



Light from the Word

Enoch's Faith and Translation

Theme verse: *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."*¹

Translation

Scripture shares very little about the Enoch of Hebrews 11. The seventh from Adam, Enoch walked with God. ". . . and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."² The writer of Hebrews adds that *"God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."*³ Translation (gr. metathesis) meaning transferal or removal. Enoch's faith was rewarded by being transferred to heaven by God without experiencing death on earth. This 'translation' is replicated only once in the Bible, when the prophet Elijah was taken up into heaven. *"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."*⁴

The significance of translation touches all who have had a

spiritual rebirth in Christ. Jesus Christ often taught eternal spiritual truths in parables by using the created (physical) world that we can see, hear and touch, as an example. *"Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."*⁵ What Enoch and Elijah by faith experienced in the physical, we as followers of Christ can experience in spirit and soul. From these two scriptures we can conclude that by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, evidenced by the keeping of His sayings (commandments), we will experience in our eternal being what Enoch experienced in the physical body.

Walking with God

Enoch's faith is evident by the scripture's testimony that he walked with God. What does it mean to walk with God? The Old Testament expression of men walking with God, in addition to Enoch, is used of both Noah⁶ and Abraham⁷. The prophet Micah captured it well, *"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love*

*mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"*⁸ To walk humbly with God is to have fellowship with Him, to hear and obey His counsel and to openly share with Him our joys, sorrows, and struggles. As believers, we walk with God in prayer and by reading and meditating on His Word. We walk with Him in submission and in agreement that He knows what is best for us. *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed."*⁹

Pleasing God

Enoch pleased God. He may not be the first biblical character we call to mind when we think of God-pleasers, yet the writer of Hebrews calls our attention to this very connection when he writes that Enoch's life was pleasing to God. *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*¹⁰ The writer of Hebrews is clearly connecting Enoch's pleasing of God to Enoch's faith. Something about Enoch's life of faith—his pursuit of God and fellowship with Him—played out in a heart which trusted that God was who He said He was (*"...believe that he is..."*) and that walking with Him, and thereby pleasing Him, would bring great reward (*"...and that he is a*

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rewarder of them that diligently seek him...). The apocryphal writings, which give a bit more insight into the life of Enoch, echo this same idea of belief that God is who He says He is. Jude 14-15 quotes from the apocryphal book 1 Enoch 1:9 “*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed ...*”¹¹ Enoch spoke of God’s judgment, and his belief in God being true to His word is evident in Enoch’s prophecy. He believed that God was who He said He was and that He would do what He promised. While Hebrews 11 outlines a great many actions of faith; the offering of sacrifices (including Abraham’s son Isaac), the building of the ark, the leaving of one’s homeland, and standing up in the power of God against Pharaoh, some faith-filled heroes, like Enoch, seemed to have simply lived a life of faith and fellowship with their God;

speaking His words, sharing His truth, and truly believing that He was God, Lord of all, and that in following hard after Him there is rich spiritual and heavenly reward.

Enoch’s Translation, The Believer’s Translation

So, what do we know about Enoch? We know that he walked with God, which implies a strong relationship with God and a godly way of living. We know that he prophesied; he spoke words of God, sharing them with God’s people to build them up or to stir them up. We know that he pleased God, which in itself bears witness to an incredible theological truth—to think that the creation of the Almighty God can move Him, giving Him pleasure or displeasure. We know that he did not see death, because he was translated or taken up. We may not know a great deal about Enoch, but what we do know sets a pattern for the life to which we are called today. We can walk with God, growing in our knowledge and love for Him, sensing His presence and His love for us. We can speak words, desiring, as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 14, the gift of prophecy to “*build*

and stir up the church.”¹² We can, miraculously, please God, as we walk with Him and speak His words through our life and our voice. Finally, we do not have to ‘see’ or experience death because of the resurrection. As Paul continues in 1 Corinthians 15 “*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*”¹³

We, too, await our translation.

Endnotes:

¹ Hebrews 11:5

² Genesis 5:24

³ Hebrews 11:5

⁴ 2 Kings 2:11

⁵ John 8:51

⁶ Genesis 6:9

⁷ Genesis 24:40

⁸ Micah 6:8

⁹ Amos 3:3

¹⁰ Hebrews 11:5

¹¹ Jude 14-15

¹² 1 Corinthians 14:12

¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:54-57