

Who Was Enoch?

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Contents

1	Genesis Assumes Knowledge of Enoch	3
1.1	Genesis 10:8–10	4
1.2	Genesis 10:25	4
1.3	Genesis 6:1–4	4
1.4	Genesis 5:21–24	5
2	The New Testament Assumes Knowledge Of Enoch	6
2.1	Luke 3:37	6
2.2	Hebrews 11:5	6
2.3	Jude 1:14–15	7
3	A Strong Tradition Did Exist In The First Century	8
3.1	The Book of Enoch — I Enoch	9
3.1.1	Description	9
3.1.2	Story of the Book of Watchers	9
3.1.3	Notes on the Other Books Within the Book of Enoch	11
3.2	The Secrets of Enoch — II Enoch	11
3.3	The Revelation of Metatron — III Enoch	12
3.4	The Book Of Jubilees	12
4	Could This Tradition be Accurate?	13
5	New Testament References To The Enochian Story	14
5.1	II Peter 2:4–5	14
5.2	I Peter 3:19–20	15
5.3	I Corinthians 11:10	15
5.4	Hebrews 11:5	16
5.5	Jude 1:6	16

5.6	Jude 1:14-15	17
6	The New Testament Authors Accepted The Basic Enochian Story	18
7	Some Early Christians Believed The Enochian Tradition	19
7.1	Irenaeus of Lyons	19
7.2	Clement to the Corinthians	20
7.3	The Epistle of Barnabas	21
8	Conclusion	21

1 Genesis Assumes Knowledge of Enoch

[18] And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: [19] And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: [20] And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. [21] And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: [22] And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: [23] And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: [24] And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5:18–24 KJV

Why is a man who was directly translated into paradise because of his walk with God given only handful of verses¹? This extraordinary event is casually mentioned in the middle of a genealogy, and then the author simply moves on. What does is “Enoch walk[ing] with God” mean? Why and how did God take him? Surely his story would be incredible if it were known to us.

It is important to remember that, in spite of its name, *Genesis* is not primarily a book about the origins of man or preabrahamic history. *Genesis* is primarily a book about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. It is a book about the origins of Israel, and the preabrahamic history that it contains serves as more of an introduction to that story than an end unto itself. The almost eleven chapters of preabrahamic history that *Genesis* contains serve as a jet-tour of about two thousand years of history, which is more time than the entire rest of the Old Testament spans. With relatively few chapters dedicated to this time period, we know fleetingly little about the world before Abraham’s birth.

Perhaps part of the reason that such a condensed summary of history was sufficient is that the people of Israel at the time of Moses already knew more about this time period than we do today. It is not unreasonable to hypothesize that many events in preabrahamic and prediluvian history may have been transmitted to the time of Moses by oral tradition with relative accuracy. This idea is supported by much of the language used in the first ten chapters of *Genesis*. The author frequently seems to make passing references to particular

¹The only other place in the Old Testament where he is mentioned is *1 Chronicles* 1:3, but nothing is said about him there other than the names of his father and son.

events without explaining them, which may imply that the reader was expected to already have knowledge of them.

1.1 Genesis 10:8–10

[8] And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. [9] He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. [10] And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Genesis 10:8–10 KJV

This passage seems to assume that the expression “Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD” is a familiar phrase that the reader should be aware of. If the author assumes that his audience would be familiar with an expression relating to Nimrod, he likely also assumed that his audience had a basic familiarity with who Nimrod was.

1.2 Genesis 10:25

[25] And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan.

Genesis 10:25 KJV

It is difficult to imagine why the writer of this passage would casually mention the earth being divided if his audience was not already familiar with what that meant. The statement is so vague that, if he were not already familiar with the event that it refers to, the reader would likely not have any way of knowing what the statement meant. Therefore, it seems most likely that there was a historical event that would have been known to the Israelites in the time of Moses that was referred to as the “earth [being] divided.”

1.3 Genesis 6:1–4

[1] And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, [2] That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that

they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. [3] 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. [4] 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.

Genesis 6:1–4 KJV

Although slightly less obvious than those previously discussed, this passage also seems to perhaps assume some prior knowledge of these events. This is perhaps most apparent in verse four. The way in which sons of God, giants², and mighty men of old are introduced with basically no explanation may indicate that the author expected that his audience was already at least vaguely familiar with these three groups.

1.4 Genesis 5:21–24

[21] And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: [22] And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: [23] And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: [24] And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5:21–24 KJV

It seems quite possible that this could be another instance of the author passing over details due to a understanding that his audience was already familiar with the subject. One might speculate that Enoch’s life would have been one of the prediluvian stories that would have been most likely to survive. Considering that all surviving prediluvian oral or written tradition would have to be passed through Noah and his kin, it is hard to believe that the great-grandfather of Noah, whom God saw fit to translate directly to paradise shortly before Noah’s birth, would be forgotten quickly after the flood. Shem was still alive during the time of Abraham, and he was old enough to have met Enoch’s son Methuselah³.

²This word, which the KJV translates as giants, can be transliterated as Nephilim. These are not necessarily the same as the Anakim or Rephaite, which are often also translated as giants. Nephilim is not a common Old Testament term, and what it refers to is consequently difficult to know with certainty.

³This assumes the traditional understanding of prediluvian ages in Genesis.

2 The New Testament Assumes Knowledge Of Enoch

Enoch is mentioned more in the New Testament than in the Old Testament, which is unexpected. Other than in genealogies, the New Testament rarely mentions minor Old Testament characters, let alone a character who is not mentioned in the Old Testament other than in the context of genealogies. Being mentioned three times (*Luke 3:37*, *Hebrews 11:5*, *Jude 1:14–15*), he is referenced in the New Testament almost as much as his great-grandson Noah.

2.1 Luke 3:37

[37] Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,

Luke 3:37

Enoch is mentioned in *Luke* due to the fact that he appears in the genealogy of Christ. Because he is necessarily a part of that genealogy, this reference to him is not particularly surprising.

2.2 Hebrews 11:5

[5] By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Hebrews 11:5

Hebrews 11 mentions Enoch in the context of an overview of historic examples of great faith. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sara, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab are all mentioned with examples of events that show their faith. The author then mentions Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David, and Samuel but, for the sake of brevity, does not provide examples of their faith. If all that the first century Christians knew about Enoch was what

was said in his brief appearance in *Genesis*⁴, his inclusion in this exclusive list of well known heroes of the faith would be slightly surprising.

The fact that the author of *Hebrews* would include Enoch in this passage could be an indication that Enoch was not considered to be as obscure of a character to the first century Christians and Jews as he tends to be to many Christians today. This could simply be because *Hebrews* was written to the Jews, whose emphasis on the Torah would make Enoch a more commonly discussed character among them than among modern Christians. However, a more intriguing possibility would be the idea that some oral tradition of Enoch's life could have survived into the first century within Israel. Knowing more about how and why Enoch was taken by God could make him a much more prominent character. However, none of this speculation can be justified by this passage alone.

Perhaps the most straightforward explanation for why a seemingly obscure character like Enoch would be mentioned in a passage like this is simply the fact that the author of *Hebrews* is pulling together a large group of characters at varying levels of prominence. Sixteen characters are mentioned, and although prominent figures like Moses and Abraham are among them, more obscure characters such as Barak and Jephthae are at least mentioned in the list of faithful individuals whose stories are omitted. Barak and Jephthae are still given much longer and more prominent stories in the Old Testament than Enoch is, but it is not unthinkable that the author of *Hebrews* could choose him as an example even if almost nothing was known about him.

2.3 Jude 1:14–15

[14] And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, [15] 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.

⁴He is also mentioned in a genealogy in *1 Chronicles* 1:3, but nothing is said about him there that was not mentioned in *Genesis*.

This passage does something that the other New Testament passages that mention Enoch do not do. It tells us something about Enoch that does not come from the Old Testament. It provides a prophecy that was spoken by Enoch, which is something that is never mentioned in the Old Testament. Where did Jude get this quote from?

One possible explanation is that Jude received direct revelation about Enoch, providing a quote that had been lost for thousands of years. That would be extremely unusual in the context of an epistle. However, such points are moot because it can be proven that this quote was passed down to the first century and was known prior to the writing of Jude. That will be shown below. For now, it is sufficient to recognize that this passage references oral or written traditions about Enoch that existed in the first century.

3 A Strong Tradition Did Exist In The First Century

A number of stories about Enoch existed in the form of oral traditions and written works in the first century. Whether or not these had any connection to the accurate oral traditions that might have existed in the time of Moses is a question that will not be addressed until later. Whether or not these are oral traditions that the New Testament may have been referencing or considered to have any credibility is also a question that will be deferred until later. This section will serve as a simple overview of the important Enochian works of that time period in order to familiarize the reader with the stories of Enoch that may have been common around the time of the writing of the New Testament.

However, it is worth noting that the presence of implausible or ahistorical information in any of these works does not necessarily imply that they are entirely fabricated. Often, an oral tradition that is based on true events can become very embellished and corrupted over time while still retaining a core of truth.

3.1 The Book of Enoch — I Enoch

3.1.1 Description

By far, the most famous noncanonical work about Enoch is the *Book of Enoch*, also known as *I Enoch*. This pseudepigraphal work claims to have been written by Enoch himself. It is composed of a number of smaller books, each of which was likely written by a different author at a different time. They were likely written in Hebrew or Aramaic, but they survive through a Ge'ez translation. It was never widely considered canonical outside of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, who have perhaps the most unusual and eclectic canon of any church.

Due to the fact that the *Book of Enoch* is composed of a number of different books from different authors, it cannot be judged as one monolithic book but rather as a collection of smaller books. The accuracy or inaccuracy of one book should not be used to judge the others.

The book within the *Book of Enoch* that is likely the most ancient (perhaps written a couple of centuries before the birth of Christ) and is cited most often is the *Book of Watchers*. It is even cited by the book of *Jude*, which will be addressed later. The following is the story described in the *Book of Watchers*. All quotations and verse divisions are from the Robert Henry Charles translation of the work.

3.1.2 Story of the Book of Watchers

A group of angelic beings called Watchers choose to rebel against God and impregnate the women of Earth. This seems to reference the events of *Genesis* 6:1–4. It should also be noted that *Danial* chapter 4 mentions angelic beings called Watchers (*Danial* 4:13,17,23).

[2] And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: “Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.” [3] And Semjâzâ, who was their leader, said unto them: “I fear ye will not indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin.” [4] And they all answered him and said: “Let us all swear an oath, and all

bind ourselves by mutual imprecations not to abandon this plan but to do this thing.” [5] Then swear they all together and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. [6] And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. [7] And these are the names of their leaders: Sêmlîazâz, their leader, Arâkîba, Râmêêl, Kôkabîêl, Tâmîêl, Râmîêl, Dânêl, Êzêqêêl, Barâqîjâl, Asêêl, Armârôs, Batârêl, Anânêl, Zaqîêl, Samsâpêêl, Satarêl, Tûrêl, Jômjâêl, Sariêl.

I Enoch 6:2–7 Robert Henry Charles

Once the Watchers come to earth, they take wives, beget Giants that are thousands of feet tall, and teach mankind forms of wickedness that were not previously known to them. This wickedness includes enchantments, metallurgy, and astrology (*I Enoch* 7–8).

The archangels Michael, Uriel, Raphael, and Gabriel see the wickedness taking place (*I Enoch* 9:1) and are sent to effect God’s plan to punish the Watchers, kill the giants, and erase all traces of the knowledge that the Watchers gave to mankind. The last of these would be accomplished by a great flood that Uriel is sent to warn Noah about (*I Enoch* 10:2). Michael is sent to bind the Watchers for seventy generations until their judgment (*I Enoch* 10:10–11).

[10] And the Lord said unto Michael: Go, bind Semjâzâ and his associates who have united themselves with women so as to have defiled themselves with them in all their uncleanness. [11] And when their sons have slain one another, and they have seen the destruction of their beloved ones, bind them fast for seventy generations in the valleys of the earth, till the day of their judgement and of their consummation, till the judgement that is for ever and ever is consummated. [12] In those days they shall be led off to the abyss of fire: and to the torment and the prison in which they shall be confined for ever. And whosoever shall be condemned and destroyed will from thenceforth be bound together with them to the end of all generations.

I Enoch 10:10–12 Robert Henry Charles

Curiously, this is the same number of generations that *Luke* records as having passed between Enoch and Christ (*Luke* 3:23–38).

Azâzêl is bound separately beneath the desert (*I Enoch* 10:3–5), which is interesting in light of *Leviticus* 16:6–10, which may describe the scapegoat being sent out into the desert

to Azâzêl⁵.

God then sends Enoch as a messenger to the Watchers to proclaim the fate that they are about to suffer (*I Enoch* 12). The Watchers ask Enoch to intercede for them, asking for forgiveness (*I Enoch* 13:3–5). Enoch does this, but his petition is not granted because God does not provide redemption to fallen angels (*I Enoch* 14:7 and 15:2–4). Judgment is then brought to bear on them.

3.1.3 Notes on the Other Books Within the Book of Enoch

The other books within the Book of Enoch are likely less ancient and are cited less frequently than the *Book of Watchers*. However, a few interesting notes from them are included here.

There are some prophetic passages about a coming Son of Man: God’s Elect One (*I Enoch* 45–52). A large portion of the book is devoted to the prophecy of this messianic figure. However, there is a brief passage in chapter 70 that seems to indicate that this figure might have been Enoch himself.

The *Book of Luminaries* (also known as the *Astronomical Book*) explains the motion of all that is seen in the heavens: sun, moon, etc. However, it seems to assume that the Earth is flat.

Noah is born in chapter 106. As soon as he was born, he lit up and began to speak.

3.2 The Secrets of Enoch — II Enoch

The Secrets of Enoch is a much less well known work, which may have been written during the first few centuries after Christ (although some would date it before A.D. 0 and some believe that it is from the Middle Ages). Although it is most likely less ancient than the *Book of Enoch*, it might still provide a window into what some individuals believed about Enoch at an early date.

⁵This is not apparent in all translations. See the English Standard Version, New Revised Standard Version, or NET Bible

In the story, two angels awaken Enoch from sleep and announce to Enoch that he will be transported to heaven to receive revelation.

[10] Have courage, Enoch, do not fear; the eternal God sent us to you, and lo! You shalt today ascend with us into heaven, and you shall tell your sons and all your household all that they shall do without you on earth in your house, and let no one seek you till the Lord return you to them. [11] And I made haste to obey them and went out from my house, and made to the doors, as it was ordered me, and summoned my sons Mathusal (Methuselah) and Regim and Gaidad and made known to them all the marvels those (men) had told me.

II Enoch 1:10–11 William Richard Morfill

Enoch is then taken to see the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh heaven and speaks with God at his throne. He is then sent back to Earth for thirty days to relate what he had seen before being taken to heaven permanently.

3.3 The Revelation of Metatron — III Enoch

The date at which *The Revelation of Metatron* was written is uncertain, but it was likely written after the advent of Christianity. This extremely odd and heretical apocryphal work includes giant idols over 3000 miles tall for whom the people of Enoch's day brought the sun, moon, planets and constellations down to serve using sorcery taught to them by fallen angels (*III Enoch* 5:7–9)⁶.

Enoch in heaven has become God's second in command, and was given over 100 names including Metatron and Lesser YHWH (*Enoch III* 12). A place resembling purgatory is described (*III Enoch* 44:1–6), and Gog and Megog are mentioned going out to fight against the Messiah (*III Enoch* 45:5).

3.4 The Book Of Jubilees

The *Book of Jubilees*, also sometimes called *Lesser Genesis*, is a pseudepigraphal work that claims to have been written by Moses on Mount Sinai. It attempts to overview history from

⁶The verse divisions used here are from the Huga Odeberg translation.

creation until Moses. It parallels *Genesis* and *Exodus* in many ways. However, it adds some details and omits others. Its dating is unclear, but it could have been written in the first century.

It provides a longer passage about Enoch than *Genesis* does, a portion of which is shown below.

[21] And he was moreover with the angels of God these six jubilees of years, and they showed him everything which is on earth and in the heavens, the rule of the sun, and he wrote down everything. [22] And he testified to the Watchers, who had sinned with the daughters of men; for these had begun to unite themselves, so as to be defiled, with the daughters of men, and Enoch testified against *them* all. [23] And he was taken from amongst the children of men, and we conducted him into the Garden of Eden in majesty and honour, and behold there he writes down the condemnation and judgment of the world, and all the wickedness of the children of men. [24] And on account of it *God* brought the waters of the flood upon all the land of Eden; for there he was set as a sign and that he should testify against all the children of men, that he should recount all the deeds of the generations until the day of condemnations.

Jubilees 4:21–24 Robert Henry Charles

4 Could This Tradition be Accurate?

Although the above shows that a strong tradition about Enoch existed in the first century, it does not prove that this tradition accurately reflected actual history. An accurate oral tradition likely existed at the time of Moses, and a tradition existed in the first century, but it has not yet been proven that these two are even related to each other. Could it be that the true story of Enoch was lost and the traditions that survived were entirely fabricated? That hypothesis seems quite strong in light of the obviously absurd content of much of the surviving Enochian literature.

However, another possibility is that some of the true story of Enoch survived through oral tradition but was highly corrupted and embellished. If a core of truth does exist in the surviving Enochian stories, it would likely survive through the elements that are common to most or all of them. The ideas that seem most common, particularly in the most well

circulated documents, are the flood being caused by wickedness brought to man by fallen angels and Enoch bringing a message of condemnation to those fallen angels. However, the fact that these ideas are seen across multiple writings does not prove that they are necessarily true.

However, above, it was alleged that the relatively high frequency with which the New Testament mentions Enoch might indicate that it assumes the existence of some knowledge of him outside of the tiny amount of information about him contained in the Old Testament. Otherwise, it seems odd to bring up such an obscure character repeatedly. However, that is not a particularly strong argument on its own. It would, however, be very persuasive if the New Testament were to directly reference Enochian stories present in the Enochian tradition that are not in the Old Testament.

5 New Testament References To The Enochian Story

A number of New Testament passages are examined below. They are examined in light of how a first century Jew would interpret them. These people would have the basics of the traditional Enochian stories as context, which most modern readers do not.

5.1 II Peter 2:4–5

[4] 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; [5] 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;

II Peter 2:4–5 KJV

Many modern readers interpret the first verse as referring to angels who were a part of Satan's fall and the second verse being a reference to an entirely different story. This seems to be reasonable in light of the fact that the context is a list of different past judgments and deliverances.

However, it also seems likely that anyone familiar with the idea that the flood was caused by the wickedness brought by fallen angels who were bound shortly before the flood would see that as the most straightforward way of understanding this passage. The Enochian story particularly emphasizes the idea that God chose not to spare these fallen angels. The fact that this passage fits extremely closely with the traditional Enochian story would have been very confusing if that is not what it is referencing. It is hard to imagine that Peter would not have known that this passage sounded like a reference to the Watchers and that that is probably the first interpretation that would come to the minds of the readers of his day.

5.2 I Peter 3:19–20

[19] By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; [20] 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.

I Peter 3:19–20 KJV

This passage appears to allude to angels that were imprisoned in the time of Noah. This is mentioned in passing, as though Peter assumed that the idea of angels being imprisoned at that time was something that would have been known to his readers. Because of the fact that nothing like this is directly mentioned in the Old Testament, it seems logical that his readers, who were likely familiar with the oral and written traditions surrounding Enoch, would interpret this verse as referring to the Watchers. It is difficult to find any other plausible interpretation of this passage.

5.3 I Corinthians 11:10

[10] For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

I Corinthians 11:10 KJV

This verse states that women should wear a head covering because of the angels. Some have seen this as a reference to the idea of angels lusting after human women. However, even

if that is the case, it is not necessarily are reference to Enochian tradition because this idea could be drawn directly from *Genesis* 6:2–4.

5.4 Hebrews 11:5

[5] By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Hebrews 11:5 KJV

The reference to Enoch in *Hebrews* 11:5 does not say anything that could not have been drawn directly from *Genesis*.

5.5 Jude 1:6

[6] 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

The idea of angels not “keep[ing] their first estate” certainly does seem to closely parallel what is written in the *Book of Watchers*. On the other hand, one might also see this as referring to any angels that fell. However, this is a particular group of angels who, after leaving their first estate, are bound and awaiting judgment. Perhaps the only specific group of angels who first century Jews would be familiar with who fit this description would be the Watchers described in the traditional Enochian stories. The angels that fell with Satan are not necessarily understood to be bound in chains awaiting the day of judgement. On the contrary, they generally seem to be roaming the Earth. Surely Jude would have known that the most obvious way in which this passage would be understood was as a reference to the Watchers. Why would he have stated this in this way if he did not intend to reference the Enochian story?

5.6 Jude 1:14–15

In case there was any doubt that the passage from *Jude* mentioned above refers to the angels mentioned in the *Book of Watchers*, the following passage comes only a few verses later.

[14] And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, [15] 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

In those verses, Jude provides a direct quotation from the *Book of Watchers* (*I Enoch* 1:9).

[9] 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.

Enoch I 1:9 Robert Henry Charles

The way that the quotes are rendered in English differ. However, that can be explained by the fact that one is a direct translation from Greek to English and the other is a translation from Hebrew or Aramaic into Ge'ez and then into English.

It seems impossible that Jude would directly quote from this work if he did not at least believe that parts of it were historically accurate. Why would he reference a group of fallen angels that sound just like those in the *Book of Watchers* and then quote from the *Book of Watchers* directly if he did not want his readers to assume that he was writing about the group of angels that are mentioned in the *Book of Watchers*?

6 The New Testament Authors Accepted The Basic Enochian Story

As shown above, the New Testament authors almost certainly knew that they were making statements that would be seen as references to the Enochian story, but they wrote them anyway. It is hard to see why they would have done this unless they were making intentional references to the Enochian tradition. To a first century reader who had grown up with the traditional Enochian stories, these references might have seemed so obvious that they hardly gave them a second thought. However, these references are often completely invisible to modern readers who are living outside of the context into which the New Testament was written.

Of course, even if the New Testament authors make references to some first century oral traditions or written works about Enoch, they do not necessarily lend credibility to all traditions and stories about Enoch. The references in the New Testament all only seem to reference the idea of fallen angels leaving their first domain, procreating with women, being punished, and their wickedness bringing about the flood. The New Testament, at best, only lends credibility to those core elements of the Enochian tradition.

However, none of these New Testament passages directly reference the other core idea contained in the Enochian tradition: the idea that Enoch was sent to the Watchers to proclaim judgment. One might argue that Jude's direct quote from Enoch from the *Book of Watchers* lends credibility to that idea, due to how central it is to the *Book of Watchers*, but that is not explicit support.

7 Some Early Christians Believed The Enochian Tradition

If the New Testament writers and Apostles believed some elements of the first century Enochian tradition, we would expect the Early Church to do so too because they were directly taught by the Apostles. Seeing Enochian tradition in Gentile churches outside of Israel would be particularly important because it would indicate that this tradition was transmitted by the Apostles or other missionaries to areas where it would not naturally exist.

7.1 Irenaeus of Lyons

Irenaeus of Lyons is often considered to be one of the first great theologians in the post-apostolic era. He is most well known for writing *Against Heresies* near the end of the second century, which is quite a long and detailed work considering the time at which it was written. He was taught by Polycarp, who is understood to have been a direct disciple of the Apostle John. Of course, that does not guarantee that his theology is perfect. For instance, he believed that John had said that Jesus was over 50 years old at his death (*Against Heresies* Book 2 Chapter 22), which seems to contradict much of what has been accepted about the timeline of Jesus' life.

In Book 4 chapter 16 section 2 of *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus discusses the fact that the Old Testament saints were not justified by circumcision or by any other legal ceremonies. He uses Abraham, Lot, Noah, and Enoch as examples of this. When he mentions Enoch, he casually says the following:

. . . Enoch, too, pleasing God, without circumcision, discharged the office of God's legate to the angels although he was a man, and was translated, and is preserved until now as a witness of the just judgment of God, because the angels when they had transgressed fell to the earth for judgment, but the man who pleased [God] was translated for salvation . . .

Subsection of Against Heresies Book 4 chapter 16 section 2 Philip Schaff Ante-Nicene Fathers

Not only does this show that Irenaeus accepted the idea that Enoch was a messenger to fallen angels, but that he assumed that his audience did the same. The casual way in which Irenaeus places this example along side those of Noah and Abraham indicates that this information about Enoch was common knowledge among the believers that Irenaeus was in contact with. Presumably, he thought that his readers would not give this statement a second thought.

Although that is the only passage in *Against Heresies* that mentions Enoch, fallen angels procreating before the flood are mentioned in several other places.

. . . He justly brought on the deluge for the purpose of extinguishing that most infamous race of men then existent, who could not bring forth fruit to God, since the angels that sinned had commingled with them, and [acted as He did] in order that He might put a check upon the sins of these men, but [that at the same time] He might preserve the archetype, the formation of Adam . . .

Subsection of Against Heresies Book 4 chapter 36 section 4 Philip Schaff Ante-Nicene Fathers

. . . since he sums up in his own person all the commixture of wickedness which took place previous to the deluge, due to the apostasy of the angels. For Noah was six hundred years old when the deluge came upon the earth, sweeping away the rebellious world, for the sake of that most infamous generation which lived in the times of Noah . . .

Subsection of Against Heresies Book 5 chapter 29 section 2 Philip Schaff Ante-Nicene Fathers

7.2 Clement to the Corinthians

The *Epistle of Clement* to the Corinthians was written by the church of Rome in the first century or perhaps the very early second century. It does make mention of Enoch, alluding, yet again, to the possibility that Enoch was a more commonly cited figure than one might

expect considering how briefly he is mentioned in the Old Testament. However, nothing is said about him beyond what is said in *Genesis*.

. . . Let us take as example Enoch, who, having been found just by reason of obedience, was translated, and his death was not found. . . .

Subsection of I Clement to the Corinthians chapter 9 Charles H. Hoole

7.3 The Epistle of Barnabas

The *Epistle of Barnabas*, which was almost assuredly not written by the Apostle Paul's companion Barnabas, was likely written at the end of the first or beginning of the second century. It not only mentions Enoch, but proports to quote him.

[4] The final stumbling block is at hand of which it was written, as Enoch says, "For to this end the Lord has cut short the times and the days, that his beloved should make haste and come to his inheritance." [5] And the Prophet also says thus: "Ten kingdoms shall reign upon the earth and there shall rise up after then a little king, who shall subdue three of the kings under one."

Barnabas 4:9 Kirsopp Lake

It is unclear whether the second quote is meant to also be from Enoch. However, in either case, it is unclear from where the author of this epistle is quoting. The author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* seems to commonly provide quotations that seem to come from unknown sources or were fabricated by the author himself⁷. Consequently, this quote from the *Epistle of Barnabas* perhaps should not be considered a reliable or perhaps even a valid piece of evidence.

⁷See *Barnabas* 7:6–11 for a clear example of this

8 Conclusion

As shown previously, accurate Enochian oral tradition very likely existed in the time of Moses, and an Enochian oral and written tradition was prevalent at the time of the Apostles. The New Testament appears to reference the Enochian tradition of the first century multiple times, and the Early Church seems to have accepted this tradition without much question in at least some regions. Thus, it can be concluded that certain elements of the first century Enochian tradition likely accurately represent parts of the oral tradition that existed at the time of Moses. Because the assertion that the flood was caused by novel wickedness brought by the fallen angels of *Genesis* 6 is very prevalent in first century tradition and is referenced in the New Testament, it seems very likely that it was a part of the ancient tradition of the time of Moses. The idea that Enoch was sent to these fallen angels to proclaim their condemnation is also prevalent, but it must be held with a lower degree of certainty due to the fact that it is not directly referenced in the New Testament. It is also possible that other elements of the surviving Enochian writings could be accurate, but there seems to be no way of separating them from plausible sounding embellishments.