
Words of Truth

Hebrews 11:4-5

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“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God” (Hebrews 11:4-5). In the two Scriptures we are looking at in this article we see two men whose works were pleasing to God. Their works were fueled by their faith (James 2:14-26).

There are many lessons to be learned from Abel. For example, Abel gave unto the Lord from his first fruits even before the Law of Moses taught such (Exodus 23:16-19). In this, he showed a great understanding of how to honor God appropriately in giving (Proverbs 3:9). With Abel, we could discuss how that pleasing God can bring about persecution (Matthew 5:10-12) even of our own families (Matthew 10:34-39). An inspired Apostle used the account of Cain and Abel to teach about brotherly love (I John 3:11-12). There are many more lessons we can learn from Abel.

Take the time to read the account of Abel’s more excellent sacrifice and learn from it what you can apply in your relationship with our Lord: *“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth”* (Genesis 4:1-12).

Enoch did not die. The record we have regarding this point is as follows: *“And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him”* (Genesis 5:22-24). The only other person recorded of not dying before leaving this world was Elijah (II Kings 2:1-14). This is an important fact of Scripture. We are taught that all will eventually die (II Samuel 14:14, Psalms 89:48, Ecclesiastes 3:20, and Hebrews 9:27). With Enoch and Elijah however, we see two exceptions to that natural law. What does that mean for us? That means we can have great confidence that if Jesus were to come today, we who are alive would not have to experience death as we see promised (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Like Abel, we do not have a significant amount of information to study about Enoch. One detail not given in Genesis or in Hebrews 11:4 is that Enoch was a prophet that had some understanding about the judgment of our Lord. Notice: *“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage”* (Jude 1:14-16).

Aside from what we just read, let's back up and think about the fact that Enoch pleased God. We read in Genesis 5:22 and Genesis 5:24 that Enoch “walked with God.” The prophet Micah wrote: *“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God”* (Micah 6:8)? So, what does it mean to walk with God? Walking with God was not unique to Enoch. In fact, in the very next chapter of the book of Genesis we read that Noah walked with God (Genesis 6:9).

Walking with God is all about being obedient to His will. Consider what was taught to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh: *“But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul”* (Joshua 22:5). Add to that what was said of Levi: *“And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity”* (Malachi 2:4-6). From these things we learn that Enoch was obedient to the will of God. That is what it means to walk with God. We too are expected to do the same as did Enoch (I John 2:1-6).