

“By faith Enoch was taken away” Hebrews chapter 11 verse 5

In the bible, before the flood of Noah's time, people lived a very long time. The book of Genesis tells us about Methuselah, the longest lived person in history, who lived 969 years. Is this possible? We might reason that the earliest people were made by God to not die at all, since their rebellion introduced death to the world. We might also speculate that, after mankind's fall into sin, the human lifespan began slowly to decrease with succeeding generations as the original vigour of human life waned.

Methuselah's father was Enoch, and not much is said about his life other than that he *“walked with God; then he was not there, because God took him.”* It seems that he was taken directly to heaven without having to suffer death. This happened to only one other person in the Old Testament – the prophet Elijah.

The letter to the Hebrews succinctly gives us the reason for this honour. It says *“Before he was taken away he was approved as one who pleased God.”* The writer of Hebrews reasons that Enoch must have been a man of significant faith because, *“without faith, it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and rewards those who seek him.”*

At the beginning of this chapter, we are offered a definition of what faith is. It is *“the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.”* When people begin to seek God for themselves, they are exploring something that they cannot see. God and the spiritual world are invisible to the human senses and cannot be proved by empirical means.

That means that to come to faith people have to take a series of experimental steps which involve choosing to open themselves up to the possibilities of faith. Is God real? Did Jesus rise from the dead? Is he alive today? These are all questions that, when sincerely asked, God can confirm in people's lives, drawing them to faith.

And when we come to believe, let God into our lives to govern, care for and guide them, we come to experience the reality of what we have put our trust in. But God is infinite and eternal. We will never exhaust the journey of faith in our discovery of him and in our obedience to him, but each step of faith we make is a step into a deeper knowledge of the one who can only be known and pleased by faith.

Our life as believers in this world consists in always moving, by faith, into more of God.

Prayer

*Father, we acknowledge that, in this world, we will never know you completely. But we do know that there will always be further for us to go and more of you to know. Thank you that Jesus reveals to us all that we need in order to live for you, but please also draw us on into the sense of reaching for something more. May we know the satisfaction, joy and contentment of being in you, but also the yearning to know you more fully that draws us on. In Jesus name, amen.*

*All these devotionals can be found on our website [inghamitechurch.org](http://inghamitechurch.org) on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.*