

Enoch

The details given intrigue us. We refer not so much to his family nor the length of his life. Four other facts about him provoke questions.

Walked with God

First, Enoch walked with God. We are told this twice (see *Genesis 5.22 & 24*). Clearly it is something important. It indicates Enoch was different. Just how different becomes apparent the more we discover about him.

What does it mean to walk with God?

The term speaks of intimacy. Enoch, the son of Jared and father of Methuselah, enjoyed a close relationship with God. He knew him and loved him. And he did so for a considerable number of years. He lived no 365 years here on earth!

To walk with God entails two desires: (1) a desire for God; and (2) a desire to please God.

In Hebrews 11 verse 6 we find two features of faith. Those of faith believe God exists. Secondly, they also believe God rewards those who seek him. Verse

5 states Enoch was a man of faith. These two features could be discerned in him. Those who cherish such beliefs inevitably have a desire for God. Enoch did. It led him to seek God and, having found him, to keep close to him.

How does a believer live his life? How does he maintain close fellowship with God. The Lord Jesus says those who love him keep his commands (see *John 14.15 & 21; and 15.10*). Enoch did. He walked with God. Thus, as well as desiring to know God, those who have faith also desire to please him. The obedient are those who provide evidence their profession of faith is genuine.

Word he proclaimed

A *second* feature of Enoch provided in Scripture relates to prophesy. He was a man whom God used. *He was empowered by the Holy Spirit to tell others about God.* In particular he made known God as Judge (see *Jude 14f*).

Some find this idea strange. They think of God only in terms of love. We do not doubt God is love (*1 John 4.8*). But nor do we doubt God has appointed we shall face judgment (*Hebrews 9.27*). We hold both truths. And we hold neither at the expense of the other. God's people make known the whole counsel of God and not only those elements of it that warm their hearts or suit them.

There is no reason to exaggerate the different descriptions given of Enoch and Noah. Both are described as men who walked with God. Noah is also called a 'righteous man' (*Genesis 6 verse 9*). and a 'herald of righteousness' (*2 Peter 2.5*). Whilst in *Jude (verse 14f)* Enoch is described as a prophet of judgment.

Some argue these men had different ministries. Enoch, they say, preached the law, whilst Noah proclaimed the gospel. However that is a somewhat arbitrary and simplistic distinction. Why? Because the gospel is only properly understood when it is presented in the context of both existing and coming judgment.

Furthermore the opposite to righteousness is unrighteousness. Both Noah's actions - he built an ark - and his words - he warned of coming judgment - indicate his ministry was similar to that of Enoch. In effect both men proclaimed the judgment of God on disobedience, rebellion and sin.

That Enoch did so is emphasised in *Jude 15*. Note how similar terms follow each other in rapid succession. The text underlines God judges ungodly sinners for their deeds of ungodliness done in ungodly ways.

The key word, *ungodly*, speaks of a lack of allegiance to or of love and respect for

God. The way the word is used shows Enoch was aware the real problem with mankind lies in his unwillingness to submit to the rule of God.

Enoch was different. His desire was to know and follow God. It was to walk with him.

What happened to this man of faith, to this man who proclaimed the Word of God as he walked with him?

Was taken

Thirdly Enoch, we are told, was taken (Hebrews 11.5). As a result he was not.

There is no compelling reason to take this information figuratively. On the contrary, the evidence is God removed Enoch from earth and transferred him to heaven. In saying this we affirm Enoch did not have the experience others had or shall have. It is appointed to mankind to die. As a result body and soul shall be separated at death until the day of judgment. But Enoch did not die. That is why his body could not be found. At one point he was here on earth. Then at the next he was taken. As a result he was not. He was nowhere to be found here on earth. He had been taken straight to glory. There are only two people of whom this may be said - Enoch and Elijah.

Enoch serves as an example. His life and translation to heaven shows those who enjoy fellowship with God shall triumph over death. That is a believer's hope. Death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Unlike Enoch other believers shall die. But like Enoch they shall also live for ever in the presence of Christ Jesus in their resurrection bodies. That which is corrupt shall put on incorruption; and that which is mortal immortality. Enoch's experience demonstrates the hope the followers of Christ Jesus have is neither fanciful nor unreal. On the last day believers shall be transformed.

Was pleasing

The *fourth* detail we are given about Enoch is that *he was commended before he was taken*. It was God who commended him. In other words, God informed the consciences of many through the life and example of Enoch that he was a godly man who was acceptable to him.

It is the godly who please God. It is the ungodly who incur his displeasure and wrath. It is not difficult to see why. As stated above, an ungodly act is an act of defiance. It is a rejection of God. It entails a lack of love and respect for him. A godly act, by way of contrast, is

an act that comes from a heart reconciled to God.

A person who desires and delights in God does not want to offend him. Rather his aim is to please him. It is to function in a way which is acceptable to God.

Jude indicates the ungodly say bad things about God. A word he uses is frequently translated as 'hard' or 'harsh'. In other words, because our words frequently reveal what our hearts are like, the ungodly are those who do not speak highly of Christ. They do not speak of his loveliness. Instead they show disrespect. They belittle him before others. They show contempt for him. They demonstrate they will not let him rule over them.

It is for this defiance they are judged. It is ever thus. Those upon whom the judgment of God falls on the last day will only have themselves to blame. The reason why they experience God's displeasure is because they choose to remain in a state of rebellion.

Enoch saw these things. He was the seventh generation from the first man (*Jude 14*). He could see widespread ungodliness about him. By God's grace he embraced God by faith. And, as a man of faith, he sought to make Christ known to the people of his generation.

He preached the law and the gospel. Judgment shall fall on the ungodly. Those who desire God, embrace him by faith, and live obediently with him enjoy fellowship with him. Here on earth they know the joy of walking with God. In due time they depart to be with him.

shall preserve them, complete it, and take them to glory. Enoch chose the right path. He walked with God.

© GRC 17 March 2013

Conclusion

The life of Enoch is instructive. As well as seeing what he did. First, he walked with God; and two, he proclaimed God's word. We also see what he experienced. First, whilst here on earth, he was commended as having pleased God. And two, he knew victory over death.

In taking Enoch straight to heaven God declares to mankind that he (that is God) alone has power over sin, death and hell. Mankind cannot free himself from their grip. But in Christ Jesus a believer will find, know and enjoy the same. Enoch knew that in Christ a believer is made a conqueror. Such victory is in him alone.

Furthermore the life of Enoch demonstrates that a believer occupies two states. First, here on earth, those born again by God's Spirit live in a state of faith and obedience. Then, secondly, after the judgment, they shall dwell in a state of eternal blessedness in the new heavens and new earth. Go, who begins a good work within them in this life,