

Men Who Never Died

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

- A. Heb. 11:5; Gen. 5:21-24 - How many among us understood that even in the Patriarchal age when God spoke to heads of families that the righteous walked by faith?
- B. 2Kings 2:8-14 - What better end could there be for the prophet the scriptures treat as the greatest of Old Testament prophets?
 - 1. Has it occurred to you that even Jesus the Son of God had to experience death and was not permitted to leave this world without it?
- C. Death is designed to be experienced by all men - Heb. 9:27
 - 1. It is half of the human predicament - 1Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:14
 - 2. What is so special about these two men that they never saw death?

I. THE MEANING OF TRANSLATION

- A. Metatithemi - "Greek: literally transport, exchange, change sides, carry over, change, remove, translate, turn" (Strongs - 3346)
 - 1. Laqach - "Hebrew: to take accept, carry away, drawn, fetch, get, in-fold, receive, seize, send for, take away" (Strongs - 03947)
 - 2. Enoch was alive when this event took place - Gen. 5:24
 - 3. A similar event happened to Elijah; he was alive when he left this world
 - a. 2Kings 2:11
- B. To date, these are the only two men to be translated and leave this world alive
 - 1. But they will not be the only ones to do so.
 - 2. John 14:1-3, 5:28-29 - We unconsciously assume that everyone will experience death before the Judgment.
 - 3. 1Cor. 15:50-54; 1Thes. 4:15-17 - Multitudes will enter heaven without experiencing death.
 - 4. There will two types of persons in heaven: those who experienced death and the resurrection, and those who experienced translation.
 - 5. One from the Patriarchal age, one from the Mosaic age, and multitudes from the Christian dispensation.
 - 6. Will the difference matter in heaven? Not at all.
- C. How will it happen?
 - 1. In 1Thes. 4:17, the phrase "caught up" is a military term. It is from harpazo which means to "seize with firmness and force, to take for oneself eagerly, to carry off" (Strongs - 726).
 - 2. God will eagerly, firmly grasp His people and carry them away to glory.
 - 3. In Matt. 24:44, it will be unexpected, necessitating a constant state of readiness.
 - 4. In 1Cor. 15:52, the change will be instantaneous.
 - 5. In 1Thes. 4:16, the ascension will be selective for the dead in Christ and the righteous who are alive.
 - 6. In Phil. 1:23 and Titus 2:13, we will see Jesus.
 - 7. More than that is not revealed.

II. GOD OVERSEES TRANSLATION

A. That's His responsibility.

1. It is not important that we know the means or mechanism; satisfying human curiosity is not a Divine priority.
2. I suspect it will be by the same expression of power He manifested in the creation - Heb. 11:3; John 5:28-29

B. God translated Enoch.

1. Heb. 11:5 says, "He was not found, because God had taken him."
 - a. Gen. 5:24 says, "God took him."
2. God controlled **when** Enoch was translated - Gen. 5:24, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."
 - a. Enoch lived on the day he was translated just as he had on every other day, pleasing the Lord.
3. God controlled **how** Enoch and Elijah left this world; He could have chosen death, instead He chose translation and a whirlwind.
4. God controlled **where** Elijah was taken - 2Kings 2:11
5. Elijah's response to Elisha indicated that he had no certain idea of where and when - 2Kings 2:10

C. God Who gives life, knows best the where, when, and how of its end.

1. Job 14:5; Psalms 104:9, 39:4

III. GOD DETERMINES THE DESTINATION OF THE TRANSLATED

A. The righteous, whether by death and resurrection, or translation are going to a land where - Rev. 21:4, 22:3-5

B. What did Enoch miss?

1. He did not get to witness the world of his son Methuselah descend into complete sin, except for the family of Noah.
2. He did not get to witness his son Methuselah descend into sin; his son's death corresponds with the beginning of the flood.
3. His name means "his death shall bring judgment." Was Methuselah righteous until the end?
 - a. Methuselah was 187 years old when he had Lamech - Gen. 5:25
 - b. When Lamech was 182-years-old he had Noah - Gen. 5:28
 - c. The flood happened in the 600th year of Noah's life - Gen. 7:11
 - d. $187+182+600 = 969$ (Methuselah's age when he died)
 - e. In Gen. 6:3, 120 years before the flood, God determined that he would give humans 120 years to change and then destroy them.
 - f. Later, He instructs Noah to build the ark and said that Noah and his family were righteous.
 - g. That list did not include Methuselah, and as the command to build the ark and the observation of the righteousness of Noah's family came long before the flood, Methuselah would have been numbered among the unrighteous before the flood.

C. What did Elijah miss?

1. He did not get to see Judah fall into complete idolatry and be taken into captivity after his life's work of combatting idolatry.

D. What will be missed by those who are translated at the second coming?

Conclusion: 1Thes. 5:1-8