The Book of The Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36): An Anti-Mosaic, Non-Mosaic, or Even Pro-Mosaic Writing?

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Abstract

The Book of the Watchers (BW) is generally considered a non-Mosaic if not an anti-Mosaic writing. In more recent research, discussions on the meaning of such labels are ever so prevalent. Nevertheless, the positions do not move far beyond the common patterns of interpretation. The present paper explores the different presuppositions and arguments supporting the assumption of the non- or even anti-Mosaic character of the BW and proposes a reading beyond the antagonism “Enochic” versus “Mosaic.”
Like Mosaic I, the Mosaic II reader is designed to guide the student in the development of a conscious, reflective attitude toward reading, to teach him or her to anticipate the context, to evaluate the difficulty and decide on the level of understanding desired, to distinguish between different types of selections and different purposes for reading and avoid wasting time in a useless, mechanical thoroughness. For this reason, particular types of timed readings are included in the second half of the book, even though speed reading for its own sake is not generally encouraged at this level. The Book of Enoch remarkable details about the Watchers. There is no complete record of the names of all 200 Watchers, but some of their names are mentioned. The two most important of these Watchers were Semyaza and Azazel, who was later considered to be a demon, and is occasionally identified as the devil, or as one of his chieftains. Julius Africanus, a Christian traveler and historian of the late second and early third centuries wrote that “the descendants of Seth are called the sons of God on account of the righteous men and patriarchs who have sprung from him, even down to the Saviour Himself; but that the descendants of Cain are named the seed of men, as having nothing divine in. The book of the watchers (1 enoch 1–36): an anti–mosaic, non–mosaic, Or even pro–mosaic writing? V. Eronika. However, some scholars go even further: They call the BW “Enochic” claiming that the writing offers clues to trace back to a social group within Judaism which they call “the Enochians.” In their opinion, this group is a dissent movement, which no longer belongs to the predominant stream of Judaism, but opposes it. Against this background, the meaning of “Enochic” obviously turns into an ideological issue. “Enochic” becomes a label opposed to labels such as “Mosaic” or “Zadokite.” According to Gabriele Boccaccini, who prominently argues for the existence of an “Eno-chic Judaism,”1 such a movem