

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 438

The Epistle of Jude, Part 7

August 14, 2022

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Episode Summary

In Jude 14-16, the author continues the theme of the judgment of his opponents, the false teachers. In this instance, Jude cites the book of Enoch (1 Enoch 1:9) specifically to make his case. In this episode, we discuss the implications of Jude's citation of 1 Enoch and the Old Testament sources from which the verse in 1 Enoch derive.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 438: The Epistle of Jude Part 7. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike, how are you doing?

MH: Oh, not too bad, not too bad. Heading into some new treatment.

TS: Radiation?

MH: Yeah. We'll see how that goes. It's all designed to get me to surgery. So hopefully after a few weeks of that, that's what it will accomplish.

5:00 **TS:** Okay, well, we'll include that in our prayers for sure. Well, Mike, we're getting close here to the end of Jude and as we do with all our book studies, we're going to ask for questions (if anybody has any) and we'll do a specific Q&A about the book of Jude. So please send me your questions at treystricklin@gmail.com. We're probably going to shoot for it in two or three weeks. So if you can, send me your questions as soon as you have them and that would be good. Alright, Mike, well I'm ready if you are.

MH: Sounds like a plan, yeah.

TS: Yeah, sounds like a plan. I'm ready if you're ready.

MH: Yeah, yeah, let's jump in here to part 7. So today we're going to cover Jude 14-16 and I'm just going to read that from the ESV and then we'll just jump into a few things here.

¹⁴ It was also about these [MH: the false teachers] that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

So Jude, no surprise, is still after the false teachers. That’s basically what the whole book is about, and at this time he is going to loop Enoch in. Now up until this point we’ve had Jude illustrate or analogize the false teachers to a number of things in the Old Testament known for their villainy: the Genesis 6 incident with the angels that sinned, we’ve had Cain, we’ve had Korah, we’ve had Balaam... Again, a whole series of Old Testament... I want to say “bad guys,” but just really unfavorable things that happened in the Old Testament that were judged by God harshly, and that is his point. Again, that is why he is using these analogies. Sodom and Gomorrah was the other one I left off that list.

Again, this is the point: Jude is saying the false teachers that he is writing against (that apparently there has been some struggle with) are like these, and then he will point to these Old Testament examples in terms of not only their wickedness, but more often than not the way they were judged. And there is no exception here, except this time it is going to be a little bit different.

Look at that first line in Jude 14:

¹⁴ It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied,

And then there’s a quotation. Well, if you go back and look at the Old Testament, there is no such quotation from Enoch because that’s not what Jude is citing. He is citing the book of Enoch here in verse 14—in Jude 14. So we’ll get into that in a moment. But Enoch, of course, was considered a prophet. A prophet is just simply someone who speaks for God. And so the Biblical Enoch had this reputation because he was specially favored by God even though he doesn’t do any prophesying in the Old Testament. I mean, he’s only in the Old Testament in Genesis 5:18, 5:21-24. This is not the Enoch of Genesis 4. This is the Enoch of Genesis 5, the one who was taken that never died—he was “translated.” I think how the King James renders it is “transported again to the heavenly realms,” so on and so forth, but there’s no recorded death. He is just taken to heaven. He is a righteous man, and because of that he gets this reputation as being somebody special in the Old Testament. He is the seventh from Adam that follows the genealogy of Genesis 5:1-24. And that same order is sort of spelled out where

Enoch is the seventh from Adam (you can find that in 1 Enoch 37:1 or 1 Chronicles 1:1-3 or also in Luke 3:37-38). So he is the seventh from Adam. That phrase though (the seventh from Adam) comes from the book of Enoch itself. It uses it in chapter 60:8, chapter 93:3. Jubilees 7:39 refers to Enoch as the seventh in his generation. So this designation, as far as the wording goes, also comes from the book of Enoch, but that isn't the quotation part. The quotation part is the Lord coming with ten thousands of holy ones, so on and so forth. And again, we'll get there in a second.

10:00 Green in his Jude commentary writes this about the seventh position because, again, that is sort of a biblical number and it has some special meaning. He writes:

The "seventh" position held particular significance for the Semitic mind (God rested on the seventh day—Gen. 2:2–3; the ark came to rest in the seventh month—Gen. 8:4; the Israelites ate unleavened bread seven days—Exod. 12:15–16; there was of course rest every seventh day—Exod. 20:10–11; [there was a] seventh generation [that was talked about in Second Temple Judaism, specifically the]—Apoc. Ab. 32.1 and Let. Jer. 3 [that had special significance in Judaism], the fever left at the seventh hour—John 4:52; the seventh seal—Rev. 8:1; the seventh angel—Rev. 10:7) [MH: things are in 7s is the point]. Sometimes genealogies were even restructured to highlight the importance of a prominent person [MH: so that would be number 7] (see Sasson 1978 and his article in *IDBSup* 355). Identifying Enoch in this manner highlights the significance of the following words: *no less than* the seventh from Adam spoke against these heretics.

That is the end of Green's quote and that's what he wants to get to. The fact that Enoch was the seventh from Adam is a position held in special regard. And so even this one—"even the seventh from Adam"—would have had something negative to say about the false teachers. So this is the mood that the wording seeks to conjure up. Then Jude proceeds to cite the book of Enoch. And this is the famous (or infamous) place where he does that. He cites 1 Enoch 1:9 directly here and he cites basically the entire verse in Greek (the Greek Enoch—Greek version of 1 Enoch). So I'm going to read 1 Enoch 1:9 in its own context. This comes from Charlesworth's Old Testament Pseudepigraphal Volume. So this is basically how the book of Enoch opens. I'm going to start in verse 3:

³ And I took up with a parable (saying), "The God of the universe, the Holy Great One, will come forth from his dwelling. ⁴ And from there he will march upon Mount Sinai and appear in his camp emerging from heaven with a mighty power. ⁵ And everyone shall be afraid, and Watchers shall quiver. And great fear and trembling shall seize them unto the ends of the earth. ⁶ Mountains and high places will fall down and be frightened. And high hills shall be made low; and they shall melt like a honeycomb before the flame. ⁷ And earth shall be rent asunder;

and all that is upon the earth shall perish. And there shall be a judgment upon all, (including) the righteous. ⁸ And to all the righteous he will grant peace. He will preserve the elect, and kindness shall be upon them. They shall all belong to God and they shall prosper and be blessed; and the light of God shall shine unto them. ⁹ Behold, he will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all. He will destroy the wicked ones and censure all flesh on account of everything that they have done, that which the sinners and the wicked ones committed against him.”

So this is an apocalyptic vision. 1 Enoch is an apocalyptic book. It's kind of like the book of Revelation, which we mentioned before. But of course, in Enoch's case, Enoch is interpreting and affirming the apocalyptic vision of the Old Testament prophets just like John did in the book of Revelation. And we spent a whole lot of time going through the book of Revelation and how it references the Old Testament. Enoch does more of the same, talking about the end of the world as we know it. He is interpreting and affirming the apocalyptic vision of the Old Testament prophets. There is nothing in what I read there that you wouldn't also find in the Old Testament. And so we have in verse 14:

¹⁴ It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

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This is a vision of judgment. Scholars have drawn attention to the way Jude cites 1 Enoch here. Those of you who are into the book of Enoch, you probably have heard of this before, but scholars have been taken by the fact that Jude uses formulaic language in this passage that is found in other New Testament books for the way Old Testament prophets get cited. In other words, Jude cites Enoch like other New Testament writers would cite scripture. In this case, we have the word “prophesied” in the declaration that someone prophesied. So verse 14 was also about “these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying...” and then here comes the quote. That's typical language elsewhere in the New Testament for quoting parts of the Old Testament. In Matthew 11:13... Let's just look up a few here. Matthew 11:13 says this:

¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John,

Again, so there's this word of prophecy. Let's look at another one here. Matthew 15:7:

⁷ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

And then here comes the quote. We'll do one more here. Let's see, Mark 7:6:

⁶And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

So a little bit different there, but "Well did Isaiah prophesy," and then here comes the quote:

**"This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'**

So it's a way of setting up a quotation, and scholars have noticed that what Jude does here with 1 Enoch sounds a lot like what other new Testament writers do for parts of the Old Testament. And so this has raised the question of Enoch's status. Was he not considered sort of on equal footing with some of this other material from the Old Testament? Green has some thoughts to interject there that I want to read to you as well. He writes here about the work of J. Charles in 1991. So it's not the R.H. Charles that's known for his Enoch studies. It's a different scholar. Green writes:

J. Charles (1991a: 144) attempts to show that "prophesied" here may mean something more general than classifying 1 Enoch as a prophetic book: "And if, by way of illustration, a Cretan is to the apostle Paul a 'prophet' (Titus 1:12), then [MH: so the reasoning goes] Enoch, in Jude 14, can 'prophesy.'" However, in Titus 1:12 Paul calls Epimenides "*their* very own prophet." Jude, on the other hand, says "Enoch ... prophesied" and places this "text" together with other authoritative "texts" (vv. 5–7, 9, 11, 17–18)...

Let me just stop there. In other words, the argument goes that Jude is including 1 Enoch in and along with these other Old Testament examples to portray the false teachers very negatively. And so some have thought that this indicates that 1 Enoch should be considered at the level of these other Old Testament books and it should be considered canonical. And Green in his commentary doesn't think it is canonical, but he does think that Enoch was specially revered by Jude and specially respected. So this is going to be his explanation of why it gets quoted the way it does. It just had a higher status than other books. [Audio breaks up], but that doesn't mean canonical. That's his argument. So he writes here:

There is no indication here that he simply quotes 1 Enoch because his opponents considered it to be authoritative (contra J. Charles 1991a: 144; Moo 1996: 273). Jude rather identifies the source of the prophecy as Enoch, underscores the

significance of that personage (“seventh from Adam,” see below), and claims that what was predicted is now fulfilled in the heretics (τούτοις, *toutois*, about these). Nothing in his language or in the context of the book suggests that he viewed this “text” as anything other than authoritative.

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That’s the end of Green’s quote. So Green is saying that he believes that Jude cited Enoch as an authority here (as an authoritative text) for what was happening, looping the false teachers into this just like the other stuff in the Old Testament. And in this case, Enoch had prophesied about it being the seventh from Adam, that this was all part and parcel of the end of the world, the apocalypse, the day of the Lord, so on and so forth. And that’s a familiar New Testament theme as well. False teaching is going to increase the further down the prophetic road you go. Now I think this is an honest assessment by Green, but I don’t find it persuasive, as far as I’m not convinced that Jude saw the book of Enoch with the same status as other Old Testament books. There is more than one reason why you would cite something, for instance. But let me just go through a few reasons why I don’t find this particular argument that persuasive, even though I think it’s an honest argument.

Other Second Temple Jews cited Enoch with authority. They did the same thing, but they also cited in the same way with formulaic language other books that no Jew considered canonical except for the Qumran sect. And I’m thinking here of the people at Qumran. They cite the Temple Scroll, which is something they produced as though it was scripture. So the fact that it gets cited with authority doesn’t mean that the believing community as a whole would have accepted the work as canonical. And they didn’t. There’s no evidence that any Jewish group outside those that lived at Qumran thought that Enoch was canonical. There is no evidence for that at all.

Secondly Enoch failed a major test of canonicity within the mainstream Jewish community. It was not witnessed in Hebrew, and this is a major canonical test. In the Jewish community, Hebrew was not just the language of literacy, but the language of the scriptures, and this is how they determined their canon. The material had to be written in Hebrew. That was sort of like a first-level test, and there is no evidence, archeologically speaking, that Enoch ever existed in Hebrew. The farthest back you can go is the Qumran material, and they had preserved the book in Aramaic because there were a few scraps of Aramaic Enoch there among the Dead Sea Scrolls. But that’s not Hebrew and so it sort of fails that major test.

Third, the Old Testament at times quotes books and the point isn’t their authority. In other words, the Old Testament might use formulaic language or it might quote something and it may depend on just sort of the convenience of the author. The author might have some other reason why he is citing a text. Enoch was an Old Testament prophetic figure. So was the point of Jude citing Enoch here in this

passage to affirm what is written in Old Testament narrative or to give the book of Enoch authority? I think it's to affirm what's written in Old Testament narrative. In 1 Enoch 1:9, Enoch conveniently combines several apocalyptic ideas from the Old Testament that otherwise Jude would've had to cite three or four different passages to make his point. But 1 Enoch 1:9 actually combines several Old Testament texts, specifically Jeremiah 25:30-31, Isaiah 66:15-16, and Zechariah 14:5. So it could be that Jude just found 1 Enoch 1:9 convenient because it combines all these thoughts into one text and therefore, he cited it. So rather than quoting all three, Jude quotes the verse in 1 Enoch that combines them and he uses the prophetic language not as a commentary on the book (not to endorse 1 Enoch as specially canonical here), but more or less as a commentary on the person—Enoch himself, who was revered and considered a prophet by the believing community. In other words, he endorses the man, not the book, and he endorses, again, the content, which happens to be three separate passages from the Old Testament that get combined in 1 Enoch 1:9. So I think that is really what is going on here.

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Lastly, of course, Enoch failed the historical test. No Jewish community except the one at Qumran thought it was sacred and canonical, and very, very few Christians did. There were a couple, of course. We've gone through this material before so I don't want to belabor it here, but there were a couple of important figures in the history of the early church (Tertullian and Irenaeus, people like that) that considered 1 Enoch to be right up there with the rest of scripture to consider it canonical, but they wound up losing that argument because the witness of the church and mass went in a different direction. So I'm trying to remember which one it was, but I think it was Tertullian that said toward the end of his life that he was content believing that the Holy Spirit had moved within the bulk of the believing church and that the book should not be considered canonical. So he gave it up. He gave up the argument because of the witness of the believing community. He just assumed that the Holy Spirit would direct the community and make the right decision, and he was content with that, even when it went against an idea that he liked. So again, there is very little specific testimony that would support the idea of Enoch being canonical, even though it was considered to carry authority. And, again, my judgment here is that it carries authority and it's convenient for citation because it combines these ideas from three passages in the Old Testament and that's why Jude quotes it, not because he believes it's scripture, but because, "Why would I quote from all three of these other passages when I can get them all bound together in one text of Enoch which you all know? You all know what this book is." The book was revered. The book was held in high regard so why not? Why not do it? Again, I think it's as simple as that.

A few other comments here before we wrap up. Verse 14:

"Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,

Elsewhere in the New Testament, you get the same picture. Elsewhere in the New Testament an angelic host will accompany Christ upon his return. We see that in Matthew 13:41, Matthew 25:31, Mark 8:38, 1 Thessalonians 3:13, among other verses. There are passages like this one that use the language of “myriads upon myriads,” “thousands upon thousands.” Some English translations will translate that into an extraordinary large number like millions. The language is actually ambiguous. Some scholars define “myriad” (again the Greek word used here) as a group of ten thousand. If you use BDAG (which is the standard Greek Lexicon), you’ll find a few references. There are a few specific examples where the word here in question refers to a unit of ten thousand. But other scholars argue that it’s a much larger number without any precise definition of quantity. And BDAG has examples of that as well, where it is just something that is far more than ten thousand. So the honest answer is we don’t really know, and ESV chooses “ten thousands of his holy ones”—ten thousands plural (not just ten thousand, but ten thousands plural) to try to kind of combine those two things that BDAG will bear witness to. Some texts say it’s ten thousand; others say it’s a much larger number. So ESV just pluralizes “ten thousands of his holy ones” and handles it that way.

The term is used elsewhere to describe the angelic hosts in several biblical and Second Temple texts. Daniel 7:10 is probably the one that comes to everybody’s mind, where there were myriads upon myriads of heavenly hosts that are witnessing the divine council meeting. Hebrews 12:22—the enumerable celebration of angels... We get that language that we see here in Jude. Revelation 5:11... You get it in 1 Enoch as well—1 Enoch 14:22 and 1 Enoch 40:1. It is a familiar image from both Old Testament, New Testament, and Second Temple literature, but we’re not quite sure exactly how many or what the count would be.

In verse 15, one comment on this phrasing:

¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness...

Green says:

“Execute judgment” is an expression commonly employed in the Septuagint (Gen. 18:19, 25; Deut. 10:18; 33:21; Isa. 5:7; 56:1; Jer. 7:5; 1 Macc. 6:22; Sir. 35:18).

This is language found directly in the Septuagint specifically for divine judgment. Green continues. He says:

This divine action (Heb. 12:23; James 4:12) is affected through the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31, Rom. 2:16) who comes to judge (2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet.

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4:5; Rev. 6:10). [30:00] The Lord will also “convict” (ἐλέγξει, *elenxai*), a term that in other contexts means “to show someone his sin and to summon him to repentance” (F. Büchsel, *TDNT* 2:474; see Matt. 18:15; Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:15).

So what he’s getting at here is this is also self-formulaic language coming right out of the Septuagint for the Messiah basically to render judgment. Green writes:

In judicial contexts “this rebuke condemns; it is no longer educative” [MH: like informing them that they’re in trouble; it’s a rendered judgment]. In the judgment the true character of the heretics will be brought to light (MM 202; John 3:20; 16:8). Jude appears to hold no hope of any redemption for the heretics. In Christ’s coming, they will be judged and condemned.

Again, it’s the language of Messianic expectation and the language of secure judgment in the Septuagint and in Second Temple texts. So Green’s argument is this is why Jude is using it—to sort of demonstrate the certainty of what’s going to happen to the false teachers.

A couple more items. In verse 16, ESV has one Greek term translated “grumblers.” The term that is used here is not really whining under hardship. That’s not really what it means, but in the Old Testament in the Septuagint, the motif of grumping really refers to a disgruntled criticizer. So Jude likely has in mind more negative examples from Israel’s history, again, comparing the false teachers to disgruntled critics. And there are a number of examples of this in the Old Testament. The people grumbled against Moses (Exodus 15:24, Numbers 14:36, Numbers 17:5.) They also grumbled against Moses and Aaron (Exodus 16:2, Numbers 14:2, Numbers 16:41). They also grumbled (again, same similar language there) against God. God was the one who appointed Moses and Aaron. So they grumble against God who appointed those leaders (Exodus 16:7-9, Exodus 16:12, Numbers 14:27-29). So even with the use of this term “grumbling,” Jude is getting at these negative examples in the Old Testament of these disgruntled critics and saying this is what the false teachers are. They actually lack real authority and they want to sort of foist themselves in the position of authority by virtue of what they [audio breaks up]... They show favoritism to win favor here in verse 16. This is a Greek idiom—“showing favoritism” ESV has. Literally in the Greek, it is “to marvel at the face” or “to marvel at” or “to look at the face.” And it refers to disingenuous favoritism or praise of someone. The more familiar “lift up the face” is a positive gesture of praise or approval, something like that, but this wording here sort of plays off that using a different Greek verb—“to marvel at” and then “the face,” just to get at the fact that this would be sort of lifting up someone’s face in a disingenuous way. You’re just deliberately flattering them to get them on your side, to win favor from them. Green writes:

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The expression ... is quite common in the LXX, meaning either to rightly favor someone (Gen. 19:21; Deut. 28:50; 2 Kings 5:1; Job 22:8; Isa. 9:15 [9:14 LXX]) or, more commonly, to show undue partiality, of the kind that may pervert justice (Lev. 19:15; Deut. 10:17; 2 Chron. 19:7; Prov. 18:5; Job 13:10; 34:19; Ps. Sol. 2:18).

So in certain contexts then, as here in Jude, the meaning of the phrase appears to be “to flatter” or to get something. So this is how Jude portrays the false teachers. They are disgruntled critics. They grumble. Again, they’re disgruntled critics just like the negative examples from the Old Testament that Jude has essentially peppered his audience with in these episodes in the Old Testament. And they’re only saying what they’re saying to you to flatter you—just to get your approval. As we talked about last week, you go back into the letter of Jude here and you really look at the fact that they are nothing. They offer nothing. So prior to verse 14 he calls them in verse 12:

¹² ... shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars...

Again, which was a direct reference back to the Watchers. In verse 14:

¹⁴ It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all...

So this is their destiny. Don’t listen to them. They’re just grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires. They’re going to get what they want. They’re going to manipulate you. They’re going to show favoritism to you to gain advantage over you. Don’t follow them. Again, their judgment is secure. And in this case, again, quoting Enoch with authority who is referencing the Old Testament in three passages about their destiny (what’s going to happen in the day of the Lord). On the day of the Lord, all of this is going to catch up to them. And so you want to be on the right side of that, not on the side that God is going to judge. And that’s basically his point in what he is doing here in this quotation from 1 Enoch 1:9.

So that’s it for this time. For next time, we are going to finish up the book of Jude. We’re going to go through the rest of the verses, verses 17-25. There’s one real specific thing that I think it is important to catch in those verses and we’ll take a look at some other things in this last section of the letter, but the next time we’ll wrap up and finish up with Jude.

TS: Alright, Mike. That sounds good. Don't forget to send me your questions about Jude at treysticklin@gmail.com so we can have a specific Q&A over the book of Jude. And also remember, please go visit logos.com/nakedbible if you have not done so. We would appreciate it and looking forward to wrapping up Jude next week, Mike. And with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.