Naked Bible Podcast Transcript Episode 443 Jude Q&A, Part 2 September 17, 2022

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Episode Summary

Dr. Heiser answers your questions:

- Why do you think 2 Peter and Jude are so similar in their references to the Book of Enoch? Did one influence the other? [6:15]
- How can the men of Sodom be held accountable for seeking the flesh of angels when they didn't know? [10:30]
- Is it possible that the devil disputed over the body of Moses because he did not want Moses in his rightful territory? [13:00]
- Can ancient literature sometimes describe reality that is not spelled out in the canon, or can we only say things really happened if they're in canonical books? [13:45]
- Is it only believers who think the correct reading of Jude verse 5 is that Jesus led the Israelites out of Egypt, or are there other critical scholars who hold to that view? [16:35]
- Are Jude and Peter portraying Jesus as the new and better Enoch, as Matthew did with Moses and Luke did with Elijah? [20:45]
- Could Jude's use of oiketerion indicate that the Watchers left their original bodies, not just their positions in heaven? [22:00]
- Did Jude's audience consider Enoch authoritative, and to what degree can we apply the information in Jude? [23:50]
- How do you handle the gift of tongues from a textual viewpoint? [28:50]
- Would Jude's references to the Old Testament and Enoch have been familiar to the people of the time, similar to how most Americans are familiar with the story of Adam & Eve? [36:00]

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 443, Jude Q&A, Part 2. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he is the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike. How are you doing?

MH: Oh, not too bad. I can't complain. I guess I could, going through radiation and such, but so far, so good.

TS: Yeah, well, maybe it'll turn you into a super superhero. It seems like most people go through something like that, radiation, and maybe you'll be the Hulk.

MH: Yeah, the gamma rays, yeah. All that stuff, yeah. Yeah, Bruce Banner, yeah.

TS: Maybe you'll be extra, extra super smart. Who knows?

MH: [laughing] Maybe it will do something positive. Who knows? Yeah.

TS: Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

MH: Well, wouldn't that be nice?

TS: Well, Mike, we wanted to mention something super early because we have not done as good of a job with marketing our advent book.

MH: Oh, yeah.

5:00

TS: Now's the time to get it. I can't believe it's already September, which means Christmas is just a few months away. So now would be probably the best time to prepare for the advent.

MH: Yeah.

TS: Don't wait for the last minute. I'm guilty of that. I wait until it's Thanksgiving and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I haven't even thought about it." So don't be like me.

MH: Yeah, absolutely. And it's a good advent book, too. So, yeah, absolutely. Christmas is right around the corner, whether you're thinking about it or not. It sneaks up on you.

TS: You can get that book. It's called *An Advent for the Cosmos* by Jeffrey Pitts on Amazon. So just search Amazon for *An Advent for the Cosmos* and get a head start on the advent this year.

MH: Mm-hmm.

TS: Well, Mike, we've got lots of good questions. This is our last Jude Q&A and we appreciate everybody that sent in their questions. We've got some good ones. So I'm ready to dive in if you are.

MH: Sure, let's go.

TS: Alright. Our first one is from Kathleen.

2

I never really thought about it before, but now I'm curious as to what might be the reason for the striking similarities between 2 Peter and Jude in their references to Genesis 6 and to the Book of Enoch. Any thoughts on the reasons for that? They are obviously addressing the same problem. Do you think they could have been writing to the same churches? Some suggest that Jude is just a bit later and he may have been directly influenced by Peter's letter. Any thoughts?

MH: Mm-hmm. Yeah, this is a bit of chicken and egg question—you know, what came first? The influence could work in either direction. Either one of these epistles could have been written before the other and influenced the other. The audience is basically the same. It is Jewish believers in Jesus. No particular church, just generally Jewish believers in Jesus who are under persecution or having a rough time of it.

I think as far as the reason for the continuity of thought is... Where evil came from and the proliferation of evil within Jewish theology was very consistent. You can go to a lot of different Second Temple Jewish books and they're going to blame what happens in Genesis 6 in addition to what happens in Genesis 3. So I think since that theology is just there when it comes to portraying the false teachers as kind of the root of the problem or the root of evil and so on and so forth, the minds of the writers just go right back to this incident in Genesis 6. because this is sort of where false teaching kicks off. Again, for those who are less familiar with how 1 Enoch, for instance (or 2 Peter and Jude, for that matter), expands on the Genesis 6 episode, including false teaching in it, you could read Unseen Realm, you could read Reversing Hermon. I've spent a lot of time on this. But just in a nutshell, the Watchers, the sons of God, here descend in Genesis 6. (And again, "Watchers" is the term in Enochian literature for these guys.) The real crime that they perpetuate is false teaching. They give humans lots of information about lots of different things, basically, that amounted to how to destroy themselves more efficiently. It was not good; it was harmful to humanity. And so the whole idea of depravity gets linked to false teaching. And once you latch onto false teaching in these books, this is a natural illustration of the problem to bring out the whole Genesis 6 thing.

A little bit more here. Under the assumption that 2 Peter is, indeed, authored by Peter (and it telegraphs that clearly, but scholars still to this day disagree about it)... So under the assumption that 2 Peter is, indeed, authored by Peter, the epistle of 2 Peter would have to have been written in the late 60s AD, and that is to accommodate a pretty strong tradition of Peter's death under Nero. The same basically holds true for Jude. If we accept Jude as the actual author, it needs to have been written sometime in the late 60s as well, if 2 Peter was first. If Jude was first, then it needs to have been written by the late 60s for Peter's interaction. So it is going to fall around the same time regardless of which one

you pick. Since there is no reference to the destruction of the Temple, which happened in 70 AD, many scholars place both the epistles a little bit earlier than 70, so in the 60s, but dates can vary widely among scholars who consider 2 Peter and Jude not to have been written by Peter and Jude, respectively. Then it is sort of just a crapshoot. It is all over the place as far as when the book might have been written. But if you're going to accept Petrine authorship and Jude's authorship, right in the mid to late 60s is the time that you would logically think that this would have been written.

TS: Joyce from Ellsworth, Maine has a couple questions and the first one is:

10:30

In episode 435 (Jude Part 4), Mike seemed to emphasize the egregiousness of seeking strange flesh, earthly flesh versus angelic flesh or Elohim. I agree that seeking strange flesh, same sex relationships, sexual relationships outside of marriage, children, animals, etc., is egregious, but how can the men of Sodom be held accountable for the higher sin of seeking the flesh of angels when they didn't know? In Luke 12:48, we are held accountable for what we know.

MH: Mm-hmm. Yeah, well, they would still be held accountable for a case of homosexual rape, which is sort of a minimalist reading of the episode in Genesis 18 and 19 there with Sodom and Gomorrah. It's the readers that would judge them more harshly perhaps, presuming the readers interpreted what was said as a reference back to Genesis 6 (again, as we noted in the episodes), and that is certainly possible. You certainly could have the situation where, again, the real issue (the heinousness of it) is crossing this barrier between heaven and earth, between the human realm and the angelic realm. But Joyce is right. I mean, the men of Sodom wouldn't have known that. So if they were the only ones in the picture here, what they would have been guilty of at the very least would be the situation of homosexual rape, which would have been a horrific violation of just the customs about how you treat strangers in antiquity, which was really important back then. But even if they didn't know, Jude leaves it to the readers to make this kind of connection. And if that is, indeed, the case of what they're actually condemned for, then the men aren't being condemned for that. They'd be condemned for violating hospitality, going after other men sexually. So they're not being held accountable for what they don't know. They know at least that much and that much is still a violation, but it could be even worse if it refers to "angelic flesh" in the passage, which it may very well.

TS: Joyce's second question is:

13:00

In episode 436, Jude Part 5, Mike discusses Jude 9. Is it possible that the devil disputing with Michael over the body of Moses is not because the devil wanted the body, but yet the devil didn't want the

body of Moses in his territory because of cosmic geography such as the case in 1 Samuel 5?

MH: Yeah, I don't really think so because it creates kind of an odd circumstance. It would mean Michael's resistance to the devil was aimed at keeping Moses where he was on nonholy ground, which does not seem to be real logical to me in the context of cosmic geography. So I have my doubts about that.

TS: Raf has our next two questions and the first one is:

13:45

When Jude quotes from 1 Enoch or alludes to the Testament of Moses, he obviously thinks that the stories those books describe reflect a theological reality or something that did take place. Is it appropriate to think that Second Temple literature or Ancient Near Eastern literature can sometimes describe reality that is not necessarily spelled out in the canonical sections of the Bible, or can we say that those things really happened only if the canonical books refer to them in some way? What criteria would we use to determine that?

15:00

MH: I think it's certainly possible. The Bible makes no claim to be an exhaustive repository of knowledge or the exclusive record of all things that ever happened. For example, the Bible doesn't record the battle between Ramesses II and the Hittites. It's not a reasonable conclusion to say that that battle never occurred because it's not in the Bible. The Bible never claims to be an exhaustive repository of everything that ever happened, both in terms of the human world and the spiritual realm. It's the same thing with theological realities. The Bible doesn't record everything God or Jesus did. It just doesn't. There's no reason to believe that other literature about some demon or deity doing something for its worshippers could never have happened. That's not a reasonable conclusion. If the Bible has such entities as being real and active, then it stands to reason that some of those things those entities did that would have been recorded in some literature somewhere could certainly have occurred. Again, there's no real basis... There's no Biblical basis to say that if an event, whether it's a theological reality or something in the human realm—if an event isn't mentioned in the Bible, it never could've happened. That's completely illogical because even the Bible itself owns up to that. John, at the end of his Gospel, says if we really would've written down everything that Jesus said or did, it would be a whole lot longer than this. If the skies were a scroll, it couldn't contain all the things that we could've written. The Bible is selective. It's inherently selective. So we cannot use its status as inspired literature to say that it alone describes things that are real or things that happened. That's just not the nature of the Bible and it's not the way it works.

TS: His second question is:

Is there a scholarly consensus among a broad range of scholars, including critical scholars, that the correct reading of Jude 5 is that Jesus brought the Israelites out of Egypt, or is it only the preferred reading of the scholars that are believers of various persuasions? In other words, is there perhaps a bias for believers to prefer this reading or vice versa, for non-believers or non-Trinitarians to avoid it at all costs?

MH: Mm-hmm. Yeah, it's quite fair to say there is broad agreement. The reading is present in UBS5 (United Bible Society's Volume 5 Greek New Testament), NA28 (Nestle-Aland 28), and the SBLGNT (Society of Biblical Literature Greek New Testament). It's in all of them and those things are not put together by evangelicals, okay? [laughs] Far from it. These are works of critical scholarship. They're editions to the Greek New Testament that are used everywhere, not just in evangelical seminaries and Bible colleges. These are the resources that everybody uses. So for the editorial staff, the editorial team, each one of these things, to accept the Jude 5 reading is pretty indicative of a broad consensus. By the rules of textural criticism (if we were just going to look at this way), Jude 5 has in its favor that it is a difficult reading. This is one of those sort of "rules of thumb of textural criticism" that somebody made up somewhere, but it's pretty tried-and-true because it's reasonable that a scribe would more often than not try to make something easier to read or correct something so that it's more readable (more comprehensible, more understandable) rather than create a difficulty. So when you get verses like this that are kind of shocking—Jesus delivering the people of Israel in the Exodus... Since that is sort of outlandish or kind of jolting, the argument is that that in and of itself is an argument for its authenticity, because what scribe would make that up?

(high Christology verses that talk about the deity of Jesus) were fiddled with by scribes. But Ehrman... If you actually read his book, whether it's *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* or his popular version of this, *Misquoting Jesus*, Ehrman does not argue that every place where you have the Greek New Testament referring to the deity of Christ, that that was fiddled with. He does not argue that. He only argues that for a select number of instances, a select number of passages where he suspects as a textural critique that a scribe did something later on. But there are plenty of verses left over that Ehrman says, "Yeah, that's what it says." I mean, there's no text-critical reason that it wouldn't say that. I mean, Ehrman just doesn't believe any of it. He does not in his book (and nobody else does for this matter, but since Ehrman is a major figure and since he is the one who sort of wrote the book on this—*The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*)... When you actually look at his work, we have to be careful that we're not claiming too much from what Bart Ehrman actually says. He is well aware that there are verses in the New Testament that have a strong witness to the deity of Christ that

Now you get people like Bart Ehrman that will want to argue that Trinitarian stuff,

20:00

have no text-critical problem in them at all. So he is not ignorant of that and he is not hiding it either. He just thinks that in some of them, there was scribal activity.

TS: Our next question comes from Marco.

20:45

Given the connections with 1, 2 Peter and the story in 1 Enoch about Enoch's intercession, can we say that Jude (and Peter) is portraying Jesus as a "new" and/or "better" Enoch similarly to how Matthew portrays Jesus as the new Moses or how Luke portrays Jesus as a new Elijah?

MH: Yeah, I would agree. I think 1 Peter 3 especially has this sort of theologizing in view to mark the superiority of Christ next to the Old Testament type that is being used (in that case, the type of Enoch in 1 Peter 3). I think this is a good thought trajectory. Jesus is marked as superior to other Old Testament heroes like Abraham. You know, "Before Abraham was, I am," or Moses, David, and Joshua. Why not Enoch? There is no reason to exclude Enoch from this consideration. So I do think passages like 1 Peter 3 and some of these other ones do end up cumulatively presenting that case—that Jesus is superior to Enoch; he is the better Enoch.

TS: Joseph from Cambridge, Maryland, asked:

22:00

In Jude 6, the Greek word "oiketerion" is used. It is used only one other time in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 5:2, in which it is used to speak of believers' glorified bodies. Because of this usage, is it possible or likely that Jude is suggesting that the Watchers didn't just leave their positions in Heaven, but actually left their original bodies and took on bodies which would be more compatible with having physical relationships with human women?

MH: Yeah, I actually don't think so. You would be able to make that case if the term consistently referred to a physical body, but it doesn't. "Oiketerion" is a word that describes a dwelling place just generally, a place where people live, and not necessarily a body. It is used in the Septuagint outside the New Testament. So in the Septuagint in 2 Macc 11:2, it is used there of a city, the referent point specifically being Jerusalem in that passage. It is also used in 1 Enoch 27:2, for the valley of the "accursed ones." The "accursed ones" being defined in that passage of Enoch as "any who will speak with their mouth in an unfitting voice against the Lord," which sounds a little bit like the false teachers of Jude. So if the word was used only of bodies—embodiment—then I think you might have a reasonable trajectory to draw the conclusion that was suggested by Joseph in the question, but since that isn't the case, I don't think so.

TS: Josh from Melbourne, Australia asked:

Is it possible Jude's audience considered Enoch authoritative, hence Jude's use of it, like Paul quoting Greek poets, or does Jude himself consider 1 Enoch authoritative? And are Jude and Peter writing to the same people?

Also, to what degree can we apply the information in Jude? Modern Christians tend to throw these verses at anyone they don't like. Is the information to be considered explanatory?

25:00

MH: Yeah. As far as audience goes, I think scholars are going to be in high agreement that it is basically the same audience—Jewish believers in Jesus who are suffering under some form of persecution. So I think the audience is going to be there, but with the way the question is worded I have a little bit of a quibble. Just because Paul guotes a Greek poet doesn't mean that people—believers are going to consider Greek poets authoritative. So I'm wondering what "authoritative" means here. In other words, it's not a good argument to say that Paul quotes Menander in 1 Corinthians... (I can't remember where. I think it's 1 Corinthians 15 somewhere or 10:13... something like that, 10:31 maybe. I'm getting that mixed up.) But he quotes Menander, "Bad communications corrupt good manners" is the line. Okay, that's a quote from a Greek poet, but why would we assign "authority" generally to the Greek poet? Well, we wouldn't. These are secular poets. Everybody knows that. Paul is not quoting the Old Testament. People know that. So I don't think we can draw that conclusion about authority just from the fact that the quote exists. Having said that, I'm sure somebody in Jude's audience may have considered 1 Enoch authoritative. I mean, there's going to be a lot of a difference of opinion among the people in his audience (gain, mostly in Jewish believers in Jesus). I doubt, though, whether...This is going to sound awful, but I doubt whether anybody who mattered would think 1 Enoch was authoritative. What I mean by that is that for the Jewish leadership of the time to consider a book canonical (and hence authoritative), it had to be witnessed in Hebrew, and there is still no evidence that 1 Enoch was originally written in Hebrew. So the scribes and such—scribes and Pharisees, the leadership (that's what I mean by "the people who matter—the ones who are literate and who spend their time thinking about these questions and mastering the texts and teaching it and so on and so forth)... Among those people, I don't think anybody is going to consider 1 Enoch authoritative because it wasn't witnessed in Hebrew. So the scribes and such would have known that. They would have known 1 Enoch fails the Hebrew test. There is only one sect in all of Second Temple Judaism... And Second Temple Judaism had a number of sects. They're the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, okay? The people at Qumran if they were or were not Essenes, okay? We'll just list them that way. You have the Zealots. You have a half a dozen different groups—the Hasmonaeans, the Herodians—all these different parties within Judaism. Only one sect, and that was the people living at Qumran, quote Enoch as though they

consider it canonical and authoritative. They're the only ones that do this. So the rest of Judaism (again being well aware of Enoch's deficiency in terms of not being witnessed in Hebrew) never took it that far. Then the people at Qumran also thought at least one of their own writings, The Temple Scroll, was in the stream of canonical tradition, too. They quote it the same way as they would Enoch or something from the Old Testament. So they're a little bit idiosyncratic, to say the least. So I think we need to keep these things in mind when we're talking about how the community would've looked at authority. Like I said before, among those whose opinion would have mattered here (the scribes and the Pharisees and so on), you're not going to find support for Enoch's authority.

TS: Mike from Abilene... Alright, Mike! I know Mike. Mike's a friend of mine. Shout out. He has a question about Jude 20.

28:50

As one who was baptized in the Holy Spirit 50 years ago with the accompaniment of glossolalia, I have always believed that when I pray in tongues, I am "praying in the Holy Spirit" as Paul seems to suggest in 1 Corinthians 14:4. "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." Jude seems to be making, primarily, the same case about personal edification. I have found through the years that those who speak on such passages academically, but not experientially, have a very clinical view of the whole topic. Just wondering how Dr. Heiser handles this supernatural gift of the unseen realm from a textual viewpoint.

30:00

MH: Yeah, well, I'm going to be one of these that are going to speak clinically here just by virtue of my own experience or lack of experience. In 1 Corinthians 14:4, it doesn't actually say "praying in tongues." It says, "When one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." The passage could apply the way Mike has it here, but it also could not. It would help if it was more explicit in that it actually mentioned prayer, as some other passages do.

But when it comes to tongues, I have some positive thoughts and I have some negative thoughts. Just to be a little personal here, I have met people who (like on the mission field) were supernaturally enabled to speak in other languages on the spot and it got them out of a jam or some dangerous situation. I don't doubt them for a second—that this happened to them and that God enabled them to do this. I don't doubt it for a second. The teaching of scripture is that tongues are known languages. Paul quotes the Old Testament to that effect when he is discussing them in 1 Corinthians, and it is obvious from Acts 2.

The only outlier here is this personal prayer language kind of thing, which (depending on what passage you're in) could go one way or the other. To me, it's not a practice that can be conclusively demonstrated from scripture, but I have friends who do that and I don't pick on them. It's fine. I can't say I have any

benefit of any experience of my own in this regard, but it is very clear scripturally that tongues are known languages and not the sort of gibberish that you might hear. By the way, if you're praying in an unknown or a gibberish language, that doesn't justify what happens in churches with the gibberish language because those passages that talk about praying in tongues, it's personal. It's not public. So if we are dealing with something personal there, fine. Like I said, I let that alone because I don't have any benefit of any personal experience and it is a possibility textually that such a practice is extant. I mean, if that's a clinical view, it's a clinical view, but I think I can argue both sides of it pretty well scripturally.

Anyway, getting back to the point, my real problem with it is logic. I accept that believers do this. Again, I have friends who make praying in tongues sort of a spiritual discipline. What troubles me about it is the logic of it and one other point: the fact that it shows up in pagan religions. The gibberish stuff shows up in pagan religions, and so that suggests to me that it could be self-contrived. It could be self-actuated, and it might not be the Spirit of God. But on the other hand, it may be, because you can martial a scriptural argument for it. So I don't really know what to do with it other than to say, "Be warmed and filled" to believing friends who do this and maybe even caution them to keep it private like the scriptures do.

But the logic of it just escapes me. God already knows what we need and what we want in prayer. Why do we need a secret language to express that? It doesn't make any sense to me. Now you could turn that around on me and say, well God already knows what we need in prayer, so why pray at all? I mean, that's a perfectly legitimate question. Why would we pray at all if God already knows everything that we need or want or could ask for, so on and so forth. I think in terms of the prayer issue, we are commanded to pray. We are not commanded to speak in tongues. So there is a difference there. And prayer fosters dependence on God. I would imagine for those who have the private prayer language thing going on, that can be argued the same way—that it helps them depend on God more. That's perfectly fine with me. Again, I don't pick at it, but I do wonder about the logic of it, and I don't see it simply as the way I would look at prayer in other contexts more widely. So that's my clinical view of it [laughs], again, not having had the benefit of any personal experience.

TS: Yeah, Mike, with supernatural gifts like that, I mean, I'm at the point where I don't even try to figure it out. I mean, God can do whatever he wants so I'm not going to question or even try to figure it out.

MH: Yeah.

TS: I'm just like, "More power to you."

MH: That's why I'm in the cautiously open category which is actually an academic clinical category. There are those who are not cessationists, but they're also not charismatic. There's something in the middle, and that's me. I'm in the middle, and if God wants to do this he can. I'm not going to pick too much at it. I will look at it. I want to see if it bears fruit. I want to see if it does violate anything scriptural—again, like taking the gibberish public. I don't see the public gibberish sort of tongues kind of stuff as being Biblical. I know enough people who have faked it (and they've told me they faked it for whatever reason) to be suspicious of it, but for me that does not exclude the notion that God could actually do this and does.

TS: Sure, yeah.

MH: So I let it alone.

TS: Yeah, it's a shame that people abuse that and then it causes mistrust for everybody else. That's unfortunate. Alright. Thanks, Mike, for the question and representing Abilene. Alright, the next question is from Matt.

36:00

It's pretty clear from the podcast that Jude expected his readers to be knowledgeable of the Old Testament and 1 Enoch. I'm curious, how many of the ideas referenced would have been common knowledge at the time, similar to how today most American's know about Adam and Eve and Noah's ark?

MH: Yeah, I tend to think a good number would have heard the stories. I mean, these would have been major events in the Biblical story in Genesis 6, Sodom, Cain, Korah, Balaam. I mean, these are big stories. The stories about major events or characters would have been easy to transmit orally. You just tell the stories, as opposed to requiring everybody to have a Bible for reading about them. I mean, in other words, people could learn about these things just by oral transmission, tradition, storytelling, and what-not, because most people don't have a copy of the scriptures. That's not an impediment to knowing the story, because in my view this is why scripture does so much with storytelling—it's easy to transmit. I think the Adam and Eve and Noah's Ark analogies are good ones that Matt brings up here because many people today would know who and what those things are without ever having cracked a Bible open. I mean, even in our culture, as pagan as it is and as godless as the culture often is, people have heard of Adam and Eve and they've heard of Noah's Ark. They heard them once in a Sunday school class or once in a church when they happened to visit a church, but they hear it from friends who are Christians. There is just any number of ways that you could hear about these things and remember them. So I tend to think... Since storytelling—story form—is such an effective way of transmitting knowledge, I tend to think a lot of people would have heard and would have known the stories.

11

TS: Alright, Mike. That's all that we have for Jude. We appreciate everybody who participated in our Epistle of Jude Bible study and sending in the questions and Logos for sponsoring us and for Mike, you leading the Bible study and answering our questions. It was a good one.

MH: Yeah, there were good questions here.

TS: Yeah, absolutely. Always great questions. We have a great audience, Mike.

MH: Yeah.

TS: Probably the smartest audience in podcast land. I'm going to go ahead and declare that.

MH: Well, you know what? I think that's defensible. Really.

TS: Absolutely. Okay, Mike, well we appreciate it and with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.