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Annette Yoshiko Reed. *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xii, 318 pp.

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To sum up, Apothaker is working in a neglected area of rabbinic scholarship, and he clearly has the potential to investigate questions about the nature and purposes of *midrash halakhah* that have been given scant attention. One hopes that his future work will give as much attention to the detailed work of interpretation as to the consideration of the larger questions that he has framed so well.

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Annette Yoshiko Reed. *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xii, 318 pp.
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This elegant book is a revised version of the author's Princeton dissertation, written under the supervision of Martha Himmelfarb, Peter Schäfer, and John Gager. On the surface, it is a study of the *Book of the Watchers*, the first of the Enochic booklets that now constitute *1 Enoch*, and the history of its reception in Jewish and Christian literature. In essence, however, it is much more. Like a detective, Reed uncovers even the faintest trace of the Watchers motif and systematically follows it from its origins in the third century BCE up to the early Middle Ages. Throughout the book, the exegesis of Genesis 6:1–4 serves as a barometer to measure the influence (or lack thereof) of the Enochic myth of angelic descent on Jewish and Christian interpreters. Along the way—and quite a way it is!—Reed not only covers a formidable wealth of materials, Jewish and Christian, canonical and noncanonical, but also touches on a wide array of broader issues that have recently received much attention in the literature on early Judaism, on what she labels “proto-orthodox Christianity,” and on the Parting of the Ways. The topics Reed discusses include the promulgation and transmission of apocalyptic literature beyond the year 70 CE, the diverse reflections on the problem of evil, the dynamics of canonization and the formation of orthodoxy, and the place of non-canonical texts and traditions in the interaction between Judaism and Christianity.

The book is organized chronologically. Following a general introduction, the first chapter offers a close reading of the *Book of the Watchers*, with an emphasis on the polyvalent account of the angelic descent, particularly in *1 Enoch* 6–11, 12–16, and 17–19. Reed's interpretation is convincing, not least because it seeks to engage the text both as a composite (Reed readily acknowledges that the book is an amalgam) and as a redacted whole. This is a refreshing corrective to the polarized views prevalent in the field of either finding multiple sources in just about any pericope or of reading every text holistically.

Chapter 2 inquires about the authors behind the early Enochic literature. Again, Reed is methodologically prudent. She finds no reason to speculate that the earliest Enochic apocalyptic texts from the third century BCE stem from

separatist conventicles (e.g., Enochic Judaism) but is content to say that their most salient feature is “their self-conscious scribalism and their development of a unique type of wisdom” (69). During the Maccabean era, the focus of the apocalypticists shifted from “scientific” to more eschatological concerns, prompted undoubtedly by the violent persecutions under Antiochus IV, and second-century BCE scribes reworked the traditions of the *Book of the Watchers* accordingly.

Chapter 3 further traces the reinterpretation and alteration of the fallen angels motif through a variety of pre-rabbinic Jewish texts up to the early second century CE (*Jubilees*, the *First Sibylline Oracle*, the *Similitudes of Enoch*) in an attempt to reconstruct the transmission history of the *Book of the Watchers* through the turn of the era. Reed uses the discussion of the problem of evil in this literature as a lens for her investigation and finds that many of these works relate to the *Book of the Watchers* by adopting, reworking, or rejecting it.

Chapter 4, perhaps the most ambitious part of the book, to which Reed often refers in the following chapters, is a tour de force that presents much of the heart of Reed’s argument. Rather than view the Christian use of the Enochic literature as a Christian “appropriation” of a Jewish text, Reed suggests that because Christianity in the second and third centuries CE was, above all, another Jewish group with an evolving Christian identity, one of several groups she calls “continuous communities,” we should rather speak of “the Christian appeal to one of many texts that belonged to their common heritage” (126). This leads her to discuss the process of canonization (Reed refutes the theory of a Maccabean canonization), the rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 6:1–4 (Reed argues that the rabbis asserted their authority by countering those who retained elements of the pre-70 CE Jewish tradition with which they disagreed), and Christian interpretations of Genesis 6:1–4 (whereas rabbinic exegesis departs from the earlier Jewish tradition, Christian biblical exegesis “stands in radical continuity with the trends in pre-rabbinic Judaism” [156]).

Chapter 5 is devoted to second- and third-century Christian attitudes toward the *Book of the Watchers* and the exegesis of Genesis 6:1–4, particularly in the work of Justin Martyr and, to a lesser degree, that of Tertullian. Reed argues that the Watchers’ teachings had not only become the focus of much exegetical interest, but also Justin’s redeployment of the instruction motif “played a determinative role in the ‘christianization’ of the Enochic myth of angelic descent” (161).

Chapter 6 observes that, as early as the third century, there occurred a marked change in the Christian reception of the *Book of the Watchers* that ultimately led to its rejection in Western Christian orthodoxy. The chapter opens with an illuminating comparison of Tertullian and Origen, the former a champion of Enoch, and the latter increasingly doubtful about the authority of the Enochic writings. Much like their contemporary Jewish counterparts, Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries rejected the angelic approach to Genesis 6:1–4 and abandoned the Enochic pseudepigrapha.

Chapter 7, finally, which draws on some of Reed’s previously published work, turns to 3 *Enoch* and the reemergence of the Enochic myth in post-talmudic Judaism. A prominent segment of the chapter discusses the variety of channels

of transmission of the ancient Enochic traditions. Here Reed breaks yet another taboo by arguing, against the scholarly consensus in favor of a strictly inner-Jewish transmission, that the influence of the *Book of the Watchers* on *3 Enoch* is most plausibly explained if we assume Jewish “back-borrowing” from Christian circles (270).

This book is daring, both in scope and argument, and, I suspect, some will argue that it seeks to accomplish too much. I disagree. Reed covers a wide field of diverse materials, which necessarily leads her to make some general statements. She concludes her epilogue, for example, with the statement “that the ‘parting of the ways’ is an illusion” (277). Of course it isn’t—Judaism and Christianity really became two distinct religions. But such calls for further differentiation miss the point of the book. This book is a new kind of study on the reception history of a noncanonical text, the Enochic *Book of the Watchers*, and of an exegetical motif, the angelic descent in Genesis 6:1–4, a study that is refreshingly different from the eclectic listing of a few scattered references one often sees elsewhere. Reed’s attempt to demonstrate that an investigation into the complex afterlife of the *Book of the Watchers* necessarily leads the exegete to contemplate several issues that stand at the center of the study of early Judaism and nascent Christianity has to be deemed a success.

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Michael Satlow. *Creating Judaism: History, Tradition, Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. xii, 340 pp.
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Michael Satlow, with an established reputation as an innovative, theory-driven scholar of Judaism in late antiquity, seems now to have written the book he has always wanted to write. Pitched at the “introductory” level (to a highly literate implied reader who probably knows more about “postmodernism” than the Talmud, but who would like to change that), this book is an extended meditation on how current academic models of the study of religion impose their logic on the material of Jewish history, religion, and culture. The publisher, no doubt, would like to see copies of the book in the textbook departments of university bookstores, supplying the next generation of Judaism 101. It might be a bit too difficult—and idiosyncratic—for that. But I would say that this book’s proper audience is the experienced undergraduate topping off a major in Jewish studies or religious studies, or the beginning graduate student, for whom the development of a theoretical self-consciousness is a key professional imperative. That, at least, is where it will turn up in the Jewish studies and comparative religion curricula at my own university.

The most important aspect of Satlow’s book, at the theoretical level, is his attack against the “essentialism” that, although perhaps inevitable in the