

The Book of Enoch

The *Book of Enoch* is an ancient Jewish religious work, traditionally ascribed to Enoch, the great-grandfather of Noah. It is not part of the biblical canon of the Jews, apart from Beta Israel (Ethiopian Jews). It is not regarded as canonical the Christian churches except by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church. It is however, quoted in both the Old and New Testaments. There are actually three different versions of the Book of Enoch. It seems that some of them were compiled of fragments found in various ancient languages, including Aramaic fragments in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was considered lost until Scottish traveler James Bruce brought three copies of the Ge'ez version back from Abyssinia in 1773. Ge'ez is an old south Semitic language. The reasons for its exclusion from the Jewish and Christian Canonical works are many and varied.

Enoch is a character that appears in Masonic ritual in the Royal Arch Chapter.

The Book of Enoch consists of five distinct major sections. These are: the Book of the Watchers; the Book of Parables of Enoch; the Astronomical Book; the Book of Dream Visions; and the Epistle of Enoch. Some scholars believe these to be written by different people. Most think these books were originally independent pieces of work. The traditional view of the Ethiopic Orthodox Church is that the Ethiopic text is the original one, written by Enoch himself. In their view, the opening sentence of Enoch is the first and oldest sentence written in any human language, since Enoch was said to be the first to write letters.

The Book of the Watchers is about the fall of the Watchers, the "angels" or messengers, the Nephilim. It narrates the travels of Enoch in the heavens. Enoch describes his experience of being taken aloft and his viewing of the Earth and even seeing its curvature. *[Food for thought here]*

The Book of Parables talks about the idea of a final judgement, the fate of evil people, those that have denied the Most High. Here can be found the expression familiar to those who have read

Christian works: the Son of Man. This is seen by some as a prophecy of the coming of a Messiah.

The *Book of Dream Visions*, contains a vision of a history of Israel all the way down to what the majority have interpreted as the Maccabean Revolt.

The Epistle of Enoch address Methuselah, Enoch's son, and narrates the history of the world using a ten periods scheme, of which seven regard the past and three the future events (the final judgment). The climax is in the seventh part of the tenth week where new heaven shall appear and there will be many weeks without number for ever, and all shall be in goodness and righteousness. It talks of final reward of the justs and the punishment of the evils (often describing the evils as the wealthy ones and the justs as the oppressed). It talks of the deluge, and of Noah who is born already with the appearance of an "angel".

The most interesting part, to me, is the Astronomical Book. It narrates what Uriel taught Enoch about the movements of the heavenly bodies: the sun, the moon, the planets and stars, and their differing periods of revolution, their affect on the seasons. It describes a Solar calendar that was composed from 364 days, divided in 4 equal seasons of 91 days each. Each season was composed of three equal months of 30 days, plus an extra day at the end of the third month. The whole year was thus composed of exactly 52 weeks. Enoch talks about seeing these through "doors" or "gates" as if he was at a place like Stonehenge. For more details read Zechariah Sitchin's *When time Began* or Robert Lomas' *Uriel's Machine*.

If one considers the thinking at the time of translation of this work, and looks beyond the words, one can find in this work an interesting perspective on our human origins and history.