

THE BOOK OF ENOCH : TRUTH OR HERESY? : PART 1

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Published On : September 25, 1997

Last Updated : June 2, 2012

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As many Christians who have read the manuscript will know, the Book of Enoch is a very powerful, vivid, prophetic work which leaves a person with a lasting impression. Due to its controversial nature, it may not be suitable for persons who are young Christians, and who have thus not yet been fully grounded in the Word of God; that is, in the accepted Canon. Because of some of the themes it contains, the Book of Enoch is not generally accepted as being Divinely Inspired by most of traditional Christianity. To my knowledge, the Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox Churches are the only Christian bodies which currently include the Book of Enoch in their canons. The Ethiopian Jews -- or Beta Israel -- of Israel also view the Book of Enoch as inspired text, and include it in their Holy Scriptures, which are known as "Mäṣḥafä Kedus".

One of the primary reasons why the Book of Enoch has been rejected by most of Christendom -- as well as by the Jews -- as being Divinely Inspired is due to its expanded account of the Watchers; that is, the Fallen Angels who abandoned their Heavenly Abode, came down to the Earth, and then engaged in sexual intercourse with human women. The Jews do not believe that the Angels were capable of sinning and rebelling against God; and some Christians likewise find it difficult to accept that Angels actually came to the Earth and engaged in sexual relations with women. This ancient account, along with a few other Biblical examples, will be examined a little later in this series.

Because of its controversial contents, the Book of Enoch

belongs to a group of writings which are referred to as the Apocryphal Works. This means that either their authenticity, authorship, or Divine Inspiration is in doubt; or at least it was in doubt at the time that the early Church Fathers made the decision regarding which books should be included in the Biblical canon. It should also be noted that the Book of Enoch was not incorporated into the canon of the Tanakh -- that is, the Hebrew Bible, or Christian Old Testament -- or into the canon of the Septuagint -- that is, the LXX, or the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible -- during the closing centuries of the pre-Christian era. In his second Epistle to Timothy, we find the Apostle Paul writing as follows:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"
2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

The Apostle Peter also made a comment regarding the Divine Authorship of the Ancient Texts in the following verse. To be more specific, Peter refers to the Gift of Prophecy:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
2 Peter 1:21, KJV

According to my research, this issue concerning the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures has been a rather strong point of contention and debate since the Third or Fourth Century; not only with regards to the Book of Enoch, but with similar texts as well, many of which remain widely unknown to most Christians to this day. In fact, dozens of different canons have been proposed since the Bible was first compiled; and even today, different Biblical canons are used by different churches around the world. For the uninitiated, a canon is simply a collection or list of sacred books which have been accepted as being genuine. In the Christian context, it is the Books of the Bible which are viewed as being Divinely Inspired.

But exactly who was the Patriarch Enoch? In reading the list of genealogies which is found in the Book of Genesis, we find Enoch listed as one of the descendants of Seth -- who was the third son of Adam and Eve -- and likewise as the ancestor of the Patriarch Noah. In fact, he was Noah's great-grandfather, as we can determine by the following verses:

"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died. And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: And

Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died. And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died. And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed." Genesis 5:3-29, KJV

As can be seen from the previous set of verses, what is so unique about Enoch is that, according to Scriptures, he did not experience a normal death like other humans. Rather, we are told that he "walked with God" and "God took him". It is commonly accepted that these phrases mean that Enoch was in some miraculous way translated -- or transported -- to the Spiritual Realm. This is similar to what occurred with the Prophet Elijah in the second Book of the Kings, as we see by the following verses:

"And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces." 2 Kings 2:9-12, KJV

Returning to Enoch, it is believed by some researchers and theologians that it was prior to his miraculous translation to the Heavenly Realm that Enoch communed with Angels, and wrote what we know today as the five-part collection called the Book of Enoch; although there is some debate regarding whether or not he actually wrote all five parts of the Book which is named after him. The five sections are as follows:

The Book of the Watchers chpts 1-36
The Book of Parables of Enoch chpts 37-71 a.k.a. the Similitudes of Enoch

The Astronomical Book inaries or Book of Luminaries	chpts 72-82	a.k.a. the Book of the Heavenly Lum
The Book of Dream Visions	chpts 83-90	a.k.a. the Book of Dreams
The Epistle of Enoch	chpts 91-108	

So the question that arises is this: If the Patriarch Enoch was so favored by the Lord that he did not have to experience physical death, but rather was taken up into Heaven by some mysterious means; and if he wrote such an awe-inspiring and important Book, why is it that his writings are not included in our present-day Bible? Who disqualified him as an inspired Prophet of God?

To fully understand this issue, we need to backtrack in time and review a little bit of ancient Biblical history. To begin with, let me remind you that since the Old Testament era, the children of Israel had some serious problems with pagan ideas and beliefs slipping into their midst. As I point out in such articles as "The Children of God and Politics" and "The Fruits of Disobedience", the ancient Hebrews were surrounded by many heathen nations which worshipped other gods, and not the God of the Israelites.

In fact, as I explain in the article called "One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews", let us not forget that Abraham the Hebrew -- which is derived from the Hebrew word "ibriy", which means "one from beyond" -- was called by God to abandon the ancient pagan worship of Babylon; that is, the city of Ur in the land of the Chaldees. From the moment that Abraham left there, he and his descendants had constant problems with some of their family members sometimes slipping back into the sins of their forefathers. Consider the following Scriptural example where a confrontation occurs between Jacob, Laban and Rachel, as a result of some missing idols:

"And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images. And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both."
Genesis 31:30-37, KJV

This is in fact a recurring problem which we find throughout the entire Old Testament. As I explain in such articles as "Revelation's Babylon the Great", the Lord sent one Prophet

after another to warn the children of Israel to turn from their wicked ways, and to return to Him. However, in spite of His pleadings with them, even at the time of Jesus, this problem still persisted. This was due in part to the fact that as a result of both the Assyrian and the Babylonian invasions, many heathens had moved into Israel, particularly into the northern half around Samaria. As I mention in other articles, this is one of the reasons why even in Jesus' day, animosity still existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. This is evident by the statement that the woman of Samaria made to Jesus in the following verse:

"Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."
John 4:9, KJV

Something else which contributed to the ongoing animosity is the fact that throughout the Old Testament period, when the Jews were not occupied with waging war against their outside enemies, the king of Israel -- whose capital was Samaria -- and the king of Judah -- whose capital was Jerusalem -- were quite often waging war against each other. This attitude of hostility between the north and the south was obviously still very much alive during the First Century AD. As I explain in other articles, grudges are held for a very long time in the lands of the Middle East.

Concerning Jesus Himself, being as He was raised in Nazareth -- which is located in extreme northern Israel near Syria -- this just gave the self-righteous Jewish Elders in Jerusalem another reason to reject Him. In the Gospel of John, you may recall how Nathanael responded when Philip first informed him that they had found the Christ. Consider this verse:

"And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see."
John 1:46, KJV

It may interest you to know that today, two thousand years later, Nazareth is known as "the Arab capital of Israel". This is because the population of the city is composed for the most part of Arab citizens of Israel; the majority of whom are Muslim, and not Jewish or Christian.

This pagan influence on the Jews is not the only thing that was happening at that time in Israel's history. As I pointed out a moment ago, from the time that Jesus began His public ministry, He and His message were not well-received by those who were in power; particularly not by those people who held religious power; that is, the Scribes and the Pharisees. In spite of this rejection by the Jewish religious authorities, we know that the common people heard Jesus gladly, as we see by this verse:

"David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly."
Mark 12:37, KJV

Compared to the cold, rigid system of legalistic observance of the Torah to the last letter, Jesus' vibrant doctrine of love, caring and sharing was too radical, and too liberal,

for the religionists of that day. Jesus fully exposed their greedy materialism, their pompous self-satisfaction, their oppression of the common people, and their hypocrisy. The Jewish leadership -- both the political and the religious leadership -- did not want Jesus upsetting the status quo. Most importantly, they weren't about to allow Him to strain their cozy relationship with the government in Rome, which already breathed down their necks. Thus, they accused Him of treason and sedition against Rome, and it worked.

While those conspiratorial Jews were eventually "successful" in ridding themselves of Jesus -- at least so they thought -- they had not foreseen the greater "threat" which would soon arrive in the form of His radical followers who would continue to carry His message of Love and Salvation into all the world. Following the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, which we find in the opening verses of chapter two of the Book of Acts, the situation got out of hand as far as the Jewish Elders were concerned. To aggravate the situation further, some of their own priests were being won over to the Christian faith, as we see by the following verse. This development alone must have made the "threat" posed by the Apostles seem even greater in the eyes of the Scribes and the Pharisees:

"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
Acts 6:7, KJV

Thus, the jealous Jewish religionists devised a devious plan to destroy the young Christian Church, before it destroyed their comfortable relationship with the Romans, and stripped them of their power and control over the masses. In looking back now, it seems that they may have devised a two-pronged attack. In other words, while they would continue to attack from without, they would also attack from within as well by infiltrating the ranks of the Disciples. We find evidence of this throughout the Book of Acts, as well as in a number of the Epistles. Jesus had earlier warned His followers of this very danger when He said the following:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."
Matthew 7:15, KJV

Thus, following their well-thought-out plan, the Early Church was infiltrated by legalistic Jews who posed as brethren, in order to try to enforce the Torah code -- that is, the Laws of Moses -- on the Disciples who had been liberated through the Blood of Christ. The Apostles Peter, John and Paul warned the Disciples about this encroaching danger, as we can see by the following sample verses:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."
Acts 20:28-30, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."
Romans 16:17, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15, KJV

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
Galatians 1:6-9, KJV

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"
Galatians 2:4, KJV

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."
Philippians 3:2, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"
1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."
1 Timothy 6:3-5, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"
2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and

contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Titus 3:9-11, KJV

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." 2 Peter 2:1-2, KJV

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." 1 John 2:18-19, KJV

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 1:9-11, KJV

In addition to infiltration by false Jewish brethren, as well as verbal attacks, physical persecution also became the order of the day; first by the Jewish religious authorities, and in the years ahead by Rome itself. As I explain in the article "A Biblical Cafeteria, Or the Whole Course?", once Saul of Tarsus was transformed from being a zealous Pharisee who was devoted to persecuting, imprisoning and killing Christians, to becoming one of the Lord's most faithful servants of the First Century, not only did he feel the wrath of his former Jewish brethren, but in time he experienced the wrath of Rome as well. Following are verses where some of Paul's sufferings are mentioned:

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." Acts 16:19-24, KJV

"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:" Acts 24:5, KJV

"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;"
2 Corinthians 6:4-5, KJV

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."
2 Corinthians 11:23-27, KJV

As many of you will already know, Paul eventually gave his life for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, he mentions his approaching martyrdom in the following verses that are found in two of his Epistles:

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."
Philippians 1:19-26, KJV

"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."
Philippians 2:16-17, KJV

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
2 Timothy 4:6-8, KJV

Paul was not alone. From the earliest chapters of the Book of Acts, we discover that Peter and the other Apostles were likewise persecuted by the Jewish religious authorities -- that is, the Sanhedrin -- and later by King Herod as well. Consider the following example verses that are found in the

Book of Acts:

"Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison."

Acts 5:17-18, KJV

"When they [the Jews] heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him [Stephen] with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Acts 7:54-8:1-3, KJV

"Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people."

Acts 12:1-4, KJV

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

Acts 26:9-11, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

THE BOOK OF ENOCH : TRUTH OR HERESY? : PART 2

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 25, 1997

Last Updated : June 2, 2012

Most Of The Apostles Were Martyred, Jesus Prophecies Peter's Martyrdom, Church Fractures Several Hundred Years After Book Of Acts, False Doctrines Abound, Verses Regarding Spiritual And Doctrinal Unity, Persecution By Roman Emperors, Fourth Century Compromise By Church Fathers, Book Of Enoch Accepted By First Century Christians And Early Church Leaders, Fourth Century Church Fathers Reject Book Of Enoch, Who To Believe: Apostles Or Later Church Fathers, Different Canons Over The Centuries, The Bible Has Been Manipulated By Political And Religious Forces, Debate Regarding Authenticity Of Book Of Revelation, Our Christian Faith Influenced And Dictated By Biblical Canon We Have Been Given, Things We May Never Know Or Believe, Decisions Affected By Compromise With The Roman Government, Certain Bible Books Have Been Lost Forever, The Controversial And Heretical Books Are Removed From The Canon, Beware Of False Doctrines, Did The Church Fathers Go Too Far, Manuscripts Hidden For Many Centuries In The Vatican Library, Vatican Control Over Scriptural Interpretation And Salvation, Franco Zeffirelli's Radical Movie "Brother Son, Sister Moon", Scriptural Foundation For Forsaking All Worldly Possessions, Francis' Audience With Pope Innocent III, Contrast Between Franciscan Monks' Poverty And Opulence Of Roman Pope's Court, The Roman Catholic Church Maintained The Scriptures In Latin, God's Warning To Selfish False Shepherds Of Ancient Israel, Scriptural Mandate To Feed God's Sheep, Sins Of Catholicism

Aside from the Apostle John -- who is believed to have died a natural death on the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea -- and Judas Iscariot, the Lord's betrayer -- who we know chose to commit suicide -- tradition holds that most -- if not all -- of the remaining Apostles died a martyr's death. In fact, Jesus prophesied the Apostle Peter's martyrdom when He said the following near the end of the Gospel of John:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."
John 21:18-19, KJV

Within a few hundred years of the events which are described for us in the Book of Acts, the situation within the Lord's Church had changed considerably. Despite warnings from the Lord Himself and the Apostles, infiltration by false Jewish brethren had taken its toll and false doctrines abounded, no doubt even more than what had already occurred by the latter half of the First Century. With all of the Apostles now gone from the scene, and thus unable to correct any errors which may have crept into the Church, the doctrinal and spiritual

unity that is described for us in the following verses had become heavily polluted by misguided ideas and the doctrines and traditions of men, some of whom were only self-serving wolves within the Lord's Church:

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are . . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

John 17:11, 21-23, KJV

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John 10:16, KJV

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 15:6, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

2 Corinthians 13:11, KJV

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"

Ephesians 4:1-3, KJV

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

Philippians 1:27, KJV

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

Philippians 2:2, KJV

To aggravate the situation within the Church even more, many years of an unpredictable tide of persecution by one Roman emperor after another -- from Nero to Diocletian -- had also taken a very heavy toll. The Lord's Church was growing weak, tired and battle-weary. Thanks to the early missionary work of the Apostles and other Christians such as Paul, Barnabas, Mark John, Silas, Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla, and Titus,

while the Church had made inroads into Roman society -- even infiltrating Roman high society -- nevertheless, it remained in a very precarious position. At certain points, Christians were even allowed to own property, while at other times they occupied the lowest rung of Roman society and were heavily persecuted, imprisoned and killed. The tide of persecution changed depending on the emperors who were in power.

The end result of these various factors is that they made the Church very vulnerable to compromise, and compromise is exactly what some of the bishops eventually sought during the Fourth Century reign of Emperor Constantine I -- son of Emperor Constantius -- who is also known as Constantine the Great. I discuss this process of compromise in more detail in such articles as "Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope". Through this compromise with the Roman world of that era by certain Christian bishops, the so-called "Holy Mother Church" slowly rose to power, and began to gain control of the minds and spirits of the masses of the Roman Empire. This also included controlling and determining what was to be taught as sound Christian doctrine.

Prior to this time -- including during the First Century -- there were a number of books, scrolls and manuscripts which the Early Christians apparently regarded as being Divinely Inspired. At the very least, they seem to have viewed them with some undetermined level of importance. If this were not the case, it does not seem likely that they would include quotes from these sources in the books which were accepted in the Biblical canon years later, as I will be discussing in more detail in a moment. This included certain quotes from -- or at least implied references to -- the Book of Enoch.

Aside from the original Apostles and Disciples, what is also known is that during the first few hundred years after our faith was founded, many of the Early Church leaders did in fact accept the Book of Enoch as Inspired Text; that is, as bona fide Scripture. These included such men as Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus and Tertullian. Furthermore, around 200 AD, Tertullian suggested that the Book of Enoch had been rejected by the Jews because it contains certain prophecies which pertain to Jesus Christ. While the debate concerning the authenticity and Divine Inspiration of the Book of Enoch continued, it seems that by the Fourth Century, the consensus amongst the Church Fathers was to reject it. Thus, it was omitted from the Biblical canon by most of the Christian Church from that point in time and forward.

The question in my mind is this: Why would at least some of the First Century Apostles and Disciples, as well as some of the early Church Fathers, accept the Book of Enoch as being Divinely Inspired, only to have it soundly rejected a few hundred years later by other Church Fathers? What happened during that interval which ultimately resulted in the sound rejection of the Book of Enoch? Perhaps an equally important question we should ask ourselves is why we should trust the judgment of later Church Fathers more than the opinion of the First Century Apostles and Disciples who embraced the Book of Enoch as Inspired Text.

While you are thinking about these questions, let me remind

you again that the Christian Scriptures we possess today have not always been in their current form. As I explained in part one, there have been many different canons proposed over the centuries; and even today, the very same canon is not used by Christian churches all around the world. You can confirm this fact for yourself simply by conducting your own research, and using the search term "Biblical canon". What you will learn is that our beloved Bible has been subjected to considerable manipulation and influence by a wide body of political and religious forces over the centuries.

Some of you may even be surprised to learn that the Book of Revelation has not always been accepted as Divinely Inspired text either. In fact, even today it is not read within the Divine Liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Similar to the Book of Enoch, the Divine Inspiration of the Apocalypse -- or Book of Revelation -- was a source of debate for a few hundred years after John first wrote it. Depending on which source you choose to believe, it was not accepted as a part of the Biblical canon until either the late Fourth Century -- at the Council of Carthage in 397 AD -- or possibly a few decades later at the Council of 419 AD.

While he eventually changed his mind, even the well-known Sixteenth Century reformer Martin Luther had some serious doubts concerning the Book of Revelation. Luther regarded it as a questionable document "neither apostolic nor prophetic" in which "Christ is neither taught nor known in it." While fellow reformer John Calvin accepted the Book of Revelation as being canonical, at the same time, it was the only New Testament Book for which he never wrote a commentary.

My point in sharing this information with you is simply this: What we Christians accept and believe to be Divine Truth in our modern day, is both affected and determined by decisions which were made many centuries ago. Our Christian faith is in large part based upon, influenced by, and in fact dictated by what we have been allowed to read. For the vast majority of Christians, this means only the books which the early Church Fathers deemed appropriate to include in the Biblical canon. If for whatever their reasons, they decided to not include certain books in the canon, most Christians today won't even know about them, unless they are willing to exercise personal initiative, and conduct Biblical research of their own.

Stated another way, there are quite possibly a lot of things which we Christians should know and believe today which we don't, simply because we have not been given the opportunity to learn about them. Why is this? Because the Church Fathers of centuries past felt that they should not be included in the Bible. Maybe they felt that a certain Book wasn't really Divinely Inspired. Perhaps they determined that another Book was too controversial or too difficult to understand. Maybe there were some texts which contained particular doctrines which the Church Fathers of that era personally did not like or embrace, and which they did not want Christians to know or to learn, so they left out those books as well.

While we may not fully understand why certain books were not included in the canon, being as these actions were taken so long ago, I suspect that some of the decisions may have been affected by the compromise which was made by certain bishops

with the Roman authorities during that time. In other words, while their rejection of certain manuscripts may have been partially motivated by their honest desire to purge our faith of questionable doctrines and obvious heresies, at the same time, I have to wonder if the Church Fathers may have wanted to remove anything which might seem offensive, or which might make the Church less acceptable to Emperor Constantine and his successors. After all, as I have already pointed out, at that time in history, there were certain Church leaders who were very interested in acquiring power and wealth, as well as in spreading the Church's influence throughout the Roman Empire. Again, please refer to such articles as "Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope".

Whatever the case may be, as is clearly evidenced by the Book of Enoch, the battle involving the Book of Revelation, and no doubt other books as well, by the Fourth Century, the Church Fathers had already removed certain books, and continued to remove some books, from the canon. As I said a moment ago, a few of the known reasons why certain books were removed from the Biblical canon is because either they were considered to be uninspired text, or because they contained spurious text, or because they contained doctrines which the Church Fathers regarded as being heretical in nature.

Exactly how many books they ultimately removed, I suppose we will never know. The only evidence we have to go by are the remaining Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical Works which have survived time, decay and the wrath of man. Many of these can easily be accessed online by any skilled computer user. Of course, there are undoubtedly many other ancient books and manuscripts which have been lost forever due to a variety of reasons.

On one hand, we can view these historical developments as a good thing in that the Church Fathers wanted to protect the Christian Church from false doctrines and other spiritual dangers. As we saw in part one, the Church has actually been plagued by false brethren and false doctrines since it was first established during the First Century. Following are a few more verses where we are warned to beware of doctrines which are contrary to the teachings of Christ and the first Apostles:

"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."
Matthew 16:12, KJV

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"
Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."
Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."
1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

On the other hand, it would seem that the Church Fathers made the decision that the common man did not possess the spiritual integrity or the wisdom to discern between good and evil in the manuscripts which were available at that particular time. While this is true even in our modern day, especially with so much deceptive nonsense available on the Internet, is it possible that in certain instances, some of the Early Church bishops may have been overly zealous, and may have purged out some manuscripts which should really have been retained in the Biblical canon?

Regardless, what would eventually become the "Holy Mother Church" delegated itself the responsibility of deciding what they -- and we -- should and should not read. Thus, as I said earlier, since that time, our faith has been carefully molded for us by others, because we can only believe in what we are allowed to read; and that has been determined for centuries by the religious powers-that-be. I sometimes wonder how many ancient books and manuscripts remain hidden away from public view in the vaults of the Vatican library. How many truths have we been denied, simply because it is not convenient for the "Holy Mother Church" to reveal them to us?

This is particularly true in the case of the Roman Catholic faithful; because to this present day, the "Holy See" claims to possess the sole authority for interpreting and explaining the Scriptures to the masses. Worse yet, this very same "Holy Mother Church" likewise claims to be the only entity on Earth which possesses the God-given authority to forgive sins, and to grant Salvation to the spiritually lost masses. As I point out in other articles, this claim is utterly false.

I can still recall how as a young Catholic decades ago, our local church had the practice of displaying a list near the back of the church which advised us of which movies we were permitted to see as members of the Catholic Church. While it was commendable that our Catholic shepherds would go to such lengths to ensure the spiritual integrity of their flock, at the same time, looking back now years later, it was really an insult to one's intelligence, and suggested that our parents did not possess the wisdom to decide for themselves which movies were appropriate for themselves, or for their children.

Some of you who are old enough will remember that in 1972, Italian director Franco Zeffirelli released a very beautiful and inspiring film called "Brother Sun, Sister Moon". This amazing movie dealt with the life of Saint Francis of Assisi and St. Claire. To say the least, the movie was very radical for its time, and caused no small stir within the Catholic Church. One reason for the strong backlash by the church -- the movie was banned in Italy for a time -- is the fact that it juxtaposed sincere, pure and simple faith in God with the hypocrisy and wealth of the "Holy Mother Church" in a very effective manner.

In one very moving scene, Francis learns of the true nature of the textile business that is operated by his very worldly father; a business which he was due to inherit. Deep in the hot, steam-filled cellars, he discovers the most miserable people -- both very young and very old -- washing and dying fabrics that will be purchased by the church, as well as by other rich clients. So moved by their awful plight, Francis begins to throw the expensive fabrics out the windows, which seriously angers his father to the point that he wants to disown his son.

In another very striking scene that occurs after the previous incident, and prior to Francis beginning his order of monks -- which must have left the Roman Catholic hierarchy of the 1970's aghast -- St. Francis removes all of his clothes and stands stark naked in the courtyard. This act symbolized his total renouncement of all of his worldly possessions, and his family as well. That Francis would do this should not surprise us. After all, his act of forsaking all of his possessions is fully supported by the Scriptures, as we can determine by the following verses:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."
Matthew 10:34-38, KJV

"Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."
Matthew 12:47-50, KJV

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."
Matthew 19:29, KJV

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
Mark 10:29-30, KJV

"Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Mark 13:12-13, KJV

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."
Luke 9:23-24, KJV

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law."
Luke 12:51-53, KJV

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."
Luke 14:26-33, KJV

When Francis and a small group of his Christian brothers are finally given an audience with Pope Innocent III in Rome, the contrast between their poverty and the opulence of the Pope's court is shocking to say the least. In a moment of what can only be described as Divine Inspiration, Francis leaves off from reading from his prepared script, and begins to speak to Pope Innocent III from his heart, by quoting from the Sermon on the Mount. In particular, he quotes most of the following:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap,

nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:19-33, KJV

As was to be expected, very similar to the Scribes and the Pharisees of centuries earlier who were greatly offended by Jesus' teachings, the pompous, well-dressed ecclesiastics in the great basilica are outraged that a poor, beggarly monk would even dare to preach to them regarding the Scriptures, and Francis and his group are swiftly and angrily removed from their presence. However, Pope Innocent III is touched by Francis' innocence and simplicity, and no doubt convicted by the words which were spoken by Francis. Thus, he orders that Francis and his fellow monks be brought back into his presence. Then, to the surprise of all present, Innocent III blesses Francis and his group, bows to the floor and kisses Francis' feet, and informs him that he -- meaning Francis -- has put them all to shame.

Even if you are not a Roman Catholic -- I am not -- I would encourage you to see the movie if you have an opportunity to do so. You will quickly understand why the Roman Catholic Church of that period did not like this movie, and even had it banned in Italy for a time.

In addition to removing certain books from the Biblical canon, and falsely proclaiming that it alone possesses the authority to properly interpret the Scriptures, something else which the so-called "Holy Mother Church" did in order to preserve and ensure its power and control over the poor masses, was to maintain the Scriptures in Latin. Obviously, this was not the language of the common man. Whereas Jesus and His Disciples had made His teachings freely available to all men, teaching in the synagogues, publicly and from house to house, once the Roman Catholic Church rose to power, the Scriptures became available only to learned scholars. I am reminded of the Lord's stiff warning to the false shepherds of ancient Israel who likewise failed to feed their flocks:

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock . . . As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and

fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them."

Ezekiel 34:2-3, 8-10, KJV

While the "Holy See" makes false claims of being descended directly from the Apostle Peter, the truth of the matter is that for many centuries it failed to take heed to Peter's own admonition regarding being faithful to feed the Lord's flocks, as we can see by the following verse:

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

1 Peter 5:2-3, KJV

Truly, the Roman Catholic Church is guilty of these very same sins. The RCC has become the biggest, fattest, richest, most worldly and complacent branch of Christianity in our modern day. This she has achieved at the expense of her flocks, whom she rapes like ignorant sheep. Later on in church history, we find even more sinister and horrible attempts by this false religion to control the common man's beliefs, as well as his spiritual destiny. Thanks to Tomas Torquemada -- the first Grand Inquisitor -- and those who followed in his footsteps, we are all familiar with the atrocities which were committed during the time of the Spanish Inquisition. These very same despicable acts were repeated hundreds of years later during the time of the Reformation when, according to some sources, millions of people were persecuted, hunted down, tortured and killed in horrible ways -- including being burned at the stake -- if they failed to embrace the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church.

Surely, this is not the religion that was taught to us by Jesus and His First Disciples. This was a religion of fear, and not a religion of love.

Please go to part three for the conclusion of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

THE BOOK OF ENOCH : TRUTH OR HERESY? : PART 3

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Published On : September 25, 1997

Last Updated : June 2, 2012

Book Of Enoch Is Rejected By Jews And By Certain Early Church

Fathers, The Book Of Tobit Raphael And Angelic Visitations In The Bible, Sometimes We Entertain Angels Unawares, The Fallen Angels And The Nephilim In The Book Of Genesis, Apostle Peter Describes How Jesus Went To Preach To The Fallen Angels Who Are Imprisoned In The Bowels Of The Earth, Jude Mentions How Fallen Angels Abandoned Their Heavenly Habitation And Are Now Imprisoned Deep In The Earth, Enoch Zechariah And Jude Each Describe Christ's Glorious Return, Jesus And John Mention The Lord's Return, Angelic Visitations, Elisha And God's Chariots Of Fire, Azazel: The Scapegoat Of The High Priest, Martyrdom Of The Prophet Isaiah, Young Christians Should Concentrate On The Canon And Stay Away From Questionable Unbiblical Books, Acquire Strong Foundation In God's Word In Order To Recognize What Is False, My Views Regarding The Book Of Enoch, Doubtful Nature Of Pseudepigraphical And Apocryphal Writings, Beware Of The Deceptions Of Satan Who Is The False Angel Of Light, Be Open To The Truth And Mine The Treasures Of God's Word, Concluding Remarks, Suggested Additional Reading Resources

Returning to our discussion concerning the Book of Enoch, if we consider the radical information that is contained in this ancient manuscript, it should not surprise us that this book was rejected by some of the early Church Fathers, as well as by some of the Jews even before that. As I mentioned in part one, the notion of Fallen Angels being capable of rebelling against God, possessing the power to materialize in physical bodies, and engaging in sexual intercourse with human women, which in itself resulted in the birth of great giants, was simply unacceptable to those tight-collared religionists of centuries ago. In their eyes, to embrace such beliefs was nothing short of heresy and blasphemy. To some of them, the Book of Enoch was a deceptive work of Satan which was worthy to be burned.

At the same time, it seems rather odd to me that Catholics have no problem accepting other Angelic Encounters. We find one clear example in the Book of Tobit, which is a part of the Apocrypha, which is included in the Catholic Bible, and which used to be included in the King James Version of the Bible as well. In this particular story, an Archangel by the name of Raphael takes on human form in order to assist in a wedding arrangement. Raphael also heals an old man's eyes. As I explain in articles such as "Sex, a Bowl of Soup, and the Nature of Angels" and "Great Cloud of Witnesses: God's Holy Ghosts?", even in the accepted canon, we discover a number of stories which involve Angelic Visitations. The Apostle Paul also informs us that sometimes we entertain Angels without even realizing it. Consider this verse:

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."
Hebrews 13:2, KJV

Having said that, let us take a brief look at the account of the Watchers -- that is, the Fallen Angels -- as it is found in Genesis chapter six. Following is the entire story as it was written by Moses:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the

sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."
Genesis 6:1-7, KJV

As the previous verses demonstrate, this union of beautiful human women and rebellious Fallen Angels -- referred to here as "the sons of God" -- ultimately resulted in the birth of a race of wicked, violent giants which the Bible refers to as the Nephilim. This word is derived from the Hebrew word "nephil" -- or "nephil" -- which is translated as "giant". According to the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon, "nephil" is derived from earlier words which mean "to fall" or "the fallen ones". Thus, the Nephilim were in reality the children of the Fallen Angels.

As I stated at the beginning of this series, the previous account is a very abbreviated version of the story compared to the much more detailed information which can be found in the Book of Enoch. It seems to me that the fact that Moses even describes this event in Genesis is a clear indication that he was probably aware of -- and apparently accepted -- the writings of his forefather, Enoch. Furthermore, Moses must have viewed Enoch's writings as Divinely Inspired. Why else would he mention them? In fact, as I point out in the series entitled "Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis", and as is readily apparent in the previous verses, the story of the Fallen Angels and the Nephilim giants is very central to our understanding concerning why the Great Flood occurred about one hundred and twenty years later.

Moses is not the only person in the Bible who mentions the events which are described more fully in the Book of Enoch. Allow me to share with you some additional verses from the New Testament which deal with the fate of the Fallen Angels who rebelled against the Lord in the days of the Patriarch Noah. In his first Epistle, the Apostle Peter describes for us how following His Crucifixion, Jesus went to preach to the Fallen Angels who are imprisoned deep in the bowels of the Earth:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

1 Peter 3:18-20, KJV

In his second Epistle, while writing about the fate of false prophets, Peter again makes mention of the imprisonment of the Watchers -- that is, the Fallen Angels -- which occurred during the days of the Patriarch Noah, as we see here:

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;"

2 Peter 2:4-5, KJV

As you can see, we are clearly told by Peter that the Fallen Angels sinned against God when they abandoned their Heavenly Abode, descended to the Earth, and proceeded to engage in sexual intercourse with human women. As a result, they were "cast . . . down to hell, and delivered . . . into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

As with Moses, it seems apparent that Peter must have either heard of these events directly from Jesus Himself, or maybe he read about them in some other source. Considering that some of the early Church Fathers embraced the Book of Enoch as Divinely Inspired text, I suspect that the book was still in wide circulation during the First Century, and was thus read by the Apostles and the Disciples.

Regardless of the actual source of the information, the main point to consider is that Peter believed it, he talked about it, and wrote about it. In my view, this adds more support for the authenticity and Divine Inspiration of the Book of Enoch. Moses and Peter were not the only ones to reference events which are more amply discussed in the Book of Enoch. In his Epistle, Jude -- who was the brother of James, and probably the biological brother of Jesus as well -- briefly mentions the fate of the Fallen Angels. In fact, in his short letter, Jude makes several references to the Book of Enoch. Following is the first one regarding the Fallen Angels:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

Jude 1:6, KJV

As a side note, it may interest you to know that some of the early Church Fathers even considered the Epistle of Jude to not be canonical, precisely because it refers directly to the Book of Enoch, as in the previous verse.

Thus we see three clear examples where writers of the Bible refer to events concerning the Fallen Angels which are amply described in a work -- that is, the Book of Enoch -- which has been condemned and banned by most of modern Christianity. If such Christians accept the Divine Inspiration of the words of Moses, Peter and Jude who each reference the writings of Enoch, why do they turn around and reject the Book of Enoch? The previous examples are not the only places where the Book of Enoch appears to be referenced in the Holy Scriptures. In describing Christ's Return when He will stand upon the Mount

of Olives just prior to the Battle of Armageddon, the Prophet Zechariah wrote the following. Please also take note of the numerical reference as well:

"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Zechariah 14:4-5, KJV

Notice in particular the very last part of verse five where Zechariah says ". . . and the LORD my God shall come, and all of the saints with thee." In the New Testament, Jude reminds us that Enoch also wrote of these very same events. Notice the similarities between the Scripture references for the Book of Zechariah, and the Epistle of Jude. Is this simply a coincidence?:

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Jude 1:14-15, KJV

Now let us take a look at exactly what Enoch said regarding this same earth-shaking event. As you will see, Jude quotes Enoch almost word-for-word. This demonstrates that Jude was very familiar with Enoch's writings, and that he must have esteemed them quite a bit. After all, one does not normally quote someone unless he has some respect for what the other person has said:

"And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones To execute judgement upon all, And to destroy all the ungodly: And to convict all flesh Of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed, And of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Book of Enoch 1:9-10

In the eighth chapter of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus also made a similar statement concerning His Return when He said the following:

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:38, KJV

In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John also provides us with a vivid description of Jesus returning with the Heavenly Host in order to engage in the Battle of Armageddon, as we

see by the following verses:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Revelation 19:11-14, KJV

As I mentioned earlier, in some of my other articles, I also discuss some of the Angelic Visitations which can be found in the pages of the Bible. In the following account concerning the Prophet Elisha, we again find mention of God's Heavenly Host which Zechariah, Jesus, Jude, John and Enoch all spoke about:

"And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha."

2 Kings 6:16-18, KJV

This incident is yet another clear example of something that is amply discussed in the Bible -- that is, the Heavenly Host -- as well as in the Book of Enoch. Despite this fact, some modern-day Christians readily accept that the writers of the Bible were Divinely Inspired as they wrote their books; yet at the same time, they adamantly reject the possibility that the Book of Enoch may also be Divinely Inspired.

Another veiled reference to the Book Of Enoch can be found in the Book of Leviticus where the duties and responsibilities of Aaron the High Priest are discussed. Now, unless you are Jewish and can read Hebrew, you may never even realize that this particular connection to the Book of Enoch exists. The reason why this is so is because the English equivalent is used instead of the original Hebrew name; which is found in certain versions of the Bible other than the KJV. In the sixth chapter of Leviticus we find the following verse:

"And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat . . . But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness . . . And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp."

Leviticus 16:8, 10, 26, KJV

As I explain in the article entitled "Judgment of Azazel: Scapegoat of the High Priest", this set of verses concerning Aaron sacrificing a bullock as a sin offering, followed by

choosing between the two goats, has some very deep spiritual implications. What is important for our current discussion is the fact that in the original Hebrew language, the word that is translated as "scapegoat" in the above verse is "azazel". Many people have never heard of this word, although it has been used in a number of Hollywood movies in recent decades.

However, if you read the Book of Enoch, you will discover that Azazel happens to be the name of one of the leaders of the two hundred Fallen Angels who rebelled against God, left their Heavenly Abode, descended to the Earth on Mount Hermon in the present-day Golan Heights, and then engaged in sexual intercourse with human women, thus resulting in the birth of the giant Nephilim. These rebels from Heaven taught humanity many evil works as well, according to the Book of Enoch, as we can determine by the following verses:

"And Azazel taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways."
Book of Enoch 8:1-3a

"Thou seest what Azazel hath done, who hath taught all unrighteousness on earth and revealed the eternal secrets which were (preserved) in heaven, which men were striving to learn:"
Book of Enoch 9:6b-7a

"And again the Lord said to Raphael: 'Bind Azazel hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness: and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudael, and cast him therein. And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there for ever, and cover his face that he may not see light. And on the day of the great judgement he shall be cast into the fire. And heal the earth which the angels have corrupted, and proclaim the healing of the earth, that they may heal the plague, and that all the children of men may not perish through all the secret things that the Watchers have disclosed and have taught their sons. And the whole earth has been corrupted through the works that were taught by Azazel: to him ascribe all sin.'"
Book of Enoch 10:4-8

"And Enoch went and said: 'Azazel, thou shalt have no peace: a severe sentence has gone forth against thee to put thee in bonds: And thou shalt not have toleration nor request granted to thee, because of the unrighteousness which thou hast taught, and because of all the works of godlessness and unrighteousness and sin which thou hast shown to men.'"
Book of Enoch 13:1-3

"And I asked the angel of peace who went with me, saying: 'For whom are these chains being prepared?' And he said unto me: 'These are being prepared for the hosts of Azazel, so that they may take them and cast them into the abyss of complete condemnation, and they shall cover their jaws with rough stones as the Lord of Spirits commanded.'"

Book of Enoch 54:4-5

"Ye mighty kings who dwell on the earth, ye shall have to behold Mine Elect One, how he sits on the throne of glory and judges Azazel, and all his associates, and all his hosts in the name of the Lord of Spirits."

Book of Enoch 55:4

"And after this judgement they shall terrify and make them to tremble because they have shown this to those who dwell on the earth. And behold the names of those angels [and these are their names: the first of them is Samjaza, the second Artaqifa, and the third Armen, the fourth Kokabel, the fifth Turael, the sixth Rumjal, the seventh Danjal, the eighth Neqael, the ninth Baraqel, the tenth Azazel, the eleventh Armaros, the twelfth Batarjal, the thirteenth Busasejal, the fourteenth Hananel, the fifteenth Turel, and the sixteenth Simapesiel, the seventeenth Jetrel, the eighteenth Tumael, the nineteenth Turel, the twentieth Rumael, the twenty-first Azazel. And these are the chiefs of their angels and their names, and their chief ones over hundreds and over fifties and over tens]."

Book of Enoch 69:1-3

So while it isn't apparent in the KJV Bible, as the previous verses reveal, Azazel is actually one of the leaders of the Watchers -- or Grigori as they are also known -- who at this current time are bound in chains in the dark interior of the Earth, waiting for their day of judgment. If you would like to learn more about this topic, please consider reading the series entitled "Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universalism".

The point I wish to make is that were it not for the Book of Enoch, this mention of Azazel in the King James Version of the Bible would more than likely be overlooked by a lot of people. What I also find interesting is the fact that to my knowledge, these are the only verses in the entire King James Bible where there is even a veiled reference to the sins of Azazel and his companions.

Another possible reference to a little-known Apocryphal Work can be found in the eleventh chapter of the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. In this chapter, Paul expounds on the importance of having faith, and mentions many of the heroes of faith of the Old Testament. In one particular verse, while discussing how some of these heroes of faith were martyred, Paul mentions the fact that some of the Old Testament Saints were sawn asunder. In case you don't know what that actually signifies, it means that the Prophets of God were literally cut in half with a two-man saw while they were still alive, as we see here:

"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;"
Hebrews 11:37, KJV

Exactly how does Paul know about this? Did someone tell him this? Did he read about it somewhere? Were people still being cut in half even in Paul's day? One possibility is that Paul may have read "The Martyrdom of the Prophet Isaiah by King Manasseh". This account very graphically describes how after

many years of faithfully prophesying the Word of the Lord, the Prophet Isaiah was strapped in and literally cut in half. According to the manuscript, Isaiah kept praising the Lord the entire time. Is there really any truth to this story? I honestly do not know; but at the very least, it provides a basis for what the Apostle Paul wrote regarding the heroes of faith being "sawn asunder" in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Despite the fact that Paul may possibly be referring to "The Martyrdom of the Prophet Isaiah by King Manasseh", some of the early Church Fathers apparently made the decision that we had no business reading about it. Thus, just like the Book of Enoch, it was not included in the Biblical canon, and we can only wonder how many other ancient manuscripts did not make the grade, when perhaps they should have been included in the canon.

Before concluding this series, allow me to offer a word of advice for my readers. While I personally will often conduct research utilizing unbiblical materials in order to fill in informational gaps in my articles, including Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical works, I do not recommend this practice for Christians who are still very young in the faith. As the Apostle Paul admonished his readers in his Epistle to the Hebrews:

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
Hebrews 5:12-14, KJV

Until you have acquired a solid foundation in the recognized Word of God -- that is, the canon -- it is probably best for you to stay away from these other questionable writings. The reason why I suggest this to you is quite simple. Until you have been a Christian for a while, and have reached a level of spiritual maturity where you can differentiate between what is truly inspired by God's Spirit, and what is not, it is dangerous to become involved with unbiblical manuscripts and books. As I explain in articles such as "2012: New Age Deception and Psychobabble", "Lying Wonders of the Endtime" and "Age of Deception, Age of Delusion", at this current time there is a great deal of deception in the world, and it is only going to get worse as we draw closer to the end of man's reign upon the Earth. Even books which appear to be based on the Bible may be full of deception.

The best way to differentiate between what is true and what is false insofar as spiritual truth is concerned, is simply by studying the Bible until you know it inside and out. This is precisely what bank tellers must do. In other words, they learn to recognize all of the unique attributes of the real currency of their land, so that whenever a false bill comes along, they will immediately be able to identify it as such. In the same manner, Christians must diligently study the Word of God in order to recognize the true Spirit of God, so that we are not deceived by false teachings, or by books which

falsely claim to be the inspired Word of God. As the Apostle Paul wrote in his second Epistle to Timothy:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

In my case, I have been studying God's Word for over forty years now. Because of this fact, I feel that I have reached a point in my spiritual growth where I can safely explore other books which I might have previously avoided. Such is the case with the Book Of Enoch. As I stated at the beginning of this series, it is a powerful book. I was definitely moved by its contents; although I must admit that some of it is even too profound for me to understand. Due to the support that I have found for it in the King James Version of the Bible, I do not outright reject it, or consider it heretical in nature. Yet at the same time, neither have I reached a point where I fully embrace it.

Concerning the level of accuracy of the Book of Enoch, I honestly do not know. Some of it is difficult to believe, even for me. What I can say is that it seems that with time, all works tend to become a bit exaggerated or distorted so that some truths are lost. This is precisely how some myths are born. As far as its Divine Inspiration is concerned, if I were to compare the Book of Enoch with the books of the Maccabees, I would easily choose the Book of Enoch over the books of the Maccabees. If you would like to read the actual Book of Enoch, please click on the link below:

<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net/Articles-Non-EPN/index.html#Enoch>

In conclusion, there are many other pseudepigraphical and apocryphal writings in addition to the Book of Enoch. Due to my personal time constraints, I have not read them all yet. However, of the ones which I have read, I will readily admit that I have some serious reservations regarding quite a few of them, and they do not seem to be Divinely Inspired to me. It is important that we remember that Satan is a liar and a deceiver, and he will use all manner of deception in order to trick us into accepting his lies, including manuscripts which were not inspired by the Spirit of God; so please be aware of this fact, and remember verses such as these:

". . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44b, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

At the same time, let us also remember that there are many precious jewels, wonderful truths and hidden treasures to be

found in God's Word. However, if we are too close-minded and set in our ways, we may never see them, or be able to mine them out. As you may recall, Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a treasure on a number of occasions, as we can see by verses such as the following:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

Matthew 13:44, KJV

"Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

Matthew 13:52, KJV

By the Grace of God, we can all learn new things everyday if we are willing to launch out into the depths of God's Word. Sometimes the things which the Lord chooses to reveal to us may contradict what we have previously believed. When this happens, we must be willing to admit that our understanding was clouded, and simply accept the new truth which He has revealed to us. Of course, at the same time, it is also my personal belief that the Lord will never give us anything which contradicts what is already contained in His Word.

Just remember that we cannot be afraid to change; otherwise we may lose all opportunities for spiritual growth. This is precisely the mistake that the Jewish Elders made when they chose to reject Jesus. Because they were satisfied with what they already had, and because they rejected the Light of the World, Jesus told them that they were blind leaders of the blind who were walking in darkness. We must ask ourselves: How much Light and Truth are we willing to accept?

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. I trust that it has been a blessing and an inspiration in your life. If you have enjoyed reading this series, I ask that you please consider sharing its URL link with your online friends. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would also very much appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly! For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, and which are likewise located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server:

2012: New Age Deception and Psychobabble
A Biblical Cafeteria, Or the Whole Course?
Age of Deception, Age of Delusion
Great Cloud Of Witnesses: God's Holy Ghosts?
Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universalism
Judgment of Azazel: Scapegoat of the High Priest
Lying Wonders of the Endtime
Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope
Revelation's Babylon the Great
Sex, a Bowl of Soup, and the Nature of Angels

The Children of God and Politics
The Fruits of Disobedience

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>