



IJS SPRING 2021 ONLINE LECTURE SERIES

Wednesday March 17th

6 pm GMT

*The work of Heaven and Earth and its Creator:
Some notes on the Enoch "astronomical" tradition*

Henryk Drawnel

Chair: Willem Smelik (UCL)

[Registration: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/134407437263](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/134407437263)



This talk discusses the introductory chapters of 1 Enoch (2:1–5:2). The availability of the Aramaic text and the original language of its composition shed new light on the content of this section. Consequently, scholars have maintained that the main message of these four chapters is the regular movement of the created world contrasted with immoral human deeds that cause God's manifestation and impending judgment. Henryk Drawnel has shown that its fine literary structure appears to be an independent composition alien to the eschatological form of epiphany and to the judgment of the sinners. The text expresses the main thematic focus of the whole work presenting God as the Creator and stressing the human duty to study the orderly and cyclic order of nature in order to apprehend its Maker. A proper explanation of the content and literary setting of 1En. 2:1–5:2 requires recourse to that tradition preserved both in Ethiopic and Aramaic. Such a perspective fairly unequivocally indicates that the text was composed to set the observations of the work of the heaven and earth within the context of the biblical theology of creation. The speaker argues that the main message of the exhortatory composition emphasises the observation of the cyclic work of nature and the intellectual apprehension of its Maker.

Henryk Drawnel, Ph.D. (2004) Pontifical Biblical Institute, is Professor of Second Temple Judaism at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. His research focuses on the beginnings of apocalyptic literature in ancient Israel, pseudepigraphic literature (1 Enoch and Aramaic Levi) and Aramaic literature from Qumran. Recently he has published *Qumran Cave 4: The Aramaic Books of Enoch from Qumran* (2019). In his earlier publication (*The Aramaic Astronomical Book from Qumran*, 2011), Drawnel edited and proposed a new interpretation of the notoriously difficult manuscripts of 1 Enoch containing simple astronomical calculations of lunar visibility as well as other topics known from the Ethiopic Astronomical Book (1 En. 72–82).