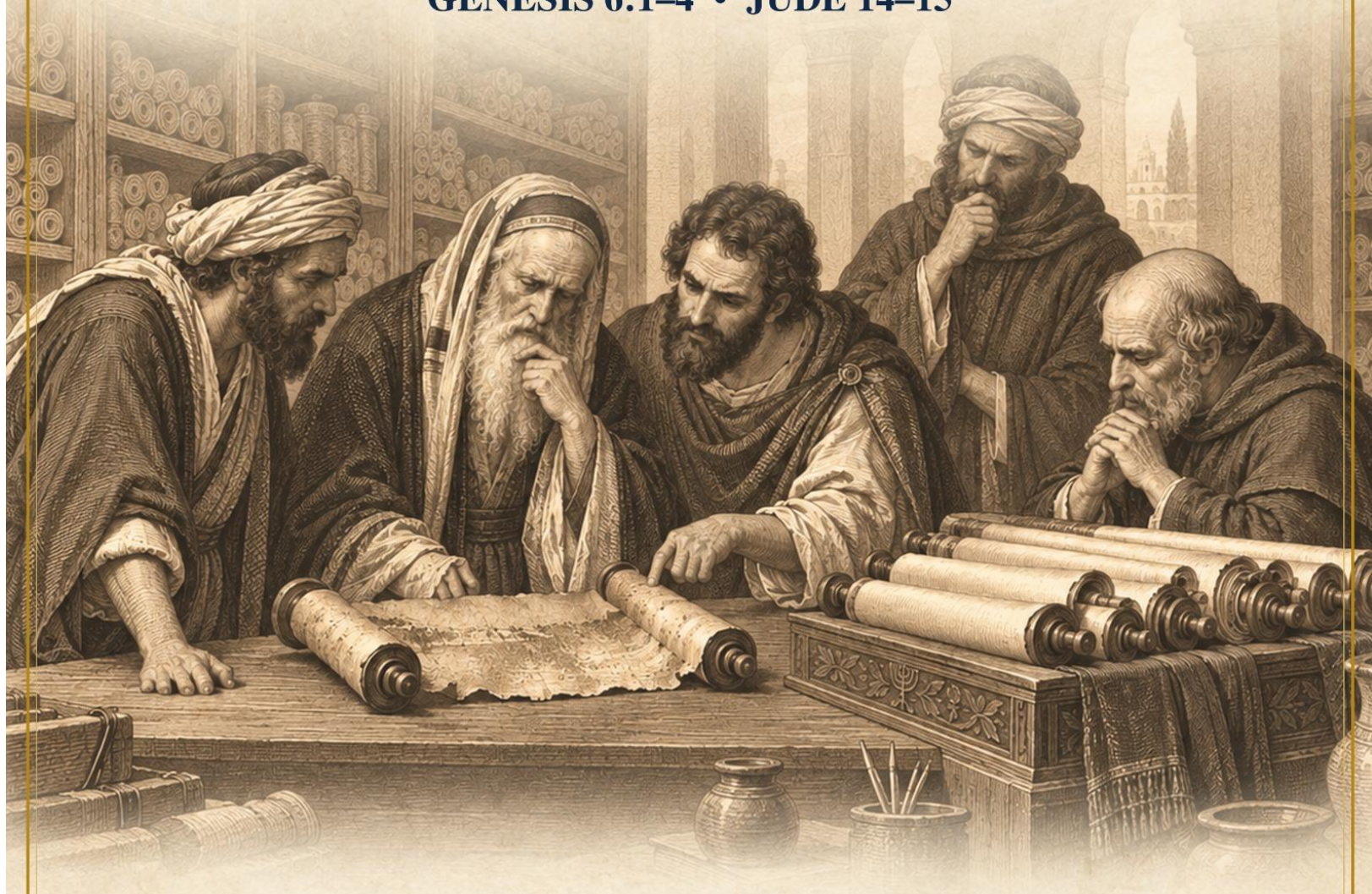


REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

GIANTS IN THE BIBLE | PART EIGHT OF EIGHT

DOES THE BOOK OF ENOCH EXPLAIN THE BIBLICAL GIANTS?

GENESIS 6:1–4 • JUDE 14–15



SERMON & PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Pastor & Teacher

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

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Giants in the Bible • Part Eight of Eight

SERMON

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Reason Together Church

Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you have worshiped with us many times or today is your first visit, we are grateful that you are here.

Our invitation is simple: Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

If you are our guest, there is a guest card available for you.

We ask only for your first name and email address so that we may thank you for coming and keep you informed about future studies.

We do not pass an offering plate at Reason Together Church.

Guests are not expected to give.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to give through your home church.

For those who are led to support this ministry, a giving box is available in the back.

Our Keiki Kids Center is available for children, and families are always welcome to worship together in the sanctuary.

Following the service, please join us in the Reason Together Café.

The coffee is free, and so are the refills on conversation.

We say that COFFEE reminds us that Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.

If today's study raises questions, bring them to the café or visit with me afterward in the Pastor's Study on the second floor.

Before we open the Scriptures, let us pray.

Father, thank You for bringing us together around Your Word.

Give us wisdom to distinguish what You have revealed from what people have imagined.

Guard us from fear, pride and careless certainty.

Help us listen with humble hearts, test every claim by Scripture and see Jesus Christ more clearly.

We ask this in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

We have reached the final study in our series, Giants in the Bible.

During this series, we have asked what the Bible means when it uses the word giants.

We have studied the Rephaim, the Anakim, the Emim, the Zamzummim and King Og.

We have examined claims that giants built ancient monuments.

We have asked whether archaeologists have discovered the bones of Biblical giants.

Today we come to the ancient book that is most often presented as the missing explanation for all of these questions.

Does the Book of Enoch explain the Biblical giants?

Genesis gives us only four verses about the sons of God, the daughters of men and the Nephilim before the Flood.

The Book of Enoch gives us names, numbers, locations, conversations, forbidden knowledge and scenes of heavenly judgment.

Genesis is brief.

Enoch is detailed.

That difference naturally makes people wonder whether Enoch contains the rest of the story.

Some people say the Book of Enoch was removed from the Bible.

Some call it a forbidden book that church leaders did not want ordinary Christians to read.

Some treat it as the key that unlocks Genesis 6.

Others dismiss it without ever reading it or considering its history.

Neither reaction is careful enough.

One reaction is driven by suspicion.

It assumes that if a book is ancient and unfamiliar, somebody must have hidden it.

The other reaction is driven by fear.

It assumes that reading a noncanonical book somehow threatens the Bible.

Neither suspicion nor fear is a sound method of study.

Truth does not need sensationalism.

Scripture does not need protection from honest historical investigation.

The question is not whether First Enoch contains anything true.

The question is what kind of book it is and what authority its statements possess.

A history book may tell us something true without becoming Scripture.

An ancient sermon may preserve a correct interpretation without being inspired in every sentence.

A religious tradition may help us hear a Biblical passage as ancient readers heard it without adding new verses to the Bible.

That distinction will guide everything we do today.

We do not need to fear an ancient book.

We also must not give an ancient book an authority God has not given it.

Our guiding principle today is simple.

Enoch may illuminate the Bible, but Enoch must never govern the Bible.

Genesis 6 begins, “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.”

Then verse 4 says, “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”

That is the complete statement in Genesis 6:1-4.

The Bible does not name the sons of God.

It does not tell us how many there were.

It does not identify a mountain upon which they gathered.

It does not tell us the height of the Nephilim.

It does not explain what became of their spirits after death.

It is worth slowing down and noticing how carefully Genesis speaks.

Verse 1 describes humanity multiplying and daughters being born.

Verse 2 introduces the sons of God, their seeing, their desiring and their taking.

Verse 3 announces God’s response and speaks of one hundred twenty years.

Verse 4 mentions the Nephilim, the unions, the children and the mighty men of renown.

Then the passage moves immediately to the wickedness of humanity.

Genesis 6:5 says, “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Whatever supernatural rebellion may stand behind verses 1 through 4, the Biblical emphasis does not allow humanity to escape responsibility.

The Flood is not presented as God punishing people for something angels did while people remained innocent.

The earth had become corrupt, human hearts were evil and violence filled the world.

That emphasis matters because discussions of giants can become so fascinated with angels that they forget the sin of man.

Genesis does not permit that distraction.

Before we examine a book bearing Enoch's name, we should begin with the Enoch whom the Bible actually reveals.

Genesis 5 tells us that Enoch was the son of Jared and the father of Methuselah.

Jude calls him "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam."

Genesis 5:24 gives us the most important fact about his life: "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

Hebrews 11 says he was translated so that he should not see death.

Before his translation, "he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

The Biblical Enoch was a real man.

He lived by faith.

He walked with God.

Jude tells us that he prophesied.

But Genesis does not say Enoch wrote 108 chapters.

Genesis does not say he named the rebellious angels.

Genesis does not say he measured the giants or explained the origin of demons.

The existence of Enoch is not the question.

The question is whether the long collection carrying his name was personally written by him and whether God intended the church to receive that collection as Scripture.

There are actually three different works commonly called Enoch.

First Enoch is the ancient Jewish collection related to Genesis 6 and Jude.

Second Enoch is a different and later work preserved mainly in Slavonic.

Third Enoch is a still later Jewish mystical work.

They are not three volumes written by the same person.

The book relevant to our question is First Enoch, often called Ethiopic Enoch because its only complete ancient form was preserved in Ge'ez, the classical language of Ethiopia.

First Enoch is itself a collection.

It contains the Book of the Watchers, the Book of Parables, the Astronomical Book, the Dream Visions and the Epistle of Enoch.

These sections did not all originate at the same time.

The section most important to Genesis 6 is the Book of the Watchers, particularly chapters 6 through 16.

First Enoch is genuinely ancient.

Fragments of it were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Some of those manuscripts were copied well before the birth of Jesus Christ.

That evidence proves that the Watcher interpretation was not invented by modern prophecy teachers.

It proves that Jewish readers before the New Testament interpreted the sons of God as heavenly beings.

But ancient does not mean written before the Flood.

The surviving evidence places the Book of the Watchers in the centuries before Christ, not in the lifetime of the Enoch described in Genesis.

The book speaks in Enoch's voice.

Ancient writers sometimes placed a work under the name of a revered figure from the past.

That practice is called pseudepigraphy.

The word does not mean that everything in the book is worthless.

It means that the name on the work does not by itself prove that the ancient patriarch personally wrote it.

The Book of Enoch is not a meaningless modern forgery.

It is also not a secret chapter torn from every Christian Bible.

It is an important ancient religious work that must be examined in its proper place.

The Dead Sea Scrolls help us locate that place historically.

Fragments of several Enochic writings were found in Aramaic among the manuscripts from Qumran.

Those fragments include portions of the Book of the Watchers.

That discovery pushed the discussion far beyond the later complete Ethiopic manuscripts.

It showed that Enochic literature circulated within Judaism before the time of Christ.

It also showed that First Enoch was not invented by a medieval writer and was not created by a modern prophecy movement.

But finding a book at Qumran does not make it part of the Biblical canon.

The Qumran collection included copies of Biblical books, community rules, interpretations, calendars, hymns and other religious writings.

A library tells us what a community read and valued.

It does not automatically tell us that the community assigned the same authority to every scroll on its shelves.

If a pastor owns a Bible, a concordance, a history of Israel and a commentary on Genesis, the presence of all four books in his study does not make all four Scripture.

In the same way, the Qumran manuscripts prove antiquity and circulation.

They do not prove authorship by the historical Enoch or universal canonical status.

What story does it tell?

First Enoch identifies the sons of God as heavenly angels called Watchers.

They see the daughters of men and desire them.

They decide to take them as wives and produce children.

Their leader is called Semihazah.

Semihazah fears that the others will abandon their plan and leave him alone to bear the punishment.

The Watchers therefore swear an oath together.

Enoch says there were two hundred of them.

It says they descended upon Mount Hermon during the days of Jared.

They take women and the women bear giants.

The giants possess enormous appetites.

They consume the provisions of humanity.

When people can no longer sustain them, the giants turn upon human beings, animals and eventually one another.

The earth becomes filled with blood and violence.

The Watchers also disclose knowledge that Enoch portrays as forbidden or corrupting.

Some teach enchantments, the cutting of roots, astrology and the signs of the heavens.

Azazel teaches weapons, metalworking, ornaments and cosmetics.

Semihazah leads the collective rebellion involving women.
Azazel receives special blame for spreading corruption through forbidden knowledge.
The cries of the suffering rise to heaven.
God orders judgment.
Noah is warned of the approaching Flood.
Azazel is bound in darkness.
The giants are caused to destroy one another.
Semihazah and the other Watchers are confined to await final judgment.
The condemned Watchers ask Enoch to present a petition for mercy.
Their petition is refused.
They abandoned their appointed place and corrupted the earth.
They will have no peace.
First Enoch then says that spirits proceeding from the dead giants remain upon the earth as evil spirits that afflict humanity.
That is a complete and dramatic account.
It answers many questions Genesis leaves unanswered.
But completeness is not the same as inspiration.
The Bible teaches that demons and unclean spirits exist.
The Bible never directly says they are the spirits of dead Nephilim.
That is an Enochic explanation, not a stated Biblical doctrine.
Now place Enoch beside Genesis.
Genesis says humanity multiplied.
Enoch agrees.
Genesis says daughters were born and were fair.
Enoch agrees.
Genesis says the sons of God took wives.
Enoch identifies them explicitly as angels and expands their decision into a conspiracy sealed by an oath.
Genesis says children were born.
Enoch describes those children as enormous and destructive giants.
Genesis mentions the Nephilim and calls their offspring mighty men of old, men of renown.
Enoch concentrates upon violence, corruption and judgment.

There is genuine overlap.

There is also extensive expansion.

Genesis never gives the number two hundred.

Genesis never names Semihazah.

Genesis never identifies Azazel as a Watcher who taught weapons and cosmetics.

Genesis never mentions Mount Hermon, a collective oath or classes of forbidden knowledge.

Genesis never assigns the giants an enormous height.

Genesis never says their spirits became demons.

Notice also what Genesis does say about the offspring.

They are associated with the Nephilim, although interpreters debate the exact grammatical relationship.

They are called “mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”

The Hebrew word translated mighty men is not limited to giants.

It can describe powerful warriors or notable men.

Genesis therefore gives us a picture of extraordinary figures in a violent age, but it does not provide a medical chart, a family tree or a measurement.

First Enoch takes the brief Biblical scene and tells a much larger story.

That is why it feels explanatory.

It supplies answers wherever Genesis leaves a question.

Who led the rebellion?

Enoch answers Semihazah.

How many participated?

Enoch answers two hundred.

Where did they gather?

Enoch answers Mount Hermon.

What did they teach?

Enoch supplies lists of forbidden arts.

What happened to the giants after death?

Enoch supplies an origin story for evil spirits.

The abundance of answers can create the impression of authority.

Yet detail by itself is not evidence of inspiration.

A later explanation will often be longer than the original text precisely because it is trying to fill the original text's silence.

We should appreciate the ancient explanation without confusing its fullness with God's final authority.

Those details may tell us how ancient readers filled the gaps in Genesis.

They do not become Biblical facts merely because they are old.

We need several clear categories.

A Biblical fact is something canonical Scripture directly states.

A reasonable inference is a conclusion supported by comparing Biblical passages.

An ancient interpretive witness shows how readers close to the Biblical world understood a passage.

A later tradition adds details Scripture does not confirm.

Unsupported speculation claims more than either Scripture or evidence permits.

The angelic interpretation of the sons of God is more than a modern guess.

In Job, the expression "sons of God" refers to heavenly beings.

Jude speaks of angels who abandoned their proper habitation.

Second Peter speaks of angels who sinned and then immediately turns to Noah and the old world.

First Enoch proves that Jewish readers long before our time connected Genesis 6 with rebellious heavenly beings.

That makes the angelic interpretation historically serious and Biblically defensible.

It still does not make every Enochic detail inspired.

This is the most defensible conclusion concerning the sons of God.

The angelic view has strong lexical support because "sons of God" describes heavenly beings in Job.

It has strong historical support because ancient Jewish readers understood the passage this way.

It has meaningful canonical support because Jude and 2 Peter place sinning angels in a context of ancient judgment.

Yet careful preaching should still distinguish the conclusion from the details.

We may say that the angelic interpretation is ancient, serious and probably the best reading.

We should not say that Genesis itself names Semihazah, describes an oath on Mount Hermon or teaches that demons are dead giants.

Confidence should rise only as high as the evidence permits.

That is not weakness.

That is reverence for the words God actually chose to give us.

The fantastic measurement assigned to Enoch's giants also requires caution.

The textual forms and translations differ, and the resulting height is extraordinary under any ordinary conversion.

Genesis gives no height for the Nephilim.

We should not use Enoch to calculate the height of antediluvian giants, Goliath, the Anakim or an alleged skeleton in an internet photograph.

The measurement functions naturally as an apocalyptic picture of uncontrollable size and appetite.

It is not reliable archaeological data.

Then we come to the difficult question.

If First Enoch is not part of most Christian Bibles, why does Jude quote it?

Jude 14 says, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints."

Verse 15 continues, "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds."

That wording closely parallels First Enoch 1:9.

Both speak of the Lord coming with ten thousands of holy ones.

Both announce judgment upon the ungodly.

Both condemn ungodly deeds and hard words spoken against God.

We do not need to deny the relationship in order to defend Scripture.

Jude is quoting or using an Enochic form of the prophecy.

Because Jude is inspired Scripture, we can receive what Jude affirms with complete confidence.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied.

The Lord will come in judgment.

The ungodly will answer for their deeds and words.

But Jude does not say every chapter of First Enoch came from the historical Enoch.

Jude does not authenticate every angelic name, every measurement or every account of forbidden knowledge.

Jude does not instruct the church to place First Enoch beside Genesis, Isaiah and Psalms.

An inspired writer can use a true statement from an outside source without declaring the entire source inspired.

Paul quoted Greek poets in Acts 17.

Paul quoted a Cretan writer in Titus 1.

The truth of Paul's quotation did not make every work of those writers Scripture.

The Holy Spirit guarantees the truth of the words He gave through Jude.

That inspiration does not automatically spread backward over every page of a source Jude used.

Consider what happens whenever a Biblical writer refers to material outside the Bible.

The inspired writer selects a statement and places it within an inspired argument.

The authority rests in what the Holy Spirit gives through the Biblical writer.

The quotation does not bring the entire source into the canon behind it.

If a preacher quotes a true sentence from a newspaper, the truth of that sentence does not make the whole newspaper a sermon.

If Paul cites a pagan poet, the poet's line may be true while the poet's theology remains false.

Likewise, Jude can affirm a genuine prophecy associated with Enoch without asking the church to receive every part of the later Enochic collection as Scripture.

This also explains why Jude's use should not embarrass us.

Inspiration does not require Biblical writers to live without books, memories or traditions.

The Holy Spirit governed the final words of Scripture so that what they affirm is true.

Jude's use of Enochic material reveals the authority of Jude, not the automatic authority of every document Jude may have known.

We should also be humble about the pathway by which the prophecy reached Jude.

Jude may have used a written Greek form of First Enoch.

He may have known an Aramaic form or a shared Enochic tradition.

A genuine prophecy of the historical Enoch may have been preserved within that tradition.

We cannot reconstruct every stage with certainty.

We do not need to reconstruct every stage in order to trust Jude.

The inspired text gives us the prophecy God intended us to receive.

Jude's reason for using it becomes clearer when we read the whole epistle.

Jude is not writing a lecture about giants.

He is warning the church about "certain men crept in unawares."

They turn the grace of God into lasciviousness.

They reject authority, defile the flesh and corrupt others.
Jude gathers examples of judgment.
He speaks of unbelieving Israel.
He speaks of angels who kept not their first estate but left their own habitation.
He speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah.
He names Cain, Balaam and Korah.
Every example announces the same truth.
Privilege does not protect rebellion from judgment.
Jude 6 says the rebellious angels are kept in chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
The language strongly resembles the Watcher tradition.
Second Peter 2 also speaks of angels who sinned, confinement in darkness, future judgment, the old world and Noah.
Peter and Jude appear to know the same broad tradition connecting angelic rebellion with the time before the Flood.
But neither apostle retells every detail in Enoch.
They select what serves their inspired warning.
The history of First Enoch after the New Testament also calls for fairness.
Some early Christian writers knew the book and valued it.
Tertullian defended its usefulness.
Other writers questioned it or rejected portions of its interpretation.
Over time, most Jewish and Christian communities did not include First Enoch in their canon.
The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church preserved the complete work in Ge'ez and receives it as canonical.
That living tradition should be acknowledged respectfully.
We do not need to pretend that every Christian community has treated the book in exactly the same way.
At the same time, different reception does not erase the responsibility of Reason Together Church to identify the canon by which we teach doctrine.
Within the Protestant tradition, First Enoch is not canonical Scripture.
We may learn from it historically without reading it as an additional book of the Bible.
That position neither insults Ethiopian Christians nor abandons our own doctrinal responsibility.

Jude does not quote Enoch to answer how tall the giants were.
He quotes Enoch to say that judgment is coming.
Enoch may make us curious about the rebellion of angels.
Jude makes us examine the rebellion of our own hearts.
We should ask whether we have turned grace into permission to sin.
We should ask whether we speak about God while resisting His authority.
We should ask whether religious knowledge has made us humble or proud.
The Watchers in Enoch possessed unusual knowledge.
They supposedly understood heavenly secrets, celestial patterns and properties of the earth.
Their knowledge did not make them holy.
Knowledge separated from obedience became an instrument of corruption.
Jude's false teachers also spoke impressive words while living corrupt lives.
A person may know every proposed name of a Watcher, every theory about the Nephilim and every claim about ancient giants and still fail to walk with God.
Scripture does not praise Enoch because he could name angels.
Scripture says Enoch walked with God.
It is better to obey what God has revealed than to boast about mysteries He has not explained.
There is a special danger in subjects like giants, angels and hidden books.
They can make a student feel that secret knowledge is a sign of spiritual maturity.
The person who knows an unusual name may begin to look down upon the believer who simply knows the gospel.
The person who discovers an ancient tradition may begin to think the church has missed the real message for two thousand years.
The person who watches enough dramatic videos may become more confident in speculation than in Scripture.
But the mark of maturity is not possession of the most unusual information.
The mark of maturity is faithful obedience to Jesus Christ.
The Biblical Enoch did not receive his commendation because he could satisfy every curiosity about heaven.
He received this testimony: he pleased God.
That is the testimony we should desire.
Do we walk with God when nobody is watching?

Do we obey the parts of Scripture that are already clear?

Do we speak truth with humility?

Do we love the church more than we love winning an argument?

Do our studies make us worshipful or merely argumentative?

Those questions matter more than whether we can pronounce every name in First Enoch.

The Bible is sufficient without being exhaustive.

It does not tell us everything that ever happened.

It tells us what God determined was necessary as the authoritative rule for faith and obedience.

Deuteronomy 29:29 says, “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever.”

Genesis could have named every being involved.

It did not.

Genesis could have described the exact appearance of the Nephilim.

It did not.

Genesis could have explained the later fate of every spirit involved.

It did not.

That silence is not a defect in God’s Word.

Biblical silence is not an invitation to turn tradition into revelation.

Second Timothy 3 says all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness.

The inspired Word is able to furnish the man of God unto every good work.

We may read Enoch to understand ancient Jewish thought.

We may use it to illuminate the historical background of Jude.

We may recognize that it preserves an early interpretation of Genesis 6.

We must not use it to establish doctrines canonical Scripture never teaches.

This gives us a practical method for reading any ancient religious work.

First, ask what canonical Scripture directly says.

Write that down before consulting the later source.

Second, ask what conclusions can reasonably be inferred by comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Third, identify what the ancient source contributes as historical interpretation.

Fourth, mark every added detail that Scripture does not confirm.

Finally, refuse to build doctrine upon the added detail alone.

This method allows us to learn without surrendering discernment.

It also protects us from the opposite error of rejecting useful evidence merely because it is not Scripture.

Archaeology is not Scripture, but archaeology can illuminate the Biblical world.

A lexicon is not Scripture, but a lexicon can help us understand a Hebrew or Greek word.

An ancient Jewish book is not Scripture, but it can show us how ancient Jews interpreted a difficult passage.

Tools serve the text.

They must never become masters of the text.

Before repeating a claim, ask whether the Bible says it, whether the Bible reasonably supports it, whether an ancient source proposes it or whether it is unsupported speculation.

Read ancient books for context.

Read Scripture for doctrine.

In the Enochic story, the condemned Watchers seek an intercessor.

They ask Enoch to carry their petition before God.

Their petition is rejected.

Human sinners also need an intercessor.

We have crossed God's moral boundaries.

We have resisted His authority.

We have used His gifts for selfish purposes.

We cannot save ourselves.

But canonical Scripture directs us to a perfect Intercessor.

Jesus Christ came from heaven without abandoning holiness.

He took human flesh without sin.

He obeyed the Father perfectly.

He died upon the cross for our sins.

He rose bodily from the dead.

He lives to make intercession for those who come unto God by Him.

You do not need to know the names of the Watchers to be saved.

You need to know the name of Jesus.

You do not need access to a hidden book.

You need faith in the living Savior.

Perhaps you have spent years trying to find the one piece of hidden knowledge that will finally make you right with God.

The gospel is not hidden.

God has made the way of salvation plain.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

The wages of sin is death.

Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

He was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Salvation is not earned by mastering mysteries, performing religious works or belonging to the right family.

It is received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Come to Him as you are, but do not expect to remain as you were.

He forgives, cleanses and gives new life.

If you have never trusted Christ, admit your sin before God.

Turn from your rebellion.

Believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose again.

Call upon Him today.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Jude does not end with rebellious angels, false teachers or judgment.

Jude ends with the God who preserves His people.

Notice the word keep throughout the epistle.

The angels “kept not their first estate.”

God has kept them in chains for judgment.

Jude tells believers, “Keep yourselves in the love of God.”

Then he closes, “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling.”

The angels did not keep their appointed place.

False teachers did not keep the faith.

Believers are called to keep themselves in the love of God.

Our final confidence rests in the God who is able to keep us from falling.

Jude tells us to build ourselves up in the most holy faith.

He tells us to pray in the Holy Ghost.

He tells us to look for the mercy of Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

He tells us to show compassion toward those who doubt and to help rescue those being pulled toward destruction.

We contend, pray, show mercy and remain watchful.

Yet our hope is not in our own strength.

Our hope is in the God who can present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Does the Book of Enoch explain the Biblical giants?

It explains how an influential group of ancient Jewish readers understood them.

It proves that the angelic interpretation of Genesis 6 is ancient.

It helps us understand the background of Jude and 2 Peter.

It also adds many details that Genesis never confirms.

First Enoch is a valuable ancient witness.

It is not the controlling authority for Christian doctrine.

Enoch may illuminate the Bible, but Enoch must never govern the Bible.

We have now completed eight studies concerning giants in the Bible.

After all the names, peoples, disputed passages and modern claims, we must return to what matters most.

Giants are not the center of Scripture.

Fallen angels are not the center of Scripture.

Hidden mysteries are not the center of Scripture.

Jesus Christ is the center of Scripture.

The giants could not overthrow God.

Rebellious angels could not escape His judgment.

The Flood did not frustrate His purpose.

False teachers will not defeat His church.

His Word remains true.

His judgment remains certain.

His mercy remains available through Jesus Christ.

The series began by asking what the Bible means when it speaks of giants.

We learned that the English word giants represents more than one Hebrew term and more than one historical setting.

We studied peoples who were remembered for unusual stature and military reputation.

We examined Og's bedstead without pretending it was a direct measurement of his body.
We tested claims about monuments and giant bones without confusing photographs or legends with evidence.
Now First Enoch gives us one of the oldest expanded interpretations of Genesis 6.
Across all eight studies, the same discipline has protected us.
Say what the Bible says.
Allow reasonable inferences where the evidence supports them.
Label traditions honestly.
Reject sensational claims that cannot be verified.
And never let the size of a creature become larger in our minds than the sovereignty of the Creator.
And He remains able to keep His people from falling.
Let us pray.
Father, thank You for giving us Your Word.
Forgive us when curiosity becomes pride and when we become more interested in hidden mysteries than in revealed obedience.
Give us wisdom to examine every claim fairly and courage to reject what cannot be established.
Protect Your church from false teaching.
Help us contend for the faith with truth, humility and mercy.
For anyone who has not trusted Christ, open that heart today to the truth of the gospel.
Thank You for Jesus, our perfect Savior and Intercessor.
Keep us from falling and prepare us to stand before Your glory with exceeding joy.
We pray in the name of Jesus.
Amen.
Before we leave, remember this.
Read widely, but test everything by Scripture.
Ask difficult questions, but do not force certainty where God has not spoken.
Learn from history, but never place history above revelation.
Do not become so interested in beings who fell that you forget the God who is able to keep you from falling.
Walk with God.
Contend for the faith.

Show mercy to those who doubt.

Keep yourselves in the love of God.

Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

Aloha Nui Loa.

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

Does the Book of Enoch Explain the Biblical Giants

Giants in the Bible • Part Eight of Eight

COMMENTARY

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Reason Together Church

Introduction

This commentary examines the principal passages behind RTS-122. Its method is to begin with canonical Scripture, identify what the text states and then use 1 Enoch as historical background. Enochic parallels can clarify the interpretive world of Jude and 2 Peter, but they cannot add inspired propositions to Genesis.

Genesis 5 21 through 24

Genesis places Enoch in the genealogy from Adam to Noah. His 365 years are shorter than the lifespans surrounding him, yet the text marks his life with the repeated statement that he walked with God. The Hebrew verb describes a continuing manner of life, not a single mystical experience.

The phrase “he was not; for God took him” distinguishes Enoch from the repeated pattern “and he died.” Hebrews 11:5 interprets this as translation so that he did not see death. Nothing in Genesis attributes a literary corpus to him. Later Jewish literature expanded the unexplained circumstances of his translation into heavenly journeys and revelations. Those expansions are historically understandable, but they remain later developments.

Genesis 6 1 through 2

The passage begins with humanity multiplying and daughters being born. “The sons of God” translates Hebrew *bene ha’elohim*. In Job 1:6, 2:1 and 38:7, closely related language clearly denotes heavenly beings. That usage gives substantial lexical support to the angelic interpretation here.

The principal alternatives identify the sons of God as Sethites marrying Cainite women or as royal rulers taking women through abuse of power. Both seek to explain the passage within human society. The Sethite view lacks an explicit identification of Seth’s descendants as sons of God in the immediate text and does not explain why the women are called daughters of men rather than daughters of Cain. The royal view can account for oppressive taking but has less direct support for the specific phrase.

The verbs “saw,” “fair” and “took” recall patterns of desire and seizure elsewhere in Genesis. “They took them wives of all which they chose” depicts acquisition governed by desire rather than submission to God’s boundaries. Genesis itself does not use the word angels in these verses. The angelic identification is an interpretation supported by wider Biblical usage and later canonical parallels.

Genesis 6 3

The statement that God’s Spirit will not always strive with man and that his days will be 120 years is difficult. The 120 years may describe the interval before the Flood or a limitation upon human longevity. The immediate movement toward Flood judgment favors a period of warning, while later long lives show that any lifespan limitation was not applied instantly or without transition.

The verse places responsibility upon humanity. Even if Genesis 6 includes supernatural rebellion, the passage does not excuse human sin. God addresses man and Genesis 6:5 emphasizes the wickedness of the human heart.

Genesis 6 4

“There were giants in the earth in those days” translates the Hebrew Nephilim. The term occurs here and in Numbers 13:33. Its etymology is disputed. It should not automatically be defined from the English verb fall, nor should it be treated as a technical term for every large person in Scripture.

The syntax of the verse is debated. The Nephilim are present “in those days” and “also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men.” The text may identify the resulting children with the mighty men, or it may describe overlapping groups. The expression “the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown” uses gibborim, a broader term for mighty warriors or powerful men.

Genesis provides no measurement. It does not name angelic fathers or explain the later fate of the offspring. First Enoch resolves these ambiguities in one direction, but its resolution must be recognized as interpretation.

First Enoch 1 9

First Enoch opens with a scene of the Holy Great One coming from His dwelling in judgment. Verse 9 describes His arrival with ten thousands of holy ones to execute judgment and convict the ungodly. The language draws upon Biblical theophany traditions such as Deuteronomy 33:2 and develops them into an eschatological announcement.

Jude 14 and 15 follows this wording closely. The shared cluster of coming, myriads of holy ones, judgment and repeated ungodliness is stronger than a general thematic resemblance. Jude most probably uses an Enochic textual tradition.

First Enoch 6 through 8

Chapter 6 interprets the sons of God as angels, children of heaven or Watchers. Semihazah leads a group of two hundred. Their oath on Mount Hermon turns individual desire into collective revolt.

Chapter 7 describes marriages, sexual defilement and giant offspring. The enormous height varies across textual and translation traditions and should not be used as a historical measurement. The narrative’s emphasis falls upon appetite. The giants exhaust ordinary provision, devour humanity and violate the created order.

Chapter 8 introduces forbidden instruction. Azazel teaches weapons, metalwork and adornment. Other Watchers teach enchantments and celestial signs. This strand explains human corruption partly through illicit revelation. Genesis 6 does not mention these lessons.

First Enoch 9 through 11

The earth’s bloodshed rises as an accusation. Michael, Uriel, Raphael and Gabriel petition the Most High. God commissions judgment. Noah receives warning, Azazel is bound, the giants are set against one another and Semihazah’s company is confined.

The narrative draws together the Flood, angelic punishment and the healing of the earth. Canonical Genesis places the Flood’s moral cause primarily in human wickedness and violence. Enoch adds an elaborate heavenly administration of judgment.

First Enoch 12 through 16

Enoch becomes a scribe and mediator. The Watchers ask him to present a petition because they can no longer approach God. The answer reverses proper mediation: heavenly beings should have interceded for humanity, not required a human intercessor.

Their request is denied. They abandoned the holy heaven, took wives and produced giants. Chapter 15 distinguishes heavenly spirits from earthly flesh and then explains the spirits of dead giants as evil spirits upon the earth. Chapter 16 describes their continuing activity until final judgment.

This demonology is important for the history of Jewish thought. It is not directly taught in Genesis or elsewhere in canonical Scripture.

Jude 3 through 4

Jude intended to write of the common salvation but found it necessary to exhort believers to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. “The faith” here is the apostolic body of truth entrusted to the church.

The threat comes from men who entered unnoticed and turned grace into lasciviousness. Jude’s later use of ancient judgment examples serves this pastoral crisis. His subject is not antiquarian curiosity. He is defending holy living and the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Jude 5 through 7

Jude reminds readers of Israel’s judgment after deliverance, the angels who abandoned their place and Sodom’s sexual immorality. Each example joins privilege with rebellion and judgment.

“First estate” translates arche, which can denote beginning, rule or domain. “Habitation” translates oiketerion, a dwelling place. The angels failed to keep their assigned sphere and left their proper dwelling. God therefore keeps them in bonds for judgment.

The phrase “in like manner” in verse 7 may associate Sodom’s sexual transgression with the angels’ offense, though interpreters debate whether the comparison runs directly to the angels or primarily among Sodom and its neighboring cities. The Enochic background makes the Watcher reading historically natural but does not settle every grammatical question.

Jude 8 through 13

Jude applies the earlier examples to false teachers. They defile the flesh, reject authority and speak presumptuously about glorious beings. Michael’s restraint in verse 9 contrasts with their arrogance. The account of Michael disputing with the devil over Moses’ body is not found in the Old Testament and probably reflects another Jewish tradition.

Jude’s use of more than one external tradition shows deliberate engagement with material familiar to his audience. The inspired point is controlled by Jude’s words. His sources do not receive blanket canonical endorsement.

Cain, Balaam and Korah then represent hatred, greed and rebellion. Jude’s images of waterless clouds, fruitless trees, raging waves and wandering stars portray promise without spiritual substance.

Jude 14 through 16

Jude identifies Enoch as the seventh from Adam, matching the Genesis genealogy when Adam is counted first. The verb “prophesied” presents the saying as a true warning. The prophecy announces the Lord’s coming with holy ones to judge all and convict the ungodly.

Jude adapts the Enochic announcement to “these,” the false teachers. An ancient judgment oracle becomes a present warning. Repetition of “ungodly” emphasizes conduct and speech opposed to God.

Jude’s use supports the antiquity and relevance of the tradition. It does not say that the entire collection is inspired or that all of its attributed speeches came from the patriarch.

Jude 17 through 23

Jude turns from examples to exhortation. Believers must remember apostolic warnings, recognize mockers and resist divisive sensuality. They build themselves upon the most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep themselves in God’s love and look for Christ’s mercy.

Verses 22 and 23 require discerning mercy. Some who doubt need compassion. Others must be rescued urgently while the rescuer continues to hate the contamination of sin. The response to false teaching is therefore doctrinal firmness joined with pastoral care.

Jude 24 through 25

The doxology completes Jude’s theology of keeping. The angels did not keep their place. God keeps them for judgment. Believers keep themselves in God’s love. Ultimately, God is able to keep His people from falling and present them faultless in glory.

Human perseverance and divine preservation are not rivals. Jude commands active faithfulness and grounds confidence in God’s power. This is the proper destination of the sermon. The final word is not the fall of angels but the faithfulness of God.

Second Peter 2 4 through 5

Second Peter says God did not spare angels who sinned but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains or pits of darkness, reserved unto judgment. The verb tartaroo is related to Tartarus and depicts punitive confinement.

Peter immediately says God spared not the old world but saved Noah. The sequence parallels the Watcher tradition’s placement of angelic rebellion before the Flood. Peter’s purpose is to prove that false teachers will not escape judgment. He does not reproduce Enoch’s names, numbers or demonology.

First Peter 3 18 through 20

Christ, put to death in the flesh and made alive by the Spirit, proclaims to spirits in prison associated with disobedience in Noah’s days. Interpretations identify the spirits as fallen angels, human dead, hostile powers or people addressed through Noah.

The Watcher tradition makes imprisoned angels a serious option. The passage remains difficult and should not be used as though its interpretation were certain. Whatever view is taken, the paragraph proclaims Christ's victory and the saving significance of His resurrection.

Second Timothy 3 16 through 17 and Deuteronomy 29 29

Second Timothy identifies Scripture as God-breathed and sufficient to equip the man of God for every good work. Sufficiency does not mean Scripture records every historical fact. It means Scripture accomplishes the purpose for which God gave it.

Deuteronomy distinguishes secret things belonging to God from revealed things entrusted to His people for obedience. Together, these passages permit historical study while forbidding tradition from becoming a rival authority.

Doctrinal summary

The angelic interpretation of Genesis 6 is ancient and has meaningful support from Biblical usage and New Testament parallels. It should be presented as a strong interpretation rather than as though every detail were explicit in Genesis.

First Enoch is a valuable historical and interpretive witness. Its added details remain outside the Protestant canon and cannot independently establish doctrine.

Jude's inspired use confirms the prophecy he gives. It does not canonize all of 1 Enoch.

The central canonical teaching is that rebellion brings judgment, false teaching threatens the church, believers must contend for the faith and God is able to preserve His people through Jesus Christ.