Syllabus

Heavenly Son of Man in Second Temple Jewish and - 1749

Last update 07-01-2014

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor) and 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Comparative Religion

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Serge Ruzer

Coordinator Email: serge.ruzer@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 13:00 - 14:00

Teaching Staff:
Dr. Serge Ruzer
Course/Module description:
The seminar will focus on the early history of the motif of "one like a son of man" — a heavenly redeemer figure belonging to the end of days. Our discussion will follow the development and modifications of this motif from its appearance in the late biblical Book of Daniel and Second Temple Enochic literature all the way to its function in rabbinic sources. A special attention will be paid to the fluctuations of the Son of Man designation's meaning from individual to collective and from earthly to sublime. Our investigation will highlight the points of contact and tension between different approaches, their religious-historical settings and hermeneutical strategies employed. It is in this context that the adoption of the motif in earliest Christianity, where it was applied to Jesus of Nazareth and adapted to the constraints of the Christian messianic narrative, is particularly informative. Of special interest for us will be the interplay between inherited Jewish ideas of broader circulation and "sectarian" interpretations of the issue propagated by Jesus' followers. The Son of Man motif will correspondingly be shown to become a core element of nascent Christianity's self-definition vis-a-vis its Jewish matrix. Finally, the function of the Son of Man imagery in later stages of interaction between Jews and Christians and, more specifically in the process of the parting of the ways between the two communities will be discussed.

Course/Module aims:
Outlining the historical development of the notion of heavenly son-of-man salvific figure in late Second Temple Judaism, its reception and metamorphosis in nascent Christianity.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to: Recognize trajectories of belief characteristic of late Second Temple Jewry and acquire awareness of the nature of their reworking in nascent Christianity.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar with students doing presentations of particular sub-topics and their discussion in research.

Course/Module Content:
1. Introductory session. Centrality of the Son of Man issue for Jewish and Christian self-definition in the beginning of the Common Era and throughout the following centuries. Second Temple period: the comeback of interest in heavenly/angelic
world and the surge of eschatological expectations of apocalyptic kind.

2. The son-of-man designation in Daniel: re-interpretation of usages from earlier layers of biblical literature and conversation with Near Eastern myths. Between Hebrew and Aramaic idiom. From Daniel 7 to Daniel 9: Son of Man as a messianic figure.

3. Evidence from 1 Enoch: comparative discussion of Enochic and Danielic son-of-man-related ideas.

4. Evidence from 4 Ezra and Dead Sea Scrolls. Summing up the Second Temple allusions to the Daniel 7 son-of-man as a heavenly figure. Heavenly messiahs vs. earthly messiahs in late antique Jewish belief.

5. Other Second Temple usages of the son-of-man designation: a case of dynamic ambiguity.


7. The variety of meanings of the son-of-man title in Jesus' Synoptic biographies and the variety of their interpretations: contours of the research debate and its repercussions for theology.

8. Moving from earthly to heavenly son-of-man as the core strategy of the gospel narrative. Jesus as Son of Man and as Son of God.


10. Jesus as earthly and as heavenly Son of Man: excursus into later Christological elaborations.


13. Students presentations.


Required Reading:

Required readings [with a number in square brackets indicating the topic they pertain to]


B. D. Chilton, "(The) Son of (the) Man, and Jesus," in B. D. Chilton and C. A. Evans (eds.), Authenticating the Words of Jesus (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 279-287 [7].


-------------, "The Son of Man," in idem, Jesus (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2001), pp. 124-133 [5].


T. Kazen, "Son of Man as Kingdom Imagery: Jesus between Corporate Symbol and Individual Redeemer Figure," in T. Holm (ed.), Jesus from Judaism to Christianity:
Continuum Approaches to the Historical Jesus (London: T&T Clark, 2007), pp. 87-108 [6].


K. A. Kuhn, "The 'One Like a Son of Man' Becomes the 'Son of God',' Catholic Biblical Quarterly 69.1 (2007), pp. 22-42 [8].


-----------, "The Son of Man Debate Revisited (1960-2010)," Journal of Jewish Studies 61.2 (2010), pp. 193-206 [7].


---------, The Scepter and the Star; The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature (New York, 1995). JMS BS 1885 M48 C63
C. A. Evans and P. W. Flint (eds.), Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls (Grand Rapids, Mi; 1997). JMS BS 1885 E75 E7
J. Neusner, Judaism and the Interpretation of Scripture: Introduction to Rabbinic Midrash (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004),

----------, "Jesus' Messianic Biography as Response to Second Temple Jewish Beliefs," Zemanim 120 (Fall 2012), pp. 50-61 (in Hebrew).


S. Talmon, "The Concept of Māiah and Messianism in Early Judaism," in The Messiah, pp. 79-115. JMS BM 538 E7 M47


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Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 20 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 80 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: