

## The Book of Enoch and The Canon

Scripture: Jude

Code: BQ061412

**It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, (14a)**

**These men** refers to the apostates whom Jude pictured in the previous section—the false visionaries, the flouters of spiritual authority, the revilers, the brute beasts who behave by carnal instinct, the hidden reefs, the waterless clouds, the dead and uprooted trees, the wild sea waves, and the wandering stars headed for eternal blackness. Even before the Flood, **Enoch** (Gen. 5:21–24) **prophesied** that the Lord would come to judge such false teachers. By citing Enoch, Jude underscored the motivation behind God’s judgment on apostasy while also reinforcing the certainty of it.

Even though this prophecy is not recorded in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit inspired Jude (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21) to use it because it was familiar, historically valid, and supported his overall thesis. Jude extracted the quote from the pseudepigraphal book of *1 Enoch*, with which his first-century readers were well acquainted. The book was part of the written history and tradition of the Jewish people, and rabbinical allusions to it were not uncommon.

Though he was not the author of the book, Enoch’s message was passed down through oral tradition until it was finally recorded in what was called *1 Enoch*. That book, like other books such as *The Book of Jubilee*, *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and *The Assumption of Moses* (from which Jude probably quoted in v. 9), was not part of the Old Testament canon; yet, since it was accurate, it was acceptable for Jude to use it to bolster his argument. None other than the apostle Paul occasionally followed the same pattern (of citing nonbiblical sources to make a legitimate spiritual point) in his teaching (cf. Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12). (For a further discussion of Jude’s use of apocryphal works, see the Introduction to Jude in this volume.)

Enoch stood **in the seventh generation from Adam** (Gen. 5:4–24). He was a hero to the Jewish people because, like the prophet Elijah later (2 Kings 2:11–12), he went to heaven without dying: “Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:24; cf. Heb. 11:5). Although it was not included in the biblical record until the book of Jude, Enoch’s prophecy is the earliest human

prophecy found anywhere in Scripture. (The only earlier prophecy recorded in the Bible was made by God in Gen. 3:15.) In fact, Enoch's message predated the words of Moses, Samuel, and the Hebrew prophets by many centuries.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright>).