Reactions to Empire

Edited by
JOHN ANTHONY DUNNE
and DAN BATOVICI

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Sacred Texts in their Socio-Political Contexts

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Table of Contents

Introduction

This volume grew out of the third instalment of the St Andrews Graduate Conference for Biblical and Early Christian Studies, "Sacred Texts in their Socio-Political Contexts," organised as a seminar within the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, 7–11 July 2013 at St Andrews.

The conference had four sections – Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Pseudepigrapha & the Dead Sea Scrolls, and Early Christianity – and the main aim was to explore various instances of theopolitical visions of authoritative texts in these areas, and as such to offer a broader perspective on the same *topos*, "sacred texts in their context." This is precisely what this volume has to offer; instead of a narrow exploration of the "political intent" of a singular text or group of texts, our volume contains the treatment of a wide range of texts, out of different corpora, with their discrete contexts. Their juxtaposition, as well as that of the respective scholarly approaches of the essays, is meant to offer fresh insights on the matter.

A further point of convergence presented itself in the papers selected for publication; each of the essays in our collection addresses the issue of oppressive imperial ideology and the extent to which the authors of sacred texts engaged their political contexts. Apart from the first two entries, eight contributions specifically present reactions to the Roman Empire. Our first two essays, by Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Amanda M. Davis Bledsoe, are the only two that do not work with texts situated in the Roman era. However, their essays address the same issues of imperial ideology and so provide fitting contributions to the overall focus of the volume. Their essays are also complementary in providing a unique angle on subversion, particularly the way that conversion was presented toward that end.

At this point a brief overview of the contributions in this volume will be offered in order to provide the reader with a summary abstract for each essay as well as provide a sense for the coherence of the volume taken together.

Within the *Book of the Watchers* (*1 En.* 6–36), many have noted a socio-political critique of oppressive hierarchies. In this reading, oppression is aligned with the anti-creation forces of evil that are represented in the

Watchers themselves and in their gigantic offspring. Yet what has not been adequately addressed to date is how the anticipation of universal worship in *1 En.* 10:20–22 relates to this. Loren T. Stuckenbruck addresses this question in his essay by analyzing how the expectation of global worship fits within both the immediate context of the *Book of the Watchers* (particularly chapters 6–11), the broader literary context of *1 Enoch*, contemporary Jewish traditions, and the Hebrew Bible. Ultimately, Stuckenbruck demonstrates that the universal acknowledgment of God is to be read in the light of the mythic context of the Watchers as an affirmation of God's sovereign rule over all creation, including human forces of oppression, even though present appearances for the original writers/readers may suggest otherwise.

The book of Daniel contains portraits of two of the most hated figures in the collective Jewish memory, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who rose against the Jews of Jerusalem in the second century B.C.E., and Nebuchadnezzar II, the destroyer of Jerusalem and the first Jewish Temple in 586 B.C.E. Often Nebuchadnezzar, who features prominently in the stories of the first half of the book, is viewed as a prefiguration of Antiochus, the main figure in the visions of the second half of the book. Amanda M. Davis Bledsoe contends, however, that by reading the depictions of these two kings side by side we are left with a surprising contrast. She proposes that the author(s) of the book of Daniel reshaped the earlier Danielic stories concerning King Nebuchadnezzar to depict him as a greatly rehabilitated servant of God in order to provide a foil for Antiochus, the ultimate evil of the author's own day, who has no redeeming qualities and sets himself in constant opposition to God. She further argues that in intentionally juxtaposing these two figures the author of Daniel offers a critique of Seleucid hegemony and presents a powerful counter-discourse to imperial ideology.

The rest of the volume focuses on various responses to Roman imperial hegemony. As a fitting start to analyzing such reactions to Rome, Nadav Sharon's essay examines the possible relationship between opposition to the Hasmoneans in Judea and the reaction to Roman domination as expressed in two contemporary literary corpora from Judea: the *Psalms of Solomon* and the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is often assumed that the Hasmoneans were widely rejected in Judea. Therefore, it is possible to presume, as some scholars did, that the Romans, who ousted the Hasmoneans, would have been favorably or at least neutrally received. However, while there is a lack of contemporary evidence of widespread rejection of the Hasmoneans, the first decades of Roman domination over Judea were a period of constant unrest and rebellion that appear to have been mostly anti-Roman. Yet, both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the *Psalms of Solomon* are often

viewed as significant exempla of opposition to the Hasmonean dynasty, and at least the former is often viewed as initially accepting of Roman rule. However, whereas the Dead Sea sect indeed opposed the Hasmoneans, the *Psalms of Solomon* indicates no such opposition during the Hasmonean period, but rather recognition in hindsight of the sinfulness of the Hasmoneans. Despite this crucial difference, Sharon's examination of both corpora reveals that they have a similar view of the Romans; they are God's agents to punish his sinful people, but, nevertheless, their rule is rejected, they are deeply hated, and their immediate downfall is hoped for and expected. Therefore, Sharon demonstrates that equation of Hasmonean rejection with Roman acceptance cannot be sustained on either side, and the literary evidence appears to support the historical picture of a hostile Judean reaction to Roman domination.

The next set of essays pertains to texts from the New Testament. The first two by Matthew V. Novenson and Christoph Heilig address the same question – did the early Christians have an anti-imperial message? – and conclude with different answers. Novenson addresses this question with a broader focus on the New Testament and the early apostles more generally, whereas Heilig focuses particularly on the letters of Paul.

Arnaldo Momigliano famously explained Josephus's silence about the synagogue and about apocalyptic movements under the rubric "what Josephus did not see." In his essay, Matthew V. Novenson suggests an analogous explanation for the near silence of the New Testament writers about the Roman Empire. Of course, Novenson is careful to note that the Roman Empire imposed itself strongly upon the lives of its provincial subjects, but it did so especially through the medium of government by indigenous elites (city councils, client kings, and so on). The local face of Roman rule was a familiar face. If the apostolic sect were inclined to view their opponents through an apocalyptic lens as undifferentiated "rulers of this age," the structure of Roman provincial administration could easily reinforce such an understanding. The exception that proves the rule is John of Patmos, who singles out Rome as an enemy because he has been singled out by Rome as an enemy. But most first-century Christian texts, although their Christology implies an anti-Roman posture ("If Jesus is lord, then Caesar is not"), do not actually draw this implication. For both ideological and social reasons, Novenson concludes that the apostles simply did not see the Roman Empire.

The other side of the spectrum can be found in the essay by Christoph Heilig. The debate regarding Paul's use of subversive sub-texts to criticize the imperial ideology of Rome has caused quite a bit of controversy within New Testament scholarship. Some of those who favor the position that Paul was intentionally and creatively reacting to the Empire's grandiose

claims about itself have proposed a methodology of discerning "echoes" of imperial criticism, borrowing the work of Richard Hays. In Heilig's essay, he re-evaluates the legitimacy of this methodology in the light of Bayes's theorem. His conclusion is that a more robust and systematic approach is needed, one that considers the discourse context, the availability of Roman propaganda in a first-century Roman context, and Paul's personality. Heilig's contribution is the offering of this new methodology that subjects all claims to sub-text criticism, or "echoes," to more pertinent scrutiny than Hays's seven criteria. This approach enables Heilig to counter some of John Barclay's arguments that critiquing Rome was less of an interest for Paul. Accordingly, he concludes that the general background plausibility of the subtext-hypothesis can be defended, at least in a modified form.

The next two essays round out the discussion on the New Testament. The first addresses the criticism of individual rulers more directly, whereas the second focuses on various customs and social structures within the Empire. The political agenda of the book of Acts, and Luke-Acts as a whole, has been the subject of much debate. Scholars have proposed a variety of perspectives that include political detachment, apologetic for early Christian civility, and implicit or explicit subversion of Roman power. Centered within this debate, Alexander P. Thompson addresses the depiction of the death of Herod Agrippa I in Acts 12:20–23 as an intentional political critique that arises from the narrative role of Herod as an opponent of Jesus throughout Luke-Acts. This political subversion is particularly seen in the contrast between the gruesome death of Herod and the imperishable resurrection of Jesus. Such a powerful foil suggests other avenues for discussing the political perspective of Luke-Acts.

In a recent paper on 1 Peter, David Horrell has argued that the long-running "Balch–Elliott debate" regarding the stance the author takes toward the values and ethos of his readers' pagan social environment needs to be focused more deliberately on the particularities of the imperial context and the shape that it gave to the power-structures within which the letter's readers were required to relate to their social environment. In this article, David I. Starling argues that another crucial particularity of the text that needs to be taken into account is the tradition of understanding within which the author encourages his readers to interpret that imperial power and their relation to it. With those two considerations in mind, this chapter examines the ways in which the author's use of OT traditions contributes to the stance that he urges his readers to take toward the imperial dynamics of fear, patronage, and honor that shaped their socio-political context, concluding that both the socially "conformist" and the socially "resistant" di-

mensions of the letter's injunctions are expressed in terms of scriptural categories and grounded in scriptural patterns of judgment.

As early Christianity emerged, did Christians maintain the same level of discourse vis-à-vis the Roman Empire? The next two essays address this question in their own way. The relationship between Jesus's preaching of the Kingdom of God and his miracles is attested in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 10:7–8; 11:2–6; Luke 9:2; 10:9). However, this correlation is not strongly upheld into the second century. The following essay by Brandon Walker traces the development of the decline of correlation in the Kingdom of God language as it relates to miracles in the first to second centuries. Through comparing Jesus's statement relating the Kingdom and exorcism in the Beelzebul controversy with second-century apologists and popular literature such as the *Acts of Peter* and the *Acts of Paul,* which all contain miracle accounts, this distancing is most noticeable. After surveying these relevant sources from the first and second centuries, Walker offers several explanations for this separation. First, the waning of allusion to the Kingdom and miracles in the second century is probably a result of the novelty of the early Jesus movement wearing off and other issues taking precedent. Second, it is possible that the acceptance of the Gentiles into the church caused a reorientation in language and theopolitical imagination. Finally, in an effort not to be perceived as politically subversive in a time of shifting Jewish-Roman political tensions, the memory of the connection between Kingdom and deeds of power would likewise have changed.

As well, in the development of early Christianity, martyrdom theology became a dominant feature. Naturally, those who idealized martyrs would have a different set of values than the Roman Empire. In Candida R. Moss's essay she explores three texts in particular – *the Acts of Justin, the Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, and *the Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* – and addresses the critique of Roman hegemony and ideology within these writings, particularly by showing how typically Roman ideals, such as masculinity, were assigned to the Christians martyrs whereas the Romans were portrayed with a dearth of these qualities.

The final essay in our volume addresses the question of Empire within the development of rabbinic theology. As scholars have addressed, for the Jews of the classical rabbinic corpora, the conflict with Rome was pronounced, especially as the Roman Empire came to appropriate Christianity. Yet Bernie Hodkin has provided a re-examination of the rabbinic evidence for Roman resistance, and has argued that the rabbinic source material does not reflect a uniform disposition to Rome, but that unique outlooks can be discerned according to provenance. Particularly, rabbis in Sassanian

Persia often reformulated Palestinian sources in order to reflect a different outlook on the Roman Empire.

Finally, the editors would like to thank everyone who participated in the conference, both the presenters who offered stimulating papers as well as those who attended and engaged our speakers with perceptive questions. We would like to give special thanks to our four keynote speakers – Nathan MacDonald, Loren Stuckenbruck, Matthew Novenson, and Candida Moss – for offering papers at the conference and for their assistance in putting together this volume. We are very grateful for the endorsement of Jörg Frey to move this volume forward for publication, and for all the help we received from the wonderful team at Mohr Siebeck, including Katharina Stichling, Henning Ziebritzki, and Matthias Spitzner. We would also like to thank Kristin De Troyer and Elizabeth Tracy; the conference would not have been possible without their prompt help.

15 June 2014

John Anthony Dunne
Dan Batovici

A Place for Socio-Political Oppressors at the End of History? Eschatological Perspectives from *1 Enoch*[1]

LOREN T. STUCKENBRUCK

Widening Participation: Eschatological Worship of God in the *Book of Watchers*

The present discussion takes the rebellious angels myth in the early Enoch tradition as a point of departure. Much has been made by recent interpreters of chapters 6 through 16 of the *Book of Watchers* in *1 Enoch* regarding a socio-political setting that explains the myth in which "the sons of God" choose women on earth for themselves, sire gigantic offspring through them, and give humanity a series of reprehensible instructions (*1 En.* 6:1–8:3). In particular, behind these events and activities, one is supposed to see a phenomenon of "political" or at least "social" oppression at work that those who originally generated and received the text categorically condemned. Such an interpretation can easily assume that the angels and/or their giant-sized progeny are steno-symbols for people who have both devised and carried out their claims to power at the expense of Jewish society. The political might behind the repression of pious Jews and the values they hold dear is, in effect, "demonised" and thus rejected as having anything to do with God's purpose for the world. This way of reading the *Book of Watchers*, as is the case with any work that draws on language of oppression, is attractive, not only because of the historical sense it makes of the text but also on hermeneutical grounds. While it is not the purpose of this discussion to turn such an approach on its head, I do think there is reason to recover some of the nuance and perspective the Enochic tradition and its early heirs bring to bear on the suffering endured by those who are oppressed.

Rather than beginning with a recounting of the fallen angels tradition itself, I think it is appropriate for our purposes here to focus initially on the

[1] Though the focus has shifted, some of the research behind this lecture is adapted from Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "The Eschatological Worship of God by the Nations: An Inquiry into the Early Enoch Tradition," in *Wisdom as a Robe,* ed. K. Dobos et al. (Sheffield: Phoenix, 2009), 191–208.

last part of chapters 6–11 in the *Book of Watchers*, a section, which, next to portions of the *Astronomical Book*, is one of the oldest parts of *1 Enoch*. The text, which spans from 10:17 to 11:2, describes blissful conditions that are to characterize the state of creation when the world is brought into an order originally intended for it. In addition to presenting the ideal future as one in which the environment will be unleashed to flourish and reproduce unhindered, the passage depicts how humans will fit into this picture. According to *1 En.* 10:20–22, God instructs the archangel Michael as follows:[2]

(20) But as for you, cleanse the earth from all uncleanness,
and from all injustice,
and from all sin and godlessness.
And eliminate all the unclean things that have been done on the earth.
(21) And all the children of humanity will become righteous,[3]
and all the peoples will serve (Grk. λατρεύοντες)
and bless (εὐλογοῦντες) me,
and they will all worship (προσκυνοῦντες) me.
(22) And the entire earth will be cleansed
from all defilement and all uncleanness.
And no wrath or torment
will I ever again send upon them,
for all the generations of eternity.

Here a purification or cleansing of the earth from the evils that have plagued it – the wording in verse 22 alludes to the divine promise not to repeat a destruction of the earth after the Great Flood in Gen 9:15b – is a prelude to the worship of God by all peoples. While Michael is the one whose agency prepares for this state of things, it is God who announces it.[4] Surprisingly, among the vast amount of scholarly and popularizing literature devoted to Enochic studies in the last 25 years, relatively little has been written that considers just what the worship of God by all peoples is supposed to mean within both its immediate context and larger literary set-

[2] The translation below is my own, based on the Ethiopic I recension, with insertions of corresponding Greek terms from Codex Panopolitanus (also known as the Gizeh Papyrus). For a recent discussion on the relative value of the Ethiopic recensions, see Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Commentary on 1 Enoch 91–108* (CEJL; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 19–26. For the Greek text, it is expedient to rely on the edition by Matthew Black, *Apocalypsis Henochi Graeci in Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti* (PVTG 3; Leiden: Brill, 1970).

[3] The text "and all . . . righteous" is original, though probably omitted in Grk. Cod. Pan. by *homoio-arcton*, perhaps at the stage of its Semitic *Vorlage*.

[4] Significantly, this is the only time in *1 En.* 6–11 that God speaks. The weight attached to divine speech in the *Book of Watchers* is also apparent from *1 En.* 15:1–16:4, in which the divine pronouncement against the forces of evil represented by the wayward angels and the giants follows upon Enoch's throne vision (14:8–25).

ting. As we shall see, a closer reading of the text and its function as a conclusion to chapters 6 through 11 may be said to have a bearing on the question of political and social oppression. For the most part, this text has most often been treated in passing as a curious vision of the future; commentators have either noted how the world-wide worship of God draws on traditions from the Hebrew Bible regarding the fate of the nations or how it links up with later Enochic (and perhaps other) texts.[5] Over a century ago, Robert Henry Charles, in an overview of apocalyptic ideas that he assigned to the second century B.C.E., commented rather straightforwardly that, "[a]ccording to I Enoch x. 21, all the Gentiles are to become righteous and worship God."[6] Most readers today will agree with this reading, although the date of the *Book of Watchers* probably goes back to the third century B.C.E.[7] Most importantly, this text is frequently taken as a significant example of how some Jews were able to envision a world in which all peoples – that is, people outside the bounds of Judaism – will participate in authentic worship, and in a text that hardly mentions the Mosaic Law. This, in turn, is regarded as a strand of Jewish thought that could imagine authentic worship apart from the Law and so prepared the way for Christian faith of the sort that Paul the apostle would communicate.[8]

Thus, while we have to do with a tradition that may be said to have been in circulation during the third century B.C.E., we are in a position to address several questions. Beyond the general affirmation that those who will worship God embraces Gentiles, can anything further be said about whom, more precisely, the phrase "all people" includes? Are these, for example, simply Gentiles who in the future are expected to recognize that Israel's God is the only legitimate God and creator of the world, or is there something particular going on in the literary context that suggests more about their profile? How is the expectation in the cited text (*1 En.* 10:20–22)

[5] See esp. Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch* (SVTP 7; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 140; George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 224, 228; Siegbert Uhlig, *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit. Band V: Apocalypsen; Lieferung 6: Das Äthiopische Henochbuch* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1984), 531–32; and Daniel Olson, *Enoch: A New Translation* (N. Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 2004), 40.

[6] R. H. Charles, *Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity: A Critical History* (New York: Schocken Brooks, 1963; reprinted from 2nd ed. published in 1913), 246. Charles offers no comment on the text in his commentary – so in Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), 26 – but rather reserves his discussion on "the conversion of Gentiles" under *Animal Apocalypse* at *1 En.* 90:30 (Charles, *Eschatology*, 214–15).

[7] Cf. J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 24 and Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 169–71.

[8] So e.g., Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 81–162.

shaped by the preceding story in the *Book of Watchers* chapters 6–8 about the rebellious angels and their gigantic offspring? This is a fair question to ask, since at first there might not seem to be any connection in relation to that storyline at all. How can a myth about rebellion in heaven have anything to do with an account that anticipates the globalization of ritual purity, faith, justice, and worship? Moreover, on what grounds can such be expected to happen and, again, whom does "all people" include and not include?

Three factors form a framework within which to address these questions. The first is how the eschatological expectation relates to passages in the Hebrew Bible that refer to the eventual recognition of Israel's God among the nations (see esp. Isa 2:3; 18:7; 19:22; 45:14–15; 60; 66:18–23; Jer 16:19; Zech 8:20–23; 14:16–21; Ps 22:27–28; 47:8; 63:2–4; 86:9; 102:15; 117:1). The second is how *1 En.* 10:20–22 functions within the *Book of Watchers*, especially in chapters 6–11. And thirdly, there is the question of how this passages relates to other contemporary Jewish traditions that anticipate the recognition by the nations of Israel's God (*Pss. Sol.* 17:29–32, 34; *Book of Parables* in *1 En.* 48:5; 50:2; Dan 7:14) or similarly anticipate among the nations some kind of "conversion"[9] or worship of God (Tob 14:6; *Animal Apocalypse* at *1 En.* 90:37; *Apocalypse of Weeks* at *1 En.* 91:14; *Epistle of Enoch* at *1 En.* 100:6; 105:1; Dan 7:14). It is along each of these lines that the discussion below shall proceed.

The Ultimate Outcome for the Nations in the Hebrew Bible

A number of passages in the Jewish scriptures express the belief that the nations of the earth will recognize, perhaps even worship the God of Israel. Such texts are primarily motivated by the conviction that what happens to Israel – whether it be exile or restoration – forms part of a grand design of things on the part of God the Creator, for the rest of the world.[10] In these

[9] The term "conversion" is frequently applied by scholars to the *1 Enoch* passages under consideration here; however, my use of it in this discussion is non-technical. It is not, for example, clear that the turning to God by the peoples of the earth is to involve circumcision (see the discussion in the following section below): do any of the expectations of these texts envision an inclusion of Gentiles among God's *covenant* people (which would then involve circumcision), or does the turning to God in an eschatological age imply that the use of circumcision to signify belonging to God's people will no longer be necessary? Failing more specific indications in the texts themselves, my use of "conversion" will neither reject nor assume that circumcision was thought to be involved.

[10] N. T. Wright aptly states in *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 268 that "the fate of the nations was inexorably and irreversibly bound up with that of Israel."

traditions the nations' ultimate response to Israel's God comes to expression in a number of ways:

– they will come to Jerusalem to be instructed and actually "walk in his paths" (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2)
– they will offer gifts and bring their wealth to Jerusalem (Isa 18:7; 45:14; 60:5, 11)
– they will petition God for mercy (Isa 19:22; Zech 8:21–22)
– they will be bow down and be subservient to Israel (Isa 45:14; 60:12)
– they will recognize and declare that the God of Israel is unique (Isa 45:14–15; 66:18; Ps 102:15)
– they will recognize the special status of Israel in relation to God amongst the nations (Zech 8:23; cf. Isa 60:3)
– they will worship God in Jerusalem (Isa 66:23; Zech 14:16–19; Ps 22:27; 86:9)
– it is deemed appropriate for them to praise God for his justice and mercy (Ps 67:3–4; 117:1)
– they will "turn" to God (Ps 22:27)

Why, beyond the motivation mentioned above, is the motif of the nations' eventual worship or recognition of God so important in these texts? First, and fundamentally, it expressed the conviction that Israel's faith is supreme. What the nations will someday do reflects an outcome that emerges logically from a fundamental conviction of Israel as God's elect people, and that this God, at the same time, is Creator of the cosmos. Although faith in this God can express itself through a sense of national or ethnic identity, God is regarded as being active throughout the created order, with the result that other nations, although not elect, somehow come under and are subject to God's rule (e.g., Ps 22:28; 47:8; 86:9). Second, Jerusalem, especially the Temple, is considered the unmatched place of God's presence. In the proper order of things, when Israel is restored from her dispersion among the other nations to worship in the place where God is present, the nations will recognize the futility of their gods and follow in tow (e.g., Jer 16:19). Third, the motif of the worship of God by other peoples in the Hebrew Bible expresses hope for a reversal of *the conditions of unjust domination being suffered at the hands of other nations by Israel*. Despite Israel's oppressed status, the nations' acknowledgement of God will demonstrate that they – and not Israel – should be the subservient ones (see esp. Isa 60). So, already we see that the expression "the nations" does not merely function as a general designation, but refers specifically to those who are to be held responsible for ethnic and religious oppression.

Nonetheless, it is not apparent from any of the passages referred to above that a "conversion" of the nations is in view, especially if we define the term "conversion" as the *complete* transfer from one religion to another.[11] Of course, the nations can receive instruction, be governed by

[11] See also the comment in n. 9 above.

God's justice and mercy, and even "walk in his paths" (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:2). However, they will essentially remain without a special covenant, they will not enjoy the status of being God's "elect" or "chosen" people, they will never specifically be associated with "righteousness," and they will only indirectly participate in the Temple cult (e.g., by the offering their wealth or by manifesting their submission to God there).

The Children of Humanity in 10:21 and Their Function in the *Book of Watchers*

Here, we look especially at the literary setting in which the passage of *1 En.* 10:20–22 appears: chapters 6–11. This part of *1 Enoch* is often regarded as a blend of different traditions which elaborate, as we have seen, the story in Genesis chapters 6–9 about "the sons of God" and "the daughters of humanity," about their giant-sized offspring, about the growing evil and violence on earth, and about God's judgment which followed (6:5–10:16). As is well known, chapters 6–11[12] form a distinct unit within the *Book of Watchers*. Unlike the rest of the book, the patriarch Enoch is neither named nor receives any, even implicit, attention here. Both this and the fact that chapter 10 opens with an address to "the son of Lamech" (*1 En.* 10:1-3) suggest that the tradition is closely associated with the figure of Noah.[13]

The appearance of a figure like Noah in a story relating to the time of the Great Flood comes as no surprise. In the book of Genesis chapter 6, the mating of "the sons of God" with women on earth serves as a prelude to the Great Flood, and it is thereafter in the text tradition that Noah becomes the main character (Gen 6:5–9:17). Noah is, in addition, a figure of interest in other parts of *1 Enoch* (so esp. in chapters 61 and 65–68, 88, and 106–107), as well as in other related texts that date to the second century B.C.E.

[12] Though a literary unit, these chapters are themselves a blending in these chapters of originally separate traditions that can still be distinguished, see esp. Paul Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11," *JBL* 96 (1977): 195–233; George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11," *JBL* 96 (1977): 383–405; John J. Collins, "Methodological Issues in the Study of 1 Enoch: Reflections on the Articles of P. D. Hanson and G. W. Nickelsburg," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 18,* ed. Paul J. Achtemeier (2 vols.; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1978), 1:315–22; Devorah Dimant, "1 Enoch 6–11: A Methodological Perspective," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 18*, 1:323–39; Carol A. Newsom, "The Development of 1 Enoch 6-19: Cosmology and Judgment," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 313; and Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 171–72.

[13] So especially Charles, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 13–14, who regarded chapters 6–11 as a "fragment" from a now lost "Apocalypse" or "Book of Noah."

Two of these works are concerned with the birth of Noah (*Genesis Apocryphon* = 1Q20 ii 1 – v 26; *Birth of Noah* in *1 En.* 106:1–107:3) and imagine this event in relation to the period before the Flood when the rebellious angels engaged in their notorious activities and sired offspring. Noah, in fact, is suspected of having been fathered by the rebellious angels and, therefore, of being one of the "giants."[14] Interestingly, in one text-tradition that only survives in fragments transmitted in Greek, Noah's lineage is actually traced back to the giants (so *Pseudo-Eupolemos*, preserved in Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.17.1–9 and 18.2). This tradition, which regarded the giants simply as carriers of culture and not necessarily as quintessential agents of evil, is completely rejected by pious Jews, including those behind *1 Enoch*.[15] Those behind the Enochic traditions correlated Noah's birth instead to the activity of God who through Noah ensures the survival of humanity during and after the coming destruction through the Flood.

As far as *1 Enoch* chapters 6–11 are concerned, the importance of Noah also makes sense because much of the imagery in chapter 10 derives from the story of the Great Flood. In the present shape of the text, the mention of Noah occurs as part of God's response to the complaints of murdered humans against the horrible injustices which the giants have carried out against them and against the earth (8:4–9:11). Here God's message, mediated through the angel Sariel, comes to Noah and declares three things: (i) a destruction of "the whole earth" is about to take place (10:2); (ii) Noah will survive this destruction (10:1, 3); and (iii) from Noah a "plant" (Eth.; Grk. "seed") will be established "for all generations of eternity."

Once Noah is mentioned in *1 En.* 10:1–3, readers familiar with the Genesis account might at this point expect a retelling of the Flood story (Gen 6:5–8:22). The writer of the tradition, however, does much more than retell events in his own words from the time of Noah. The storyline actually functions as a way for the writer to offer comment about his own time and about his hope for the (eschatological) future. But the analogy between the

[14] Another, the *Book of Giants*, is preserved in fragments which – as *1 En.*10:1–3 – focus on the theme of Noah's escape from the flood (cf. 6Q8 2). Interestingly, the work refers to Enoch as the authoritative interpreter of the giants' ominous dreams, although it was copied in a ms. (4Q203) that Milik identified as the same ms. (4Q204) that contains several parts of *1 Enoch* (*Book of Watchers*, *Animal Apocalypse*, *Apocalypse of Weeks*, *Epistle of Enoch*, and *Birth of Noah*). Although the *Book of Giants* shares the third narrative style of chapters 6–11, when compared to the *Book of Watchers* as a whole, it is not a work that claims Enoch as its fictive author.

[15] See further Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "The "Angels" and "Giants" of Genesis 6:1–4 in Second and Third Century BCE Jewish Interpretation," *DSD* 7 no. 3 (2000): 354–77; see further *idem*, *Commentary on 1 Enoch 91–108*, under the Notes to *1 En*. 106:4–7 and 106:9–12.

story of Noah and the writer's own time is not immediately clear. While the Noahic storyline is not entirely lost – indeed, motifs related to the Noah account intermittently recur later in the chapter (esp. from v. 14) – what follows (so 10:4–13) focuses instead on the punishments meted out against the main evildoers of the text: against one of the leaders of the angelic rebellion, 'Asa'el (10:4–6; he is bound, thrown into darkness, and is to be burnt with fire at the Great Judgement), against the giants (10:9–10; they are condemned to annihilate one another), and against another leader of the rebellion, "Shemihazah and his companions" (10:11–13; they are bound for seventy generations and eternally confined in a prison where in the end they will undergo torment by fire). These acts of divine judgement and punishment, which are carried out, respectively, by the angels Raphael, Gabriel, and Michael, *deal directly with the demonic world*, and *it is against the demonic world that the souls of the enslaved and killed humans have complained*. The angels who have heard the lamentation of the suffering souls (9:1, 4) are the same angels who carry out justice on their behalf at God's command (10:1, 4, 9, 11). In this way the story of the fallen angels and the story of Noah merge and can be regarded as comprising a continuous narrative.

The eternal "plant" to come from Noah (10:3) and the final judgement against the rebellious angels (10:5–6, 12–13) show that for the writer the story is concerned both with Noah's time in the sacred past and with eschatological time in the future. Such sacred past and sacred future come together; what happens in the one time corresponds to what happens in the other. Thus the story about fallen angels at the beginning of chapter 6 is relevant to how the writer(s) imagined the future to be at the end of chapter 10. Significantly, *the scope of this correlation between sacred past and sacred future involves all humanity*. The story begins with the mass of humanity: "the sons of men" and "the daughters of men" (6:1–2) who multiply on the face of the earth. The rebellious angels intermingle with the human species, and when the giants become violent, humanity's very existence as a species is under threat. Through Noah, however, the survival of humanity as a whole is assured. It should not be surprising, then, if in the end, at 10:20–22, all humanity is featured once again and will be found to worship God.

The opening and closing of the story may be clear enough, but the path to this happy conclusion is not straightforward. The condemnation of the fallen angels and slaughter of their offspring (10:14–15) is not complete at the time of the Flood.[16] The Flood and internecine fighting among the gi-

[16] The Flood itself does not constitute the punishment of either the Watchers or giants. Instead, deluge imagery relates to the theme of Noah's escape (10:3), the destruction and

giants constitute provisional forms of punishment; however, they mark a time of decisive punishment that guarantees the complete removal and annihilation of evil at the end of history. What characterizes the time in between past punishment and final annihilation is the appearance of Noah's offspring, called "the plant of truth and righteousness" (10:16). This community of faith lives in a time of tension between the defeat of evil in the past and its full destruction in the future, between an "already" and "not yet."

We may ask: who or what is this "plant of truth and righteousness" in the text? Here the narrative is concerned with those who are obedient to the covenant between God and Noah; they are a community of those who are actively faithful and are described as doing "works of righteousness" (Eth. to *1 En.* 10:16; omitted in the Grk. through homoioteleuton[17]). As such, they are the ones who, presumably as Noah during the Flood, will "escape" when "all iniquity" and, as the text puts it, "*every evil work*" are destroyed (10:16; cf. also *Birth of Noah* at *1 En.* 107:1). Read in relation to the story about the fallen angels, the text draws an analogy between the destruction and eternal punishment of the angels and giants (cf. 10:9–14) and the destruction of iniquitous *deeds* or *activities*. Given the angelic and non-human origin of evil, *destruction is not anticipated for human beings as much as for the reprehensible deeds and knowledge they have learned from the angels* (7:3–5; 8:1–3).[18]

The emphasis here is somewhat different from several recent interpretations offered for *1 En.* 6–11. Several scholars have argued that in the story "the fallen angels" and "the giants" are not really angels and giants; instead, they are to be understood as metaphors or code words for oppressive socio-political and religious realities during the time the text was put together. These realities are the military successors to Alexander the Great during late fourth and early third centuries B.C.E. Called the "Diadochi," they wielded considerable power in the Eastern Mediterranean world; they not only enslaved some of those they conquered, they also played a major role in imposing Greek culture, ideals, and practices onto Jews and other ethnic groups in the region. The Enochic text here functions as a voice of protest and resistance. All those things which the Greeks have imposed on Jews undermine obedience to the covenant as the writer understood it. The

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elimination of iniquity and impurity from the earth (10:16, 20, 22), and the escape of the righteous in the eschaton (10:17).

[17] See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 218, who notes with Milik (*The Books of Enoch*, 189) that the longer reading is supported by the Aramaic text in 4QEn^{c} 1 v. 1.

[18] In this way, the tradition's focus on the culpability of the Watchers and giants is nuanced: it does not imply that humans who have been taught by them are not held responsible.