

I've Had Enough About Enoch

Forbidden Books

History always has periods of time when a book or books were banned for one reason or another. According to an [article](#) from the *Smithsonian Magazine* the first book banned in America was before America even existed:

Klimek: What is New English Canaan about? Connolly: It's a three-volume book written by a guy named Thomas Morton, so it's part ethnography. He writes a lot about the Indigenous peoples of New England at that time. He writes about flora and the fauna and what goods might be available to sell back in England. But at the end, he also is quite critical of the Puritans, and I think this is probably the part that's most interesting. He is a colonist as well, but he has a totally different idea of what the colonies should look like, and so he criticizes them pretty heavily, and subsequently they ban his book and they exile him.

So it wasn't the actual language that got the book banned, it was the content that made it controversial. The article would go on to mention that the Bible was kept from slaves to read because they might read parts of like *Exodus* that would give them the hope of being freed someday. Was the Bible itself bad? No, it was the concepts in it that were dangerous to some. Which brings us to our next point: Why did some books not make it in the Bible?

They Had To Draw The Line Somewhere

You've probably heard about the phrase "canon of scripture" and if you haven't well now you have. In essence there were books that were simply heretical so they wouldn't make the cut. In an [article](#) from *Ligonier.org* we get a better idea of how at least the New Testament came to be the 27 books we read now:

We must distinguish between recognition and establishment because they are two different categories that separate Protestants from Catholics on this issue. The church recognizes that which is canonical; it does not establish the canon. So, when we talk about the canon in church history, we need to make that distinction.

The article went on to say this:

A book is canonical because it has been recognized by the church. For the church's sake, a book is canonical because it is the Word of God and declared to be the Word of God. When you look at this process in the New Testament, it's a little confusing. There are two myths out there. One is that as soon as John finished writing Revelation, or whichever was the last book of the Bible, a nicely bound black leather Reformation Study Bible dropped out of heaven into every church member's lap. On the other hand, some people get the impression that the early church did not know which books were canonical and that it took three centuries before they agreed on the canon.

The process was a little more stable than that:

The truth is we have the New Testament reflecting on the canon itself. For example, Peter referenced Paul's epistles as Scripture, which is significant because he was Paul's contemporary (2 Pet. 3:15–16). So, the New Testament reflects on itself as canonical, as Scripture, and we need to recognize that in the church.

The church reached a consensus that the Gospels and Paul's letters, a huge part of the New Testament, were canonical as early as AD 90. It was not until later that the canonical list of the twenty-seven books was published because a few of them proved challenging. There were also a few on the list that would later be recognized as deuterocanonical books.

But What About The Old Testament?

As one would expect, the official books that made their way into the Old Testament were done so by being recognized by Jewish religious leaders or rabbis. Again, these books were not made holy by these leaders, they were recognized as such by meeting strict guidelines. We see in an article from *gotquestions.org* how the Old Testament included the 39 writings we have now:

There is little historical data detailing the formation of the Old Testament canon. The scribes compiling the canon would have been mindful of:

- *the reputation of each book's human author*
- *doctrines and statements within a given manuscript that conflict with the clear teachings of established biblical writings*
- *historical inaccuracies and/or spurious prophetic utterances that would cast a shadow of doubt on a manuscript*
- *a book's widespread acceptance or rejection by respected scholars*

Based on these exacting standards, the ancient Jewish scribes demonstrated the highest measure of diligence and scholarship as they settled on the Old Testament canon. Additionally, the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ never questioned the authenticity of the Hebrew Bible. The Old Testament was regarded as God's infallible Word by the early church, and, as Jesus Himself said the prophets spoke of Him (Luke 24:13–27), we have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the Old Testament.

Still, other books were written that failed the various standards and yet people even today somehow want to make them important and come extremely close to having them be seen as authentic and inspired. However, in them are always things that go against the other 66. It might be one thing or many, but there were reasons and we need to be discerning of that when we mention them in a higher light now. One such book that seems to be making the rounds on social media is the book of *Enoch*. It is a fantastical book and it really highlights various angels both good and bad and is the basis for a lot of what is thought about in the pre-Flood time. To some it also contains prophecies that are backed up by the official Bible. However, why didn't this book make it into the Old Testament?

Danger Will Robinson!

We are all products of the things we grew up liking and for me, I am a big fan of science fiction. One of the shows I enjoyed seeing was *Lost In Space*. In it there is a phrase echoed by the iconic robot to the son, Will Robinson warning him when he was in peril: *Danger Will Robinson!* In this case, I'm sounding the alarm about the book of *Enoch* because it contains doctrines that aren't in line with the Bible and as such needs to be read with a lot of caution if read at all. Don't get me wrong, though. I am not saying the book needs to be banned as some want. I just question why we should entertain the contents as filling in details about various topics like angels and what happened before the Flood, details that begin to have a life of their own and that lead to interpreting the Bible in ways it was never intended. Those who advocate an in depth study of the book seem to raise it to a level the early church and early Jewish leaders never did although they appeared to respect it at some level. But right now, it's all the rage in social media circles. In our current zeitgeist or cultural climate we tend to lean towards wanting to know the hidden things, the things we're told we shouldn't know or that are kept from us by those shrouded in mystery. Places like Area 51 or this cave or that deep sea cavern and UFOs, aliens and different dimensions where alternate realities exist. The list goes on and on and to be honest, these topics are intriguing and can hold our interest for the short time it is in front of us. While it is entertaining, there are dangers to accepting theories carte blanche as they say.

Why All The Buzz?

When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. 24 Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away. (Gen 5:21-24, NIV)

We wouldn't be talking about the book of *Enoch* at all if it wasn't because of the man living in the Bible all the way back in the book of **Genesis**. And it is that tiny phrase that Enoch didn't die, but God took him away that stands out. So he was special. And then Enoch is mentioned in New Testament book of **Jude**:

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones. 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14-15, NIV)

Because of these two instances in the Bible the name Enoch comes up. But then the writings of Enoch showed up and now we have to figure out if they are to be given any credence. According to even the most die-hard fans of the writings, Enoch didn't write them. So the authorship is suspect at best. That's a big alert, but we don't know exactly who wrote other books in the Bible, so that alone shouldn't disqualify them. Next Jude quotes him and people think that the quote was from these writings so they have to be important. But other books are quoted in the Bible that aren't God breathed either as we read in an [article](#) from [gotquestions.org](#) that addresses this point:

Jude's quote is not the only quote in the Bible from a non-biblical source. The apostle Paul quotes Epimenides in Titus 1:12, but that does not mean we should give any additional authority to Epimenides' writings. The same is true with Jude 1:14-15. Jude quoting from the Book of Enoch does not indicate the entire Book of Enoch is inspired, or even true. All it means is that particular passage of Enoch is true. It is interesting to note that no scholars believe the Book of Enoch to have truly been written by the Enoch in the Bible. Enoch was seven generations from Adam, prior to the flood (Genesis 5:1-24). Evidently, though, the words Jude quotes were genuinely something that Enoch prophesied—or the Bible would not attribute it to him: "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men" (Jude 1:14). This saying of Enoch was somehow handed down through the generations and eventually recorded in the Book of Enoch. But it's what is inside the writings that should cause us to pause.

Holy Unsound Doctrine, Batman!

I guess I'm drawing on my childhood with all these headings, but it makes the point. If a book not found in the Bible talks about history, that's fine, but when it ventures into our beliefs, well then it has to be vetted by Scripture. In my opinion, the book of *Enoch* does that and does so in a big way. In an [article](#) refuting the book of *Enoch* we read citations from the actual book that should make our Spidey senses tingle (there I go with my fictional references again):

10:2 Enoch allegedly wrote about Noah, even though the Bible teaches that Enoch was taken up to heaven years before Noah was born.

10:8 Ascribes all the sin of the fallen angels to one named Azazel – not scriptural.

13:5-6, 14:4-5, 7 Implies fallen angels can't talk to God – this contradicts Job. Also implies that angels were repentant, but weren't received back by God – very strange doctrine.

15:8-10 Very strange doctrine about "evil spirits" proceeding from unredeemable giants

10:7 Talks about the "Satans" – plural, different than the Bible, who gives that name to only one fallen angel. Also, implies Satan can't stand in God's presence, contrary to Job.

47:4 Says God requires the blood of the saints... very strange

There is a lot more to be said on this, but I'm just trying to sound the alarms for you. There are reasons that these writings didn't make it into our Bible. The Jews didn't put it in the Old Testament, the Christians that decided the New Testament didn't add it so why should we give it credence anymore that we should decide that any of the other discredited books written after Jesus lived, books like *The Gospel Of Thomas* that suggests that Jesus was married and had kids. Some theologians who really like the book of *Enoch* and how it "fills in" the gaps of the Bible should also add disclaimers about the weird and just wrong teaching inside of it. I like how the same article cited earlier from gotquestions.org sums things up:

We should treat the Book of Enoch (and the other books like it) in the same manner we do the other apocryphal writings. Some of what the Apocrypha says is true and correct, but much of it is false and historically inaccurate. If you read these books, you should consider them interesting but fallible historical documents, not as the inspired, authoritative Word of God.