

Chapter 2

1 Enoch 1–36: The Book of Watchers: A Review of Recent Research

2.1 Introduction

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there has been an increasing interest by scholars in *1 Enoch* 1–36, the *Book of Watchers*. This is due primarily to the publication of the 4QEn fragments by J.T. Milik in 1976. Milik presents a major edition that contains the Aramaic fragments of *1 Enoch* from Qumran Cave 4.¹ He has included the text of the fragments, his translation and notes, and his reconstruction of the text. Milik provides an evaluation of the extant literature by comparing what he calls “specimens of the original text” to his reconstruction and translation, while also offering an introduction to the history of the early Enochic literature.

The major problem with Milik’s book, as many have pointed out,² is that in many places the Aramaic text he presents is in fact a reconstruction based on his comparison of the 4QEn fragments with the extant Greek and Ethiopic texts. To this end, he has been properly criticized; his work all too easily may lead to the illusion that a great deal more of the Aramaic documents is extant from Qumran than is actually the case. However, the contribution of Milik’s work far outweighs its shortcomings.

As a result of the publication of the Qumran material, several theories have been set forth that consider the major areas of concern about *BW* (i.e. date, place and authorship, source criticism of the myths behind *BW*; and interpretation of the function of *BW*). This chapter will endeavour to present a history of the recent research on *BW*. In order to prepare a backdrop of the review of the previous research, I will first present a brief

¹ Milik, *Books of Enoch*.

² See reviews by James Barr, review of J.T. Milik, *Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4*, *JTS* 29 (1978): 517–30; Sebastian Brock, *JJS* 29 (1978): 98–99; J. Greenfield and Michael Stone, *Numen* 26 (1979): 89–103; James A. Sanders, *JBL* 97 (1978): 446–47; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Revision of Aramaic—Greek and Greek—Aramaic Glossaries in The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4 by J. T. Milik,” *JJS* 41 (1990): 13–48; James C. VanderKam, “Some Major Issues in the Contemporary Study of 1 Enoch: Reflections on J.T. Milik’s Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4,” *Maarav* 3, (1982): 85–97.

record of the extant texts of *1 Enoch* 1–36, a short discussion of the structure of *BW*, and finally a summary of the contents.

2.2 History of the Texts

Modern research on *1 Enoch* had its beginning in 1773 with the discovery of the whole of *1 Enoch* by James Bruce who brought three Ethiopic manuscripts back to Europe. This discovery led eventually to no less than 12 translations (English, French, and German) in the nineteenth century, highlighted by August Dillmann's translation and commentary edition in 1853.³ The discovery of the Akhmim Greek manuscript of *1 Enoch* 1–32 in 1886/87 (and subsequent publication in 1892/93)⁴ greatly advanced the research of *BW* in the Greek tradition. R. H. Charles' translation and commentary, published in 1912, contained the most extensive text-critical apparatus and commentary on *1 Enoch* to date. Following Charles' publication, the majority of research concerning *1 Enoch* through 1950 focused on the eschatological aspects and the "Son of Man" of the Similitudes.⁵

A significant advance for the research of *BW* took place with the initial publications (1951, 1955, and 1958) of the Aramaic fragments discovered at Qumran.⁶ Milik's monograph containing the fragments of *1 Enoch* and the *Book of Giants*⁷ has been a decisive catalyst to further study of *BW*. Michael Knibb published a new translation of the Ethiopic with text-critical apparatus that included the Qumran fragments and the extant Greek texts in 1978.⁸ This two-volume work provides a copy of the Ethiopic *1 Enoch* 1–108 (vol. 1) along with a translation and commentary (vol. 2) that compares the various Ethiopic and Greek texts with the Aramaic fragments. A second English translation by Ephraim Isaac followed in 1983.⁹ In 1984, Siegbert Uhlig published a German translation based on

³ For a thorough review of the textual tradition, see Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 9–20, 109–112.

⁴ Published by Bouriant (1892) and Lods (1892/93).

⁵ The majority of the research was done by Christian scholars; see comments *ibid.*, 114.

⁶ See review of material in Milik, *Books of Enoch*. See also Nickelsburg, "Enoch in Recent Research," for a review of the research during this period.

⁷ See Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants* and Émile Puech in *DJD*, vol. XXXI (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001) for a thorough study of the Book of Giants fragments.

⁸ Knibb, *Ethiopic Enoch*.

⁹ Ephraim Isaac, "1 Enoch," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983–85), 1:5–89. Isaac has not incorporated the Aramaic fragments in his translation.

multiple Ethiopic MSS not incorporated in previous translations by Charles, Knibb, and Isaac.¹⁰ In 1985, Matthew Black published what would be an attempt to expand Charles' 1912 edition with text-critical notes and commentary.¹¹ Black's two works have analysed the extant Greek manuscripts. The first of Black's volumes presents the extant Greek manuscripts and their textual variants, while the second provides a short introduction, translation, commentary, and textual notes on the variants of the extant Greek manuscripts.

In 1993, Patrick Tiller published a comprehensive introduction and commentary to the *Animal Apocalypse* (chs. 85–90) that is based on multiple Ethiopic MSS, Greek fragments, and the Qumran fragments.¹² In 2001, George Nickelsburg published a long awaited comprehensive introduction and commentary on *I Enoch* chapters 1–36 and 81–108. The first volume of what is a two-volume commentary on *I Enoch*¹³ includes his own English translation with the apparatus of the variant readings in the Ethiopic, Greek, and the Aramaic fragments from Qumran. He has also included a verse-by-verse commentary that explores what he describes as the “major philological, literary, theological, and historical questions” concerning its place in Hellenism, 2TPJudaism, and early Christianity. In doing so, Nickelsburg has produced a tool that will be appreciated by anyone doing research in what is one of the most important books of 2TP Judaism.

2.3 Structure of the *Book of Watchers*

The *Book of Watchers* is one of the five major sections of *I Enoch*, although the final section (chapters 91–108) may be subdivided into four smaller sections.

Chapters 1–36 – Book of Watchers

Chapters 37–71 – Book of Parables

Chapters 72–82 – Astronomical Book (Book of the Luminaries)

¹⁰ See Siegbert Uhlig, *Das äthiopische Henochbuch* (JSRHZ 5/6; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1984). For details of these additional manuscripts, see Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 17.

¹¹ Matthew Black, *Apocalypsis Henochi Graece* (PVTG 3; Leiden: Brill, 1970) and idem, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch* (SVTP 7; Leiden: Brill, 1985).

¹² See Patrick A Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993). This section of *I Enoch* plays an important role alongside *BW* in the interpretation of Gen 6.1–4.

¹³ The second volume was released in 2011; see George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *I Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of I Enoch, Chapters 37-82*. (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

Chapters 83–90 – Animal Apocalypse (or Book of Dreams)

Chapters 91–108 – Epistle of Enoch¹⁴

Following the publication of the fragments from Qumran Cave 4,¹⁵ it is now thought that *I Enoch* was written in Aramaic, and then translated into Greek and later Ethiopic.¹⁶ The five sections of *I Enoch* as a whole are fully extant only in Ethiopic because the Ethiopic Church preserved it as an authoritative writing.¹⁷ *BW* is itself thought to be a composite document that is normally divided into these subdivisions:

Chapters 1–5 – introduction

Chapters 6–11 – traditions of Asa’el and Shemihazah groups of angels¹⁸

Chapters 12–16 – reintroduction of Enoch and his interaction with the angels

Chapters 17–19 – Enoch’s first heavenly journey

Chapter 20 – list of archangel names

¹⁴ Nickelsburg argues (see *ibid.*, 8) that chapter 91 is an editorial section that leads into the Epistle of Enoch (92–105). Chapters 106–107 are identified as a birth narrative from the Book of Noah and chapter 108 is considered an appendix that provides words of assurance to the righteous.

¹⁵ See Milik, *Books of Enoch*. Milik recognizes 11 manuscripts that correspond to four of the five divisions of *I Enoch*. The Book of Parables has yet to be identified among the fragments of Qumran (p. 7).

¹⁶ Edward Ullendorf and Michael Knibb have argued that the translators of the Ethiopic edition had in front of them both the Aramaic and Greek versions; see Edward Ullendorf, “An Aramaic ‘Vorlage’ of the Ethiopic Text of Enoch?” (*Problemi attuali di scienza e di cultura, quaderni* 48; Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1960): 259–67; and Knibb, *Ethiopic Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 2:27–46. James VanderKam has argued that the translators depended on the Greek text exclusively; see James C. VanderKam, “The Textual Base for the Ethiopic Translation of 1 Enoch,” in *Working with No Data: Studies in Semitic and Egyptian Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin*, (ed. D. M. Golomb; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 247–62. For other arguments related to the Vorlage of the Ethiopic translations, see Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 225–58; H. F. Fuhs, “Die Aethiopsche Uebersetzung des Henoch: Ein Beitrag zur Apokalyptikforschung der Gegenwart,” *BN* 8 (1979): 36–56; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Implications of the New Enoch Literature from Qumran,” *TS* 38 (1977): 332–45; Erik W. Larson, “The Translation of Enoch: From Aramaic Into Greek” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1995); Michael Sokoloff, “Notes on the Aramaic Fragment of Enoch From Qumran Cave 4,” *Maarav* 1 (1978–1979); and James Barr, “Aramaic-Greek Notes on the Book of Enoch I, II,” *JJS* 23 (1978): 187–98.

¹⁷ See R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, (London: SPCK, 1912. Repr., ed. Paul Tice; Escondido, CA: The Book Tree, 2000), xiv–xxix for a survey of the extant texts. Cf. Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 9–20, 109–112.

¹⁸ Several have argued that chapters 6–11 are original to the now lost “Book of Noah.” See e.g. Alexander, “Sons of God,” 60 and Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and its History*, (JSPSup 20; trans. William J. Short; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 213.

Chapters 21–36 – Enoch’s second heavenly journey

In all likelihood, each of these sections was written by a different author and brought together by an editor or editors at a later date. However, the possibility that it is a single author should be given consideration. As will be argued below, different strands of the tradition may be found in the various sections (e.g. chs. 6–11 likely contain two strands of the tradition – Asa’el and Shemihazah).

BW (especially 6–11) is arguably the earliest Jewish apocalyptic writing that takes up the story found in Genesis 6.1–4. Palaeographical evidence makes it plausible to date *BW* as a whole (i.e. 4Q201, 4QEn^a) to the early second century B.C.E. or possibly the late third century.¹⁹ At this early stage, *BW* likely consisted of the narrative that is recognized as chapters 6–11 and 12–16.²⁰ Fragments found at Qumran support the suggestion that chapters 1–5 were incorporated as an introduction to chapters 6–16 during the early stages of the composition.²¹ A *terminus ad quem* of the last third of the first century B.C. is suggested for the later chapters of *BW* (i.e. 17–36) that describe the heavenly journeys of Enoch. This is based on the fragments of 4QEn^{c+d} that contain the only extant Aramaic text of these chapters.²²

R. H. Charles proposed in his edition that chapters 1–5 were written as an introduction to the whole collection of *1 Enoch* as a final section to the work. Chapters 1–5, which describe the offence of those who have turned from the covenant of God, the coming judgment and the restoration of the earth, are thought to be eschatological in nature.²³ The Aramaic fragments of 4QEn have since proven Charles’ findings incorrect. Due to the dating assigned to the fragments of chapters 1–5 and 6–11 identified as 4QEn^a,²⁴

¹⁹ It should be noted that 4QEn^a contains only a small portion of *BW*, i.e., frag i – 1.1–6; ii – 2.1–5.6; iii – 6.4–8.1; iv – 8.3–9.3,6–8; v – 10.3–4; vi – 10.21–11.1; 12.4–6. Loren Stuckenbruck suggests 4Q201 frag 6 corresponds to *1 Enoch* 13.8 (see discussion below)

²⁰ Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 140–41. Milik and others conclude that the Vorlage of 4Q201 originated as early as the third century. See also Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 7; Stone, “Book of Enoch and Judaism,” 484; and Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven,” 219–20.

²¹ It is generally acknowledged that *BW* consisted of several different components which were likely separate traditions interwoven to form the early stage of *BW*. See e.g. Milik, *Books of Enoch*; Nickelsburg, “Apocalyptic and Myth”; Newsom, “Development of *1 Enoch*”; Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven”; Collins, “Apocalyptic Technique”; and Dimant, “Methodological Perspective.”

²² See Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 178–222.

²³ For a detailed study of chapters 1–5, see Lars Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning: A Study of 1 Enoch 1–5*, (ConBNT 12; Lund, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1979). Hartman argues that these chapters offer the reader clues on how to understand the chapters that follow.

²⁴ Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 140, 144. Milik argues that 4QEn^a dates from early second century B.C.E. while *1 Enoch* 83–90 cannot be dated earlier than 164 B.C.E.

it has been determined that *I Enoch* 1–5 is an introduction to *BW* (chs. 1–36) only.²⁵

2.4 Summary of the Content of the *Book of Watchers*

The content of *I Enoch* reveals that the author was particularly captivated by the traditions found in Genesis 5–9. James VanderKam and others have argued that a “special form of Judaism,” Enochic Judaism, reflects the author’s fascination in particular, with the story of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men” in Genesis 6.1–4.²⁶ The narrative of *I Enoch* 6–16 focuses on the Watcher angels (= *bene haelohim*) and their intrusion into the physical world. The story describes how the Watchers (i.e. the rebellious angels) chose to rebel against God by swearing an oath to go to the earth and engage with the daughters of humanity to produce offspring of their own. A comparison of the two passages, Genesis 6.1–2 and *I Enoch* 6.1–2, reveals a close similarity between the two stories:

Genesis 6.1 And it came about that humanity began to multiply upon the face of the earth and daughters were born to them. 2. And the angels saw that the daughters of humanity were good to behold, and they took for themselves women from whomever they chose.

I Enoch 6.1 And it came to pass, when the sons of men had increased, that in those days there were born to them fair and beautiful daughters. 2. And the angels, the sons of heaven, saw them and desired them. And they said to one another: “Come, let us choose for ourselves wives from the children of men, and let us beget for ourselves children.”²⁷

²⁵ Nickelsburg suggests that chapters 1–5 are an introduction to a “full-blown Enochic Testament” that included chapters 1–5+6–11+12–33 or 36+81.1–82.4+91 and parts of 92–105, but admits the evidence is indecisive. See Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 25. See also Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 48.

²⁶ This is a far too simple explanation for Enochic Judaism. Enochic Judaism appears to encompass a widespread sectarian movement of which Qumran was likely a part. The sect(s) thought itself to have received authoritative literature by revelation and that the possession of such literature validated it as the elect community of God. It is plausible to suggest that the writings from the Qumran library which are identified as Qumran sectarian were part of the large community of Enochic Judaism. See James C. VanderKam, *Enoch: A Man for All Generations* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1995), vii; Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998); David R. Jackson, *Enochic Judaism Three Defining Paradigm Exemplars*, (London: T&T Clark, 2004); and Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*.

²⁷ Translation from Knibb, *Ethiopic Enoch*, 2:67. There is the question of who is relying on whom in this tradition. Milik has argued that the *I Enoch* traditions preceded

From this point forward, however, the author of *BW* embarks on an elaborate narrative that departs from the Genesis story detailing the effect of these relationships upon the angels, humanity, and creation.

It has been argued that at least two distinct strands of the angel story can be delineated within chapters 6–16 (Shemihazah and Asa’el). Each of the strands assigns at least part of the blame for the coming judgment of the earth to the angels.²⁸ The first strand contains the story of Shemihazah and his two hundred followers who take women to sire offspring of their own.²⁹ The giant offspring that are born from the relations are the primary cause of the violence and destruction on the earth, which, in turn, results in the Flood (cf. *gibborim* in Gen 6.4).

This same group of angels has a role in the second strand of chapters 6–16, which begins in chapter 8. This is the story of the angel Asa’el, whose original mission on the earth was to teach the arts of civilization for the good of humanity. However, the apparently improper use of the knowledge by humans resulted in their own corruption and the punishment of the Watcher angels. The author of *BW* has made it clear that the Watchers have rebelled by having sexual relations with women (Shemihazah tradition) and teaching humanity the rejected forms of knowledge (Asa’el/Instruction tradition).³⁰ Following the introduction of the Watchers and the Instruction motif, the story continues with the outcry of humanity because of the destruction caused by the giant offspring, which in turn solicits a response from heaven. The author of *BW* incorporates an

the Genesis material and that the author of Genesis compressed the *BW* version because of the audience’s familiarity with the story. See Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 31.

²⁸ Dimant has written a detailed interpretation of chapters 6–11 in which she argues for three basic strands within the story. The first is an account of the angels from Gen 6.1–4 who have sexual relations with women and produce giant offspring. The second story, which Dimant argues combined with the first, is a description of how angels led humans into sin by secret instruction and resulted in the appearance of demons and judgment by the Flood. Dimant contends that the third strand, which identifies Asa’el as the leader of the angels, is related to Gen 6.11–12. This story describes the teaching of the arts of civilization to humans, which cause them to sin, corrupt the angels, and bring about the Flood. See Dimant, “Fallen Angels,” 23–72.

²⁹ One question that has perhaps been overlooked concerning this part of the tradition is: ‘Why did the angels want to sire offspring in the first place?’ Was it a simply matter of lusting after the beauty of the daughters of men? Or was there a tradition in Early Judaism that perhaps revealed the driving force behind the Watchers’ desire to have children?

³⁰ The angels are accused of teaching a “worthless mystery,” see e.g. *1 Enoch* 7.1; 8.1–3; 9.6–8a; 13.2b. It is possible that the author or redactor included the Instruction motif into the story in order to place part of the blame for the judgment of the earth on humanity to draw a parallel to the Genesis narrative.

eschatological element into the story beginning in 10.13,³¹ which describes the coming of a heavenly epoch following the cleansing of the earth from the evil caused by the interaction of the angels and humanity.

Chapters 12–16 begin within the context of Genesis 5.21–24 and the time that Enoch spent with the angels.³² Beginning in chapter 12, Enoch is told to go and tell the Watchers of heaven of their approaching destruction as punishment for their sin. He goes first to Asa’el, tells him of his punishment, and then proceeds to tell the rest of the Watchers about their punishment.³³ They in turn, plead with him to intercede with God on their behalf. Chapter 13 describes the Watchers’ request for absolution and Enoch’s petitioning of heaven. Chapter 14, the longest in this section, depicts Enoch’s vision and message to the Watchers; they will be judged and will not have peace. In chapters 15 and 16, God tells Enoch about the sins of the Watchers and their offspring, and that, because of their sin, they shall have no peace.³⁴ The central theme of these chapters is the story of the angels who sinned by having sexual relations with women and the evil spirits that emerge from the bodies of the giants upon their death.

The final section of *BW*, chapters 17–36, describes the heavenly journey of Enoch. While on the journey, he is shown various elements of the cosmos that play a part in the eschatological message of the author, i.e. Sheol, the ends of the earth, places of punishment, Paradise, God’s throne, the tree of life, and Jerusalem. Also, during the journey, he is given heavenly knowledge by an archangel that would be used to counter the teachings of the Watchers.³⁵

It is important now to discuss the focus of recent research of *BW* that has studied the work from a redactional or source critical approach. Scholars have made great progress in this area attempting to reach an “original” *1 Enoch* text. Many theories have been presented regarding the

³¹ Eschatology is first introduced in chapters 1–5.

³² The LXX has translated אֱלֹהִים in Gen 5.22 as τὸ θεῶν “with God”. It is clear that the author of *1 Enoch* 12.2 has interpreted this as the angels: “And all his [Enoch] doings were with the Holy Ones and with the Watchers in his days.”

³³ Cf. 4Q203 8. 6–10.

³⁴ Compare also 4Q203 frag 13.3 – [. . . שְׁלָם] אִיתִי לְכַהֵן – “that there will be no peace to you.” Text from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, eds., *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; Leiden and Grand Rapids: Brill and Eerdmans, 1997–98), 1:410.

³⁵ There is a similar theme found in *Jubilees* in which the scribe and prophet Moses is given heavenly knowledge (i.e. message from God concerning the covenant) by the angels and directly from the mouth of God. This can be seen in *BW* in the case of Enoch who is seen as the righteous scribe (and prophet) who is given the divine message by the angels and from God. Similarly, in *Jubilees* 10, Noah is given knowledge by the angels in order to thwart the physical afflictions of the evil spirits. See Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 229.

traditions from which the material has been passed down to the author. Though this approach to the documents perhaps gives the critic control over the evidence, it does not necessarily bring the reader to the right conclusions about the author's intention in writing down and bringing together these traditions in the closing centuries B.C.E. Redaction and source criticism are essential methods as one scrutinizes the text of *1 Enoch*, but they do not go far enough if one is to give serious consideration to the theological issues which the author was attempting to address in his interpretation of Genesis 6.1–4. These issues must be examined alongside the source critical theories in order to gain a clearer understanding of *BW*.

2.5 Focus of the Research

The primary focus of the research in *BW* has been an attempt to discover the source, or sources, of the tradition of the Fallen Angels and giants portrayed in *1 Enoch* 6–16.³⁶ There is a wide range of views concerning the author's purpose in writing *BW*, some of which will be discussed below.

Three primary foci are usually found interconnected within the research undertaken by most scholars concerning *BW*. These foci have centred on the varying cultural traditions the author of *BW* used to develop his story. First, recent research has concentrated on the origin of the sources of these traditions. The opinions surrounding this question are primarily divided into two main camps: (1) the traditions originated in Greek culture or (2) they originated in Near Eastern Semitic cultures. A third option holds that the source of the traditions found in *BW* derived more immediately from the Israelite traditions.

A second area of the research has centred on *BW*'s relationship to the story concerning the sons of God in Genesis 6.1–4. Here there are also two main camps involved (with minor disagreements in each): (1) the author of *BW* elaborated on the Genesis text and the traditions behind it or (2) the

³⁶ Adler, "Berossus"; Barr, "Enoch Fragments"; Brock, "Enoch Fragments"; Collins, "Apocalyptic Technique"; idem, "Methodological Issues"; Davidson, *Angels At Qumran*; Dimant, "Fallen Angels"; idem, "Peshet of the Periods"; idem, "A Methodological Perspective"; Greenfield and Stone, "Enoch Fragments"; idem, "Enochic Pentateuch"; Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven"; Hendel, "Of Demigods"; Milik, *Books of Enoch*; idem, "Problemes"; Newsom, "Development of 1 Enoch 6–19"; Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth"; idem, *Commentary*; idem, "Enoch, Levi, and Peter"; idem, "Recent Research": 210–17; Pearson, "Resurrection and the Judgment"; Reimer, "Rescuing the Fallen Angels"; Sanders, "Enoch Fragments"; Stone, "Book of Enoch and Judaism"; Stuckenbruck, "The 'Angels' and 'Giants'"; idem, "Revision of Aramaic"; Suter, "Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest"; VanderKam, "Enoch Traditions"; idem, "Major Issues"; and West, *East Face*.

redactor of the Genesis passage was relating a well established oral (or perhaps written) tradition concerning the origin of evil spirits with which his readers would have been familiar.

A third area of research has focused on how the sources of these traditions have been transmitted and adapted by the Jewish authors. This question presents the largest area of discussion regarding *BW* and has resulted in several theories concerning the author's purpose in writing the document. The question of dating *BW*, of course, plays a large role in the conclusions reached by any of these scholarly works. Several scholars have attempted to apply *BW* to a specific historical setting (e.g. Suter, Nickelsburg – the situation resulted in the composition of *BW*), while others (i.e. Hanson, Newsom, Collins, and VanderKam – the existing myth was used to explain the various situations) contend that the author wished to bring an understanding to an audience concerning the cause of their current situation in Israel. The author's purpose was to explain the origin of the evil (i.e. persecution) they were facing, to give Israel hope for the future, and to encourage them to hold fast to their faith in God despite the persecution and oppression of foreign invaders.

Excursus: Notable terms in the Book of Watchers

In order to gain a clearer understanding of major issues of debate in the research of *BW*, it is necessary to preview some of the significant nomenclature used by scholars in their presentations of the themes found in *BW*. There are five terms listed below for which I have provided a brief description of their use in *BW* and the Israelite tradition.

Watchers

BW presents the most familiar witness to a well-known subject in early Jewish literature. Generally, the Watchers are paralleled with the sons of God in Genesis 6.1–4, where they are presented without the negative connotation that is placed upon them by *BW*. The Watchers (the characters of *BW*) are thought to be angels who chose to rebel against God and heaven and entered into the human realm and mated with human women and begat giant offspring. *1 Enoch* 12.3³⁷ indicates that the Watchers were apparently in the same category as the archangels of heaven.³⁸ A slightly different story is presented in *Jubilees* (3.15). Here the Watchers are

³⁷ 12.3 “And I Enoch was blessing the Great Lord and the King of Eternity and behold the Watchers called to me, Enoch the scribe, and said to me: (4) ‘Enoch, scribe of righteousness, go, inform the Watchers of heaven who have left the high heaven’”; see text in Knibb, *Ethiopic Enoch*. See Daniel 4 and Pseudo-Philo 13.6 for a positive role of the Watchers.

³⁸ See argument of Newsom in “Development of 1 Enoch 6–19,” 317.

described as angels who are sent by God to teach humanity the ways of heaven, but are seduced by the women and produce evil offspring. The role of the Watchers in Jewish and Hellenistic writings varied. They are seen as the fallen angels, angels sent to instruct humanity in the arts of civilization, the holy ones who serve in the presence of God, the angels who keep watch over creation, protecting angels, and as intermediaries (מלאכים) between God and humanity.³⁹

*Shemihazah*⁴⁰

Shemihazah is an angelic leader who is associated with the Shemihazah tradition found in *BW*. He is the leader of the groups of angels in *1 Enoch* 6–16 who are considered the Watchers. These angels have been enticed by the beauty of women on the earth, *1 Enoch* 6.3–8 (cf. Gen 6.2 and *Jub* 4.15), and they all swear an oath to go down to the women and to approach them and have offspring. Shemihazah is responsible for teaching humanity (and the giants) enchantments. Because of their union with human women (*1 En* 10.12), Shemihazah and the rest of the Watchers have corrupted themselves and made themselves unclean and are bound and cast into darkness (Tartarus) until the Day of Judgment.

*Azazel/Asa'el*⁴¹

Asa'el is first encountered as one of the leaders of the Watchers who swear an oath with Shemihazah to go down to the earth and enter into relations with the daughters of men. He is introduced in *1 Enoch* 6.7 as the tenth angel identified as a leader of the group of two hundred angels. Some debate exists about whether the angel named in 6.7 is the same angel later identified as Azazel (Ethiopic) in 8.1. Here he is an angelic figure associated with the Asa'el tradition, which will be discussed in some detail below. This angel is accused of teaching humanity what is initially called the “eternal secrets of heaven” (9.6), which are later described as a “worthless mystery” (16.3). The secrets that Asa'el taught included the making of weapons of war and teaching women the art of painting their faces in order to appear more beautiful (8.1). Asa'el would be bound and cast into darkness until the Day of Judgment along with the others (10.6).

³⁹ See John J. Collins, “Watchers,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*: (DDD) (ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter W. van der Horst; 2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 893–95. The idea of these angels is attested in multiple works, cf. CD 2.18; 4Q180; 4QEn; 1QapGen; T12P; Daniel 10–12; Hesiod, *Works and Days*; Philo of Byblos, *Phoenician History*.

⁴⁰ This tradition will be discussed in detail in ch. 4 below.

⁴¹ This tradition will be discussed in detail in ch. 4 below.

Some scholars are of the opinion that Asa'el was connected to Azazel the demon in the desert in Leviticus 16.⁴²

*Giants*⁴³

Giants, γίγαντες, are first mentioned in the LXX in Genesis 6.1–4. γίγαντες is the Greek translation of the Hebrew terms *nephilim* and *gibborim* (Gen 6.4). These giants are thought to be the offspring that resulted from the mingling of the sons of God and the daughters of men. The origin of the word is thought to be γήγενης, born of the earth. This is derived from the Titan myth of Greek literature in which the giants are the sons of *Gaea* whom she persuades to do battle with the gods of Olympus.⁴⁴ The giants are related to the “heroes” of Greek literature who are the offspring of the relations between Zeus (and other gods) and human women. In the LXX, γίγαντες, or a form of it, is used to translate four Hebrew terms. This has created a great deal of confusion about their identity in the history of Israel. It may be understood from the Flood narrative (Gen 6–9) that all flesh, including the giants, was destroyed upon the earth, but the γίγαντες continue to appear in the text of the Greek Bible following the Flood.

The “giants” of the Watcher tradition are the offspring of the union between the fallen angels and humans (7.2). They are the cause of great turmoil and destruction upon the earth due to their appetite for blood (7.3–5). This causes God to send the Flood upon the earth to destroy the wickedness of all flesh, including the giants (10.2). The Watcher tradition relates that the spirits of the giants survive and their spirits become the evil spirits that are a cause of evil on the earth at the time of the writing of *BW* (16.1).⁴⁵

Nephilim

The term *nephilim* is perhaps the most problematic among the designations used in Genesis 6 narrative. It is generally agreed that it is derived from the Hebrew verb נפל, to fall, in the case of the Genesis passage, “the

⁴² Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven.” See also Lester L. Grabbe, “The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study of Early Jewish Interpretation,” *JSJ* 18 (1987): 152–67; and B. Janowski, “Azazel,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: (DDD)* (ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter van der Horst; 2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 128–31.

⁴³ This tradition will be discussed in detail in ch. 5 below.

⁴⁴ See Homer *Iliad* 14.279 and Apollodorus 1.1.2–4.

⁴⁵ See P.W. Coxon, “Gibborim,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: (DDD)* (ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter W. van der Horst; 2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 345–46; and G. Mussies, “Giants,” in *ibid.*, 343–45.

fallen ones.”⁴⁶ Despite its occurrence in the Genesis 6.1–4 passage, the author of *BW* chose to exclude it from the narrative, either by choice or because of a lack of knowledge of the term.⁴⁷ The *nephilim* appear only twice in the Hebrew Bible, in Genesis 6.3 and Numbers 13.3.⁴⁸ The identity of these beings is quite ambiguous, although the majority of scholars assume that they are the offspring of the relationship of the sons of God and humans.⁴⁹ *Nephilim* is translated in the LXX by the term γίγαντες, and it is from this translation that most scholars have concluded that they are the offspring of the union of the divine beings and humans.⁵⁰ Targum *Pseudo-Jonathan* identifies the *nephilim* as the chief Watchers, Shemihazah and Azazel, from the Enochic tradition.⁵¹ Genesis 6.4a identifies the *nephilim*, if one accepts the generally accepted reading of the text, as the “heroes of old, men of renown” of verse 6.4b. This identification raises the possibility of a mythical connection with the Greek Titan myth or the Mesopotamian *Atrahasis* myth.⁵²

2.6 Date, Place, and Authorship of the *Book of Watchers*

The theories concerning the date of the composition of *BW* have been greatly assisted by Milik’s publication of the Aramaic fragments from Qumran. The ability of scholars to establish an approximate date for *BW* has aided efforts to locate the account of the Watchers in a historical

⁴⁶ See references to the Watchers and their offspring in CD 2.19.

⁴⁷ The latter proposal creates a few problems within the issue of dating *BW*. If the author was unaware of the term *nephilim*, then it perhaps supports the theory that *BW* predates the writing of the Genesis text. If he was aware of the Genesis tradition then why did he choose to omit such a key term in his work?

⁴⁸ The *nephilim* of Numbers 13.33 are the people whom the men saw when they were sent to spy out the land while Israel was in the wilderness. These beings described in the LXX present the reader with the problem of how giants survived the Flood; contra to the Watcher tradition, which conveys that all the giants were physically killed.

⁴⁹ So the problem remains as to who are the *nephilim* of the Gen 6.4 passage if they existed prior to the union of the sons of God and the daughters of men. The Genesis passage does not present the *nephilim*, or, for that matter, the offspring of the union of the sons of God in Gen 6 are considered the mighty men of old and men of renown. This in no way reflects the image of the giants presented in *BW*.

⁵⁰ See also the Watcher in *Jubilees* (6.1) for reference to the offspring as *nephilim*. See also *Book of Giants*, 4QEnGi^b 3.8; and CD 2.19.

⁵¹ As noted above, it can also be implied in CD 2 that the Watchers are the *nephilim* based upon the use of the verb נפל.

⁵² J Assmann, “Nephilim,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*: (DDD) (ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter W. van der Horst; 2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 618–20.

setting that some would suggest corresponds to the message of the composition. Such attempts have facilitated the development of several interesting theories about the sources behind *BW* and the document's function in Early Judaism. These hypotheses will be discussed below. Establishing an approximate date for the composition of *BW* will also assist in tracing the theological and anthropological themes that were developing in Early Judaism in the closing centuries B.C.E. and perhaps reveal the origin of these same themes found in later Jewish and Christian writings.

According to Milik, the *I Enoch* Aramaic fragments found at Qumran could have been a copy of a manuscript that dates to the end of the third century B.C.E.⁵³ This date is based upon the palaeographic evidence of 4QEn^a which attributes the fragment to the early part of the second century B.C.E. and 4QEn^b to the mid-second century B.C.E.⁵⁴ This date includes chapters 1–36 as a single unit (although we can only assume its unity); however, traditions within *BW* may be considerably older. Milik argues that *I Enoch* 6–11 can possibly be dated to the fifth century B.C.E. due to its relationship to Genesis 6.1–4. Milik goes so far as to argue that the Enochic material had its origin in an oral Haggadah on the Genesis 6 passage (see discussion below).

Milik states that two Qumran manuscripts, 4QEn^a and 4QEn^b, were brought from outside Qumran, but does not suggest a place for their origin. Milik contends that 4QTestLevi^a 8 iii 6–7, an Aramaic parallel to the Greek *Testament of Levi* 14.3–4, contains the earliest allusion to *BW* and dates from the second century B.C.E.⁵⁵

Milik suggests the author of *BW* was a Judean and possibly a Jerusalemite. This argument is based on the author's view that Jerusalem is the centre of the earth and on his familiarity about the surroundings of the city. Milik considers that the author was a "modest official in the perfume and spice trade" and probably lived in the Nabataean city of Petra.⁵⁶ However, Milik's theory is highly speculative if one bears in mind that there is little in *BW* that reflects anything about the author.

⁵³ Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 24. Based on the script of the manuscript, Milik believes it is possible that 4QEn^a could have been a copy, i.e. a copy of a late third c. B.C.E. manuscript, which used scribal customs from Northern Syria or Mesopotamia; see *ibid.*, 141.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 25–8. The terminus ante quem for *BW* is incontestably 164 B.C.E. Milik concludes that the Judean author wrote *BW* in the middle of the third c. B.C.E.; see *ibid.*, 28.

⁵⁵ Milik argues that the *Testament of Levi*, based on Qumran fragments and other textual evidence, can be dated to the early third c. B.C.E. or possibly the end of the fourth century; see Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 24.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 25–6.

George Nickelsburg maintains that *BW* is made up of multiple traditions which can be dated possibly prior to the Hellenistic period, while *BW*, in its completed form (chs. 1–36), was compiled by the middle of the third century B.C.E.⁵⁷ The evidence for this dating comes from the palaeography of 4QEn^a, dated to the first half of the second century B.C.E. and also from the reference to Enoch in the book of *Jubilees* (4.21–2), which dates between 175 and 150 B.C.E.⁵⁸ The Shemihazah strand of *BW*, which Nickelsburg describes as the “primary myth,” required time to generate “numerous layers of accretion” to the point of composition that is extant in the two manuscripts from Qumran.⁵⁹ Nickelsburg argues correctly that several stages of development of the Shemihazah material would allow for a date well before 200 B.C.E. in order to account for its influence on the author of the *Animal Apocalypse* in 165 B.C.E.⁶⁰

He states that it is difficult to ascertain the provenance of *BW* due to the multi-cultural traditions that appear in the text (e.g. Babylonian, Greek, or Syria-Palestine). He implies a possible Syria-Palestine provenance due to his argument for the author’s purpose in writing *BW*, which will be discussed below.⁶¹

Some have argued that to establish a date for the composition of *BW*, one must attempt to locate a historical context in which the tradition of *BW*

⁵⁷ Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 7. I would argue that it is possible that the traditions originated in a much earlier period, perhaps as early as the late eighth c. B.C.E. due to the parallels in the Hesiod myths. Therefore, as Nickelsburg argues, the adaptation of these myths by the author of *BW* could have been as early as the end of the fourth c. B.C.E.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 293. The date for *Jubilees* is problematic. VanderKam argues that there is evidence that it was an authoritative source by the end of the second c. B.C.E. because of its alleged use by CD 16.2–4. He posits a terminus a quo of 163–161 B.C.E. and a terminus ad quem of 140 B.C.E. Therefore, it is appropriate to suggest that *BW* can be dated in the first half of the second c. B.C.E.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 169. See also Nickelsburg, “Apocalyptic and Myth,” 390–91. Here Nickelsburg argues for a date around the end of the fourth century B.C.E. due in part to his theory that the Wars of the Diadochi provide the historical setting for the writing of *BW*. See also Roger T. Beckwith, “The Earliest Enoch Literature and Its Calendar: Marks of Their Origin, Date and Motivation,” *Revue de Qumran* 10 (1981): 365–72, Beckwith follows a similar line for dating as Nickelsburg (mid-third century B.C.E.), but for slightly different reasons. He argues that *BW* is an Essene (or proto-Essene) document and was composed around 250 B.C.E. (apparently due to the beginnings of what he understands as the Essene movement mentioned in *1 Enoch* 90.5–17). Beckwith contends that *BW* has parallels to the sectarian writings of Qumran and therefore must be Essene, but this theory neither confirms nor supports a date of mid-third century B.C.E. It is possible that the document was written much earlier and was only brought to Qumran long after its composition.

⁶⁰ Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 170. Cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, lii.

⁶¹ Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 170.

can find a proper application. In this case, Nickelsburg is open to the prospect that *BW* could have been composed much earlier than the early third century B.C.E., but recognizes that it would require one to find an appropriate historical setting for its transformation and interpretation of the Genesis 6.1–4 passage. The author, according to Nickelsburg, was probably a Jew living in Palestine.⁶² However, there is no definitive evidence to support this theory.

Through a precise arrangement of connections between the Shemihazah myth and various other Enochic materials, Nickelsburg dates *I Enoch* 12–16 to the mid-third century B.C.E., possibly between 300 and 250 B.C.E.⁶³ He locates the provenance of chapters 12–16 in the region surrounding Mount Hermon in northern Israel, and thus proposes that the chapters were conceived by an apocalyptic group in upper Galilee.⁶⁴ He bases his hypothesis, *inter alia*, on textual evidence that *BW* was a polemic against the Jerusalem priesthood.⁶⁵ Nickelsburg argues that the following section, chapters 17–19, has a close relationship to 12–16, but was written after them, therefore reflecting a date in the early third century B.C.E. in their current configuration.⁶⁶ According to Nickelsburg, the third and final section, chapters 20–36, should be granted a *terminus ad quem* in the late third century B.C.E.⁶⁷

Drawing on Milik's Qumran evidence, Hanson argues that *I Enoch* 6–11 acquired its present form by the middle of the second century B.C.E.⁶⁸ Following Nickelsburg, he contends that due to a growth process of the tradition, chapters 6–11 and the Shemihazah material should be assigned to some time during the third century B.C.E. Owing to the angelic prayer in *I Enoch* 9.4–5, Hanson asserts that *BW* has arisen from the setting of a “protagonist group” that is suffering oppression, which resulted in the development of *BW* into a sectarian ideology. He goes on to identify this “sectarian apocalyptic group” as the Hasidim or the Essenes in the third

⁶² See Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priests,” 131. Suter implicitly connects the author of *BW* to the community at Qumran, rather than the community simply adopting *BW* for their use. He dates the myth of the Fallen Angels to the third or early second c. B.C.E., based upon the necessity of *I Enoch* being a polemic against the Jerusalem priesthood and the document's relationship to the Damascus Document and the Testament of Levi.

⁶³ Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 230.

⁶⁴ Idem, “Enoch, Levi, and Peter,” 586.

⁶⁵ Idem, *Commentary*, 177. Nickelsburg contends two wordplays in verses 6.4–5 give a key to the location of the author. רר , to descend, also the name of Enoch's father; and חרר (חרר) they swore upon Mount Hermon. See also Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven,” 199.

⁶⁶ Nickelsburg, *Commentary*, 279.

⁶⁷ The problem with Nickelsburg's argument for the dating of this text is that we have no fragments of chapters 20–36 within 4QEn^a.

⁶⁸ Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven.”

century B.C.E.⁶⁹ He argues that the Asa'el material also arose from a similar apocalyptic group, but states that details of the dates and groups involved cannot be determined.⁷⁰ Hanson does not speculate on the provenance of *BW* as a whole, but assumes, due to his sectarian theory, that it would have been in Palestine.

Devorah Dimant does not attempt to pinpoint the date of *BW*, in particular chapters 6–11.⁷¹ She maintains that an identifiable historical setting for *1 Enoch* 6–11 cannot be established based on the text,⁷² but she is willing to push the date of the sources back into the late Persian period.⁷³

Alternatively, Michael Stone has identified *BW* as one of the two oldest extra-biblical Jewish religious works. He dates *BW* to the third century B.C.E., but states that it may be inferred that the sources of the work could be significantly older than the current written form.⁷⁴ He speculates that the author of *BW* was associated with “well-educated men and may possibly have been associated with the traditional intellectual groups, the wise and the priests.”⁷⁵ As with others, he finds it difficult to identify an author with what little evidence there is in the text.

John Collins is less confident than others that one can, with assurance, date *BW* and its components. He does, however, follow Milik's theory that *BW*, in its present form, dates from the beginning of the second century B.C.E. He supports this argument with the work of James VanderKam, who recognizes that *Jubilees* has knowledge of *BW* in the mid-second century B.C.E.⁷⁶ Collins argues that a historical setting for *BW* cannot be established with accuracy, but he recognizes that it was multivalent and applicable to a number of situations.⁷⁷ He remarks that no evidence in the text reveals that *BW* was written in Palestine as proposed by Milik, Nickelsburg, Suter, and speculated by Hanson. He proposes instead that the author's familiarity with Babylonian traditions could possibly indicate that it was composed in the eastern Diaspora.⁷⁸ Despite understanding *BW* as an apocalypse, Collins contends that it was not necessary for it to have

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 219–20.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 226.

⁷¹ Dimant, “Methodological Perspective.”

⁷² *Ibid.*, 331.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 338, n. 70.

⁷⁴ Stone, “Book of Enoch and Judaism,” 484. Stone states the second work, the Astronomical Book (*1 Enoch* 72–82), according to Milik's evidence, dates to the end of the third century, or beginning of the second B.C.E.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 489.

⁷⁶ Collins, “Apocalyptic Technique,” 95; see also VanderKam, “Enoch Traditions.”

⁷⁷ See also Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priests,” 131.

⁷⁸ Collins, “Methodological Issues,” 321.

been composed in a time of persecution.⁷⁹ He remarks that to limit the purpose of the author in writing the Watcher tradition to an episode of a specific time of war, as Nickelsburg suggests, is difficult. Rather it could be ascribed to the feeling of oppression through much of the Hellenistic period.⁸⁰ He does not attempt to identify the author of *BW*, other than the fact that he was probably Jewish, but he does indicate that it was typical of a Jewish apocalypse to hide the identity of its author by the use of myth that relates recurring patterns in history.⁸¹

The issue of a date for the composition of *BW*, as can be seen above, is complicated. A scholarly consensus seems to place it (at least the extant Aramaic form) somewhere in the third century B.C.E. based on Milik's palaeography of the Qumran fragments. Milik has also pushed the date into the fourth century B.C.E. based on its relationship to the *Testament of Levi*. Several problems arise, however, with the reference in 4QTestLevi^a 8 iii 6–7 to *I Enoch*, which may prove it less than useful to date *BW*.⁸² The first matter concerns the letters of the name of Enoch in the fragment. The inability to identify them clearly as Enoch (ך[ח]נוך) line 6) casts reasonable doubt upon the idea that this is a reference to the character spoken of in *BW*. The second arises from Milik's translation of the verb קבל. Milik translates it as "accuse," but there other possibilities to translate קבל without forcing a negative meaning onto the text. The textual evidence presented by Milik, however, can only place the fragmentss within the Qumran community at this time, but says nothing about the actual date and place of composition or authorship. Milik's theories of the date of *BW* have exercised considerable influence, sometimes negative, on scholarship attempting to determine the function of the book in Early Judaism.

It is possible to imagine that based on the Qumran material the Watcher tradition (in either oral or written form) is much older than the date suggested by Milik (and others). The various traditions that lie behind *BW* may be of some assistance in determining what influenced the author of *BW* to bring these sources together in order to present his theological message. In this determination, it may be possible to clarify further a date of origin when *BW* assumed its present form.

⁷⁹ Idem, "Apocalyptic Technique," 110.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 98.

⁸¹ Ibid., 99.

⁸² It should also be noted there is a lack of evidence in the later Greek material and the Cairo Geniza material. See also objections of VanderKam to the use of 4QTestLevi^a as evidence to date 4QEn in VanderKam, "Major Issues." See also the review of Milik's reconstruction techniques in Barr, "Enoch Fragments." See also Beckwith, "Earliest Enoch Literature," 173f. Beckwith doubts the date of the Testament of Levi given by Milik and argues for a date in the second century B.C.E.