

## BOOK REVIEWS / BOEKRESENSIES

Loader, William. *Enoch, Levi and Jubilees on Sexuality. Attitudes towards sexuality in the early Enoch literature, the Aramaic Levi Document, and the Book of Jubilees*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2007. 350 pages. Paperback. Price unknown. ISBN 978-0-8028-2583-4.

This publication investigates mental attitudes towards sexuality in the pseud-epigraphical books of 1 Enoch, the fragmented *Aramaic Levi* and *Jubilees*. It is the first of a larger project exploring attitudes towards what Loader calls the “central aspect of our common humanity” (p. 313) in Judaism and Christianity of the Hellenistic Greco-Roman era (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. – 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E.). The three books examined here are representing the earliest and most influential works of this era.

The publication comprises a brief introduction (pp. 1-4), three parts, the first on early Enoch Literature (pp. 5-85), the second on the Aramaic Levi Document (pp. 87-111), and the third on Jubilees (pp. 113-313), a bibliography (pp. 315-337), an index of modern authors (pp. 338-340), and an index of ancient sources (pp. 341-350). It is written in a clear style with not too many technical terms. Ample additional discussions are found in the extensive footnotes. In a few cases words are omitted (“is” p. 24 line 4, p. 26 line 20; “of” p. 80 line 1; “the” p. 180 line 3). Somewhat irritating is that footnotes referred to are sometimes not on the same page (e. g. note 104 p. 39, note 324 p. 113).

Loader’s research method is to be lauded. Engaging with current research he uses a variety of methods for his investigation. He seeks to identify key terms for sexuality within its literary context and study their intratextual associations (see for instance p. 209). This identification he uses to “build a profile of their meaning” (p. 226). In the case of Jubilees (the major part of his research) he uses the available *Ge’ez* text, tries to reconstruct from it the probable original Hebrew text, and then consults the parallel versions in Syriac and Latin. In the case of Enoch he also pays attention to traditio-historical explanations. He then moves to the broader context, in the case of Jubilees first the larger literary unit and then an analysis of the narrative flow. He finally uses the larger context to study the key terms that were initially identified within the perspective of the whole.

In Part One the author analyses the “Book of the Watchers” (1 Enoch 1-36), “Book of Dream Visions” (1 Enoch 83-90), the “Epistle of Enoch” (1 Enoch 92-105) and the “Birth of Enoch” (1 Enoch 106-107) as well as the

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“Book of Giants” from Qumran. Although the myth of the Watchers with its overtly sexual acts plays a central role in these books, Loader comes to the conclusion that the focus here is on evils like violence and bloodshed rather than sexual wrongdoings. The second part focuses on the collection of fragmentary copies from Qumran collected as the “Aramaic Levi Document”. The book of Jubilees seems to be dependant on this work or a mutual source. This can be seen in its rendition of the Dinah story and the central role of Levi. Intermarriage with foreigners is directly addressed and applied to the priests, especially the High Priest Levi. Part Three presents a thorough analysis of the Book of Jubilees. Loader excels in this section to indicate how Jubilees exploited the myth of the Watcher’s sexual wrongdoings and made it of immense significance. The conviction of the author is that “sexual wrongdoings is really the main focus for Jubilees” (p. 291). Although the book “rarely goes beyond abstract categories to describe actual behaviours” (p. 293), it “defines what is appropriate and inappropriate in the realm of sexual behaviour” (p. 289). Loader not only indicates the negative aspect of the attitude towards sexuality in Jubilees, but also denotes sexuality as something good and holy in the right time and space.

This publication will contribute immensely to the field of second temple research. Its thoroughness and comprehensiveness makes it highly recommendable.

P. M. Venter, Department of Old Testament Science, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, South Africa. *E-mail*: [pm.venter@up.ac.za](mailto:pm.venter@up.ac.za).