

# Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

## An Expositional Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

### Chapter 13- The Prophecy of Enoch **Jude 14-15**

### 151 The Prophecy of Enoch Part 5

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WOSM Wednesday 06/04/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to continue to look at what Jude taught about "The Prophecy of Enoch" So let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 14 & 15** again together:

**14** *It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,*

**15** *to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

Now it is important for us to remember that the men that Jude is talking about here are the apostates whom Jude pictured in the previous section—the false visionaries; the flouters of spiritual authority; the revilers; the brute beasts- who behave with carnal instincts; the hidden reefs; the waterless clouds; the dead and uprooted trees; the wild sea waves; and the wandering stars headed for eternal blackness.

Now even before the Flood, Enoch (**Genesis 5:21-24**) prophesied that the Lord would come to judge such false teachers. And by quoting Enoch's prophecy in these verses- Jude underscored the motivation behind God's judgment on apostasy while also reinforcing the certainty of it.

Now even though this prophecy of Enoch's is not recorded in the Old Testament- the Holy Spirit inspired Jude to use it because it was familiar to the people of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century and it was historically valid, and supported his overall thesis. Jude extracted the quote from the

book of 1 Enoch, with which his first-century readers were well acquainted. Now this book of 1 Enoch was part of the written history and tradition of the Jewish people, and many of the rabbis at the time that Jude wrote this Epistle quoted freely from it.

So, although the Book is *not* part of the Canon of Scripture- it was well known by the people of the first century and was used in many quotations by many people at that time.

Now some people become quite concerned about the trustworthiness of Scripture at this point. They wrongly conclude that since an extra biblical work is quoted here that this somehow tarnishes the inspiration of the entire Book. It doesn't. Jude is simply quoting a prophecy from a well known book that many people would have been familiar with at that time.

This same technique is done all the time today. Preachers quote from historical and literary works that are not necessarily inspired- but are true. For example- the works of Shakespeare, the United States Constitution, History Books, and the sermons from other men of God from the past are frequently quoted from in sermons all the time. None of these writings are inspired- but many of the things that they talk about are true and they can be used to make a point that is very useful and valid.

Paul used this method in preaching when he quoted from a legend about the character and nature of a particular group of people in **Titus 1:12**, when he said,

**One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."**

Now although we do not have a record of Enoch's prophecy in any other Old Testament Book does not mean that it is not a valid prophecy. The very fact that the Holy Spirit inspired Jude to include this prophecy in his Epistle shows us that it is indeed accurate. And since it does not create any new Doctrine, nor does it take away from any existing Doctrine- this prophecy can be relied on as being a true and trustworthy depiction of God's wrath against those who bring in false Doctrine into the Church.

Matthew Henry was a Puritan Pastor in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. God raised up this man who dedicated his entire life to write a

Commentary on every single verse of the entire Bible. In his Commentary on this part of Jude, Matthew Henry said,

“Of the prophecy of Enoch, (v. 14-15) we have no mention made in any other part or place of Scripture; yet now it is Scripture itself that confirms that there was such a prophecy. One plain text of Scripture is proof enough of any one point that we are required to believe, especially when relating to a matter of fact; but in matters of faith, necessary saving faith, God has not seen fit (blessed be his holy name he has not) to try us so far. There is no fundamental article of the Christian religion, truly so called, which is not inculcated over and over in the New Testament, by which we may know on what the Holy Ghost does, and consequently on what we ought, to lay the greatest stress. Some say that this prophecy of Enoch was preserved by tradition in the Jewish church; others that the apostle Jude was immediately inspired with the notice of it by the same Holy Spirit: be this as it may, it is certain that there was such a prophecy of ancient date, of long standing, and universally received in the Old-Testament church; and it is a main point of our New-Testament creed.”<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Manton, another Puritan pastor said this about Enoch’s prophecy,

“Whether this prophecy was written or not, the same Spirit who spoke in Enoch also inspired Jude. If he received it by tradition, it is here made authentic and put into the canon of Scripture. Why should Jude prefer to use Enoch’s prophecy rather than another passage from the authentic Books of Scripture? I answer: This was done through God’s providence, to preserve this for the Church.”<sup>2</sup>

Though he was not the author of the book- Enoch's message was passed down through oral tradition until it was finally recorded in what was called 1Enoch. That book, like other books such as The Book of Jubilee, The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, and The Assumption of Moses, was not part of the Old Testament canon; yet, since it was accurate, it was acceptable for Jude to use it to bolster his argument.

According to **Genesis 5:4-24**, Enoch was in the seventh generation from Adam, and he was a hero to the Jewish people because, like the prophet Elijah, Enoch went to Heaven without dying. The Bible gives us the reason for his departure into Heaven in **Hebrews 11:5**:

**By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.**

Although it is not included anywhere in Scripture until Jude wrote it here- Enoch's prophetic utterance would make it the earliest human prophecy in the Bible. And that carries with it great importance to us today.

Since Enoch prophesied about the Judgment and wrath of God against heretics before there even were any heretics- it shows God's Omnipotence and His Omniscience. And it also confirms that which Jude said about these people in verse 4, when he said that these certain men who would creep into the Church to try to destroy it were:

**... certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

This teaches us that God's wrath against false teaching is sure and certain and that from the beginning, God does not tolerate those who try to deceive.

Enoch's prophecy and Jude's comments about his prophecy in verse 15 give us several solid aspects about God's judgment against false teachers:

1. The Lord will come
2. When He comes- the Lord will not be alone
3. When He comes with His angels- He will come to judge apostasy

Let's look at all three of these.

**1. The first aspect is that it is certain that the Lord will come.**

The certainty of Christ's return was under attack from the false teachers in Jude's day and is under attack today. Many people today use the same wrong logic that they used in Peter's day to speak of the return of Christ. Let's read **2 Peter 3:3&4:**

**3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts,**

**4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."**

And in the very next verse, Peter said that by saying this- these people are *willingly* ignorant of the Word of God and the way that God operates. So, Jude is reminding us in verse 15 that we are to look for the return of Jesus Christ and that His return to this earth is certain.

Many people today flippantly say that they believe that Jesus could come back at any moment- but their lives betray their speech. If they really believed that the Son of God was going to burst the clouds and return at any moment- how would they live? How would they conduct their lives? How careful would they be?

Jude is telling us that the return of Jesus Christ is certain and so we should live our lives in a manner that reflects that we really do believe that.

## **2. When the Lord Comes Back- He Won't be Alone**

Jude said that Enoch prophesied that when the Lord comes back to this earth, He will come with "ten thousands." This phrase, "ten thousands" does not mean the number 10,000, but is a Hebrew expression that means "a number that is limitless; an uncountable number"; it means that so many are coming back with Jesus that the number is beyond counting.

The King James Version says these unlimited number that come back with Jesus will be "saints." The NASB Version uses the term "holy ones." The Greek word that Jude used here is "*hagios*," which means "set apart ones" or "holy ones." This could very well mean that those who have gone to Heaven, and who will return with Jesus- but it could also mean "angels."

There is actually more Scripture to say that Jude was referring to angels here rather than saints due to what Jesus Himself said about this in **Matthew 24:30&31:**

**30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the *SON OF MAN***

**COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.**

**31 "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.**

Because we know that the angels will come in context to the Judgment of Christ against the ungodly- it is more accurate to suggest that these “holy ones” are angels and not saints.

### **3. When the Lord Comes With His Holy Ones- He Will Judge the Apostates.**

When the Lord comes back- He is going to judge all the ungodly- but Jude shoes us clearly that Christ has special judgment in mind for those who deceive and bring forth False teaching.

These are the people who are the “ungodly” in Jude’s writings who have utterly disregarded God's law. The verb that was translated as “convince” is from the Greek word, “*elegchœ*,” which means "to expose," "to rebuke," or "to prove guilty," which includes showing someone his error and his culpability. When the Lord returns, the sins of the ungodly will be exposed and the verdict rendered accordingly, and the final sentence, as noted earlier, will be eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

And this is why we all need to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. Well, I’ve got to stop right here. But please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Bible Soft, 1991, Hendrickson Publishing)

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Manton, *Commentary on Jude* (Crossway Book, Wheaton, Ill, 1999) page 177