

Enoch was the Father of Methuselah and Walked with God for 300 Years

5: 21-24

DIG: Why was Enoch the one exception to the reign of death? What does it mean for Enoch that God took him away? Why Enoch of all people (see Hebrews 11:5-6)? If Methuselah was the oldest man in the Bible, how could he die before his father?

REFLECT: When was the last time you felt that you walked with God? How could the picture of ADONAI taking Enoch away have anything to do with you? What can we learn practically about walking with God so that we can follow Enoch's example?

Some leaders are made in a moment. Others are defined by a lifetime. This was true of Athanasius, a fourth-century believer who stood firm over many decades by refusing to compromise, even when it seemed the whole world was against him. Athanasius lived in Alexandria, Egypt, during the historic transition within the Roman Empire. Emperor Constantine had ascended to the throne and put an end to the imperial policy of persecution against Christians. But the Church's newfound acceptance and rest didn't last long. An apostate named Arius became an influential teacher against the deity of Messiah and, therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity.

The truth about the deity of Christ and the Trinity had been foundational doctrines of the Church since the time of the apostles. But the heretic Arius arrogantly challenged them both, claiming that **God the Son** was a created being who was inferior to, rather than equal with **God the Father**. In other words, he was the original Jehovah's Witness! He perverted the true Good News and replaced it with a **different Gospel (Galatians 1:6-10)**. Although his lies were unanimously condemned by the by the Council of Nicaea in 325, they remained popular even after his death in 336.

As early as 321, the twenty-three year old Athanasius began writing against the apostate teachings of Arius. In 328 he became the pastor of the church in Alexandria - one of the most influential churches in the Roman Empire. At great personal cost, "the saint of stubbornness" diligently dedicated his life to defending the deity of the Messiah and defeating the Arian heresy. Arius had powerful allies that made Athanasius' life miserable. His life was in constant danger. He was banished from Alexandria five times and spent a total of seventeen years in exile because he would not back down. After defending the

Trinity for more than fifty years, he died in 373. And **ADONAI** rewarded his faithfulness, empowering Athanasius to keep hold back the tide of apostasy at a crucial point in the history of the Church. During those long years of exile, when he felt almost completely alone, he didn't give in.

Enoch was the same kind of man, who stood his ground over a long period of time. Like Athanasius, **he** boldly opposed the false teachers of his day, courageously confronting the faulty theology of the society in which **he** lived (see my commentary on **Jude At - Enoch, the Seventh Generation from Adam, also Prophesied about These People**). Even in the midst of a wicked generation, one in which **God** determined to destroy in the Flood, **Enoch** refused to bend to the whims of his culture. Some had used a Latin phrase to describe Athanasius, *Athanasius contra mundum*, meaning, "Athanasius against the world." I am sure **Enoch** felt the same way, yet **he** remained faithful to **the LORD**.

Enoch, pronounced *Chanoch* in Hebrew, is the **seventh generation** and means *dedication, consecration or beginning*. **Enoch's** name is also found in Cain's line, but they are not the same people. The witness of **Enoch** is given to us as an oasis in this chapter. **He** is one of the few people before the Flood of whom we have any record at all.

When **Enoch** had lived **65 years**, **he** became the father of **Methuselah**. There is an interesting contrast between **the father** and **the son**. **Enoch** does not die, but **his son** outlives **him**. Of the ten generations listed, **Enoch** had the shortest lifespan of **365 years**, but **his son Methuselah** had the longest lifespan of **969 years**.

After **he** became the father of **Methuselah**, **Enoch** walked (this is the first use of the word **walked** in the Bible) with **God 300 years** and had **other sons and daughters**. The word **walked** used here is the same word used with **Adam** and emphasizes fellowship and communion. To walk with **God** is another way of saying that **Enoch pleased God**. In fact, the Greek translation of the TaNaKh translates the phrase exactly that way. The writer to the **Hebrews** sealed this meaning when he described **Enoch's** life this way: **he was known as a person who pleased God (Hebrews 11:5b NLT)**. Because **Enoch** sought to be pleasing to **God**, **God** was well pleased to be in fellowship with **him**.

Enoch understood that to walk with **God** included living in loving obedience to Him. As **ADONAI** told the Israelites when they were camped at the foot of Mount Sinai: **If you live by My regulations, observe my commandments and obey them . . . I will walk among you and be your God and you will be My people (Leviticus 26:3a and 12b CJB)**. To walk in fellowship with **ADONAI** is to **love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your**

soul and with all your mind and with all your strength (Mark 12:30). That kind of **all-consuming love** assumes obedience. As **Yeshua** told his apostles in the upper room: **If you love Me, keep My commands (John 14:15).** A few verses later **He** reiterated that point with these words: **You are My friends if you do what I command (John 15:14).**

Only three people in the Bible are said to have **walked with God; Adam (3:8), Enoch and Noah (6:9).** I am sure it was not easy for **him** to do so. The Bible teaches us that **he** was a preacher and a prophet. Being the seventh in the godly line of **Seth, Enoch** would have been a contemporary of **Lamech**, who was the seventh generation in the ungodly line of **Cain (4:18b-24).** **He** stood against the corruption of **his** culture and walked with **God** for three centuries.

It is remarkable that **Enoch** would prophesy of what we recognize as the **Second Coming of Christ** even before the Flood or the **First Coming!** **His** prophecy is indeed the oldest human prophecy in the Bible. Actually, it may be considered as an expansion of the prophecy that **the LORD** made in **3:25**, the promise of the eventual crushing of the serpent, Satan, and his seed. **He** had **not left Himself without testimony (Acts 14:17),** even in those days. The promised coming judgment was partially fulfilled in the great Flood, but its final fulfillment will be in the glorious return and triumph of **the Lord Jesus Christ.**⁹⁶

Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. Enoch walked with God. He walked with God because **he** was **God's** friend and liked **His** company. Moreover, **he** was going in the same direction as **God**, and had no desire for anything but what **the LORD** wanted. We walk **with God** when **He** is in all our thoughts; not because we think of **Him** all the time, but because all we think of naturally suggests **Him** to us. Everything we do has some connection to **Him**. When we fall into sin, we cannot rest until we have resumed our place at **God's** side and are able to walk with **Him** again. It is constantly holding our lives open to **the Lord's** inspection and in conformity to **His** will, and a readiness to give up what **He** finds contrary to **His** will. It is a cold and distant feeling when we are conscious of doing something that displeases **Him**. As you would instinctively avoid subjects which you know would hurt the feelings of a friend, as you would naturally want to please your company, so when the consciousness of **God's** presence begins to have some weight with you, instinctively, you want to please **Him**.

Then he was no more, because God took him away. The **King James Version** says: **and he was not.** In the Hebrew it is one word, *veeimemu*, basically meaning *he disappeared*. Millennia later, another prophet, **Elijah**, was also snatched up to heaven without dying (**Second Kings 2:11**). As the writer to the **Hebrews** says: **By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had**

taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:5-6a). The rabbis teach that when Enoch died he was a righteous man, but his mind was easily tempted to turn away and do evil. So God took him quickly and he died before his time. Of course this view is just the opposite of what is stated in Scripture where it says he walked with God.

Enoch was taken up to heaven. The only way I know how to describe this is the way a little girl described it to her mother when she came home from synagogue. She said, "Teacher told us about Enoch and how he walked with God." Her mother said, "Well, what about Enoch?" And the little girl put it something like this: "It seems that every day God would come by and say to Enoch, 'Enoch, would you like to walk with Me?' And Enoch would come out of his house and down to the gate, and he'd go walking with God. He got to the place that he enjoyed it so much that he'd be waiting at the gate of his house every day. And one day God came along and said, 'Enoch, let's take a long walk. I have so much to tell you.' So they were walking and walking, and finally Enoch said, 'It's getting late in the afternoon, I'd better get back home.' And God said to him, 'Enoch, you're closer to My home than you are to your home; why don't you come on home with Me.' And so Enoch went home with God."⁹⁷

Enoch's being taken up to heaven is also a picture of the Rapture of the Church (see my commentary on Revelation By - The Rapture of the Church). Therefore, before the judgment of the Flood, God removed Enoch. But even Enoch did not entirely escape the consequences of sin because his son, Methuselah, also inherited the same death sentence as the rest of his family tree.