Andrei A. Orlov


This book is a collection of six essays, three of which are on Azazel and three on Satanael. The three on Azazel (Part I) are all studies of the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. The essays of Part II focus on Satanel (or Satan). Most of them have been published previously. The rest of the volume comprises endnotes (127–78), a bibliography (179–96) and a subject index (197–201). There are no author or text indices, unfortunately.

While the individual articles are thoughtful and engaging, as a whole the book contains no effort to sketch out the broader subject of Early Jewish demonology, or even define it, and situate the place of Azazel and Satanel within this broader context. No demonic figures aside from Azazel or Satanel are discussed extensively. Nevertheless, the articles as a whole have a consistent approach and common set of interests. Together they highlight “the symmetrical patterns of Early Jewish demonology that are often manifested in the antagonists’ imitation of the attributes of various heavenly beings” (7). The author intriguingly emphasizes that there is in Early Judaism not only an effort to understand heaven as similar to earth (as, for example, construing heaven as a temple that is similar to the one in Jerusalem) but also a similar “paradoxal correspondence between divine and demonic figures” (4). Hence the appealing title *Dark Mirrors*. The essays also share a number of recurring themes and motifs, such as Adamic and Enochic traditions and the interrelations between them. In addition, the articles are unified by a consistent focus on pseudepigrapha preserved in the Slavonic tradition, such as the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *2 Enoch* and *3 Baruch*. The author is to be commended for shedding light on a corpus of material that deserves more scholarly examination.

The first essay of the volume, “‘The Likeness of Heaven’: *Kavod* of Azazel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*” (11–26), argues that the composition envisions Azazel as “a kind of negative counterpart” to God (12). This helps explain an odd reference to the “heaviness” of Azazel in Apoc. Ab. 14:13, which likely derives from the Hebrew כבוד (“glory”). The title captures the ‘dark mirrors’ theme since Apoc. Ab. 21:2 imagines Abraham from heaven looking at earth, the realm associated with Azazel, describing it as “the likeness of heaven” (20–21). In “Eschatological Yom Kippur in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*: The Scapegoat Ritual” (27–46), the author stresses priestly and cultic elements in the presentation of Abraham in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Orlov highlights the priestly nature of the attire of the angel Yahoel, who wears a turban and a
purple robe (cf. Exodus 28). His guidance of Abraham is construed as “a priestly figure initiating an apprentice into celestial sacerdotal praxis” (28). The heavenly exaltation of Abraham, the author argues, should be understood against the background of the Yom Kippur festival. This is an intriguing proposal that merits further speculation, since Azazel is prominent in the document, as in Leviticus 16. The angel Yahweoel carries out a sort of “transference” ritual in which the sins of Abraham are carried over to Azazel, which also evokes Yom Kippur (44). The last article of Part I, “The Garment of Azazel in the Apocalypse of Abraham” (47–81), similarly stresses Yom Kippur for understanding the experiences of Abraham. He is transformed into a “celebrant of the celestial liturgy” that is marked by a change of clothing (48). The composition juxtaposes, Orlov emphasizes, the ascent of Abraham to heaven with the descent of Azazel to earth. Abraham is given a heavenly garment that once belonged to Azazel (Apoc. Ab. 13:14; p. 55). The theme of Azazel’s clothes is indeed important, but Orlov unpersuasively argues that this motif is also present in the Book of Watchers, since in it Azazel is covered with stones when he is thrown in the earth (1 En. 10:5). It is a stretch to call the rocks “ominous attire” and, moreover, while the Ethiopic states that the stones are cast upon him, the Greek asserts instead that he is placed upon the stones (78).

The first essay of Part II, “The Watchers of Satanael: The Fallen Angels Traditions in 2 (Slavonic) Enoch” (85–106) insightfully discusses the key chapters for 2 Enoch’s adaption of the Watchers myth (chs. 7 and 18). While it is not clear that they constitute a “rival” to Enochic traditions, as the author suggests, the name Satanael for the lead watcher who descended to earth and the motif of Satan being forced to venerate Enoch may indeed be related to exegetical traditions regarding Genesis 1–3 (105; 92). The article “Satan and the Visionary: Apocalyptic Roles of the Adversary in the Temptation Narrative of the Gospel of Matthew” (107–12) is a brief study that argues that the temptation story in the gospels adapts the motif of Satan bowing down before Adam, since Satan asks Jesus to bow down before him (Matt 4:9; p. 110). Orlov may be correct on this point; I am less convinced by his suggestion that Satan’s use of the term “son of God” when asking Jesus to throw himself from the Temple (Matt 4:6) draws on the Enochic descent of the Watchers motif (who are, as is well-known, called “the sons of God”; p. 109). The last article of the collection, “The Flooded Arboretums: The Garden Traditions in the Slavonic Version of 3 Baruch and the Book of Giants” (113–25), argues that 3 Baruch has more connections to Enochic and Noahic traditions than is commonly understood. Orlov focuses on 3 Baruch 4, in which Eden is flooded (115). He points out that the Qumran Book of Giants, which draws prominently on Enochic tradition,