

## 5:24 *Enoch Walked with God*

ENOCH WAS MEANT TO GIVE HOPE TO THE PATRIARCHS. MARTIN LUTHER: The inference is universal: Adam died; therefore he was a sinner. Seth died; therefore he was a sinner. Infants die; therefore infants have sinned and are sinners. This is what Moses wants to point out when he states of the entire series of patriarchs that they died even though they were sanctified and renewed through faith. But in this series there shines forth like a star the most charming light of immortality, when Moses relates about Enoch that he was no longer among men and yet had not died but had been taken away by the Lord. Moses is indicating that the human race has indeed been condemned to death because of sin, but that there has still been left the hope of life and immortality, and that we shall not remain in death. It was for this reason that the original world not only had to be given the promise of life but also had to have immortality demonstrated to it by an example. Therefore it is stated about the individual patriarchs: “So many years he completed and died,” that is, he bore the punishment of sin, or he was a sinner. But about Enoch Moses does not make this statement, not because he was not a sinner but because even for sinners there is left the hope of eternal life through the blessed Seed. LECTURES ON GENESIS 5:1.<sup>1</sup>

## ADAM NEVER SAW THE RESURRECTION

FORESHADOWED BY ENOCH. JOHN CALVIN: It is strange that Adam was deprived of this support for his faith and consolation. Given that God’s terrible verdict—that “by death you shall die”—would have been constantly ringing in his ears, he was greatly in need of some source of comfort, so that he would have something else to call to mind on his deathbed besides the curse and his own extinction. However, it was a hundred and fifty years or so after Adam’s death when God took Enoch, who was to be like a visible mirror of the blessed resurrection. Had Adam been enlightened about Enoch, he might have girded himself for his own departure with equanimity. COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 5:24.<sup>2</sup>

WALKING WITH GOD MEANT RESISTING SATAN AND PREACHING THE GOSPEL. MARTIN LUTHER: [Moses] exalts godly Enoch like a sun above all the teachers or patriarchs of the primitive world. From this we gather that Enoch had an unusual fullness of the Holy Spirit and outstanding courage, because he was bolder than the other patriarchs in offering resistance to Satan and the Cainite church. For, as we said above, to walk with God does not mean to flee into the desert or to hide in a nook but to go out according to one’s calling and to offer resistance to the iniquity

<sup>1</sup>LW 1:332–33 (WA 42:244).

<sup>2</sup>CTS 1:231\* (CO 23:107–8).

and malice of Satan and the world; moreover, to confess the Seed of the woman, to condemn the religion and the endeavors of the world, through Christ to preach another life after this life, etc. This kind of life godly Enoch lived for three hundred years, like a chief prophet and priest who had six patriarchs as his teachers. LECTURES ON [GENESIS 5:21–24](#).<sup>3</sup>

**ENOCH TRUSTED THE INVISIBLE GOD.** DESIDERIUS ERASMUS: It was no impediment to the godly Enoch that he descended from an ungodly father.† For Holy Scripture bears witness to him, that he spent his time with God even while he lived on earth, namely, pursuing by faith not those things that are seen but those that are not seen, that is, those that are eternal and heavenly. For this reason he was taken up while still alive to those things that he loved, and delivered from death. For before he was removed from human fellowship, he lived in such a way that he seemed to live more in heaven than on earth, and as one who had committed nothing worthy of death, he also seemed unworthy to die. People should learn from his example, first of all, that the way to immortality is opened by faith and innocent living. He was taken away, therefore, because he was pleasing to God. But he pleased him chiefly by faith, without which no one can please God,

however much one may otherwise abound with good deeds. For anyone who desires to be commended by God must first of all believe that a God exists who can do all things and who wills what is best. Then, that God exercises care over human affairs so as to ensure that the godly, who neglect the visible goods of this world and seek after the invisible God, will not be cheated out of their reward, however much they may be afflicted in this life; and that neither will the ungodly lack their punishments, even if in this age they seem to enjoy favorable breezes. It is to his faith, then, that Enoch owes this outcome (whether described as his glory or his happiness), that he was removed from human companionship and lives with God. PARAPHRASE OF [HEBREWS 11:5–6](#).<sup>4</sup>

**ENOCH IS NOT THE ONLY ONE EVER TO PLEASE GOD.** WOLFGANG MUSCULUS: That Enoch was taken by God is clearly stated here, but *where* he was taken and *why*—beyond the fact that “he walked with the Lord”—is not to be read here. Accordingly, what the godly reader finds written should be accepted as beyond question, but what one does not see written should be judged not to pertain to oneself. Instead, one may say with Cyprian, “*Where* Enoch was taken, God

<sup>3</sup> [LW 1:344](#) ([WA 42:252–53](#)).

<sup>4</sup> *Paraphaseon* (1541), 2:373; cf. [CWE 44:245](#) and *Seconde Tome* (1549), 19r.

only knows.” ... *Why* God took this Enoch seems to be expressed by what the text says, ... and we can assign no other cause than that which is put here. Nonetheless, it’s not meant to be a perpetual and necessary cause, as if it were always the case that anyone who walks with God ought to be taken by God in the way that Enoch and Elijah were. Otherwise, the rest of the patriarchs, who all agree were godly, would stand convicted of not having walked with God, since they were not taken in this way but rather just died. It is rightly surmised from their being taken that Enoch and Elijah pleased God. But it is not right to surmise that the rest of them, who were not so taken but were subjected to the common law of death, displeased God. Indeed, this is not the only proof or basis for God’s good pleasure, that one be taken to heaven without having tasted death, for otherwise all those godly people who have died and we ourselves will be punished—along with Christ himself. But there are countless other proofs as well for the grace of God, from which assurance of his good pleasure can be drawn. COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 5:25.<sup>5</sup>

**MARRIAGE AND FAMILY DO NOT IMPEDE WALKING WITH GOD.** KONRAD PELLIKAN: To walk with God is to please God by one’s innocence of life, to exhibit toward others

a nearly heroic way of life, to attend to God as his servant and to experience his special grace. Nonetheless, just as with Noah and others, marriage and the proliferation of a family were not obstacles but did more to add to the example of these holy ones. Indeed, holy Enoch begot Methuselah himself. But at the age of 365, Enoch was taken, and for reasons unknown: for the judgments of God are not to be fathomed. COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 5:23.<sup>6</sup>

**BOTH ABEL AND ENOCH WERE SAINTS, DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENT ENDS.** PETER MARTYR VERMIGLI: It is the opinion of the Fathers concerning Enoch that he was taken up by God and now lives—the same thing they assert about Elijah, who (as [2 Kings 2\[:11\]](#) has it) was taken away to heaven in a fiery chariot. And they diligently record that the same blessing befell these two, who entered into diverse ways of life: one, Elijah of course, was unmarried and his wife and children are not mentioned; but the other, Enoch, begot sons, and among them was Methuselah. This demonstrates that marital status has little or no effect on who will cling to God, who will please him and who will be carried off to heavenly places. They also want to show us God’s fairness and justice in taking this man. Having fallen by sinning, Adam was

<sup>5</sup> *In Mosis Genesim* (1554), 165–66.

<sup>6</sup> *Commentaria Bibliorum* (1532) 1:9v.

expelled by God, the same thing that we saw happen to Cain, above, but by his faith and piety Enoch was received by God. According to [Hebrews 11\[:5\]](#), “by faith” he “was taken up so that he should not see death.” From this, the saints in the church knew how they might strengthen themselves and be comforted with hope for something better. For, having first seen Abel, a righteous man, killed by Cain, they could be shaken by some temptation. But later on, when they saw Enoch taken up like this on account of his faith and piety, they were right to conclude at once that the saints would have both the cross and joys, given that these examples exhibited both. COMMENTARY ON [GENESIS 5:24](#).<sup>7</sup>

**ENOCH TEACHES ABOUT THE SABBATH REST THAT AWAITS.** HULDRYCH ZWINGLI: Note here that Enoch was the seventh generation from Adam! But on the seventh day the Lord rested from every work. Therefore in Enoch the Sabbath is renewed and restored. For Moses does not say that he died, as he says of everyone else, but that he was taken away, namely, from all labor into the repose of the saints, that is, those who have worshiped God in true faith. By Christ this place was then called the bosom of Abraham, on account of his remarkable faith and uprightness; Elijah also was received here, as well as however

many have walked innocently before God. Everything here is filled with lessons and mysteries. First, we learn that the Sabbath is nothing other than innocence of life and conduct before God. Second, that we who now live in the seventh age are ourselves “Enochs,” so we ought to walk innocently with God. Third, a kind of everlasting Sabbath is signified here (which Isaiah calls “from one Sabbath to another”), namely, the saints’ rest, into which God will receive us, if with Enoch we have lived innocently before him, having endured our labors to the end. ANNOTATIONS ON [GENESIS 5:22](#).<sup>8</sup>

**ENOCH AND THE RESURRECTION.** JOHANNES BRENZ: When Moses writes that Enoch did not die but was taken by God, he shows that God wanted to attest to the other patriarchs by this miracle that there remains a life to come and that there is a resurrection of the dead. Indeed, it was explicitly being proclaimed that there is another life after this one, because by seeing one patriarch die after another and no one returning from another world who could explain the future state, they were coming to regard statements about the other world as vain. For this reason, God raised up the patriarch Enoch, who led a most godly life for many years and then, while the patriarchs looked on, was taken up on high by the Lord so that there

<sup>7</sup> *In Primum Librum Mosis* (1569), 25v.

<sup>8</sup> [ZSW 13:40](#); cf. [Lk 16:22](#); [2 Kings 2:11](#); [Is 66:23](#).

would be clear proof that he had been taken by God and that there is another life to come in which Enoch would live with God in utter happiness. COMMENTARY ON [GENESIS 5:24](#).<sup>9</sup>

**ENOCH'S DEATHLESS TRANSITION TO HEAVEN.** MARTIN LUTHER: The flesh indeed cannot be without pain; but since the conscience has been quieted, death is like a fainting spell through which we pass into rest. That pain of the flesh would have been absent in the innocent nature; for we would have been taken away as if by a sleep, and, awaking shortly, we would have been in heaven and would have lived the angelic life. But now, when the flesh has been corrupted by sin, it must first be destroyed by death. So Enoch, perhaps when he was lying in some place covered with grass and was praying, fell asleep; and as he slept, he was taken away by God without pain and without death. LECTURES ON [GENESIS 5:21–24](#).<sup>10</sup>

**ENOCH STILL AWAITS THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.** JOHN CALVIN: Being taken in this way was a gentle and joyful departure from this world. Yet he was not received into celestial glory but was freed only from the miseries of the present life, until Christ should come, the firstfruits of those who will rise again. And since he

was one of the members of the church, it was necessary for him to wait until they all go forth together to meet Christ, that the whole body may be united to its Head. COMMENTARY ON [GENESIS 5:24](#).<sup>11</sup>

**ENOCH DID NOT FULLY ENTER HEAVEN UNTIL CHRIST DID.** ANDREW WILLET: Because it is said that God took away or translated Enoch, popish writers imagine that Enoch is yet alive in his flesh, together with Elijah. On the contrary: given that Elijah is said to be taken up into heaven, or that he went into heaven ([2 Kings 2:11](#)), where Enoch also “walked with God,” we cannot believe that they entered heaven in their whole humanity. That prerogative was to be reserved for Christ, for the apostle says that he has prepared “a new and living way into the holy place for us by his veil, that is, his flesh” ([Heb 10:20](#)). Therefore, Christ's flesh must make a way into heaven before any one else's flesh can enter. COMMENTARY ON [GENESIS 5:24](#).<sup>12</sup>

**WILL ENOCH RETURN?** JOHANNES BRENZ: According to the epistle of Jude, it appears that as the time of the flood was drawing near, Enoch harshly attacked the corrupt behavior of his age and urgently prophesied of the coming flood, using the opportunity to provoke people with these threats so they might repent. From this,

<sup>9</sup> *Opera* 1:85.

<sup>10</sup> [LW 1:349](#) ([WA 42:256](#)).

<sup>11</sup> [CTS 1:232\\*](#) ([CO 23:108](#)).

<sup>12</sup> *Hexapla* (1608), 70.

stories arose even among Christians that before the last judgment Enoch would come, along with Elijah, to preach repentance. What is said of Elijah's coming is taken from Malachi and fulfilled in John the Baptist, as is abundantly shown elsewhere, but what is said about Enoch's coming is taken from this passage in Genesis, where it is written that he did not die, and from the epistle of [Jude†]. But one should regard it as the truth of the matter that Enoch prophesied before the flood of the coming wrath of God and exhorted the people to repent. Elijah, on the other hand, who is John the Baptist, predicted that one day the Jews would be driven out, and he warned them to come to their senses. So also will it occur in the last days, before the whole world is destroyed, that God will raise up certain ones who will call people to repent, so that if not all, at least some may be saved. I suspect, then, that either an apostle or some other pious person in the early church uttered allegories to the effect that Enoch and Elijah (that is, preachers of repentance) were going to come prior to the last judgment and the world's consummation through fire. The [apostle] himself interpreted these preachers allegorically, in order to urge people to repent, but others referred this to these patriarchs' own persons. But let us imagine that Enoch and Elijah are sent to us every single day, as often as we are called to our senses, so that we may escape the

coming judgment. COMMENTARY ON GENESIS 5:5.<sup>13</sup>

**THE REAL ENOCH MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM FABLES.** ANDREW WILLET: Concerning the end and reasons for Enoch's translation [to heaven], we first admit that God thereby wished to comfort the righteous that, notwithstanding the sentence pronounced against Adam, there was a way of righteousness whereby Adam's lost state might be recovered. Also, to minister comfort to the afflicted members of Christ, so that they should not doubt but that their reward is with God, just as Abel, though he had an untimely end, yet lived with God as Enoch did (so Theodoret). We also do not reject the inference here of Thomas Aquinas, that God wished to nourish the hope of life in his church: both by Enoch's translation before the law [was given] and by Elijah's, under the law. They were types representing the ascension of Christ, in whom the promise of salvation should be accomplished.

These causes of Enoch's translation may safely be received. But we do not agree with the book of Wisdom (which is not canonical scripture and we may therefore safely dissent from it) that he was taken away lest wickedness alter his understanding. For just as he walked with God before and God kept him in fear and

<sup>13</sup> *Opera* 1:85, †reading Jude for *Iacobi* (James), which mentions not Enoch but Elijah (*Jas* 5:17).

preserved him from evil, so could God have guided him still, ... even as Methuselah, Enoch's son and the longest lived of all the patriarchs, continued righteous to the end. Nor is the notion fit to be received that Enoch is kept alive to preach repentance at the end of the world and to maintain the gospel against Antichrist, which is the common opinion of the papal professors. For there is no mention in Scripture of Enoch preaching at the end of the world, but only of the sending of Elijah, which is not to be understood of Elijah's person but of his spirit and zeal. COMMENTARY ON [GENESIS 5:24](#).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Hexapla* (1608), 71. Wisdom does not mention Enoch, but cf. *Midrash Rabbah* §25.1 (Soncino ed., 1:205) for the account of Enoch here.