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“Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord!”

We’ve been looking at evidence, both external as well as internal to the *Book of Enoch*, which points to the possibility that the Biblical Enoch is in fact its author. We’ve explored the evidence for the book’s great age as well as the book’s incredible history of survival despite being banned by churchmen and rabbis of various religious groups. We’ve seen that the *Book of Enoch* is thoroughly Biblical in its world view. In fact, the *Book of Enoch* seems to clarify a number of puzzling passages in our Bibles. Also, the book contains a very high view of the identity and character of the Messiah, along the lines of what we find in what the New Testament says about Jesus. On a related note, the book also contains a number of passages which claim to be prophetic and seem to have come to pass, some of which are Messianic in character. We have also noted that certain New Testament writers seem to accept the *Book of Enoch* as the authentic writings of Enoch.

So what are we to make of all this? If the *Book of Enoch* was written by the Biblical Enoch, this would mean the book would have been in existence and preserved and passed along since the times of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament. Indeed, in the previous chapter we saw there are in fact ancient Jewish traditions which purport to record a kind of history of transmission of the *Book of Enoch* from Abraham to Jacob, and from Jacob to Levi.

If that is the case, were the writings of Enoch considered to be Scripture before Moses and before the prophets of Israel had written their books?

“Enoch Was the First to Write a Testimony”

In the *Book of Jubilees*, a book which can be found in the Bible of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, an ancient Jewish tradition is preserved in which we read,

Moses was on the Mount forty days and forty nights, and God taught him the earlier and the later history of the division of all the days of the law and of the testimony. (Jubilees 1:4)

In the above-referenced passage from Jubilees the phrase “the law and the testimony” refers to the body of work which has come down to us today variously referred to as Torah, the Pentateuch and the Law of Moses. Not only did Moses give the children of Israel the Law, but he also left them a testimony to their early history as the foundation for what was to develop and become the ‘Tanach’ for Jews and Old Testament for Christians.

According to the tradition as preserved in the passage quoted above, God taught Moses the earlier and later history. Part of the earlier history

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taught to Moses was that Enoch was the,

First to write a testimony and he testified to the sons of men among the generations of the earth, and recounted the weeks of the jubilees, and made known to them the days of the years, and set in order the months and recounted the Sabbaths of the years as we made them known to him. And what was and what will be he saw in a vision of his sleep, as it will happen to the children of men throughout their generations until the day of judgment; he saw and understood everything, and wrote his testimony, and placed the testimony on earth for all the children of men and for their generations. (Jubilees 4:18-19)

So we are told Enoch did for an earlier generation what Moses was to do in his own. Enoch was the first to write a testimony. The claim is made that just as the five books of Moses comprised a testimony to the people of his day, what we have today in the *Book of Enoch*, a composite of five books penned by Enoch over the course of his earthly sojourn, were to comprise a testimony to the generations which were to come after him. If this is so, the five books of Enoch would have comprised the core of the “Bible” for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is an interesting speculation.

What is sure however, is that the three groups of literature which make up the *Book of Enoch*, the Old Testament, and the New Testament uphold the same message throughout. God loves His creation and intends to restore it through His Son, who is appointed to be its savior.

That these three bodies of literature uphold one another can be demonstrated again from three passages which contain eye-witness accounts to the heavenly worship scene around God’s throne. In each of these passages the veil is pulled back and we are given a view of God worshipped by the hosts of Heaven.

Isaiah Sees the Lord

In Isaiah 6, we find,

In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

WHO REALLY WROTE THE BOOK OF ENOCH?

John Sees the Lord

In the Revelation to John chapter 4, we read,

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

Enoch Sees the Lord

In Enoch 39:10-13, we are told,

For a long time my eyes regarded that place, and I blessed Him and praised Him, saying: 'Blessed is He, and may He be blessed from the beginning and for evermore. And before Him there is no ceasing. He knows before the world was created what is for ever and what will be from generation unto generation. Those who sleep not, bless Thee: they stand before Thy glory and bless, praise, and extol, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Spirits."⁶⁵³ He filleth the earth with spirits." And here my eyes saw all those who sleep not:, they stand before Him and bless and say: 'Blessed be Thou, and blessed be the name of the Lord for ever and ever.'" And my face was changed; for I could no longer behold."

These three passages each claim to be revelation of the heavenly worship scene around the throne of God. Taken together, the three passages attest to the nature of God as revealed in the past, present and future.

The passage from Enoch celebrates He who is holy for *He fills the earth with spirits*. The phrase points to God's work of creation. God is the "Lord of spirits" because he has filled the world with living things in which is the spirit of life. The God of life has populated the earth with the living in which he placed the spirit of life. Here the work of God as creator is celebrated. Enoch celebrates God as creator.

The passage in Isaiah celebrates He who is holy for the whole earth has been filled with His Glory. Here the work of God as redeemer of creation is celebrated. In Solomon's Temple, Isaiah receives the vision of God glorified. God is glorified in the earth as His work of redemption is

⁶⁵³ "Lord of Spirits", this title for God found throughout Enoch's "*Book of the Parables*", reminds us of similar titles used in **Numbers 16:22**, And they fell on their faces and said, 'O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?', and **Hebrews 12:9**, Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

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exemplified by the sacrificial system and temple worship under the Mosaic Covenant. Isaiah celebrates God as redeemer.

The passage from the *Book of Revelation* celebrates He who is holy for He was and is and is to come. According to John, not only is God creator and redeemer, but he is the One who will bring his works of creation and redemption to completion in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, for He is He who was, who is, and who is to come. John celebrates God as he who will bring his creation and redemption to completion.

Holy Is the One Who Was and Is and Is to Come

Holy is the One who did not leave his people without a testimony in the days of Enoch. Holy is the One who did not leave his people Israel without testimony but they were entrusted with the lively oracles of God. Holy is the One who is to come who has given us His testimony of God made flesh.

Though it is not now possible to know whether the patriarchs considered the *Book of Enoch* as Scripture, nevertheless, it is an interesting question that remains unanswered. What is known however, is that for most of the past two thousand years, the *Book of Enoch* has been considered Scripture by one or more Christian communities.