

Was Enoch raptured to heaven?

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January 2025, 28 minutes

Enoch, a righteous man, was the father of Methuselah and grandfather of Noah. There's a common belief that Enoch never died and that God raptured him to heaven. Does the Bible actually say all that? You might be surprised. Let's see if that's true. But first understand that **the word "raptured"** is just the Latin word translation of "caught up" in 1 Thess 4:17. Don't make a bigger deal of the word "raptured" than it is. Many believe God caught Enoch up to heaven, or raptured, and he never died.

Here's what we're told in scripture about Enoch.

Genesis 5:21-24 NKJV

"Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. 22 After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. 23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.

24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

Hebrews 11:5 NKJV

"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."

- **But does scripture actually say anywhere that he was taken to HEAVEN? No, there is no such scripture. Is the word "heaven" even ever mentioned in the original verses about Enoch? No, heaven is never mentioned in the Hebrew or Greek original scriptures.** The assumption is made that if God took him, that he took him *UP to heaven* where heavenly Jerusalem is, but scripture nowhere actually says that – except in some errant "translations" that ADD it.
- **And does scripture actually ever anywhere plainly say that Enoch NEVER ever died? No it doesn't.** Gen 5:24 just says he couldn't be found, for God had taken him. That's all it says. Hebrews 11:5 says he was "taken away so he did not see death and was not found, because God had taken him."

So a multitude of assumptions were made. If God took Enoch, surely God took him to heaven, some assume. But scripture doesn't say that. And the phrase in Heb 11:5 of "so he did not see death" – was assumed to mean that Enoch never ever died. But let's put all of scripture together.

One thing to remember is that "heaven" is described three ways.

1. As where the birds fly and where we see clouds. **2** – where the stars are. "the Heavens" declare God's glory," and so on. **3**– where God's heavenly Jerusalem is, called "the third Heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2).

The world was becoming an evil place early on and it was dangerous to be a preacher of righteousness. I think it's very possible that God saw Enoch's life was in danger, so God took him, moved him away suddenly, just as Philip was moved suddenly from the Ethiopian eunuch he had just baptized in **Acts 8:34-40**. God's spirit took Philip – but God moved him to Azotus, a town not far away, not to heaven. Similarly, they couldn't find Enoch and so he was not killed by men looking for him. Why else would it say, "he was not found"?

We're told the total years of Enoch's life was 365 years. If he continued living in heaven or anywhere else without dying first, we would not be told "for all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty five years" (v. 23) if he continued living in heaven after being taken there. It IS possible that God let him die earlier than usual but nobody trying to kill Enoch ever found him. Just like when God took Moses' life, and buried him, but nobody ever discovered where.

You will be surprised by what scripture actually says if you believe what's commonly held about Enoch.

I take the approach of preaching the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27); giving all the scriptures on a subject.

Can you find a single scripture that clearly says Enoch never ever died? You can't. It just says he "wasn't found" – which meaning is open for discussion.

As we read the various translations of Gen 5:24, notice that nowhere are we told WHERE God took Enoch. Nor does any PURE translation say that Enoch never ever died – just that he disappeared. Here's the passage again:

Genesis 5:24 NKJV

"And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

Now let's look at other translations and see if you can find "heaven" or "never died" anywhere. Are these just conclusions we assume? We read "God took him" or "took him away" and so many conclude that this has to mean God took him to heaven, but heaven is nowhere mentioned.

Genesis 5:24 IN VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS.

NIV "Enoch walked with God; **then he was no more because God took him away.**"

HOLMAN Bible: "Enoch walked with God, and **he was not there,** because **God took him.**"

CJB -"Hanokh walked with God, and then he wasn't there, because God took him."

NET: "Enoch walked with God, and **then he disappeared because God took him away.**" (all from Genesis 5:24).

The other place we read about Enoch is in Hebrews 11, the faith chapter. Notice the wording is almost identical.

Hebrews 11:5 NKJV

"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."

The problem with Hebrews 11:5, as I'll show soon, is that **many translations** took great liberties with this verse and inserted words that were not in the original Greek, as you'll see. **But many people came to believe these very loosely translated versions of the Bible, inserting words not in the original as we'll see. Some translations insert the word "heaven" but that word is not in the original Greek.**

Again, "Enoch was taken away, so that he didn't see death." When we put all the scriptures together about going to heaven or if anyone ever went to heaven, all we know is that there was a point in time when Enoch could have died – probably we could say could have been murdered by men tired of him being a preacher of righteousness, and then God intervened to save him from being killed.

So Enoch did not see death. Saying Enoch did not see death does not have to mean that we have to conclude that Enoch NEVER died. That's quite an assumption especially when we put more of the scriptures on this together.

We can know with certainty that God did not take him to heaven, because in the New Testament **Jesus the Son of God says this:**

John 3:13 Holman Bible

“NO ONE has ascended into heaven except the One who descended from heaven—the Son of Man.”

Jesus is saying – “Folks, NO human is in heaven. No one’s GONE to heaven except me.” “NO ONE has ascended to heaven” has to include Enoch. Are we going to believe the Son of God or not?

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said this in his inspired sermon: even righteous King David never ascended to heaven! IF David didn’t go up there, and Jesus said NO ONE ever ascended to heaven, then which human could be there unless you refuse to believe Jesus’ and Peter’s own words?

Acts 2:34-35

"For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

One reason so many falsely teach that Enoch was taken UP to heaven is that some paraphrased versions – like the New Living Bible (NOT a translation) say he was taken to heaven, but that’s not at all what was originally written!

The original Greek – translated “taken away” – means exactly that. There’s no indication of going to heaven in the Greek original, as some “translations” add the word “heaven” or add the word “UP” – as in “taken UP.” **The NLT, Passion Bible and The Message Bible** are the worst on this verse in their versions, not true translations. *NLT also says, “without dying” instead of “he did not see death.”* They play way too loose with God’s word.

Hebrews 11:5 NLT (takes a lot of liberties; very bad in my view. UNACCEPTABLE.)

“It was by faith that Enoch **was taken up to heaven without dying**—“he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken **up**, he was known as a person who pleased God.”

If you use NLT as your study Bible, heaven help you. Don’t use it for a study Bible. They put in their own theology instead of sticking to a strict translation. **The Greek means he was “taken away.” There’s no hint of being taken UP” as so many translations ADD – like ESV, NET, etc.** At least the CJB says he “was taken away” and “for God took him away.” That’s

fine. NIV says Enoch did not experience death, instead of saying he did not see death – where I would refer that to the moment God moved him.

There are other times in the Bible where God MOVED someone – like Philip, after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. He just disappeared, for the Holy Spirit had caught him away to Azotus a town not far away.

Acts 8:38-40

“ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 **Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more**; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 **But Philip was found at Azotus.** And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.”

Even **Elijah** was caught up in the whirlwind – up to the first heaven where the birds fly (2 Kings 2:11). But even HE was just moved away for a while, and we know that because afterwards Elijah wrote a letter to the king from Elijah’s **new location on earth (2 Chronicles 21:11-12)**. Elijah was not taken to the 3rd heaven, or Jesus’ own words that “no man has ever ascended into the 3rd heaven”, would be untrue.

BACK TO ENOCH: There’s no indication in the Greek that God took him UP, or took him to heaven, or that he never died. It simply says something was going on – likely, there were people intent on killing him – and God moved him to a safe place where those intent on killing him could not find him.

I believe some bad and loosely translated versions of the Bible contributed greatly to the notion that Enoch was taken alive UP to heaven and never died. Here’s an example of a very bad version. It’s certainly not a translation.

Hebrews 11:5 The Message (NOT a translation; NOT for a study Bible)

“By an act of faith, Enoch skipped death completely. "They looked all over and couldn't find him because God had taken him." We know on the basis of reliable testimony that before he was taken "he pleased God."

The Passion Bible also takes MANY liberties to inject their own theology when they can. God warns us to never add or remove words from his Bible.

Hebrews 11:5 – Passion Bible, which takes so many liberties with God’s word here. The original does NOT say he was taken UP to heaven!

“Faith translated Enoch from this life *and he was taken up into heaven! He never had to experience death.* He just disappeared from this world, for God had promoted him. For before he was *translated to the heavenly realm* his life had become a pleasure to God.” (In my view, a terrible translation of Heb 11:5)

Now – can it be true that Enoch never died? That’s not what scripture says! After talking about Enoch v.5, and others, we read this:

Hebrews 11:13 “***These ALL DIED in faith, not having received the promises,*** but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Heb 11:13 – “ALL” has to include Enoch, who is mentioned in verse 5.

Here’s another point. ***Everyone*** is appointed to die once, except those who are alive when Jesus returns. They will be changed in an instant to spirit.

Hebrews 9:27 “**And as it is appointed for men to die once,** but after this the judgment,”

One more point: if Enoch is already in heaven, has he not already received the promises and reward?

Hebrews 11:39-40

“**And ALL these,** having obtained a good testimony through faith, **did not receive the promise,** 40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

So I hope it’s crystal clear. Enoch did not see the death that appeared to be looming for God took him away to safety, and men could not find him. Then like everyone else, he eventually died.

Jesus clearly says NO MAN has ever ascended to heaven. Not even King David. Not Enoch. Nowhere does Gen 5:24 or Heb 11: 5 say anything about Enoch going to heaven. That was all added by men trying to validate their false teachings of the immortal soul and going to heaven when we die.

Our spirit in man goes to God when we die, but we all die and God calls it being asleep, until we are awakened in the resurrection. And we will see Enoch in the first resurrection, because he “sleeps” awaiting the resurrection.