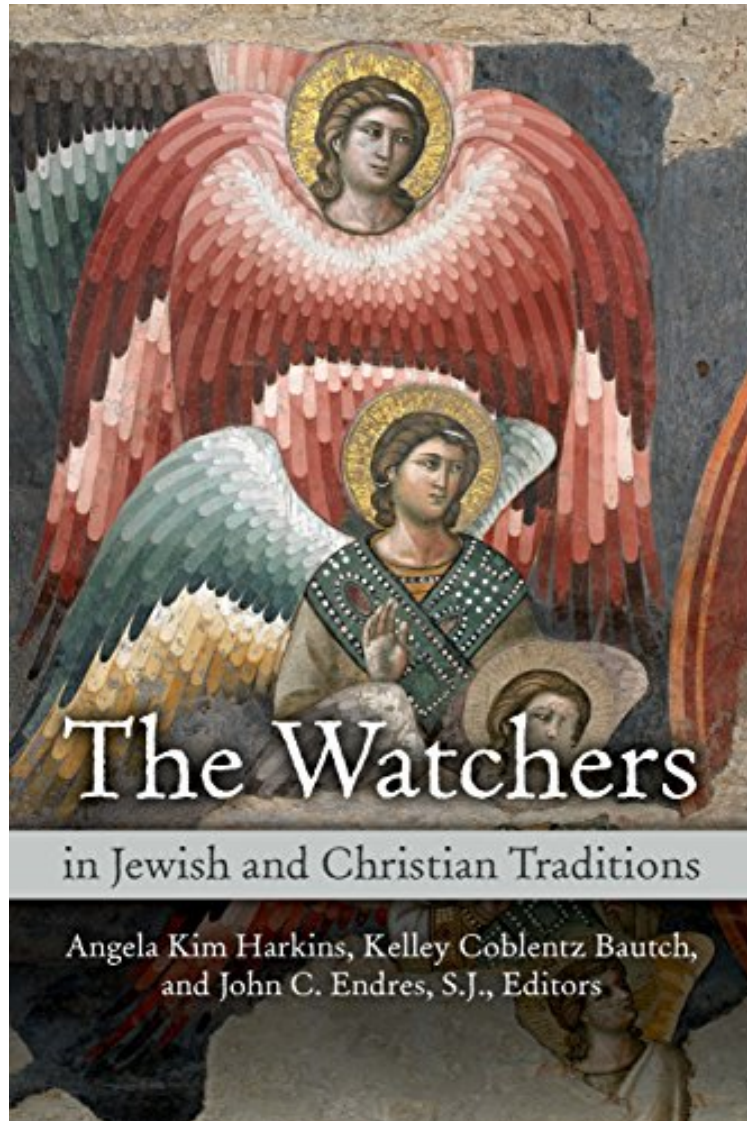


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The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions

Angela Kim Harkins

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Angela Kim Harkins : The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. why so few reviews?-this book is a gem By michael gwow! only 2 reviews for this tome! I ordered this book on a whim to show a friend who does not believe there is extra biblical evidence to support genesis 6/ the book of enoch because her pastor says so. how many times have we heard that check your brain at the door mantra before. this book explains and covers most of the ancient near east to the Christian

era tradition of the watchers. and the group of professors who all had a section/chapter for their input are tops in their class on the subjects covered-see the look inside feature, a feature I have grown to love, to give you an idea of the thesis level of research and writing put into this book. heavily referenced/documented, I can highly recommend this book for the lay person, college student, or casual reader who has an interest. read the 2 other 5 star reviews-they are spot on. 5 stars!24 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Overview of the Tradition of The WatchersBy Michael C. BolingThe pericope of Genesis 6:1-4 is a portion of Scripture that many either completely ignore or for those who might have pondered its meaning, have found to be a rather curious set of statements, especially considering the placement of this passage immediately before the account of the Noachic flood. What exactly is the author of Genesis describing, what or who are the sons of God, the Watchers, and the Nephilim, let alone the might men of old described at the conclusion of these verses? While this section of Genesis 6 may not be the focus of most laymens Bible study efforts, it has become an increasing focus of much scholarly debate. Given the mention of the events of Genesis 6 in 1 and 2 Peter as well as Judes Epistle, a discussion of this event to include those described in Genesis 6:1-4 is certainly in order. To address this issue, a new book has come out called appropriately enough The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions, edited by Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblentz Baruch, and John C. Endres. Essentially, The Watchers is a series of essays that explores not just the pericope of Genesis 6, but also the variety of other works, Jewish, Christian, and pagan, that interact with the Watchers tradition, noting along the way the possible approach of the various traditions and authors, all in an attempt to extrapolate from these writings the underlying message of Genesis 6 as well as the impact this passage had on Jewish and Christian traditions in particular. The contributors focus on how the Watchers traditions influenced matters of eschatology, how both Jewish and Christian writers viewed those in authority over them, as well as how matters of sin and evil in the world were often viewed as originating from these fallen angelic beings of old. As one who has been greatly fascinated for some time with digging into what Genesis 6:1-4 is possible portraying, I found the various essays in The Watchers to be a treasure trove of information on this subject matter. Each essay, while at times cover similar material as found in the other essays in this work, follows a similar pattern of discussion. The contributor begins with a demonstration of how the particular work that is being addressed connects with either the Genesis 6:1-4 passage or what tended to be the greater focus of this book, how the various traditions of The Watchers connect to the Book of Enoch, specifically the section known as the Book of the Watchers which is arguably the most developed addressing of the events of Genesis 6 found outside Scripture itself. While I personally disagree with the assessment of the JEDP hypothesis which presents the idea that not all of the Pentateuch was penned by Moses but was rather consolidated by later redactors, I did find the scholarly research in this book to be quite evident as noted in the vast amount of footnotes provided throughout the text. Anyone desiring to study this subject matter in an level of detail beyond this book will find plenty of source material to keep them occupied for some time. For such a short set of verses as found in Genesis 6:1-4, it became readily apparent while reading The Watchers of the great importance that small segment of Genesis had on both Jewish and Christian traditions. While one can certainly argue for or against where the tradition of the Watchers originated, whether that was from Mesopotamian or other ancient influences or whether the Mosaic writings represent the actual events with other traditions adding their own proverbial spin, it is clear the tradition of the Watchers was of great importance throughout ancient times even up until the 2nd and 3rd centuries in the early Church as revealed in the writings of the Early Church Father Justin Martyr. The contributors to The Watchers do an excellent job of covering the material in their respective essays, continually driving home how each particular manuscript they analyze engages the Watchers tradition as well as the theological, cultural, and practical importance of this tradition in the lives of those who penned the manuscripts that are addressed. Scholars will likely continue to debate who The Watchers, the Nephilim, and the sons of God are for quite some time. What is evident and what will become very clear to those who read this outstanding treatment of this issue is the importance of the Watchers to early Jewish and Christian traditions and how issues of soteriology and eschatology are woven into the fabric of this discussion. Did angelic beings actually reject their God ordained position and mate with human females to produce an offspring of giants known as the Nephilim? Are these Nephilim the source of mythological stories found in Ancient Near East and even Greco-Roman traditions? That certainly is up for debate. What is not up for debate is the importance of the serious Bible scholar taking a look at the events of Genesis 6:1-4, events which as noted earlier find their way into the Epistles of 1 and 2 Peter as well as Jude. I highly recommend this book again for the serious Bible student who is interested in understanding the various traditions that interact with the Genesis 6 storyline as well as the writings found in the Book of Enoch. The Watchers is rigorous yet fruitful reading that will provide those who engage its essays with a valuable look into how the tradition of the Watchers has taken shape over the years. Since this story is in the Bible, it is well worth studying. I received this book for free from Fortress Press for this review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commissions 16 CFR, Part 255 : Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Interesting topic and interesting book! By Barbara Wright This book is broken down into 14 sections which discuss subtopics of the Origins and Biblical Discussions of the Fallen Angels. For anyone who is not familiar with fallen angels, Genesis 6:1-4 is the first place referred to by those who study the

topic extensively. There are other obvious references and many not so obvious references to fallen angels in the Bible, as described by those who submitted essays for this book. Some of those are Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Genesis, Psalms, and many others. However, there is much extra-Biblical literature that goes more deeply into the topic than what is discussed in the Bible. It seems that for years, the early church accepted much of this extra-Biblical material. A few that are referenced frequently in the book are The Book of Enoch, The Book of Giants, Qumran texts and many more. While I found the material in the book interesting, most of it couldn't be classified as a page turner. That is until I got to Section 10 Watcher Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls by Samuel Thomas. He described a statement by Amram about a vision (or dream) about two figures arguing over him, contending for possession of him. I was astounded. I had the same thing happen to me years ago (dream/vision). I have never heard of anyone else experiencing this and I have only told two people about my experience. I truly don't believe it was a dream, but I am unable to prove it was not. Anyway, just like Amram, they were contending for my soul. Talk about a book coming alive for you. Certainly, makes me want to do more research on the angels vs. fallen angels saga. The next area I found extremely interesting is Section 13 Cain the Giant: Watchers Traditions in the life of Adam and Eve by Silviu N Bunta. This section introduced extra-Biblical material of which I was totally unaware. From the Life of Adam and Eve and different books with similar names from different cultures but basically the same story, comes the belief that the Watchers impacted human history long before Enoch. In fact, both Cain and Abel were Eves sons by a fallen angel (perhaps Satan). I thought this was a pretty wild idea, but the author shows how Biblical text can support this idea if you read them with this idea in mind. I won't go into detail, but if you are the least bit interested, you need to read this book. At first I wasn't overly impressed with the book, but as I continued reading, either it got better or I started paying more attention. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in Watchers/Fallen Angels/Nephilim topics. If you are interested in the Bible or Christian topics you may also find this book of interest. I was provided a free copy of this book for review from Fortress Press and Edelweiss. I was under no obligation to provide a favorable review.

At the origin of the Watchers tradition is the single enigmatic reference in Genesis 6 to the "sons of God" who had intercourse with human women, producing a race of giants upon the earth. That verse sparked a wealth of cosmological and theological speculation in early Judaism. Here leading scholars explore the contours of the Watchers traditions through history, tracing their development through the Enoch literature, Jubilees, and other early Jewish and Christian writings. This volume provides a lucid survey of current knowledge and interpretation of one of the most intriguing theological motifs of the Second Temple period.

About the Author Angela Kim Harkins is associate professor of religious studies at Fairfield University in Connecticut and in the Center for Judaic Studies. Kelley Coblenz Bauth is associate professor of religious studies at St. Edward's University. John C. Endres, S.J. is professor of sacred scripture at the Jesuit School of Theology and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.