

LOREN T. STUCKENBRUCK

The Myth of
Rebellious Angels

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament*

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Loren T. Stuckenbruck

The Myth of Rebellious Angels

Studies in Second Temple Judaism
and New Testament Texts

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

The present volume brings together some unpublished and mostly published (yet updated) material. The common thread that links the chapters of this book is a concern to explore the myth of rebellious angels in some of its Second Temple Jewish setting and to inquire into possible aspects of its reception, including among writings belonging to what we now call the New Testament. While the ancient storyline about the “fallen” angels and its consequences has garnered my formal attention for nearly two decades, it continues to hold my interest, not only because of the important place it occupies in the early Enoch writings, the Dead Sea Scrolls and related Jewish literature, but also because of potential ways reflection on this tradition may contribute to the interpretation of texts more familiar to scholars, students, and interested readers in biblical studies.

The influence of the collection of traditions known as *1 Enoch* or *Ethiopic Enoch* on Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity has, of course, been documented and worked out in various ways, and the “fallen angels” mythology has played a role in some of these studies. The more obvious among New Testament texts that receive and sustain scholarly attention in this respect include 1 Peter 3:18–22, 2 Peter 2:4–5, and Jude 6 and 14–15, the last text of which contains the explicit and much discussed quotation of *1 Enoch* 1:9. Given the recent published interest in each of these texts (text-critical, tradition-historical, and exegetical), the discussions offered in this book, especially chapters 8 through 14, attempt to draw other New Testament passages into the conversation, here the Synoptic Gospels (chs. 8 and 9), the Johannine tradition (ch. 10), the Book of Acts (chs. 11), Pauline thought (chs. 12 and 13), and the Apocalypse of John (ch. 14). Without making any claim to be comprehensive in relation to either the Second Temple traditions (chs. 1 through 7) or the New Testament, I hope that these studies will open up and stimulate pathways for further tradition-historical research and, indeed, theological reflection.

This book appears at a time when research, some of it groundbreaking, is being carried out in relation to the myth of disobedient angels in several areas. First, much needed attention is being directed at the Ancient Near Eastern context within and relation to which the earliest account of the fallen angels in the *Book of Watchers* (esp. *1 Enoch* chs. 6–11) took shape. Here, the continuing and recent studies of Helge Kvanvig, Henryk Drawnel, and Brian Doak merit attention.

Second, there is currently a resurgent interest in the giants, who in the early Enoch tradition are presented as violent offspring of the malevolent angels and the daughters of humankind just prior to the time of the Great Flood (cf. Gen. 6:1–4). The presentation in the *Book of Watchers* of the giants, as that of the angels who sired them, picks up symbols, motifs, and characters otherwise known through literature of the Ancient Near East, in addition to drawing on the same in Greek mythology. Along with throwing light on such backgrounds for “giants” in Second Temple Jewish tradition, recent study is also turning in the direction of reception history, that is, within Graeco-Roman culture, patristic sources, Rabbinic literature, Byzantium, and even Jewish, Christian, and Manichean sources from the Medieval period. Here I am thinking of the research being carried out by Matthew Goff, Ken Penner, Joseph Angel, Andrew Perrin, Kelley Coblenz-Bautch, Jan Bremmer, Annette Yoshiko Reed, Andrei Orlov, and Philip Alexander.

Third and more profoundly, whether or not “influence” of the angels and giants mythology preserved in *1 Enoch* on this or that tradition can be firmly established *per se*, the tradition in question allows us to explore what it means to place Second Temple Jewish and emerging Christian traditions in the late 1st and 2nd centuries in a conversation that furthers both historical and theological interpretation and that takes account of socio-political and religious contexts while being sensitive to the permutation and transformation of ideas.

Fourth, an area of study not addressed in the present volume but which is on the verge of receiving sustained formal attention is the further critical study of the *1 Enoch* text tradition. Although much discussion has been and is being devoted to the relevant texts and traditions, their precise form bears further investigation at each stage. While considerable advances have been made since the initial publication of fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls regarding the shape of the early Enochic tradition that refers to rebellious angels, a number of text-critical and early reception-historical questions remain. Further research is not only needed in relation to the Aramaic fragments of the early Enoch tradition (including the *Book of Giants*) and the more extensive yet still fragmentary Greek texts, emerging manuscript evidence in Ge'ez, some of it textually significant, is making a new textual edition of the materials a *desideratum*. The latter project is one centered at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich and on which Ted Erho and I are currently engaged, in collaboration, as appropriate, with colleagues in Ethiopia, Israel, Europe and North America.

Fifth and finally, the study of *Ethiopic Enoch* in the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church is currently being augmented by growing work on its rich commentary tradition (Andemta). An increasing number of scholars has become involved in this and related areas of the reception of *1 Enoch* in Ethiopia. In addition to some of the names mentioned above, these scholars include: Jonathan Ben-Dov, Daniel Assefa, Eshbal Ratson, Randall Chesnutt, Ted Erho, Ralph Lee, Archie

Wright, and Amsalu Tefera. It is in forthcoming publications that I shall address some of the issues raised above in the third, fourth, and fifth points.

The content of this book has benefited from a large number of conversation partners, especially during the last several years. The names already mentioned can be augmented by the following: Stephen Barton, Leslie Baynes, Eve-Marie Becker, Michael Becker, Shane Berg, Gabriele Boccaccini, Markus Bockmuehl, James Charlesworth, Esther Chazon, John Collins, Christopher Cook, Devorah Dimant, Esther Eshel, Jörg Frey, Sean Freyne, Beverly Gaventa, Maxine Grossman, Robert Hayward, Desta Heliso, Matthias Henze, Matthias Hoffmann, Chris Keith, Menahem Kister, Anders Klostergaard-Petersen, Matthias Konradt, Robert MacLennan, Daniel Seife-Mikael, Hindy Najman, Judith Newman, George Nickelsburg, Alexandra Parvân, Claire Pfann, Stephen Pfann, Émile Puech, Paul Rorem, Michael Stone, Eibert Tigchelaar, Michael Tuval, William Telford, James VanderKam, Ross Wagner, Rodney Werline, Benjamin Wold, and Benjamin Wright.

At an important stage of manuscript preparation, Seth Bledsoe and Blake Jurgens, both beneficiaries of grants to conduct their research at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, have contributed significantly, not only in attending to some of its formalities, but also in reflecting with me about the arguments set forth in individual chapters. Amanda Davis Bledsoe has also contributed by casting a meticulous eye on the manuscript during preparation of the indices. In addition, Ursula Danninger, my secretary in the faculty, Lina Aschenbrenner, and Elisabeth Gehrke research assistants, have no less been involved in attending to several matters as the manuscript has gone to press. Of course, any errors in the manuscript remain my sole responsibility.

The final chapter of this book (ch. 14) was initially authored with Mark D. Mathews, whose own published doctoral dissertation had touched upon several important aspects of the argument. I am very grateful for the opportunity to have worked with him collaboratively on the Apocalypse of John and its reception of Enochic tradition.

As always, one's institutional context contributes significantly to the intellectual and collegial climate within which research comes to publication. I am now especially grateful to members of the Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Faculties of Theology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München for their warm reception of me as a colleague, for inter- and cross-disciplinary opportunities to exchange ideas and perspectives, and for interest in research questions taken up in this project. In addition, I am grateful to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki at the Mohr Siebeck publishing house in Tübingen for the support given in bringing the present book to publication.

It is surely an understatement for me to thank my wife Lois for being as significant a conversation partner as anyone else mentioned above. Endlessly, and often with great profit, we have discussed matters "giants", "angels", "demons", "evil" and

“Enoch”. I am grateful to her for many insights and ideas that have come about through our daily discussions.

Lastly, I wish to mention Hermann Lichtenberger, Prof. Emeritus at the Institut für antikes Judentum und hellenistische Religionsgeschichte at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. I am but one among many who are grateful for his consistent example, through numerous publications, support, and collegial conversations, in advocating for a serious reading of Second Temple literature as it is placed in conversation with New Testament and Early Christian texts and traditions. So many of his accomplishments have set the tone for work being carried out by a next generation of scholars. It is to him that this book is dedicated.

Loren Stuckenbruck

Munich

Ethiopian Calendar 27th of Terr 7506 (4th February 2014)

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in honor of
Hermann Lichtenberger

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- “Why Should Women Cover Their Heads Because of the Angels?” *Stone-Campbell Journal*, vol. 4 (2001), pp. 205–234 (Chapter 13)
- “The Apocalypse of John, *I Enoch*, and the Question of Influence”, in eds. J. Frey, J. Kelhoffer, and F. Toth, *Die Apokalypse: Kontexte – Konzepte – Wirkungen* (WUNT I/287; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), pp. 191–235, co-authored with Mark D. Mathews (Chapter 14).

Abbreviation List

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AGSU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen
BAC	Biblioteca de autores cristianos
<i>BBB</i>	<i>Bulletin de bibliographie biblique</i>
BBR	Bulletin for Biblical Research
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
<i>BibAn</i>	<i>Biblical Annals</i>
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>BTS</i>	<i>Bible et terre sainte</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CJA	Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum ...
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium. Edited by I. B. Chabot et al. Paris, 1903–
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
HUCM	Monographs of the Hebrew Union College

HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>IOS</i>	<i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements
JCTCRS	Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal for Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period</i>
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement
JTOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement
JSSSup	Journal for Semitic Studies Supplement
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
MNTC	Moffatt NT Commentaries
NEBAT	Die Neue Echter Bibel. Altes Testament
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codices
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTL	New Testament Library
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-Kommentar
<i>OtSt</i>	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RHR	<i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i>
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse
RTRSup	Reformed Theological Review Supplement
SB	Sources bibliques
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLECL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Christianity and Its Literature

SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
<i>SBLSP</i>	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SBM	Stuttgart Bible Monographs
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>Sem</i>	<i>Semeia</i>
SJS	Studia Judaeoslavica
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra Pagina
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica
<i>TA</i>	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
THNT	Theologischer Handkommentar Zum Neuen Testament
TKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Bible Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

Chapter One

Origins of Evil in Jewish Apocalyptic Tradition: The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 in the Second and Third Centuries B. C. E.

Introduction

During the last several decades, specialists in ancient Judaism have increasingly devoted attention to traditions about the “sons of God” (Gen. 6:2) in Jewish literature from the Second Temple period, in which they are also referred to as “watchers”¹ who, by convention, are often described under the heading “fallen angels”. It is frequently observed that in a number of early Jewish writings such angels were regarded as evil beings whose activities, whether in the past or present, are inimical to God’s purposes for creation.²

¹ The designation (Aram. ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܝܢ; Grk. ἐγγήγοροι) is applied to the rebellious angelic beings in a number of texts; cf. *1 Enoch* 1:5; 10:7, 15; 12:3a; 13:10; 14:1, 3; 15:2; 16:1, 2; 91:15; *Book of Giants* at 4Q203 7A 7; 7B i 4; 4Q532 2.7; *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen ii 1–2, 15); *Damascus Document* (CD ii 18–19 par. 4Q266 2 ii 18). The Aram. ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܝܢ functions as a designation for good angelic beings in *1 En.* 12:2, 3 and Dan. 4:13, 17, and 23.

² The literature from the early 1970’s until the turn of the 21st century is considerable. From this period, see especially Devorah Dimant, e.g. in “The Fallen Angels’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic Books Related to Them” (Ph.D. thesis, Hebrew University, 1974) (mod. Heb.) and “The ‘Peshar on the Periods’ (4Q180 and 4Q181)”, *IOS* 9 (1979), pp. 77–102; Lionel R. Wickham, “The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men: Gen 6:2 in Early Christian Exegesis”, *OtSt* 19 (1974), pp. 135–147; Martin Delcor, “Le myth de la chute des anges et de l’origine des géants comme explication du mal dans le monde dans l’apocalyptique juive histoire des traditions”, *RHR* 190 (1976), pp. 3–53; Józef T. Milik, in “Turfan et Qumran: Livre des géants juif et manichéen”, in eds. Gerd Jeremias, Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, and Hartmut Stegemann, *Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt. Festgabe für Karl Georg Kubn zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), pp. 117–127 and *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); Paul D. Hanson, “Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6–11”, *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 195–233; George W. E. Nickelsburg, “Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6–11”, *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 383–405; David W. Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest. The Problem of Family Purity in 1 Enoch 6–16”, *HUCA* 50 (1979), pp. 115–135; Ida Fröhlich, “Les enseignements des veilleurs dans la tradition de Qumran”, *RevQ* 13 (1988), pp. 177–187; Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and its History*, trans. William J. Short (JSPSup 20; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1–36, 72–108 and Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (JSPSup 11; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); John C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony: Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions* (HUCM 20; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992); William R. Adler and James C. VanderKam, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*

Such a view, however correct it may be, is often taken as axiomatic. To be sure, there is ample reason for such a view. Traditions that refer to both evil angels and their gigantic offspring are variously preserved in a number of apocalyptic and sapiential writings dated mostly to the first three centuries before the Common Era. The literature includes the following: *1 Enoch* (*Book of Watchers* chs. 1–36; *Animal Apocalypse* chs. 85–90, *Apocalypse of Weeks* (93:1–10 + 91:11–17); *Book of Giants*; *Jubilees*; *Damascus Document*; Ben Sira; *Wisdom of Solomon*; *3 Maccabees*; *3 Baruch*; plus a number of fragmentary texts only preserved among the Dead Sea Scrolls: *Genesis Apocryphon* (1Q20), *Ages of Creation* (4Q180–181), *Exhortation Based on the Flood* (4Q370), *Incantation* (4Q444), *Songs of the Sage* (4Q510–511), and *Apocryphal Psalms* (11Q11). For all the apparently one-sided emphasis of these writings in regarding “the sons of God” and their progeny as evil, nothing in Genesis 6 itself unambiguously prepares for such an understanding (see below). It is misleading, therefore, to suppose that the writings just cited were simply adapting a tradition inherent to Genesis 6.

In order to give shape to the particular concerns that allowed early Jewish apocalyptic authors to regard the angelic “sons of God” in Genesis 6:2 as malevolent beings, it is necessary to consider the biblical tradition itself and to give some attention to the wider Hellenistic world within which the apocalyptic ideas took shape; in particular, we shall consider those documents in which the gigantic offspring of the “sons of God” are not categorically branded as evil.³ In view of the biblical background and contemporary context, it is thus remarkable how uniformly the ambiguous Genesis 6:1–4 (or at least tradition relating to this passage) was being read, that is, as a story about irreversibly rebellious angels and giants. In addition to the special and respective circumstances of communities that inspired a trajectory of biblical interpretation in this direction, it seems that the myth about “fallen angels” took on a life of its own as it became subject to a relatively widespread surge of interest during the third and second centuries B. C. E. More than merely coming

(CRINT III.4; Assen: Van Gorcum and Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran: Texts, Translation, and Commentary* (TSAJ 63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997); Philip S. Alexander, “Wrestling Against Wickedness in High Places: Magic in the Worldview of the Qumran Community”, in eds. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* (JSPSup 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 319–330 and “The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls”, in eds. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years. A Comprehensive Assessment* (2 vols.; Leiden / Boston / Köln: Brill, 1999), 2:331–353; and Andy M. Reimer, “Rescuing the Fallen Angels: The Case of the Disappearing Angels at Qumran”, *DSD* 7 (2000), pp. 334–353.

³ For an early, though brief attempt in this direction, see Thomas Francis Glasson, *Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology with Special Reference to the Apocalypses and Pseudepigrapha* (London: SPCK, 1961). In addition and esp. see Benjamin Zion Wacholder, “Pseudo-Eupolemus’ Two Greek Fragments on Abraham”, *HUCA* 34 (1963), pp. 83–113 and, of course, the more general approach reflected in Martin Hengel’s *Judaism and Hellenism*, trans. by John Bowden (2 vols.; London: SCM Press, 1974), esp. 1:231–234, in addition to which the articles by Hanson and Nickelsburg mentioned in n. 2 above continue to be useful. For two more recent, though contrasting studies, see John C. Reeves, “Utnapishtim in the Book of Giants?”, *JBL* 112 (1993), pp. 110–

to terms with social oppression or political persecution, there was something genuinely theological at stake as writers, whether “apocalyptic” or not in orientation, attempted to understand their location and the location of those for and to whom they spoke in the experienced world. New circumstances generated fresh ways of coming to terms with received tradition (whether from Genesis directly or from early or proto-Enochic sources). Hence the following question arises: What theological interests account for the reason(s) why a tradition known through Genesis 6 could be read as a story about the introduction of evil into the world?

In what follows, I would like to describe the various approaches to this question among the earliest Jewish apocalyptic writings while, at the same time, suggesting how their respective treatments of the “fallen angels” and “giants” might be broadly thought to cohere. To achieve this aim, we may begin with a brief, but necessary look at the interpretive horizon of Genesis 6 which, in turn, is followed by a description of the role of “angels” and “giants” in two Hellenizing euhemeristic sources. I shall argue that it is against this (Hellenizing) background that, finally, the early apocalyptic traditions themselves can best be understood.

A. Interpretive Possibilities in the Biblical Tradition

For Second Temple Jewish authors, the pericope that perhaps most inspired speculation about the “fallen angels” myth is the enigmatic passage of Genesis 6:1–4.⁴ Beyond the reference to “the daughters of men” (v. 1) and “humankind” (v. 3), the Masoretic tradition distinguishes at least three, perhaps even four, categories of beings. The first is “the sons of God” – that is, בני אלהים (*bny ’llym*) in verses 1 and 4b (rendered literally as οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ in LXX, while Cod. Alexandrinus reads “the angels [οἱ ἄγγελοι] of God”). The second is the beautiful “daughters of men” with whom the sons of God have consorted. Later tradition would debate the degree to which the women might be held responsible for the sons’ descent to earth.⁵ Third, the text refers to the offspring of sons of God and the human women; they are called “the mighty men ... men of renown” (v. 4b – הגבורים ... אנשי השם; LXX οἱ γίγαντες ... οἱ ἀνθρώποι οἱ ὀνομαστοί). Fourth and finally, there is a somewhat indefinite mention of “the Neph[i]lim”⁶ (הנפלים) who are described as having been

113 and Ronald V. Huggins, “Noah and the Giants: A Response to John C. Reeves”, *JBL* 114 (1995), pp. 103–110.

⁴ It is not necessary to claim that it is precisely the text of the Hebrew Bible that, in all aspects of its wording lies behind all adaptations of the storyline. Nevertheless, it is more difficult, for example, to explain Genesis chs. 6–9 on the basis of *1 En.* chs. 6–11 than the other way around. If the Enochic tradition underlies Gen. 6 at all, it did not bear much of the embellished form it now has.

⁵ See a review of this tradition in Kelley Coblenz Bautch, “Decoration, Destruction and Debauchery: Reflections on 1 Enoch 8 in Light of 4QEn^b”, *DSD* 15 (2008), pp. 79–95, though it is not a view that can already be detected in the Aram. Dead Sea Scroll fragments.

⁶ The transliteration “Neph[i]lim” is given on account of the ambiguous form in the Heb.

“on the earth in those days” (v. 4a). By translating both “the mighty men” and “the Neph[i]lim” in verse 4 with the same expression, “the giants” (οἱ γίγαντες), the Old Greek tradition has identified these groups with one another.⁷ As is frequently noted, the thematic coherence of the text is not easy to trace. How, for example, is God’s decision to cut short human life in verse 3 related to the account of the Nephilim and mighty men in verse 4?⁸ Moreover, it is anything but clear how “the sons of God,” “the mighty men”, and “the Neph[i]lim” contribute to the story of Noah and the Flood that follows (6:5–9:29). Given these difficulties within the text, one may wonder whether several questions could have emerged for later interpreters: How, if at all, do any of these groups play a role in God’s decision to punish evil on the earth through a deluge (see 6:3, 5–7, 13)? Do, for example, “the sons of God” and their offspring have anything to do with the “great evil”, “corruption”, and “violence” that had consumed the earth (6:5, 11–13)? In relation to *whose* wickedness does the Flood constitute a divine response? Does the destruction of “all flesh” through the Flood include “the mighty men” and “the Neph[i]lim”? While answers to these questions may, on first reading of the Flood narrative, be readily forthcoming, the juxtaposition of the story about “mighty men” with the silence about them and their parentage in what follows creates a problem if one wishes to read the passages *together*. Hence some interpreters during the Second Temple period would find points of departure for a more coherent picture on the basis of the larger literary (i. e. Genesis and Pentateuchal) context.

Although the tradition in Genesis 6 seems, on the surface, to underscore that a complete destruction took place through the Flood (Gen. 6:13, 17) and to restrict its survivors to Noah, his family and selected animals (6:18–21; 7:1–3), there are enough clues in the narrative of Genesis, indeed in the Pentateuch as a whole, that may have provided Jewish readers sufficient reason to suppose that “the mighty men” (assuming their identification with “the Neph[i]lim”) actually outlived the Flood. Such a conclusion could have been reached either by supposing that Noah and his family somehow belonged to their number or by inferring that they survived through a means not narrated in the text. The former possibility might have been raised by coordinating Genesis 6:4 with the brief story of Nimrod in Genesis

text: נפילים. While the Masoretic pointing, as well as some early renderings (Heb. נפילים / Aram. נפילין/א) identify the vowel of the second syllable as an *-i-*, the form is likewise consistent with an *a*-class vowel.

⁷ The same assimilation of the different Hebrew expressions of v. 4 into one group is also carried through by the Aramaic targumic traditions of *Onqelos* and *Neophyti*, which render both with גיבריא and גיבריה, respectively; cf. further n. 12 below. Both LXX and these targumim presuppose a more coherent tradition about giants than does the Hebrew.

⁸ For a description of the problems encountered in the text of Gen. 6:1–4 as it stands, see esp. Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11. A Continental Commentary*, trans. J. J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), p. 366 and, more recently, Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, “The Flood Story in the Book of Jubilees”, in eds. Florentino García Martínez and Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, *Interpretations of the Flood* (TBN 1; Leiden / Boston: Brill, 1998), pp. 66–85 (here p. 83).

10:8–12,⁹ while a double-reference to “the Nephilim” in Numbers 13:33 (LXX has γίγαντες) would have made it possible to consider the latter.¹⁰ Each of these alternatives for reading the biblical tradition bears further comment.

Nimrod. As a post-Flood descendent of Noah through the line of Ham, Nimrod is in Genesis 10:8–11 described as “a mighty man (גבר) in the land” (v. 8) and as “a mighty hunter (גבר ציד) before the Lord” (v. 9). To Nimrod is also attributed the building of several cities in Assur (v. 11), after he had already established his rule in the cities of Babel, Erech, and Accad in the land of Shinar (v. 10). Shinar, of course, is identified in the subsequent narrative (11:1–9) as the very location in which the tower of Babel was built. It may be significant that the Greek translator of Genesis 10:8–9 used the term γίγας each of the three times Nimrod is described as a גבר. This correspondence between the Hebrew and Greek versions is the same as found in Genesis 6:4 (where, however, the Masoretes have pointed גבר as *gibbôr*), and it is not impossible that the Greek translation reflects some coordination between the passages. Nimrod’s identification as a “mighty man” or “giant” may have given readers cause to infer that the offspring of the sons of God in 6:4 may, at least in part, have survived the Flood,¹¹ whether this survival took place directly through the lineage of Noah (who in this case would have been a “giant” too; see more on this below) or through some other means not recounted in the narrative.

Nephilim in Canaan. The passage from Numbers 13 picks up on another aspect of Genesis 6 through an enigmatic double-reference to “the Nephilim” (v. 33). The Israelites spying out the land of Canaan, except for Caleb, advise against taking possession of the land because of the menacingly great size of its inhabitants (vv. 28, 32–33). In verses 32–33, the spies are made to say:

³²The land that we have gone through to spy it out is a land devouring its inhabitants. And all the people whom we saw in it were men of great stature. ³³And there we saw the Nephilim (הנפילים) – *the sons of Anak are from the Nephilim* (הנפילים) – and we were in our eyes as grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes.

⁹ In this passage Nimrod, described as a גבר (“a mighty man”; LXX renders γίγας), is identified as the son of Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah (Gen. 10:6–8).

¹⁰ Although an allusion to Gen. 6:4 in Num. 13 is not impossible, the reference to the גבורים נפילים in Ezek. 32:27 (translated in LXX as “the giants of those who fell” οἱ γίγαντες τῶν πεπτωκότων) neither refers specifically to the Flood nor specifies just when this group “descended to Sheol with their weapons of war”.

¹¹ This seems to be the shape of the tradition behind Philo’s discussion of Nimrod in *De gigantibus* 63–66. A vestige of Nimrod’s connection with the gigantic offspring of the sons of God survives in Josephus (*Ant.* 1.114) who explains that by overseeing the erection of the tower of Babel to reach “higher than the [flood] waters”, Nimrod wished “to avenge the destruction of their forefathers” (μετελεῦσεσθαι δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν προγόνων ἀπωλείας). Although Josephus describes Nimrod as the great-grandson of Noah and not, with the LXX tradition, as a “giant”, does he or the tradition upon which he drew from presuppose a genetic connection between Nimrod and his contemporaries, on the one hand, or between him and those who were destroyed by the deluge, including the “giants”, on the other?

The gloss (in italics), which explains the unexpected nomenclature of “Nephilim” in relation to Anakim already mentioned in verses 22 and 28, is perhaps a later addition that seems to coordinate this passage with Genesis 6:4 (as suggested by the same spelling without the first *yod*). Similarly, the Greek translation tradition may be cognizant of the pre-diluvian Nephilim, since here, as in Genesis 6:4, they are likewise rendered as οἱ γίγαντες.¹² Although in Numbers 13 the inhabitants of Canaan are considered enemies of the Israelites, both the use and coordination (LXX) or derivation from the designation (MT) in an allusion to Genesis 6 betrays an assumption that one or more of the Nephilim must have escaped the Great Flood. An account that relates how any of the Nephilim might have survived is, of course, not given. However, it is not impossible that some ancient readers, in considering the literary context of the Pentateuch as a whole, might have come to the conclusion that Noah, as sole survivor with his family, was one of their number.

Nephilim and Further Groups. The specific correlation between the Nephilim in Numbers 13:33 and “the sons of Anak” (vv. 22, 28) would have widened the horizon for ancient readers to have inferred links between groups of various names within the biblical tradition, whether in the Masoretic text or the LXX tradition.¹³ For example, in Deuteronomy 2:10–11 an apparent gloss refers to inhabitants of Ar called “the Emim ... a great and numerous and tall people” who “like the Anakim are thought to be the Rephaim” (see also vv. 20–21).

The correspondence chain of Giborim = Nephilim = Anakim = Rephaim, which could be inferred from reading synthetically the Hebrew of Genesis 6, Numbers 13, and Deuteronomy 2, is consistent with a translation strategy in the Greek tradition that often applied, as we have seen above, the term γίγας, for these words.¹⁴ By implication, Og king of Bashan could have been related to this circle, as may be suggested by the gloss at Deuteronomy 3:11 (see also 3:13) about the unusually large size of his bed and the claim that he “alone was left remaining from the remnant of the Rephaim (מיתר רפאים)”. In the Greek translation at Joshua 12:4 the same phrase מיתר רפאים is rendered ἐκ τῶν γιγάντων (“from the

¹² However, only the first instance of “Nephilim” is translated (as in Targums *Onqelos* and *Neophyti*) in LXX: καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐωράκαμεν τοὺς γίγαντας καὶ ἤμεν ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν ὡσεὶ ἀκρίδες (“and there we saw the giants, and before them we were as grasshoppers...”). It is possible that the gloss in Masoretic tradition of Num. 13:33 was either inserted after the time the Greek translation was made or, and less likely, the Greek tradition reflects a copyist or reader’s error through *homoioteleuton* (הנפילים ... הנפילים ...).

¹³ Unfortunately, none of the biblical manuscript fragments from the Dead Sea preserves anything corresponding to the passages relevant to the present discussion.

¹⁴ For instances of גבורים, רפאים, and ענקים (only once: Deut. 1:28) rendered as γίγαντες throughout the Septuagint tradition, see the listing with discussion by Brook W. R. Pearson, “Resurrection and the Judgment of the Titans: ἡ γῆ τῶν ἀσεβῶν in LXX Isaiah 26.19”, in ed. Stanley E. Porter, Michael A. Hayes and David Tombs, *Resurrection* (JSNTSup 186; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 33–51 (here pp. 36–37 and ns. 6 and 7) and Brian R. Doak, *The Last of the Rephaim: Conquest and Cataclysm in the Heroic Ages of Ancient Israel* (Ilex Foundation Series; Cambridge, Massachusetts / London: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 51–118.

giants”) in a way that could have identified Og’s ancestry with the pre-diluvian giants. This possibility for interpretation was later given explicit shape in several traditions preserved in rabbinic and targumic literature.¹⁵

The foregoing consideration of biblical tradition has been necessarily brief. However, it is sufficient to allow for the following inferences to be made about the gigantic offspring of “the sons of God”. Firstly, there is no coherent picture in the biblical narratives that clarifies their status in relation to the Great Flood. Though Numbers 13 and Deuteronomy 2–3 present giant men as enemies of the Israelites in the wilderness, the initial reference to them in Genesis 6 does not specify that the Flood was sent as a punishment for anything they had done. Secondly, despite the annihilation of “all flesh” in the Flood account (with the exception of Noah, his family, and the selected creatures on the ark), traditions persisted that assumed the “giants” had survived the Flood. Viable for later interpretation, therefore, was the possibility that the giants, whether it was one or more of them, escaped from the Flood and that they were not necessarily perpetrators of an evil introduced into the world by fallen “sons of God”.

B. The Euhemeristic Citations Preserved through Alexander Polyhistor

Brief, but significant fragmentary accounts of early history that refer to “the giants” were preserved in the first century B.C.E. by Alexander Polyhistor (112–30). Alexander Polyhistor’s work “On the Jews” was, in turn, quoted in the fourth century C.E. by Eusebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.17.1–9 (fragment 1) and, quite possibly, 9.18.2 (fragment 2).¹⁶ Despite the likelihood that both “fragments”

¹⁵ See *b.Niddab* 61a and *Tg. Ps.-Jon.* to Deut. 2:2 and 3:11 in which both Sihon and Og are identified as giants insofar as they are the “sons of Ahijah the son of Shemihazai” (the latter, of course, being the chief of the fallen angels in the Enoch tradition). In *b.Niddab* 61a Og is, in addition, said to have reported the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham, and is singled out as one “who escaped from the generation of the flood” (זה עוג שפלט מדור מבורל). – Another passage in *b.Zebahim* 113 refers only to “Og king of Bashan”. Its brief account suggests that Og escaped the scalding waters of the Flood by (presumably) holding onto the ark that was miraculously protected by cooled water; on Og as a giant, see further *b.Erub.* 30a, 48a; and *b.Yoma* 80b. Indeed, Milik has speculated whether these texts presuppose a knowledge of giants traditions that ultimately derive from the *Book of Giants* (Og being a derivational equivalent for the giant ʾOhyah); cf. Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, p. 320 and further Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony*, p. 22. It is possible that the dream vision of the giant Hahyah in 4Q530 2 ii + 6–7 i + 8–12, lines 7–12, which refers to fire and water, contains imagery of hot waters in describing divine judgment against the giants; see further the *Animal Apocalypse* at 1 *En.* 89:3 (Eth.).

¹⁶ The Greek text was published in 1970 by Albert-Marie Denis, *Fragmenta Pseudepigraphorum Quae Supersunt Graeca. Una Cum Historicum et Auctorum Judaeorum Hellenistarum Fragmentis* (PVTG 3; Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 197–198. For English translations, see Robert Doran, “Pseudo-Eupolemus: A New Translation and Introduction”, in ed. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–1985), 2:873–879 (with discussion); Carl H. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors. I. Historians* (Texts and