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Epistle of Enoch: 1 Enoch Chapter 91-105

Hypothesized Dating of the Document, the Author, the Audience, and the Original Context:

What do we know about the author and the time this text was written?

A. Dating of Document:

- **Approximate Date: 2nd to the middle of the first century c. B.C.E.**¹

C. Author(s)/Editor(s) of Document:

- **It was written by Enoch**²

What was going on in the Jewish world and the locality when this text was created?

A. List major events such as Roman invasion or Ptolemaic rule:

- (175-164 BC) Antiochus IV attempted to assimilate Judea to Hellenistic culture which started the Maccabean revolt. This created a stronger emphasis on the uniqueness of the God of Israel.³

B. List key historic figures such as Alexander the Great or Judas Maccabeus

- Antiochus IV- Seleucid monarch⁴

Identify the Audience

a. Who was the Intended Audience?

- i. Intended Audience:** Enoch wrote this last section of this epistle for his sons to teach them how to live rightly in the midst of chaos and the pressure to conform to syncretistic ways.⁵ Enoch addresses his son Methuselah in chapter 91:1 and tells him to gather his brothers.

Are the contents of this text **prescriptive** or **descriptive**?

A. Prescriptive or Descriptive? Prescriptive

B. What particular reasons support this view?

- The whole of 1 Enoch 91-105 is in the future tense. Enoch is warning his sons about what is to come and teaching them how they are to live. It is reflective in a

¹ Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), p.301)

² Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), p.301)

³ Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), p.81)

⁴ Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), p.81)

⁵ Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), p.81)

sense that the author makes the reader think about the past that results in the impending judgement (1 Enoch 91:9).

Structural Divisions

Describe in detail what you see (use an outline format).

- A. Identify the main divisions (focus on change of themes, characters, events, etc.)
 1. Brief summary of the current situation and its results (91:5-19)
 2. The Apocalypse (93:17)
 3. Warning to live a righteous life (94:17)
 4. What will happen to the righteous (96)
 5. Warning to the wise and foolish (98)
 6. What will happen in the future “In those days...” (99-100)
 7. Sovereignty of God (101)
 8. Addressing the oppression righteous people face (103:9-15)
 9. Hope to endure (104:1-7)

Key Theological Themes/Topics

- A. Is there a detectable theological point of view?
 - 1 Enoch 91-105 lays out some foundational truths that all are sinners but we can live in righteousness that God will honor in the time of judgement. The current situation during this time is that the Jews were being oppressed to conform to the Hellenistic way of life. Enoch encourages them to keep the words in their hearts so they do not fall into the false wisdom of the sinners and to live in peace(94:5). He talks about the sovereignty of God to show that there is no hiding from him (101:1) and to not fear (101:9)
- B. What do you see that you did not expect?
 - The language in these chapters are very harsh which shows how serious Enoch was when sharing this message. It shows the severity of the impending judgement.
- C. What powerful words and ideas are expressed?
 - The imagery of fire, death, and the consequences of sin are very strongly emphasized through these chapters. Also, the comparing and contrasting of the sinners and the righteous are also very impactful.

Analytical skills

Connections

- What do you think the author’s purpose was for writing this text? Why did this person write this document?
 - Enoch wrote this to warn his children about how real judgement is and to not fall under the pressure of Antiochus IV. The way of the righteous is much better than the way of the sinners.
- What conclusions can you draw about what the author means or is trying to get across to his or her audience? What is your strongest evidence for those conclusions?

- The author is trying to keep the audiences' eyes on what is true and righteous in the eyes of God. 1 Enoch 99:6-10 talks about how the reason for bloodshed is because they worship the wrong things and they will instantly perish. However, who those who keep the paths of the Most High, they will be saved.
- In what way does this document confirm and/or challenge your assumptions about the past?
 - Even though 1 Enoch did not make into the Bible, it is evident that the priests and prophets of that they still had the right focus which was to be unhindered in their faithfulness to YHWH and to turn away from the pressures of society.
- How does this document relate to our understanding of Second Temple Judaism?
 - It shows the kind of oppression the Jewish people were going through and how evident it was that it was the wrong way.
- How does this document relate to the New Testament writings?
 - Many parts of this document are very similar to many of the writings in the New Testament, especially Revelations. Some even remind me of the prophecy of the Old Testament prophets.

Summary statement (no more than one (1) paragraph, with five (5) to ten (10) sentences) that states explicitly what you learned about Second Temple Judaism from this document that challenges, informs, and/or expands your understanding of either Judaism or the New Testament.

1 Enoch 91-105 showed me how much the Jewish people valued the unique God of Israel. Even though they do not talk about Jesus or anything related to him, they continuously refer to God as the Most High and the Creator which showed that they foundationally had the same beliefs as us Christians. Righteousness cannot be achieved on our own and it was probably impossible to keep all 600 plus laws. However, one of Enoch's points was to not worship false idols but to look to the Most High who gives the peace they need to endure the oppression. It makes me wonder how different their lives could have been had they acknowledged Jesus as Savior.

Bibliography

Green, Joel B., and Lee Martin McDonald. *The World of the New Testament Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017.