

**Excerpt from Professor Chávez’s A Theological Introduction to the
Christian Bible, pp. 98-99, on the “Enochian” view of evil, its origin and its end**

Secondly, 1 Enoch has a “preterhuman” view of sin (Sacchi). Sin is not due originally to human fault, but has a cosmic origin; it is due to the primal sin, sins committed by angels beginning on the fourth day of creation. The world is profoundly defiled, impure, because of this; it is under the dominance of evil spirits. The Flood was only a superficial cleansing; a cleansing by fire would be needed.¹⁵⁵ This is in line with the deep pessimism of apocalyptic: the world is in such a bad, utterly corrupt state, that only a new creation by divine intervention will suffice to remedy it. Mere reform has been proven to be inefficacious. Where were the effects of the new covenant of Jeremiah 31, or the other covenant of Deut 28/29, or the new heart of Ezek 36? Clearly, all that had been done after the Exile consisted of temporary, half-way measures. Devout Jews of the Enochic type expected, demanded, needed, much more.¹⁵⁶

Thirdly, the approach to time of 1 Enoch and related literature was different than that of mainstream Judaism. This book advocates the use of a solar calendar, perhaps an ancient priestly calendar older than the lunar calendar adopted in Babylon. Enoch himself had lived a significant 365 years, Gen 5:22-24, before being taken up to God (only Elijah was likewise privileged), where he received his revelatory visions.¹⁵⁷ The Qumranites also espoused a solar calendar, and this was a significant “dissident” position to take vis-à-vis “official Judaism.” It is possible, as Annie Jaubert has argued, that Jesus and his

¹⁵⁵ See GABRIELE BOCCACCINI, *The Roots of Rabbinic Judaism, An Intellectual History from Ezekiel to Daniel* (Grand Rapids – Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2002), 91. Note the theme of fire in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matt 3/Luke 3), and this theme as well as the omnipresence of evil spirits requiring exorcism in the ministry of Jesus. Cf. Eph 6:10-13; Col 2:15. One could also point to Jesus’ cleansing or purification of the leper in Mark 1:40-44 and of the woman with the blood flow in Mark 5:25-34; menstruation rendered very impure (see Lev 20:18). Purity was of enormous concern to the “Enochians,” but they did not see the solution in the Temple cult. Cf. John the Baptist’s non-Temple baptism “unto the forgiveness of sins.” Jesus’ “cleansing of the Temple” was really a symbol of its destruction. More on this later.

¹⁵⁶ Both 1 Enoch and Qumran will depict a “heavenly, eschatological high priest commissioned to cleanse the polluted earth;” NICKLESBURG, *1 Enoch 1*, 54. In 1 Enoch, it is the archangel Michael (which some associate with the Danielic Son of man); in Qumran, 11QMelchizedek, it is Melchizedek, “portrayed as a divine hypostasis,” (Rabbi) JOSEPH M. BAUMGARTNER, “Messianic Forgiveness of Sin in CD 14:19 (4Q266 10 I 12-13),” in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Technological Innovations, New Texts & Reformulated Issues* (D.W. Parry – E.W. Ulrich, eds.; Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill Academic, 1999), 537-544.

¹⁵⁷ See also Heb 11:5.

followers celebrated Passover on a different day than most Jews, which would explain a significant discrepancy between the Synoptic and Johannine chronologies for the crucifixion (Passover before the crucifixion in the Synoptics, after according to John 18:28; 19:14, 31). Further, in the 1 Enoch section called the Apocalypse of Weeks, all history is divided into ten units called “weeks,” and

the ten ‘weeks’ total seventy units, itself a highly significant number in light of Jeremiah’s prediction that Jerusalem would be desolate for the seventy years of Babylonian control . . . and the decisive “week,” that is, the one in which the actual author lives and when the great turning point in history will begin is the seventh. As $7 \times 7 = 49$, the total brings to mind associations with the biblical jubilee (which the author of *Jubilees* [another work advocating the solar calendar and very important at Qumran] and others understood as a forty-nine-year unit).¹⁵⁸

We recall the use of “weeks” in Dan 9 to interpret Jeremiah’s prophecy, and to provide calculations for the end of the period before salvation arrived. In both, as at Qumran, the period is that of ten Jubilees, or 490 years. In the Qumran document 11QMelchizedek, which announces eschatological forgiveness of sin on the tenth Jubilee, this final Day of Atonement is identified with the “good news” of Isa 40 and Isa 61 (which mentions the “anointed [messiah] of the Spirit”). Jesus does not seem to have formed part of the scholarly, scribal, esoteric circles which cultivated such intricate calendrical calculations, but when he proclaimed, as part of the kernel of his message, that the “time was fulfilled,” he may well have had in mind something like the end of the period of waiting prophesied by Jeremiah, Second Isaiah and Daniel; his use of the Jubilee word “liberty” in Luke 4 points to just such an idea (this would not be just another Jubilee to be repeated after another 49 years!).

¹⁵⁸ VANDERKAM, *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, 104. In 11QMelchizedek, mentioned above, “Melchizedek is to proclaim liberty [*dʿror*, Lev 25:10; Isa 61:1] for all the Sons of Light by releasing them from the burden of their sins. This will take place on the day of Atonement at the end of the tenth jubilee;” BAUMGARTNER, “Messianic Forgiveness,” 539. Jesus proclaims the eschatological “liberty” of Isa 61 in Luke 4:18-21 as being fulfilled “today.” I believe that what we are to pray for in the Lord’s Prayer (“forgive us ur sins”) depends on our forgiving others their sins *and debts* (Luke 11:4) as in the Jubilee year cancellation of all indebtedness; see the Sabbatical year provisions in Deut 15:1-3.