

THE BOOK OF MOSES

By Bob Moore

The Sealed Book of Mormon begins by asserting that the lost book that Hilkiyah found during the renovation of Solomon's Temple, which repairs were made during the reign of King Josiah, was given to Shaphan, Josiah's scribe. The Bible agrees: "*Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses. And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan*" (2 Chr 34:14-15). It also states that Shaphan gave the book to Elasah, one of his four sons. It also asserts that Elasah is Lehi, who brought the book to America. The seal book's translation also claims that the lost book is the Book of Moses, which makes up the content of the first book of the translation.

This article will review what the Bible says about the newly discovered book before discussing what is contained in the Book of Moses as found in the Sealed Book of Mormon. Once Hilkiyah gave the lost book to Shaphan, Shaphan read it to the king: "*Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king*" (2K 22:10). The king was so distressed at its contents that he tore his clothes in anguish. The Bible adds, "*And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes*" (2K 22:11). What disturbed King Josiah so much that he tore his clothes? The answer is found in the king's immediate command: "*Go, inquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book*" (2 Chr 34:21). Hilkiyah, "*Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's*" (2K 22:12) took the book to Huldah, the prophetess. They inquired of her because Jeremiah was on the king's mission to Assyria, inviting the scattered Israelites to return to their Promised Land and worship according to the reforms that Josiah was instituting. Huldah's response is extremely revealing in light of the Book of Moses' claim: "*Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read*" (1K 22:15-16).

Although the Bible calls the lost book, which Hilkiyah found, Shaphan read to Josiah, and Huldah interpreted, the *Book of the Law*, it also calls it the *Book of Moses*. An indirect usage of this title is found in one description of its discovery: "*Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses*" (2 Chr 34:14). Because of the commandments that it contained and the punishments it promised for disobeying those statutes, Josiah ordered that the Passover be properly kept, something that had not been done for generations. In the description of those observances, the chronicler reported, "*They removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen*" (2 Chr 35:12). One could claim that the Book of Moses that they followed at this Passover is the name of the book that Hilkiyah found and gave to Shaphan.

According to the Bible, a significant part of the lost book's contents are statutes that were not obeyed, the laws concerning the Jewish feasts, at least the Passover, and God's

devastating judgments that would befall the Hebrews if they disobeyed them. That information caused great fear when the book was read. None of those subjects comprise the content of the Book of Moses as contained in the Sealed Book of Mormon. There is no mention of the statutes surrounding the Passover Feast nor the divinely imposed punishment that would befall the Hebrews if they failed to obey; neither does it contain the predictions that would cause the Jews at the time of Josiah to fear the horrible punishment that was soon to befall them. The lack of similarity between what is contained in the translation's Book of Moses and what the Bible says was in the lost book is too drastic to accept the Book of Moses as written in the translation as the lost book found in the days of Josiah. If Lehi brought a copy of some book written by Moses, it could not be the lost book that was discovered during the reign of Josiah.

While there are some interesting topics in the Book of Moses, as well as a few disquieting points, the most alarming content is its account of Enoch. The discourse has little similarity with the account in the Inspired Version. Instead, it repeats with a great deal of accuracy, but some differences, also, the material in the first vision as contained in the Ethiopian version of the Book of Enoch. That vision is about the Watchers, fallen angels whose lust for women led to pregnancies and the birth of the Nephalim, giants in the days before the flood. The King James Version gives tacit support to that belief. It states, "*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*" (Gen 6:1-3). Josephus' Jewish history is closer to the Ethiopian version of the Book of Enoch: "*For many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength, for the tradition is that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants.*"¹ The inspired Version eliminates any link between the Biblical account and this falsehood. It says, "*Noah and his sons hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed; and they were called the sons of God. And when these men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, the sons of men [disbelievers] saw that their daughters were fair, and they took them wives even as they chose. And the Lord said unto Noah, The daughters of thy sons have sold themselves, for behold, mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice*" (Gen 8:2-3). Acceptance of the Book of Moses as scriptures requires people to believe that angels could lust after women and copulate with them. Those are the beliefs of pagans who repeat myths about the gods bearing children with earthly women. The inclusion of the account of the Watchers in the Sealed Book of Mormon is another significant indication that it is not divine. It disagrees with the Inspired Version and is repugnant to Christian theology and morality.

Proponents of the Sealed Book of Moses point to the fact that a Book of Enoch was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is rumored a complete scroll was found at Cave 11 in 1956 and purchased by an anonymous buyer, presumably European bankers, who to date refuse to allow its translation and publication.² Some small fragments from the Book of

¹ Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Bk 1, Ch. 3.1 as published in Complete Works of Flavius Joaephus, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregal Publications, 1960, 28.

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aramaic_Enoch_Scroll.

Enoch have also been found at Qumran. Their few words agree with the Ethiopian version. In addition, the early Christians possessed copies of a Book of Enoch. A few believed it scripture. Proponents can point to these sources for evidence that the Book of Enoch is valid scripture and that this portion in the Book of Moses within the Sealed Book of Mormon is true. The following section discusses the Book of Enoch and shows that the Ethiopian Version is not the same book that the early Christians possessed. It also shows that the Book of Enoch, regardless of how it existed at Qumran or among the Christians, could not have been a part of the Bible. I wrote it for the witnesses while they were preparing the text for publication and believe it relevant for those considering the divinity of the Sealed Book of Mormon.

THE BOOK OF ENOCH IN ANTE-NICENE LITERATURE

The Book of Enoch

The Book of Enoch is one of several apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works that claim to be sacred texts. In general, apocryphal texts are specifically composed to be accepted as scripture. Pseudepigrapha compositions are works falsely attributed to Biblical people. Some of the more well known apocryphal and pseudepigraphical texts are the Ethiopian Book of Enoch, the Slavonic Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, the Book of Jasher, the Books of Adam and Eve, the Ascension of Isaiah, the Assumption of Moses, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Two of these books are important because they are related to content in the Sealed Book of Mormon that is ready for publication.

The Ethiopian copy of *The Book of Enoch* is part of the Ethiopian Church's scripture. It was preserved by Georgius Syncellus, a monk from Palestine, who relocated to Constantinople in the late eighth century, bringing the text with him. Afterward, he was imprisoned with Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople, for his opposition to Iconoclasm. He died in 810 or shortly thereafter. The book was later discovered in Abyssinia by the Scottish traveler James Bruce. Abyssinia is an alternative name for the Solomonic Dynasty that ruled the Kingdom of Ethiopia from 1270 to 1974. That dynasty claimed to have descended from the union of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Bruce brought several different Ethiopian manuscripts when he returned to Europe in 1773. Among them were three copies of the Book of Enoch. He reached London in 1774.

The Ethiopic Book of Enoch was translated into English by Dr. Laurence, Archbishop of Cashel and former professor of Hebrew at Oxford in 1821. Dr. Laurence determined that it was written sometime after the Jews returned from the Babylonian Captivity and before Christ. He also believed that the Jewish Cabbalists, who preserved the hidden, mystical wisdom, regarded Enoch as chief among the prophets. He thinks that they eventually possessed a copy of the Book of Enoch and that they thought that it was genuine. A copy of a Book of Enoch was found at Qumran, which is the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. It was purchased by European investors and has never been published. Its contents are not publicly known. A few other fragments have been found, but are very small portions of the Ethiopian Book of Enoch.

People easily assume that ancient Hebrew texts could have survived among the Jews until the time of Christ. That assumption ignores the attack of some of the Jews' own kings against their religion, as well as the devastation caused by Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. The Temple was the depository of Hebraic scriptures. Moses' torah scroll was housed there. When the Jewish kings, Manasseh and Ahaz, embraced idolatry, they erected pagan alters there, halted Mosaic ceremonies, and burned some scriptures. King Josiah restored the Temple and returned the Jews to the observance of the Law of Moses. During the repairs, "*Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses*" (2 Chr 34:14), which Shaphan read to the king. They were startled at what was already lost. The Shaphan group, which include several prophets, scribes, and scholars, whom Academia calls the Deuteronomist, restored the scriptures while the Temple was being repaired. In less than three decades, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, stole the temple vessels, destroyed the Temple, with its contents, including the scriptures, and exiled the Jews to Babylon. No copies of any sacred books remained with those exiles. When they returned to Judea, Ezra, with the help of the Great Assembly, restored the Old Testament under the direction of the Holy Ghost. They did not restore any apocryphal or pseudepigraphical texts, including the Book of Enoch.

Any books attributed to people who lived before the Captivity and whose works were not restored by Ezra and the Great Assembly must be spurious. They must have been written after the Jews returned from their Babylonian Captivity and by someone other than its claimed author. This fact is acknowledged by Tertullian, a Christian apologist from the beginning of the third century who also believed that the Book of Enoch as it existed among Christians in his time was genuine and should be included among the Christian scriptures. He wrote, "*Every document of the Jewish literature is generally agreed to have been restored through Ezra.*"¹

Several different texts claiming to have been written by Enoch have survived. Besides the Ethiopian Book of Enoch, the Slavonic Book of Enoch, the Third Book of Enoch, and the Armenian Book of Enoch, all describe how Enoch was lifted up to see creation, the supporting columns of the earth at the center of the universe, the cause of the winds and seas, and the orbits about the earth of both the stars and angelic chariots. Unlike the Bible, they either express the cosmological views prevalent in Europe during the Middle-ages or helped shape it. That reason alone is enough for our scientific age to regard them as myths and legends from more ancient and less enlightened times.

Members of the Restoration who are acquainted with the latter-day revelations about Enoch and the holy city that he built may find themselves attracted to the Book of Enoch. Unfortunately, nothing in the Ethiopian Book of Enoch approaches the revelation that is contained in the Inspired Version. Furthermore, its account of the Watchers contradicts the changes that Joseph Smith placed in Genesis.

According to the Book of Enoch, the angels became enamored with the daughters of men. It later calls the angels who lusted after these women *Watchers* and states that they gathered on Mount Armon, descended, and took wives. Their children became the

¹ Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women*, Bk. 1, Ch 3 as quoted in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985) 15-16 hereinafter noted as quoted in ANF 4:15-16.

Nephalim, giants among men who approached 300 cubits tall.¹ Those who accept this rendition maintained that it is recorded in the Bible. The King James Version states, “*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*” (Gen 6:1-2). It adds, “*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*” (Gen 6:4). When Moses wrote Genesis, he did not necessarily consider the sons of God to be fallen angels who took wives from the daughters of men and produced giants. That correlation was complete by the time that the Qumran community collected their religious scrolls. It is repeated by Josephus in his history of the Jews.²

The connection of the “*sons of God*” with fallen angels, or “*Watchers*” happened while the Jews were exiled in Babylon. “*According to Jonathan Ben-Dov of the University of Haifa, the myth of the watchers began in Lebanon when Aramaic writers tried to interpret the imagery on Mesopotamian stone monuments without being able to read their Akkadian text. Amar Annus from the University of Tartu argues that the Watchers were intended as polemical representations of the Mesopotamian Apkallu, who gave wisdom to man before the flood (which is portrayed as a corrupting influence in Enochian literature).*”³ That is one reason why noted scholars who translated ancient literature concluded that the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jasher, which was also found in Ethiopia, and other books mentioning the Watchers were written after the Captivity.

The Restoration and the Watchers

The Inspired Version removes the possibility that angels cohabited with women to produce the Nephalim. It states, “*Noah and his sons hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed; and they were called the sons of God. And when these men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, the sons of men saw that their daughters were fair, and they took them wives even as they chose*” (Gen 8:1-2). It says nothing about the offspring of their union, whether they were mighty men or the Nephalim, although it reports, “*And in those days there were giants on the earth, and they sought Noah to take away his life*” (Gen 8:6). The corrections that the Holy Spirit caused Joseph Smith to make to the Biblical narrative make it clear that the “*sons of God,*” who cohabited with women were men among the righteous who were beguiled. The Inspired Version adds, “*And the Lord said unto Noah, The daughters of thy sons have sold themselves, for behold, mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice*” (Gen 8:3).

Proponents of the Book of Enoch point to the fact that a verse in Jude’s epistle is contained in the Ethiopian book. Jude wrote, “*Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand 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). The comparable verse in the Book of Enoch is,

¹ *The Book of Enoch The Prophet*, Chapter 7:1-12, 5-7, Richard Laurence, translator (San Diego, CA: Wizards Bookshelf, 1976) hereinafter referred to as Enoch 7:1-12.

² Josephus, *Antiquity of the Jews*, Bk 1, Ch 3.2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1960) 28.

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watcher_\(angel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watcher_(angel)).

“Behold, he comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon them, and destroy the wicked, and reprove all the carnal for everything which the sinful and ungodly have done, and committed against him.”¹

Some proponents find additional evidence for the Ethiopian text earlier in Jude, as well as in one of Peter’s epistles. Jude also wrote, *“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). Peter made a similar statement: *“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”* (2P 2:4). While both verses could fit into the narrative portrayed in the Book of Enoch, other Bible passages give a different explanation. Isaiah reveals Satan’s fall from heaven: *“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!”* (Is 14:12). The Inspired Version gives more detail: *“Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him; and also that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten I caused that he should be cast down and he became Satan. Yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive, and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice”* (Gen 3:4-5). John adds that angels fell with the devil: *“And there appeared another sign in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth”* (Rev 12:4). A little later the vision adds, *“Neither was there place found in heaven for the great dragon, who was cast out; that old serpent called the devil, and also called Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth; and his angels were cast out with him”* (Rev 12:8). These scriptures combine to reveal Satan’s rebellion from God and notes that one-third of the angels of God were cast out of heaven with him. By revealing that these angels were placed in hell and reserved for the final judgment Jude and Peter agree with the Biblical account.

If the story of the Watchers as contained in the Book of Enoch was preserved among the records that Lehi brought to America, one might expect the Book of Mormon to mention the fall of the angels. On the contrary, it only upholds the Biblical teaching that Satan fell and that both he and his angels are predestined for eternal damnation. Nephi quotes Isaiah, *“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! Art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High”* (2N 10:34-36). Lehi understood that Satan fell: *“I, Lehi, according to the things which I have read, must needs suppose that an angel of God, according to that which is written, had fallen from heaven; wherefore he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God. And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable for ever, he sought also the misery of all mankind. Wherefore, he said, unto Eve, yea, even that old serpent, who is the devil, who is the father of all lies”* (2N 1:101-14). Nephi also wrote about the devil’s fall: *“For behold, if the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more”* (2N 6:20).

¹ Enoch 2:1, 2.

The Book of Mormon does not mention that angels fell with Satan, but only that they are wicked, like their leader: "*Wherefore, they who are filthy are the devil and his angels*" (2N 6:39). In addition, it reveals that these enemies of righteousness are reserved for the second death: "*Then will I confess unto them, that I never knew them; and they shall depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*" (Mos 11:135). It also reveals that Satan and his angels actively influence people to act wickedly: "*For after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no not one; neither doth his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him*" (Mri 7:16). An interesting point in the Book of Mormon is that people who choose wickedness become angels of the devil. Jacob urged, "*Loose yourselves from the pains of hell, that ye may not become angels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death*" (Jac 2:65). The absence in the Book of Mormon of any reference to either fallen angles or the Nephalem suggests that Lehi did not bring the Book of Enoch or its accounts. Since Lehi left Jerusalem immediately before Nebuchadnezzar conquered it, the absence in the Book of Mormon of references to the fall of angels helps confirm that the belief about fallen angels who cohabited with the daughters of men was introduced to Jews during the Babylonian Captivity and entered their literature after their return.

The Ante-Nicene Fathers

Some proponents of the Book of Enoch's validity also refer to the Ante-Nicene Fathers. That term means authors who wrote before the Council of Nicea, which convened in 325, and whose works remain until today. Some of them spoke of the Book of Enoch or quoted from it, which proponents assert that the early Christians accepted the book as scripture. Their conclusion is inaccurate. Quoting a source, even when it is used to bolster a Christian teaching, does not mean that Christians considered it scripture. The most obvious example is the occasional reference that many Christian authors made to the sibyls. The sibyls were oracles in ancient Greece, who, according to legend, prophesied at holy sites, originally at Delphi and Pessinos. These prophecies became popular books among Roman pagans. Their universal respect among the public is one reason why "*the Fathers all cite them.*"¹

The references that the early Christian writers make to the Book of Enoch only show that it existed in some form when they wrote. Only Tertullian maintained that the Book of Enoch should be scripture. At the time that he wrote, the Bible canon was still in the process of being defined. It was not formalized until a generation later. Until then, other works, such the Epistle of Clement and the Visions and Similitudes of Hermes, both valid books written by people named in the New Testament, were regarded as scripture along with the Epistles of Peter, James, John, and Paul. However, the incessant work of heretics to authenticate their falsehoods by writing spurious texts, like the Gospel of Thomas, required the church to identify genuine books of scripture. The need became obvious when Marcion wrote his altered New Testament, but it took nearly a century for the church to settle on the content. The difficulties that both the heretics posed and their spurious works created is obvious in the Ante-Nicene writings. A number of books containing fantastic visions and apocalyptic prophecies appeared. Often fragments of the Book of Enoch were found with fragments of these other fantasies. For instance, the editor for the Gospel of Peter, an

¹ Elucidations 2, ANF 6:256.

obviously spurious composition, makes this statement about its discovery: *“The same parchment which contained this fragment also contained a fragment of the Revelation of Peter and a fragment of the Book of Enoch in Greek.”*¹ This discovery illustrates how similar the Ethiopian Book of Enoch is to other pseudepigraphical and heretical works.

No Ante-Nicene author before Tertullian advocated that the Book of Enoch be received as scripture. He wrote an entire chapter, entitled *Concerning the Genuineness of The Prophecy of Enoch*. He wrote, *“I am aware that the Scripture of Enoch, which has assigned this order (of action) to angels, is not received by some, because it is not admitted into the Jewish canon either. I suppose they did not think that, having been published before the deluge, it could have safely survived that world-wide calamity, the abolisher of all things. If that is the reason (for rejecting it), let them recall to their memory that Noah, the survivor of the deluge, was the great-grandson of Enoch himself; and he, of course, had heard and remembered, from domestic renown and hereditary tradition, concerning his own great-grandfather’s ‘grace in the sight of God,’ and concerning all his preachings; since Enoch had given no other charge to Methuselah than that he should hand on the knowledge of them to his posterity. Noah therefore, no doubt, might have succeeded in the trusteeship of (his) preaching; or, had the case been otherwise, he would not have been silent alike concerning the disposition (of things) made by God, his Preserver, and concerning the particular glory of his own house.*

“If (Noah) had not had this (conservative power) by so short a route, there would (still) be this (consideration) to warrant our assertion of (the genuineness of) this Scripture: he could equally have renewed it, under the Spirit’s inspiration, after it had been destroyed by the violence of the deluge, as, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian storming of it, every document of the Jewish literature is generally agreed to have been restored through Ezra.

*“But since Enoch in the same Scripture has preached likewise concerning the Lord, nothing at all must be rejected by us which pertains to us; and we read that ‘every Scripture suitable for edification is divinely inspired.’ By the Jews it may now seem to have been rejected for that (very) reason, just like all the other (portions) nearly which tell of Christ. Nor, of course, is this fact wonderful, that they did not receive some Scriptures which spake of Him whom even in person, speaking in their presence, they were not to receive. To these considerations is added the fact that Enoch possesses a testimony in the Apostle Jude.”*²

All others Ante-Nicene authors who address the divinity of the Book of Enoch spoke against its inclusion as scripture. One was Origen, who wrote a commentary on John’s gospel. In it he said, *“Let us look at the words of the Gospel now before us. ‘Jordan’ means ‘their going down.’ The name ‘Jared’ is etymologically akin to it, if I may say so; it also yields the meaning ‘going down;’ for Jared was born to Maleleel, as it is written in the Book of Enoch—if any one cares to accept that book as sacred—in the days when the sons of God came down to the daughters of men.”*³ Origen appears careful not to call the men angels who came to the daughters of men. Not only does his caution suggest that he does not regard the Enochian

¹ ANF 10:3.

² Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women*, Bk. 1, Ch 3 as quoted in ANF 4:15-16.

³ Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Bk. 6, Ch 25 as quoted in ANF 10:371.

account factual, but he implied that he does not consider the Book of Enoch as scripture when he says, *“If any one cares to accept that book as sacred.”*¹

At another time, Origen wrote his book against Celus, an advocate of paganism who had misused the Book of Enoch. Celus claimed that Christians believed that Jesus was the only angel to visit men. Paganism is filled with legends of their gods approaching people, sometimes to reward them, sometimes to curse them and sometimes to impregnate women. In one place, Origen revealed how Christians viewed that book: *“In a most confused manner, moreover, does he adduce, when examining the subject of the visits of angels to men, what he has derived, without seeing its meaning, from the contents of the book of Enoch; for he does not appear to have read the passages in question, nor to have been aware that the books which bear the name Enoch do not at all circulate in the Churches as divine”*²

The Apostolic Constitutions, which scholars believe was compiled during the third and fourth centuries, contains a position regarding the Book of Enoch. The section is entitled *Concerning Books With False Inscriptions*. It says, *“We have sent all these things to you, that ye may know our opinion, what it is; and that ye may not receive those books which obtain in our name, but are written by the ungodly. For you are not to attend to the names of the apostles, but to the nature of the things, and their settled opinions. For we know that Simon and Cleobius, and their followers, have compiled poisonous books under the name of Christ and of His disciples, and do carry them about in order to deceive you who love Christ, and us His servants. And among the ancients also some have written apocryphal books of Moses, and Enoch, and Adam, and Isaiah, and David, and Elijah, and of the three patriarchs, pernicious and repugnant to the truth. The same things even now have the wicked heretics done, reproaching the creation, marriage, providence, the begetting of children, the law, and the prophets; inscribing certain barbarous names, and, as they think, of angels, but, to speak the truth, of demons, which suggest things to them: whose doctrine eschew, that ye may not be partakers of the punishment due to those that write such things for the seduction and perdition of the faithful and unblameable disciples of the Lord Jesus.”*³

Ante-Nicene Quotations

Some references that the early Christian authors make to the Book of Enoch restate information that it contains. Proponents of the Book of Enoch claim that these quotations prove that the book is true, but it only proves that it existed at that time. Irenaeus, who wrote about 170 AD, mentioned Enoch without quoting him. He said, *“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.”*⁴ The editor made a note about the use of this phrase *“the angels when they had transgressed fell to earth for judgment,”* supposing that the information had been drawn from the Book of Enoch. The note said, *“Massuet remarks here that Irenæus makes a reference to the apocryphal book of Enoch, in which this history is contained. It was the belief of the later Jews, followed by the Christian fathers, that*

¹ Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Bk. 6, Ch 25 as quoted in ANF 10:371.

² Origen, *Against Celsus*, Bk. 5, Ch 54 as quoted in ANF 4:567.

³ *Constitution of the Holy Apostles*, Bk. 6, Sec. 3, Ch 16 As quoted in ANF 7:457.

⁴ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Bk. 4, Ch 16 as quoted in ANF 1:481.

*“the sons of God” (Gen. vi. 2) who took wives of the daughters of men, were the apostate angels. The LXX. translation of that passage accords with this view. See the articles “Enoch,” “Enoch, Book of,” in Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible. [See Paradise Lost, b. i. 323–431.]”*¹ The editor’s note is important because it reveals how the concept of the Watchers, which some Jews embraced while in Babylon, became attached to scripture. The LXX is the Septuagint, the earliest translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek, which the Egyptian King Ptolemy II Philadelphus commissioned and tradition says 72 Jewish scholars translated. King Ptolemy lived from 285–246 BC. What the editor is implying is that the translators wove the myth of the Watchers into their translation so that the Septuagint, the Bible that the early Christians used, reflected it.

Elsewhere, Irenaeus commented on a verse in the text, *“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men”* (Ps 68:18). Paul quoted this verse in his Ephesian epistle (Eph 4:8). Irenaeus wrote, *“And by captivity he means the destruction of the rule of the apostate angels.”*² While this explanation may refer to information in Peter’s epistle, it could have easily come from the Book of Enoch.

While the Christian Fathers occasionally refer to the Book of Enoch and its content as it exists in the Ethiopian copy, many of their quotations are not there. The following examination will show the many differences between the copy of the Book of Enoch as the early Christians had it and the Ethiopian text as it exists today. Justin was the first author to quote it. He was martyred about 140. He wrote, *“The final stumbling-block (or source of danger) approaches, concerning which it is written, as Enoch says, ‘For for this end the Lord has cut short the times and the days, that His Beloved may hasten; and He will come to the inheritance.’”*³ This verse is not in the Ethiopian text. Justin wrote in Greek. A Latin copy, which would have appeared at least a century later, substitutes Daniel for Enoch, but the text is not in Daniel either.

Tertullian was born in 155 AD and became a Christian about the age of 42. Ten years later, he was attracted to Montanism and became a proponent of it. In his book *On Idolatry*, Tertullian provides two quotations that are rather lengthy for authors in those times. The first says, *“Enoch had preceded, predicting that ‘the demons, and the spirits of the angelic apostates, would turn into idolatry all the elements, all the garniture of the universe, all things contained in the heaven, in the sea, in the earth, that they might be consecrated as God, in opposition to God.’”*⁴ The second states, *“In short, the same Enoch fore-condemns in general menace both idol-worshippers and idol-makers together. And again: ‘I swear to you, sinners, that against the day of perdition of blood repentance is being prepared. Ye who serve stones, and ye who make images of gold, and silver, and wood, and stones and clay, and serve phantoms, and demons, and spirits in fanes, and all errors not according to knowledge, shall find no help from them.’”*⁵ The first quotation is not in the Ethiopian copy of the Book of Enoch, but the second is similar to one that is. While describing the divine judgment, *“when the nations shall be overthrown,”*⁶ the Book of Enoch prophesies, *“They shall worship stones,*

¹ ANF 1:481.

² Irenaeus, *The Demonstration of Apostolic Teaching* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002) 25.

³ *Epistle of Barnabas*, ch 4 as quoted in ANF 1:139.

⁴ Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Ch 4, as quoted in ANF 3:63.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Enoch 97:5, 162.

and engrave golden, silver, and wooden images. They shall worship impure spirits, demons, and every idol, in temples; but no help shall be found in them.”¹ Referring to the pagan practice of placing enchantments or charms at doors and other entrances, Tertullian also said that Enoch prophesied those things: “*These things, therefore, the Holy Spirit foreseeing from the beginning, fore-chaunted, through the most ancient prophet Enoch, that even entrances would come into superstitious use.*”² No equivalent statement is found in the Book of Enoch either.

One other reference that Tertullian quoted from the Book of Enoch is found in it. He wrote, “*I mean, and lustrous stones—and taught men how to work them, and by and by instructed them, among their other (instructions), in (the virtues of) eyelid-powder and the dyeings of fleeces, have been condemned by God, as Enoch tells us, how shall we please God while we joy in the things of those (angels) who, on these accounts, have provoked the anger and the vengeance of God?*”³ The Book of Enoch states, “*Moreover Azazyel taught men to make swords, knives, shields, breastplates, the fabrication of mirrors, and the workmanship of bracelets and ornaments, the use of paint, the beautifying of the eye-brows, the use of stones of every valuable and select kind, and of all sorts of dyes, so that the world became altered.*”⁴ Only two of Tertullian’s four references as taken from the Book of Enoch that he possessed are actually in the Ethiopian text.

Origen, a very prolific writer who was highly regarded throughout Christendom, wrote from 220 to 250. In his explanation of the power of God to create all things, he stated that belief in the Creator was a primary principle of Christianity and appealed to several sources to show how important it was. One of them said, “*That all things were created by God, and that there is no creature which exists but has derived from Him its being, is established from many declarations of Scripture . . . For even in that little treatise called The Pastor or Angel of Repentance, composed by Hermas, we have the following: ‘First of all, believe that there is one God who created and arranged all things; who, when nothing formerly existed, caused all things to be; who Himself contains all things, but Himself is contained by none.’ And in the book of Enoch also we have similar descriptions.*”⁵ The only place in the Book of Enoch that says anything close to Origen’s claim is as follows: “*Thou hast made all things; thou possessest power over all things: and all things are open and manifest before thee.*”⁶ While it is unlikely that this verse is the source of Origen’s quotation, it is the closest when compared to all others that he quoted.

According to the Latin copy (the Greek copy ends several chapters earlier), Origen quoted a few short verses from Enoch. He wrote, “*Enoch also, in his book, speaks as follows: ‘I have walked on even to imperfection;’ which expression I consider may be understood in a similar manner, viz., that the mind of the prophet proceeded in its scrutiny and investigation of all visible things, until it arrived at that first beginning in which it beheld imperfect matter (existing) without ‘qualities.’ For it is written in the same book of Enoch, ‘I beheld the whole of matter;’ which is so understood as if he had said: ‘I have clearly seen all the divisions of matter*

¹ Enoch 97:8, 162.

² Ibid., Ch 15 as quoted in ANF 3:70-71.

³ Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women*, Bk. 2, Ch 10 as quoted in ANF 4:23.

⁴ Enoch 8:1, 7-8.

⁵ Origen, *De Principiis*, Bk 1, Ch 3.3 as quoted in ANF 4:252.

⁶ Enoch 9:4, 9.

which are broken up from one into each individual species either of men, or animals, or of the sky, or of the sun, or of all other things in this world.” While the Ethiopian text explains how Enoch was raised up to see the workings of heaven and earth, it does not say that he walked to imperfection, nor that he saw that imperfect matter existed at the beginning. According to the book, the prophet starts his tour when he is carried “to a lofty spot, to a mountain, the top of which reached to heaven,”¹ From it, he sees fire, rivers and every abyss. During the next chapters he surveys the stones that support the corners of the earth, the four winds, the circuits of heaven with their fiery globes, deserts, valleys, and mountains, as well as “beasts different from each other, and birds various in their countenances and forms,”² but he does not behold the divisions of matter, how they are broken up to form individual species, or make such a concluding comment about his trip through creation.

In his treatise against Celsus, already mentioned, Origen quotes the Book of Enoch: “It is from this source that he might be supposed to have obtained the statement, that ‘sixty or seventy angels descended at the same time, who fell into a state of wickedness.’”³ The Ethiopian book does not contain that quote. The number that it gives is much larger. It says, “Their whole number was two hundred.”⁴ After giving the names of their 18 chiefs, it adds, “These were the prefects of the two hundred angels, and the remainder were all with them. Then they took wives, each choosing for himself.”⁵ A little later, Origen mentions another false assertion about Christian teachings that Celsus took from the Book of Enoch: “And he quotes (as from the book of Enoch, but without naming it) the following: ‘And hence it is that the tears of these angels are warm springs,’—a thing neither mentioned nor heard of in the Churches of God!”⁶ While acknowledging that the teaching was contained in the Book of Enoch as it existed at that time, he emphatically denies that it is accepted as a true tenet among Christians. His denial shows one reason why Christians rejected the Book of Enoch. Since the cited quotation is not in the Ethiopian text, his quote also reveals that the Ethiopian text is not the text that existed in his day.

Origen wrote a commentary on John’s gospel. In it he said, “Let us look at the words of the Gospel now before us. ‘Jordan’ means ‘their going down.’ The name ‘Jared’ is etymologically akin to it, if I may say so; it also yields the meaning ‘going down;’ for Jared was born to Maleleel, as it is written in the Book of Enoch—if any one cares to accept that book as sacred—in the days when the sons of God came down to the daughters of men.”⁷ Those who advocate the Book of Enoch find confirmation in this passage, assuming that it confirms Enoch’s account of the Watchers; but other texts that claim an origin in antiquity give a different account. They report that the righteous lived on a mountain and worshiped God, but some of them gazed on the dress, ornaments, and entertainment among the children of Cain. They were so attracted that they left their high estate: “The daughters of Cain lusted after the sons of Seth like ravenous beasts, and the sons of Seth after the daughters of Cain,

¹ Enoch 17:2, 23.

² Enoch, 32:1-2, 39.

³ Origen, *Against Celsus*, Bk. 5, Ch 54 as quoted in ANF 4:567.

⁴ Enoch 7:7, 6.

⁵ Enoch 7:9-10, 6-7.

⁶ Origen, *Against Celsus*, Bk. 5, Ch 56 as quoted in ANF 4:567.

⁷ Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Bk. 6, Ch 25 as quoted in ANF 10:371.

until they committed abominations with them."¹ Once they sinned, the men could not return to the mountain of the Lord. This alternative account is more compatible with the Inspired Version. It is relevant to note that the books of Adam and Eve are also pseudepigraphical works. They were likely written by an Egyptian and probably in Arabic. That likelihood places their origin after 621 AD, the beginning of the first Islamic Jihad. The version that was translated into English was found in Ethiopia.

Theodotus, a name of three likely candidates, all heretics, wrote a commentary on scriptures. The surviving excerpts suggest that this Theodotus was a Montanist, the same heresy that attracted Tertullian for a while. Those excerpts contain two references to the Book of Enoch. One states, "*Blessed art Thou, who lookest on the abysses as Thou sittest on the cherubim,' says Daniel, in agreement with Enoch, who said, 'And I saw all sorts of matter.'*"² This quote is similar to ones preserved by Origen. The Ethiopian text does not contain anything about matter. The second quotation says, "*And already Enoch had said, that the angels who transgressed taught men astronomy and divination, and the rest of the arts.*"³ This information is contained in the Ethiopian text: "*Amazarak taught all the sorcerers and dividers of roots: Armers taught the solution of Sorcery; Barkayal taught the observations of the stars; Akibeel taught signs; Tamiel taught astronomy; and Asardel taught the motion of the moon.*"⁴ The difference in these two quotations is obvious.

Another example of passages that were in the Book of Enoch that the early Christians possessed is given by Anatoilis, who wrote about 270. In one of his few surviving texts, he wrote, "*But I shall pass on without demanding such copious demonstrations (on subjects) from which the veil of the Mosaic law has been removed; for now it remains for us with unveiled face to behold ever as in a glass Christ Himself and the doctrines and sufferings of Christ. But that the first month among the Hebrews is about the equinox, is clearly shown also by what is taught in the book of Enoch.*"⁵ Neither the prophecies nor information about the Hebrews is contained in the Ethiopian text. Neither does it mention that their calendar started about the time of the Spring equinox.

Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs

The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs in its present form was part of the Armenian scriptures of 1666. Fragments of it have been found at Qumran, but some scholars question whether the two are the same document. The reason is that the present work contains several direct references to Christ, which makes its origin before Christianity doubtful. Scholars place the Testaments as being written by a Christianized Jew in the last decade of the second century, just before Tertullian's conversion. Many surmise that the author began with a text that existed among the Jews, fragments of which, as already noted, have been found at Qumran, but he added to it and otherwise modified it into its present and Christianized form. Its value to this study is that it freely quotes from the Book of Enoch as available at that time.

¹ 2 Adan and Eve 20:32 as quoted in *The Lost Books of the Bible and The Forgotten Books of Eden* (NY, NY: World Publishing, 1972) 78-79.

² Theodotus, *Selections from the Prophetic Scriptures*, Ch 2 as quoted in ANF 8:43.

³ *Ibid.*, Ch. 53 as quoted in ANF 8:49.

⁴ Enoch 8:3-8, 8.

⁵ Anatolius of Alexandria, *The Paschal Canon*, Ch 5 as quoted in ANF 6:147.

The Testament is divided into twelve chapters, one for each of Jacob's sons, and arranged in the order of their birth. In Rueben's testimony, he urges, "*Therefore flee fornication, my children, and command your wives and your daughters that they adorn not their heads and their faces; because every woman who acteth deceitfully in these things hath been reserved to everlasting punishment. For thus they allured the Watchers¹ before the flood; and as these continually beheld them, they fell into desire each of the other, and they conceived the act in their mind, and changed themselves into the shape of men, and appeared to them in their congress with their husbands; and the women, having in their minds desire toward their apparitions, gave birth to giants, for the Watchers appeared to them as reaching even unto heaven.*"² While this passage does not mention the Book of Enoch, the book's free use throughout the Testaments suggest that it is the source of this information.

One set of references in the Testaments that is not in the Ethiopian text is promises made to the House of Israel. For instance, Simeon reports, "*For I have seen it inscribed in the writing of Enoch that your sons shall with you be corrupted in fornication, and shall do wrong against Levi with the sword.*"³ Levi also said, "*For the house which the Lord shall choose shall be called Jerusalem, as is contained in the book of Enoch the righteous.*"⁴ Another passage reads, "*And now, my children, I have learnt from the writing of Enoch that at the last ye will deal ungodly, laying your hands upon the Lord in all malice; and your brethren shall be ashamed because of you, and to all the Gentiles shall it become a mocking. For our father Israel shall be pure from the ungodliness of the chief priests who shall lay their hands upon the Saviour of the world.*"⁵ Lastly, he testified, "*And now I have learnt in the book of Enoch that for seventy weeks will ye go astray, and will profane the priesthood, and pollute the sacrifices, and corrupt the law, and set at nought the words of the prophets.*"⁶

The Testament of Dan contains this passage: "*For I have read in the book of Enoch the righteous, that your prince is Satan, and that all the spirits of fornication and pride shall be subject unto Levi, to lay a snare for the sons of Levi, to cause them to sin before the Lord.*"⁷ Benjamin contains a reference to the removal of the kingdom from the Hebrews, which is something that Jesus did. The Savior told His disciples after His answer angered the Pharisees, "*And the kingdom of God shall be taken from them, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof; (meaning the Gentiles.)*" (Matt 21:53). Benjamin said that this loss was predicted in Enoch: "*Now I suppose, from the words of the righteous Enoch, that there will be also evil-doings among you: for ye will commit fornication with the fornication of Sodom, and shall perish all save a few, and will multiply inordinate lusts with women; and the*

¹ Editor' Note regarding *Watchers*: [This section is censured by Lardner as unsuitable to dying admonitions. He forgets Oriental simplicity.] This name, occurring once again in the Testaments (Naph. 3), is one frequently found applied to the angels as the custodians, רייע of the world and of men. Thus, in the Chaldee of Daniel (iv. 10, 14, 20: 13, 17, 23, Eng. Ver.), we find the expression which Aquila and Symmachus render ἐγρήγορος. The corresponding Ethiopic term is of frequent occurrence in the book of Enoch, not only of the fallen angels (e.g., x. 9, 15, xvi. 1, etc.), but of the good (xii. 2, 3, etc., ed. Dillmann). See also Gesenius, רייע. Thesaurus, s.v.

² *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Ch. 1.5 as quoted in ANF 8:10.

³ *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Ch 2.5 as quoted in ANF 8:12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.10 as quoted in ANF 8:15.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.14 as quoted in ANF 8:15.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.16 as quoted in ANF 8:16.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Ch. 7.5 as quoted in ANF 8:26.

*kingdom of the Lord shall not be among you, for forthwith He will take it away.”*¹ The Book of Enoch contains no prophecies or predictions about the house of Israel or the individual tribes.

Other quotations contain instructions urging actions that are related to the Hebrews in some fashion. For instance, Judah admonished, *“For I have read also in the books of Enoch the righteous what evils ye shall do in the last days. Take heed, therefore, my children, of fornication and the love of money; hearken to Judah your father.”*² Zebulon urged the people to observe one aspect of the Mosaic Law: *“Therefore is it written in the writing of the law of Enoch, that whosoever will not raise up seed to his brother, his sandal shall be unloosed, and they shall spit into his face.”*³ Naphtali advised people to obey another provision of the Mosaic Law: *“These things I say, my children, for I have read in the holy writing of Enoch that ye yourselves also will depart from the Lord, walking according to all wickedness of the Gentiles, and ye will do according to all the iniquity of Sodom.”*⁴ Like all the quotations in the Testaments, none of these are contained in the Ethiopian text, showing that book to which the early Christians referred is a different book.

Summary

The Book of Enoch contains views that are not consistent with the scriptures, especially as they exist in the Inspired Version and the Book of Mormon. Instead, they reflect myths and misunderstandings taken from ancient pagan sources. The Jews encountered them during their Babylonian captivity and brought them back to Judea on their return. They were included in the Book of Enoch when it was composed sometime after Ezra, but likely before Ptolemy. Fragments of that book were found at Qumran.

One reason that the Book of Enoch could not be from antiquity is because the scriptures were destroyed when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and also burned the Temple. The Jews were exiled to Babylon, taking with them only the few possessions that they could carry. No book of scripture remained when the Jews return. Ezra and the Great Assembly restored the scriptures to form the Old Testament. The Book of Enoch was not part of that restoration effort. The fact that the Book of Enoch existed among the Jews prior to Christ shows that it had a separate origin and that it was written after Ezra.

The fact that the Ante-Nicene authors quoted from the book and otherwise referenced it does not mean that they regarded the book as scripture. Only Tertullian taught that it should be. Others clearly denounced it as such. There were at least two reasons why they quoted it. One was that opponents to Christianity made references to it, which they addressed in their refutations. The other was because its popularity among their audience allowed them to use it to bolster the points that they tried to make.

The most critical point that can be concluded from the quotations that are contained in Ante-Nicene literature is that the Book of Enoch as it existed among the early Christians is not the same as the Ethiopian copy that now exists. This conclusion is made quite clear by comparing the quotations from Ante-Nicene literature to the present-day text. Of the 21 quotations, only three are in the Ethiopian copy of the Book of Enoch. One of those is far

¹ *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Ch. 12.9 as quoted in ANF 8:37.

² *Ibid.*, Ch. 4.18 *Ibid.*, as quoted in ANF 8:20.

³ *Ibid.*, Ch. 6.3 as quoted in ANF 8:23.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Ch. 8.4 as quoted in ANF 8:27-28.

different, although the information is the same. The fact that such a high percentage is missing is ample evidence that the Book of Enoch as it exists today is not the same book that the early Christians had, nor which was held among some Jews before Christ.

The Book of Enoch as it existed among the Jews was not authentic. It was not written by Enoch, but by others after the Captivity. The Ethiopian copy is not the same as the early Christians possessed, implying that it is not the same book that the Jews held prior to Christ. The present-day Book of Enoch is at best a corrupt book, perhaps based on parts of the original, but perhaps forged. Whatever its history or development, the present-day copy of the Book of Enoch could not have been written by Enoch. The only reason that these conclusions are relevant is the close similarities between the Ethiopian copy of the Book of Enoch and parts of the Book of Moses as now being presented in the Sealed Book of Mormon. The similarities are much greater and far more vast than the comparison between the Ethiopian text and Ante-Nicene literature. With such close similarities, it is inconceivable to think that one did not come from the other. Since the supposedly miraculous origin of the Book of Moses authenticates the Ethiopian text, defenders of the divinity of the sealed Book of Mormon are left to also defend the authenticity of the Ethiopian copy of the Book of Enoch, which has a shady past and spurious origin.