

BIBLE STUDIES

SERIES: HEROES OF FAITH – Hebrews Chapter 11

LESSON #4

ENOCK

Hebrews 11:5

“By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

Enoch is one of the most unique, exemplary and mysterious characters in the catalog of the commendable in Hebrews chapter eleven. Let’s look at the information we have about him in five phases:

ENOCK’S TIMES.

Enoch was the great grand-father of Noah. The early history of Enoch is recorded in Genesis chapter five. In Genesis chapter six, God told Noah to build the Ark in preparation for the judgment of the flood He was going to send. Even though Enoch lived many years before the flood, he lived in an increasingly evil environment.

“The age in which he lived was undoubtedly one of great wickedness. Enoch is selected as the only one of that generation signalized by eminent piety, and he appears to have spent his life in publicly reproofing a sinful generation, and in warning them of the approaching judgment; Jude 14-15. The wickedness which ultimately led to the universal deluge seems already to have commenced in the earth, and Enoch, like Noah, his great-grandson, was raised up as a preacher of righteousness to reprove a sinful generation.” (Barnes' Notes)

It is frequently said that it is hard to live for God in the context of our godless twenty-first century society. Do we remember why God sent the flood? Genesis 6 reminds us in these words: *“Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”* - *“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.”* (Gen. 6:5 & 11)

It was in this pre-flood wicked environment that Enoch lived. Hebrews 11:5 tells us that he had faith in the midst of a faithless population. There has never been a time when living for God was easy! Why? Because we are living in the Devil’s territory. In II Corinthians 4:4 Satan is referred to as *“the god of this world.”*

That is why God has tailored a special suit of clothing for us. It is on display in Ephesians 6:11-17 - *“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of*

the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

This suit is always in style for the child of God, never needs cleaning and never wears out! If we are wearing it every waking moment, we too, can demonstrate our faith in God regardless of the tough times in which we may find ourselves.

We are not living in times preceding a global flood, but we are living in times described by the Apostle Paul, when writing to Timothy, as "*perilous times*" (II Tim.3:1) and they require faith to overcome the lure and lair of the world.

ENOCH'S TESTIMONY.

You don't have to go with the flow! Enoch walked with God against the current of popular opinion and conduct. He kept clear about God's will for his life; clean in his deportment and committed to live for God in a godless society.

Enoch's testimony is first recorded in ancient biblical history. Back in Genesis chapter five we read that "*Enoch walked with God three hundred years.*" (Gen.5:22) Again, in v.24, the statement is repeated: "*And Enoch walked with God.*" There are several noteworthy things about this walk of faith:

It Suggests That They Were Traveling At The Same Pace.

Genesis 5:22a "*Enoch walked with God.*"

Enoch walked *with* God. He did not run ahead; he did not lag behind. Walking with another requires mutual agreement. The prophet Amos understood this when he asked, "*Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?*" (Amos 3:3)

Let us not be like Peter who at one point in his life walked "*afar off*" (Matt.26:58) and was found in the enemies camp. Let us pray and practice the words of the old hymn:

"Close to Thee, close to Thee;
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior let me walk with Thee."

Throughout the centuries men and women have known what it is to walk with God in holy Communion and companionship, and today we can know the same blessed experience as Enoch. What a joy it is to journey through life in step with God!

It Suggests That They Were Traveling On The Same Path.

God, our Shepherd, leads us "*in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*" (Psalm 23:3) We can't walk with God unless we walk the righteous path. "*But the path of the just is like the shining sun That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.*" (Prov.4:18,19) Walking with God means walking at God's pace, walking on God's path, and..

It Suggests That They Were Traveling To The Same Place.

Every path begins somewhere and leads to some place. Enoch and God were going to the same place. One can not walk together with another continuously and end up at two different destinations. When we walk with God we will end up where He does! And isn't that where we want to be? And where is that? "*The Father's house*"! (Psalm 23:6)

Enoch's walk was pleasing to God. He was like any other human but he had faith in God, and that faith issued in a pleasing lifestyle. It began with a heart attitude of faith and issued in his walking with his God. Only the person who walks with God, pleases God!

Walking with God is life's greatest adventure! What better epitaph could one have than that she/he walked with God? Oh, I almost forgot – Enoch did not have a tombstone, did he? So no epitaph!

ENOCH'S TEACHING.

Although Enoch lived in the far distant past, he saw into the far distant future. The little New Testament book of Jude contains a great truth that Enoch taught: "*Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.*" (Jude v.14,15)

Here is a remarkable prophetic proclamation coming down to us from before the time of the flood in Noah's day, when Enoch lived on the earth. Several New Testament writers also warn of God's judgment in similar words to those of Enoch. Paul, in II Thess.1:7-9 "the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power...." And Peter writes similarly in II Peter 3:3-7.

But back to Enoch's teaching. Enoch's prophecy said that coming judgment:

- Is Personal - "*Behold, the **Lord** comes with ten thousands of His saints*"
- Is Universal – "*to execute judgment on **all***"
- Is Impartial - "*to convict **all** who are ungodly among them of **all** their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of **all** the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.*"

There remains this question: "How did Enoch know of God's coming judgment?" God told him! Enoch "*walked with God*" and God communicated with him. Enoch was certainly on a friendship basis with God after walking with Him all those years.

It is said of Moses, "*the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.*" (Exodus 33:11) Also, Abraham was called "*the friend of God.*" (James 2:23) "*The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do...?"*" (Gen.18:17) So, no doubt, the same Lord told Enoch about coming judgment.

Let us make sure that we are not numbered among those cited in Enoch's prophecy as being "*ungodly*" but that we are numbered among the "*godly.*"

ENOCH'S TRANSFER.

Enoch had a most unique and dramatic exodus from this earth. Hebrews 11:5 notes that *"Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."*

Note different translations:

KJV: *"By faith Enoch **was translated** that he should not see death";*

NKJV: *"By faith Enoch **was taken away** so that he did not see death";*

NIV: *"By faith Enoch was **taken from this life**, so that he did not experience death";*

NASU: *"By faith Enoch **was taken up** so that he would not see death;*

TLB: *"**God took him away to heaven without dying; suddenly he was gone** because God took him."*

Regardless of how it is stated, Enoch experienced a sudden transference from earth to heaven in a most dramatic way. The Hebrew word "*heurisko*" is used and means: "*to disappear; no longer to be found.*" Hebrew often uses sentences that have no verb. The expression is simply two words for the negative with a pronominal suffix on the end - "*not he,*" to which, in English, we must add the verb "*was*" to make sense, therefore, "*he was not.*" This is the way the KJV translation renders it which is usually quite literal. The NIV has it, "*he was no more.*"

Clearly the context shows there was something different about Enoch's end from those mentioned previously, of whom it was said, "*and he died*"; whereas, with Enoch it is said, "*he was not*" because of something different. And the difference was that "*God took him,*" implying that he did not die an ordinary human death. So the implication is that he was taken without death.

The Hebrew commentary by Casuto sites these examples from the same Hebrew construction:

Psalms 103:16 - "*When the wind has passed over it, **it is no more***"

Prov 12:7 "*The wicked are overthrown and **are no more***"

Job 7:21 "*You will seek me, but **I will not be.***"

Job 8:22 "*the tent of the wicked **will be no longer.***"

Enoch's rapid removal from the earth is a foreshadowing of the sudden taking away of the saved ones at the return of our Savior. 1 Thess. 4:17 states we "*shall be caught up.*"

Enoch's departure reminds us that at the Lord's *appearance*, there will be our *disappearance*! We, too, will be transferred from earth to heaven in an unusual manner as was Enoch.

ENOCH'S TRUST.

We must not forget, that the reason that we are focusing on Enoch at all, is because of his faith. Heb. 11: 5 "*By faith Enoch*". Faith is trust. "Its primary idea is trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust." (Easton)

The key, the secret, the difference, the essential element in Enoch's life was his trust, reliance, dependence, his faith in God. In the account in Genesis, Enoch's faith is displayed in the expression, "*he walked with God*" and his faith is celebrated in Hebrews eleven, in the Honor Roll of Faith, in the words, "*he pleased God.*"

We must not overlook the next verse in Heb.11 – it is verse 6 and says: "*without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*"

This verse is a continuation of what we read in verse five. Since it is in the same context as the description of Enoch's faith, I believe that he characterized the truth in verse six. The reason he *walked with God* and *pleased God* was that he not only *believed* in God, but he continually and diligently *sought* the Lord.

To seek the Lord is to be ever desirous to know Him better. Jeremiah 9:23,24 tells us: "*Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me.*"

SUMMATION

What about this man Enoch is it, that we should remember, and that would help us?

-He had faith in a faithless age;

-He was God's companion – he walked with God! II Cor. 5:7 reminds us to "*walk by faith, not by sight.*"

-He was a God-pleaser - What a wonderful summation statement for a believer's life. "*He had this witness that he was pleasing to God.*" Can that be said of our lives?

-He was God's messenger – he proclaimed God's message for his time;

-He had a unique exit from earth – He suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth. Someday, we who know the Upper-taker will do likewise!

May we, like Enoch, commit ourselves to be God-seekers, God-pleasers and God's companions by "faith-walking" all of our journey from earth to heaven!

*When we walk with the Lord,
In the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way;
While we do His good will
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey."*

"WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD."

Hebrews 11:6