifs in the biblical narrative, when split into two protagonists. These motifs resurfaced when expanding the narrative of these figures in the Second Temple period. I have tried to argue that this evolution is in keeping with some Lévi-Straussian paradigms of how mythic elements travel from one tradition to another in folklore. However, the continuity of these traditions is broken after the Second Temple period, with the appropriation and

reworking of the protagonists and their roles in light of biblical exegesis alone and Jews’ and Christians’ views of each other.