

What is the Apocryphal Book of 1 Enoch?

The writings of Enoch are part of a collection of apocryphal writing. Specifically, the writings are part of the pseudepigrapha, a collection of approximately 300 books that are spiritual in nature, but were rejected by Jewish and early New Testament church leaders for inclusion in the biblical canon. Generally viewed by most scholars as being of lesser integrity than apocryphal books, pseudepigraphical writings expound beyond (and at times conflict with) the accepted, inspired, biblical narrative.

Enoch is noted as the great grandfather of Noah and is referenced prominently in Scripture (I Chronicles 1:3; Genesis 4:17-18, 5:18-24; Luke 3:37; Hebrews 11:5; and Jude 1:14). The writings of Enoch were not written by the Enoch referenced in Scripture—the writings of Enoch are reportedly the written expression of the oral account passed down by the notable biblical character. Enoch walked with God” and was “caught up” by God in what many view as a *type* of the first Rapture.

The book describes past, present, and future happenings on earth and in the spiritual realm. The three books of Enoch reference ungodly sinners, great judgment, and how the ungodly committed atrocities against God and man. The ‘Holy ones’ or fallen angels showed an unnatural desire for human women and through sexual union, human women bare great giants. Genesis calls them Nephilim—“men of renown.” Enoch describes them as evil beings who nearly devoured mankind. Virtually all their ungodly deeds were prompted by pride and a desire to destroy that which God loves.

The entire book has three primary components: The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch); The Book of the Secrets of Enoch (2 Enoch), and The Hebrew Book of Enoch (3 Enoch). 1 Enoch consists of five sections: The Book of Watchers, The Similitudes of Enoch, The Astronomical Book, The Book of Dreams, and The Epistle of Enoch. The first book details the birth of the Nephilim, the giants, and the fall of the angels known as the Grigori (or the Watchers).

How Does Enoch Differ from Other Apocryphal Books?

1 Enoch differs from apocryphal works in six primary ways.

- Enoch provides insight into a very early period of human history—predating Abraham and Noah.
- Enoch includes three parables—He couches the first parable in spiritual language, laying a foundation for a style of teaching that would be highly developed by Jesus during his earthly ministry.
- Enoch offers a distinct perspective on the origins of demons and fallen angels. His narrative is distinct from other apocryphal writings.

- Enoch notes the names of notable angels (including fallen angels): Michael, Gabriel, Kaphael, Suryal, Uriel, Azazyel, Amazarak, Armors, Barkayal, Akibeel, Tamiel, and Asaradel.
- Though many apocryphal writings were known to the Essenes, only 1 Enoch, the Epistle of Jeremiah, Ben Sira, and the book of Tobit were included in the Dead Sea Scrolls. This does not make the writings of Enoch unique, but it is a distinctive quality.
- Enoch references a complex hierarchy of angels (heavenly luminaries) and, more than other apocryphal writers, presents a vivid description of the spiritual realm.

What Does Book 1 of Enoch Say About Fallen Angels?

Professor Jonathan Pageau argues that 1 Enoch expands on the creation narrative, the fall of angels, and serves as an analogy for the consequences of sin and the response of the righteous God who must at times execute judgment to save humanity.

Enoch describes the Nephilim in Genesis 6 as the offspring of "holy ones." Though God hath ordained his people to follow after Him, humans were easily swayed and virtually all their uncleanness stemmed from following the deception of fallen angels and their human offspring. Enoch walked with God his faith is noted as rare; Scripture notes that just two generations later, only Noah and his family walked rightly before God.

Pageau argues that God entrusted to the "holy ones" and the Watchers, the responsibility of overseeing natural patterns and systems on earth—such as the seasons, various weather patterns, and even human knowledge and desire. This is sometimes referred to as the secret things or the secret knowledge. In this writer's view, this interpretation is based on assumptions not found in the text.

Pageau also notes that Enoch's book reveals how aspects of the offspring of the fallen angels, sometimes known as malevolent giants, corrupted true knowledge, led humanity from the truth, and prompted all on earth to rebel against the Creator. In the same manner that Lucifer rebelled in heaven, on earth, the giants turned against God.

Enoch describes the progression of great sin—from the fall of Satan to the fall of angels, to the fall of humanity. Like a cancer, sin quickly metastasized and enveloped the whole earth—inviting great judgment. Enoch warned that a holy God would soon execute judgment on the unrepentant, but because of the activity of fallen angels—all of their uncleanness—all of their ungodly deeds—Enoch prophesied that God would execute judgment in the form of flaming fire and that his wrath would impact the whole earth. Many believe his teaching on sin, a provision for escape, and a coming judgment foreshadow the work of Jesus Christ and the final judgment profiled in Revelation 20.

Pageau argues that Enoch's writings prophetically point to how the desire of man (for technology and power), leads to the depravity of man, the decline of social, economic, civil, and spiritual health, and the need for the ultimate judgment and cleansing of God.

Why Was the Book of Enoch Removed from the Bible?

Enoch's writings were never included (or seriously considered for inclusion) in the canon of Scripture. The writings were not incorporated into sacred Jewish texts, and when Jewish leaders formalized what Christians now view as the Old Testament canon at the Council of Jamnia in 97 A.D., the writings of Enoch were not included.

New Testament leaders held multiple councils in the second—fourth centuries A.D, and ultimately formalized the canon of Scripture (the Old and New Testament) as the 66 books included in Protestant Bibles today. Again, the writings of Enoch were not included in the canon of Scripture.

It is worth noting that centuries later, a collection of historical writings (known as the Apocrypha) *was* included in the Catholic Bible. The writings were disputed through the ages, rejected by early reformers, and only formally recognized by the Catholic Church as part of holy Scripture in the late 16th century.

When originally written, the writings were not considered inspired. Only the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eritrean Orthodox Church view the writings of Enoch as canonical.

Should the Book of Enoch be in the Bible?

Theologians consider the writings of Enoch to be interesting but not inspired. They are part of the pseudepigrapha—a collection of spiritual writings of lesser integrity than the 14 books comprising the Apocrypha. Though the writings of Enoch speak of fallen angels, great judgment, eternal life, sin, God, salvation, a righteous man, and a final judgment, the writings are not considered *inspired* and, therefore, are subject to error. The writings of Enoch are viewed as non-canonical by the Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Church.

Further, no one knows when 1 Enoch was originally written, and the three books of Enoch indicate substantive editing and changes through the centuries. Again, the writings were not included in the first century A.D. Jewish canon or the canon of Scripture adopted by the Christian Church at the Councils of Rome, Hippo, and Carthage in the late fourth century.

Enoch the man is referenced prominently in Scripture—the Book of Enoch is not. Some aspects of the book are likely true and were used as illustrations for spiritual teachings in the first century A.D. This is likely why a portion of the book is referenced in Jude 14. However, this does not serve as proof that the book of Enoch is to be considered authoritative or inspired—just as Paul’s reference to the writings of the philosopher-poet Epimeriids in Titus 1:12 does not indicate his writings should be incorporated into holy Scripture.

What Significance Does Rough and Jagged Rocks Have in the Book of Enoch?

The book of 1 Enoch is believed to be rich in symbolism, with fire, trees, mountains, and rocks taking on significant spiritual meaning. Though some of the imagery is clear (such as “flaming fire” indicating judgment), much is not (such as the “fourteen trees” referenced in 1 Enoch 3:1). Enoch described “all the trees” as being “withered,” save the evergreen trees, which were presented as weary but would be restored “after two or three days.” Many believe the trees represent humanity, with most being withered due to sin, but the few repentant being restored to new life by the sacrifice of the Messiah (who would resurrect on the third day). This deep imagery appears to be emblematic of Enoch’s writings.

The rough and jagged rocks represent a place of torment and judgment ordered by the Holy One—the Creator. In Enoch’s writings, fallen angels share forbidden and false knowledge with humanity and incur God’s wrath. The evil angels Shemihazah and Asael are chief in leading humans astray.

God sends the angel Raphael (later referred to as an archangel in apocryphal writings) to bind Asael and thrust him into the “rough and jagged rocks of Dudael”—a place of judgment in the accursed valley. The rocks are said to represent the earth, which Enoch prophetically notes will soon face God’s judgment when all the generations that turned away from God in sin would be swept away. The rocks are a place of torment where fallen angels are fated to wait for God to execute judgment in the last days. God is just, and judges sin in the spiritual and human realms in the same manner.

What Happens in the Book of Enoch?

The book of Enoch is a deeply symbolic spiritual writing that presents complex commentary and prophecies about humanity and aspects of the spiritual realm. Though not considered to be inspired writing, the book of Enoch appears to correlate well with aspects of Genesis, Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew, Jude, and Revelation.

The writings of Enoch reference fallen angels, expound on what happened as a result of Adam and Eve eating from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” and profile the impact of sin on the “the whole earth” (noting how sin often manifests itself through aberrant sexual desire—illustrated by how the many committed fornication in those (and these) dark days. Paralleling Scriptural themes, Enoch also references God’s desire for His beloved ones to embrace His gift of eternal life, humanity’s pitiful attempt to “hide thyself” (hide their sin) from an all-knowing God, human disobedience and defiantly hurling “proud and hard words” with “impure mouths against [God’s] greatness,” the Creator’s lavish gifts to humanity (illustrated by costly stones, trees that bear fruit, and beautiful high hills and seven mountains in the northwest), and His righteous nature requiring judgment on evil.

Chief among themes is God’s power and commitment to righteous judgment. Illustrating God’s glory, Enoch writes that the Lord cometh with “ten thousands” of wonderous angels. Fallen angels, though powerful, are no match for the splendid glory of God. They are captured, bound, and “for seventy generations,” a phrase that symbolizes God’s perfect timetable, await the judgment of God “in the valleys of the earth.” Though Enoch prophetically notes it will be years till fully accomplished, he writes that the Lord will work in wonderous and mysterious ways through the ages until “newness [restoration] comes.”

Also, following the biblical narrative, Enoch notes that God’s judgment is often carried out by angels who are given specific responsibilities. Just as angels are depicted as having particular roles or missions in the Old Testament books of Genesis, 1 Chronicles, and Daniel, and in the New Testament books of Matthew, Jude, and Revelation, Enoch writes of how the Watchers and some heavenly angels are given specific missions by God (though the Watchers ultimately reject their calling).

The book ends by reconciling God’s mercy and benevolence with God’s righteous judgment. God’s wrath is presented as provoked and justified. The Lord disciplines those whom He loves and helps those who strive to do good—indeed, Enoch walked with God and was blessed. In the entire book, the great-grandfather of Noah points to God’s sovereignty and urges humanity to submit to His will.

A brief outline of the writings of Enoch follows:

- Enoch elaborates on Genesis 6:1-4 and notes how fallen angels wrongfully took wives who bore the Nephilim.
- Enoch notes that fallen angels shared forbidden knowledge with humanity.
- Enoch notes that fallen angels fanned the flames of sin, which ultimately forced God to cleanse the earth via the flood in the days of Noah.
- In what is known as *the second parable*, Enoch notes that salvation is found only in the Lord and that “those who deny the name...of the Lord of Spirits...into...heaven they shall not

ascend... Such shall be the lot of the sinners who have denied the name of the Lord of Spirits, who are thus preserved for the day of suffering and tribulation.” (Chapter 45:1-2)

- Enoch references the judgment in the days of Noah (noted in Genesis 6-7) and the final judgment referenced in Revelation 19-20.

Who Wrote the Book of Enoch?

The authorship of the book of Enoch is unknown. Certainly, the book of Enoch was not *written* by Enoch, but it may contain oral messaging originating with him. Most scholars believe the writings of Enoch are a composite work—authored by multiple authors over hundreds of years. Ancient Jewish (non-canonical) texts attribute the writings to Enoch—the man who “walked with God” and was caught up into heaven by God in Genesis 5. Early Christians did not consider the writings to be divinely inspired or worthy of inclusion in the canon of Scripture. Portions of the writings were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, but that does not make them authoritative as among the Dead Sea Scrolls were more than 1000 writings that could be considered songs, poetry, proverbs, and community guidelines.

Who was Enoch?

Enoch is noted in the Bible as the “seventh son of Adam” and the great-grandfather of Noah. He is notable for his faith, being referenced in Genesis, 1 Chronicles, Luke, 2 Peter, Hebrews, and Jude. He is only one of two people who did not experience a physical death (like Elijah in 2 Kings 2, he was caught up into heaven by God).

Enoch was a somewhat mysterious figure; he was a light of righteousness amid a world darkened by sin. His faith was rewarded. He writes of judgment but also that God is good, all-powerful, and all-knowing. His grace abounds, and His righteous judgment on evil (as well as His promise and provision to rescue and redeem) is sure.

What Did Enoch Say About Ungodly Sinners?

Enoch’s writings are unequivocal in noting that evil will not go unchecked, and the ungodly will be held to account for every word and deed. In 1 Enoch 1:9, we read that God will “*execute judgment upon...the ungodly.*” Enoch associates ungodliness with pride and willful defiance against God’s

commands. Enoch writes of an impending judgment (the flood in the days of Noah) and of the final judgment (which will follow the Millennial Reign of Christ). At the final (Great White Throne) judgment, fallen angels (including Satan) and sinful humans will be sent to hell and thereby be forever separated from the beauty and blessings of God.

What Does Jesus Say About the Book of Enoch?

Jesus did not reference Enoch, but clearly acknowledged the inspired nature of Old Testament writings, which do reference the Patriarch. The question of whether or not Jesus referenced or drew from the writings of Enoch is difficult to answer. Some believe Jesus drew heavily from Enoch's writings (as noted below) while others argue that most of the portions of Enoch's writings that Jesus reportedly referenced were written after Jesus' death and resurrection.

A listing of the writings attributed to Enoch that Jesus possibly referenced follows:

1. Some allege, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Mat 5:5) originates from, "The elect shall possess light, joy, and peace, and they shall inherit the earth." (Enoch 5:7 {6:9})
2. Some allege, "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation" (Luke 6:24) originates from, "Woe to you who are rich, for in your riches have you trusted; but from your riches you shall be removed." (Enoch 94:8 {93:7}).
3. "Some allege, "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28) originates from, "I will place each of them on a throne of glory." (Enoch 108:12 {105:26})
4. Some allege, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed. (Luke 16:26) originates from, "By a chasm ... [are] their souls are separated." (Enoch 22: 9,11 {22:10,12})
5. Some allege, "That ye may be called the children of light" (John 12:36) is drawn from, "The good from the generation of light..." (Enoch 108:11 {105: 25}).

Why is the Book of Enoch Not Considered Part of the Biblical Canon?

Those who advocate for the inclusion of the writings of Enoch in the canon of scripture note the writings are referenced in 2 Peter and Jude, portions of the book were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the man Enoch is mentioned prominently in Scripture.

Further, Enoch's writings reportedly come from a dream vision (a common form of divine inspiration and communication), they are prophetic in nature, in some ways they parallel the biblical text, and the first 36 chapters are considered holy Scripture by the Ethiopic Coptic Church.

Though these points have some merit, the determining factors for inclusion into the canon of holy Scripture were 1) the human authorship must not be a source of contention, 2) the content must align with previously affirmed inspired writings, and 3) the adjudicators must view the content as ***both*** accurate ***and*** divinely inspired. The third point is paramount, but on all points, the writings of Enoch fail.