

# Did Enoch and Elijah Die?

The heart of the conjecture that, at death, the “pious-go-to-heaven” comes from the histories involving Enoch’s translation and Elijah’s trip into the heavens in a whirlwind of fire.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the evidence proves that such an interpretation is inconsistent with clear scriptural statements.

Centuries after either of these two events, Yahushua proclaimed that no human, except for himself, had ever been in the heavens wherein father Yahweh dwells.<sup>2</sup> Further, it is impossible that Enoch and Elijah could ever have gone into the third heavens because father Yahweh dwells in unapproachable light, “whom no one of mankind did see nor is able to see.”<sup>3</sup>

Still, another point is ignored by the advocates of the “pious-go-to heaven” conjecture; neither Enoch nor Elijah was dead at the time of their experience. Yet Scriptures proclaim that all humans have sinned and that “the wages of sin is death.”<sup>4</sup>

Further, how can men who had not yet suffered death but who supposedly went to heaven to live with the deity stand as proof that when someone pious “dies,” their spirit or immortal soul goes to heaven to live with the deity?

The fact that Scriptures proclaim three realms called “heavens” offers us a better understanding of these stories. A closer look proves that Enoch and Elijah had only entered the realm called the first heavens. Accordingly, there is no contradiction between the words of Yahushua, who states that no human has ascended into the heavens and seen father Yahweh,<sup>5</sup> and the remainder of Scriptures.

## Enoch

The story of Enoch’s so-called translation is found in Genesis 5:22-25. Here the prophet Enoch is said to have “walked with *eloahim*, then he was not (found), for *eloahim* took him.” In the book of Hebrews, it is popularly rendered to mean “translated.”

For example, Hebrews 11:5 in the KJV reads:

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.<sup>6</sup>

These verses are popularly interpreted to mean that Enoch never died. Instead, he was taken alive off to heaven to live with the deity. Based upon their

interpretation of the statement that Enoch “walked with *eloahim*, then he was not (found), for *eloahim* took him,” some of the mystic Jews of the 1st century C.E. determined that *eloah* took Enoch to the highest of the heavens.

The earliest and best expression of this idea comes in the three books entitled “Enoch,” where the fanciful story is told of Enoch’s journey through the various heavens and his arrival at the highest heaven. In 3 Enoch, which was composed during the 5th-6th century C.E., it adds how Enoch then became the chief archangel Metatron.<sup>7</sup>

Later on, neo-Christians picked up on this mystic Jewish notion of Enoch’s “translation” and interpreted the LXX version and Hebrews 11:5 to mean that Enoch was taken to heaven to be with the deity. The view that “Enoch was

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 5:22-25; 2 Kings 2:11-17.

<sup>2</sup> John 1:18, 3:13, 5:37, 6:45-46.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. 6:16.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Chron. 6:36; Rom. 3:23, 5:12-14, 6:23; Heb. 9:27.

<sup>5</sup> John 3:13.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. 11:5.

<sup>7</sup> For the three books of Enoch, see OTP, 1. Also see the discussion in 3 Enoch, by Hugo Odeberg, 1973.

taken up bodily to heaven"<sup>8</sup> is widely held even today among various neo-Christian and Jewish factions.

Nevertheless, neither in Genesis 5:22-25, nor Hebrews 11:5, or for that matter anywhere else in Scriptures, does it say that Enoch "went to heaven," "was in the third heavens," or "saw Yahweh the father while in heaven." This concept was first applied to Enoch's translation, as we have said, by the mystic Jews who wrote the books of Enoch in an effort to explain Enoch as a prophetic type of a coming messiah.

These mystic Jews also knew that the messiah had some connection with a chief "angel,"<sup>9</sup> and they had access to the knowledge that the messiah was to be taken up into the heavens.<sup>10</sup> To bridge these various prophecies, they invented the story of Enoch's trip to the highest heaven as a prototype of the messiah at the right hand of father Yahweh.

### Enoch's Translation

A closer examination of both the Old and New Testaments and an analysis of the explanations in older and less mystical Jewish works, both earlier and contemporary with the various books of Enoch, prove quite another meaning about the story of Enoch's "translation." Our attention is first drawn to the statement from Genesis:

And Enoch walked with *eloahim*, and he was not (found), for *eloahim* took him. (Genesis 5:24)

The phrase, "And Enoch walked with *eloahim*," is taken by some to mean that Enoch was walking with *eloahim* in heaven. The first problem is that Enoch is expressly said to have

been walking with *eloahim* for 300 years prior to *eloahim* taking him.<sup>11</sup> The inconsistency is therefore manifest that they would have him walking in heaven before he was taken to heaven.

The error of this view is further revealed in Genesis, where the same expression "walked with *eloahim*" is mentioned regarding Noah, a man nowhere said to have gone to heaven:

Noah, a righteous man, had been perfected among his peers; Noah walked with *eloahim*. (Genesis 6:9)

Instead of "walked with *eloahim*," the Targum Onqelos renders the statements regard-

ing both Enoch and Noah as "walked in reverence of Yahweh."<sup>12</sup> All that this phrase means is that Enoch and Noah were righteous men doing the will of Yahweh.<sup>13</sup> It has nothing to do with walking in heaven.

Next, the expression "he was not," stated with regard to the disappearance of Enoch, is in Hebrew אַיִן (ayinmu), a form of אַיִן (ayin), from אַי (ay), meaning "to be nothing or not exist," and more precisely is a "query" asking "where?"<sup>14</sup> The LXX Greek version renders this word οὐχ εὐρίσκειτο (*ouch eurisketo*), meaning, "was not found."<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, men had looked for Enoch but were not able to find him. Those wishing to believe that Enoch was in heaven and for that reason other humans could not find him are faced with the problem that nowhere in Scriptures is this claim made. All that it states is that the men who sought his life could not find him.

The Hebrew word for "took," in the expression, "and *eloahim* took him," is לקַח (*laqakh*),

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<sup>8</sup> NBD, p. 378.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Ps. 8:4-6.

<sup>10</sup> E.g., Ps. 110:1-2.

<sup>11</sup> Gen. 5:22-23.

<sup>12</sup> Targum Onqelos., Gen. 5:22, 24, 6:9.

<sup>13</sup> The expressions "after Yahweh your *eloahi* you will walk" (Deut. 13:5), "Yahweh, before whom I will walk" (Gen. 24:40), and "walking with *eloahim*" are "all considered idiomatic expressions of worship" (Grossfeld, *Onqelos*, p. 51, n. 2).

<sup>14</sup> SEC, Heb. #336, 369, 370, 371; HEL, pp. 8, 13; CHAL, pp. 11, 13.

<sup>15</sup> GEL, pp. 331-332; SEC, Gk. #3756 and 2417.

meaning, “to take (in the widest variety of applications):—accept, bring, buy, carry away, drawn, fetch,”<sup>16</sup> to “take away,”<sup>17</sup> and “take, lay hold of, seize . . . be taken away.”<sup>18</sup> The Greek in the ancient LXX version renders this term μετέθηκεν (*metetheken*), a form of μετατίθημι (*metatithemi*), meaning, “to place differently,”<sup>19</sup> “to transfer, i.e. (lit.) transport.”<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, *eloahim* “transferred,” “transported,” or “carried away” Enoch, lifting him up from the place where he had been dwelling and placing him in another area. The passage in the book of Hebrews likewise indicates these two above meanings in its discussion of Enoch, reporting:

**Where was  
Enoch carried  
to after *eloahim*  
lifted him up  
off the earth  
and took him?**

By trust, Enoch was μετετέθη (*metetethe*; transported) not to see death, and was οὐχ εὕρισκετο (*ouch eurisketo*; not found) because *eloahim* μετέθηκεν (*metetheken*, transported) him; for before his μεταθέσεως (*metatheseus*; being transported) he had borne witness that he well-pleased *eloahim*. (Hebrews 11:5)

It is not surprising that in the Hebrew version of the book of Hebrews, the term לקח (*laqakh*; carried away) is used where the Greek terms *metetethe*, *metetheken*, and *metatheseus* appear. These are all forms of *metetheken*, the Greek word used by the LXX to translate the Hebrew word לקח (*laqakh*).

All speak of being carried away from one point to another. The Greek term οὐχ εὕρισκετο (*ouch eurisketo*) is used by the LXX to translate the Hebrew word אִינְנוּ (*ayinnu*), meaning Enoch was not “found.”

Further clarification of these relevant scriptural verses is supplied by Josephus.<sup>21</sup> Josephus refers to the event with Enoch by saying that Enoch was “ἀνεχώρησε (*anechurese*) toward the deity.” The word *anechurese* means “to lift up.”<sup>22</sup>

Enoch, therefore, was “lifted up toward *eloahim*,” which parallels the idea of being “carried away,” i.e., he was lifted up off the earth by *eloahim* and carried away. He does not say that Enoch was taken to the third heavens to be

with *eloahim*. Indeed, nowhere in Scriptures is the statement that Enoch either went to heaven or never died.

These notions arise only from religious speculation. We shall examine what type of transportation was used by *eloahim* to carry the prophet Enoch away and where he was placed in our discussion below while examining a similar event that happened to the prophet Elijah.

### Where Did Enoch Go?

The question now arises, Where was Enoch carried to after *eloahim* lifted him up off the earth and took him? We find the answer in the ancient book of Jubilees, written about 100 B.C.E.

In this text, which provides us with the earliest extrabiblical Jewish explanation of this story, the angels spoke to Moses while he was yet on Mount Sinai, telling the story of Enoch in the following way:

And he (Enoch) testified to the Watchers (angels), who had sinned with the daughters of men, for these had begun to unite themselves, so as to be defiled, with the daughters of men, and Enoch testified AGAINST ALL (i.e., both angels and men). And he was taken from amongst the sons of Adam, and we (the sacred angels) conducted him INTO THE GARDEN OF EDEN in majesty and honor, and behold there he wrote down the condemnation and judgment of the world, and all the wickedness of the children of men. And on account of it, the waters of the Flood (i.e., Noah’s flood) were brought upon the land of Eden; FOR THERE HE WAS SET AS A SIGN AND THAT

<sup>16</sup> SEC, Heb. #3947.

<sup>17</sup> HEL, p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> CHAL, pp. 178-179.

<sup>19</sup> SEC, Gk. #3346.

<sup>20</sup> GEL, pp. 504-505.

<sup>21</sup> Jos. *Antiq.*, 1:3:4.

<sup>22</sup> GEL, p. 69.

HE SHOULD TESTIFY AGAINST ALL THE CHILDREN OF MEN, that he should recount all the deeds of the generations until the day of condemnation. And he (Enoch) burned incense of the sanctuary at twilight, sweet spices acceptable before Yahweh on Mount Qater.<sup>23</sup>

This text then lists the four most sacred places of Yahweh. Each is specifically said to exist "ON THE EARTH": (1) the Garden of Eden, (2) the mountain of the  $\square\eta\eta$  (Qadim; front, east side),<sup>24</sup> (3) Mount Sinai, and (4) Mount Zion, which will be sanctified in the new creation for a sanctification of the earth.<sup>25</sup>

The evidence from Jubilees is clear. Enoch was taken from among men and placed in the Garden of Eden, one of the four places ON THE EARTH sanctified by Yahweh. It was not to the third heavens that Enoch traveled but to Eden. The wicked men who, due to his testimony, sought Enoch's life were unable to find him, in part because mankind had been banished to the land east of Eden after Adam and Eve had sinned.<sup>26</sup>

Enoch, a just man, was allowed to live on the site where the Garden of Eden had previously stood because, as a prophet and priest, he symbolized the arrival of the messiah and his elect into Renewed Jerusalem, the true future place of Paradise.

The three books of Enoch also reveal an interesting development of the Jewish ideas about Enoch. In 1 Enoch, composed from the late 2nd to early 1st century B.C.E.,<sup>27</sup> Enoch was "hidden, and no one of the children of the people knew by

what he was hidden and where he was. And his dwelling place, as well as his activities, were with the Watchers and the sacred ones; and (so were) his days."<sup>28</sup>

Here once more is a vague reference to his being concealed from mankind. The story then picks up where Enoch has intercessions for the fallen angels and "visions" in which he was taken to various parts of the earth and allowed to see things that shall happen in the future.<sup>29</sup> After these things, Enoch writes an admonition to his children and to others who would come after him.<sup>30</sup>

### Not in Heaven

There is no suggestion whatsoever that Enoch was in heaven while he composed these various books of prophecy. In fact, during the period after Enoch had been transported, Jubilees explicitly states that he lived in the Garden of Eden. In turn, Eden was located very close to Mount Qatar, where he "burned incense of the sanctuary at twilight" every night.<sup>31</sup> The only thing mentioned in 1 Enoch is that he was hidden from mankind and wrote books of prophecy during this period of his life.

The book of 2 Enoch was written in the late 1st century C.E.<sup>32</sup> In this version, Enoch sees the various levels of the heavens. He was ultimately grasped by the angels and carried "up to the highest heaven," where he was received by Yahweh, who "made him stand in front of his face for eternity."<sup>33</sup>

The book of 3 Enoch (in part written in the early 2nd century C.E. and other parts as late

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<sup>23</sup> Jubilees 4:11-25.

<sup>24</sup> The name Qater comes from the Hebrew term  $\eta\eta\eta$  (*qatar*), meaning "incense burning" (SEC, Heb. #6999, 7000, 7001, 7002). Therefore, Enoch lived in the Garden of Eden near the mountain of incense burning, apparently named from the fact that he burned incense to Yahweh there.

<sup>25</sup> Jubilees 4:26.

<sup>26</sup> Gen. 3:22-23.

<sup>27</sup> OTP, 1, pp. 5-7.

<sup>28</sup> 1 Enoch 12:1.----

<sup>29</sup> 1 Enoch 12:4-90:42.

<sup>30</sup> 1 Enoch 91:1-108:15.

<sup>31</sup> Jubilees 4:25.

<sup>32</sup> OTP, 1, pp. 91, 94-95.

<sup>33</sup> 2 Enoch J67, A67.

as the 6th century C.E.)<sup>34</sup> carries this theme one step further, identifying Enoch with the angel Yahweh, who the rabbis named Metatron, chief of all angels, being also the angel who stands at the right-hand side of the throne of Yahweh.<sup>35</sup>

Why did this critical shift in doctrine take place? The reason is that the Pharisaic and mystic Jews of the late 1st and early 2nd century C.E. were in a heated doctrinal dispute with the early Christian assemblies. These early Christians were advocating that Yahushua the messiah pre-existed as the angel Yahweh.<sup>36</sup>

In turn, they advanced the view that Yahushua fulfilled the prophecy from the book of Psalms:

A statement of Yahweh to my *aden* (foundation), Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies (as) a stool for your feet." (Psalms 110:1)

This prophecy was quoted both by Yahushua the messiah and his disciples during their polemics,<sup>37</sup> was stated by the messiah as an event that was going to occur to him,<sup>38</sup> and after Yahushua's resurrection and ascension into the third heavens was considered an accomplished fact by his disciples.<sup>39</sup>

It was also forcefully argued by the ante-Nicene fathers.<sup>40</sup> The Jewish groups countered by arguing that it was Enoch who ascended

into the heavens to sit at the right-hand side of the throne of Yahweh, and not Yahushua, and that Enoch became known both as the angel Yahu Yahweh and as the archangel Metatron.<sup>41</sup>

**The identification of Enoch with the angel Yahweh was a desperate attempt on the part of the rabbis to thwart the inroads made by the early Christians.**

### Garden of Eden

Jewish commentators knew that Enoch had been taken to the area where the Garden of Eden was once located. Yet they also knew that the garden (translated as *παράδεισον*, [*paradeison*], i.e., *paradise*, in the LXX) was symbolic of the paradise of the third heavens and that in the future, this place would be embodied in Renewed Jerusalem, containing the Tree of Life in its midst.<sup>42</sup>

Renewed Jerusalem, even in the New Testament, is at this

present time in the third heavens and contains the Tree of Life.<sup>43</sup> Enoch's translation, therefore, was viewed in the same sense expressed by Saul in Colossians. Saul tells how we have been "delivered" from the authority of darkness, "and μετέθησεν (*metethesen*; transported) into the government of the son (i.e., Yahushua the messiah) of his love," since we were "made competent for the share of the inheritance of the sacred ones in the light."<sup>44</sup>

The identification of Enoch with the angel Yahweh was a desperate attempt on the part of the rabbis to thwart the inroads made by the early Christians.

<sup>34</sup> OTP, 1, pp. 223, 225-229.

<sup>35</sup> 3 Enoch 1:1-4:8; D10.

<sup>36</sup> E.g., Justin Martyr, *Trypho*, 34:2, 56:1-57:4, 58:3, 10, 59:1-60:4, 61:1, 126:1, 127:4, 128:1, *Apol.*, 1:63; Melito, frag. 15; Irenaeus, frags., 23, 53-54; OTP, 2, p. 690, *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers*, 12:10; Novatian, *Triados*, 18-21, 28; Eusebius, *H.E.*, 1:2:2-16, *P.E.*, 7:15, *D.E.*, 5:10-11, 6, Intro. & 1.

<sup>37</sup> Matt. 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13.

<sup>38</sup> Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69.

<sup>39</sup> Mark 16:19; Acts 2:31-33, 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 5:5-7.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., Irenaeus, *Ag. Her.*, 2:28:7, 3:5:6, 3:10:5, 3:12:2, 5, 13, 3:16:3, 16, 4:33:11, frag. 54; Clement of Rome, *1 Cor.*, 36; Polycarp, *Phillip.*, 3:2; Ignatius, *Mag.*, 12, *Tral.*, 9; Ps. Ignatius, *Tars.*, 6; Barnabas, 12; Clement of Alexandria, *Instr.*, 2:2, *Strom.*, 4:4, frag. 1:2; Hippolytus, *Ref.*, 5:21, 6:41, frag., on *Dan.*, 20; *Christ and Anti.*, 46, 61, *Ag. Noetus*, 1, 18; Justin Martyr, *Apol.*, 1:45, *Trypho*, 32, 36, 38, 56, 83, 127; Tertullian, *Soul*, 55, *Prescrip.*, 13, *Ag. Marc.*, 4:41-42, 5:9, 17, *On Flesh*, 16, *On Res.*, 22, 23, 35, 51, *Ag. Prax.*, 2, 4, 11, 13, 17, 30, *Scorp.*, 10; Origen, *de Princ.*, 1:6:1, 4:1 (Latin); Cyprian, *Treat.*, 10:14, *Test.*, 11; Novatian, *Triados*, 9, 26; Alexander of Alexandria, *To Alex.*, 12, Arian Hers., on *Soul*, 5:7; Methodius, *Banq.*, 7:8-9; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, 4:12, *Epit.*, 47-48; Victorinus, *Com. Apoc.*, 1:16.

<sup>41</sup> E.g., 3 Enoch 4, 48C; Targum Jonathan Gen. 5:24; OTP, 1 pp. 223-254; and the discussion found in Odeberg 3 Enoch.

<sup>42</sup> Gen. 2:8-9.

<sup>43</sup> Rev. 21:2-22:5.

<sup>44</sup> Col. 1:12-13.

These Jewish Pharisees and mystics assumed that the location of the earthly Garden of Eden, which was only a prophetic type of Renewed Jerusalem, was itself parabolically associated with Renewed Jerusalem and Yahweh's realm of government in the heavens.

Further, they assumed that, since Enoch was in the Garden of Eden, he was permitted to take fruit from the tree of life, thereby gaining eternal life. Yet nowhere is this claim made in the Scriptures. In fact, for Enoch to have eaten from the tree of life would have made him the recipient of the Eternal Inheritance and therefore, he he would have been the messiah instead of messiah Yahushua.

This evidence does reveal that righteous Enoch was a parabolic foretype of the coming messiah, a point made even in the Jewish mystic works. Yet he was not the messiah. Unfortunately, the myth that Enoch went to heaven instead of going to the Garden of Eden fits well with the increasing belief among a number of neo-Christian groups in an immortal soul and the idea that when the pious die, they immediately go to heaven.

### Did Enoch Die?

The neo-Christian advocates of the "pious-go-to-heaven" theory next point to the statement in Hebrews 11:5 that "Enoch was translated (carried away) so as not to see death." This statement, they assume, confirms that Enoch, as a corruptible flesh-and-blood man, had received eternal life and never suffered death.

They simply ignore the words of the apostle Saul that "all," except for the messiah himself, "have sinned"<sup>45</sup> and "the wages of sin is death."<sup>46</sup> Further, because of Adam's sin, death

entered the world, and then "death passed to all men, in as much as all have sinned."<sup>47</sup>

Their interpretation also ignores the statement that corruptible "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of Yahweh, nor does corruption inherit incorruptibility."<sup>48</sup> Neither has any man, except for the messiah while he was living in the third heavens as a divine being, ever personally beheld the face of father Yahweh or actually heard his voice or seen him at any time.<sup>49</sup>

Yet no one can deny that Enoch was a flesh-and-blood descendant of Adam with a corruptible body. How then could he, prior to the messiah and without dying, have

attained eternal life and ascended to the third heavens, where he, above all other men, would be able to see the face of father Yahweh?

What these neo-Christians have failed to read is the clarification given at the end of the commentary in Hebrews 11. During the discussion from 11:1 through 11:16, the author tells us about several people in the ancient world who trusted in Yahweh—namely, Abel, ENOCH, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah.

### All Died!

In summary, the book of Hebrews makes this revealing statement, "ALL THESE DIED in trust, not having received the promises."<sup>50</sup> Accordingly, Enoch died, just as Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah did, not having received the promise of eternal life.

Indeed, Enoch had to die, for the same book of Hebrews pronounces that "it is apportioned to men ONCE TO DIE, and after this, Judgment."<sup>51</sup> Even the Jewish scribes of the Targum Onqelos record that "Yahweh had caused him (Enoch) to die."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Rom. 3:23.

<sup>46</sup> Rom. 6:23.

<sup>47</sup> Rom. 5:12.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Cor. 15:50.

<sup>49</sup> 1 Tim. 6:16; John 1:18, 5:37, 6:45-46.

<sup>50</sup> Heb. 11:13.

<sup>51</sup> Heb. 9:27.

<sup>52</sup> Targum Onqelos, Gen. 5:23-24. The Targum Onqelos differs from Jubilees in that it reports that Enoch died at age 365 instead of being taken to the Garden of Eden.

No mention was made of Enoch's age at the time of his death because he died beyond the reach and report of other men. The failure to mention Enoch's age at death is also reminiscent of the way Melchizedek's history was treated. The New Testament points out that the high priest Melchizedek, to whom Abraham paid tithes, was recorded "without father, without mother, without genealogy; neither beginning of days nor the end of life having," because he was "a priest continually."<sup>53</sup> His life was handled in this fashion because he was a parabolic type of the messiah.<sup>54</sup>

Likewise, the end of Enoch's life was not recorded because he too symbolically represented the messiah as the son of man and as "a priest continually." Yahweh saved Enoch from the hands of men and death in order to reside in the Garden of Eden (symbolically representing Renewed Jerusalem) as a high priest, offering incense on Mount Qater. Yet Enoch never went beyond the confines of the earth and its atmosphere. Further, he eventually died, just as all men do.

### What Was Enoch Taken Away From?

All of this evidence, then, brings us to the true meaning behind the statements in Genesis 5:25 and Hebrews 11:5 regarding Enoch:

- And Enoch walked with *eloahim*, and he was not (found), for *eloahim* took him. (Genesis 5:24)
- By trust Enoch was transported not to see death, and was not found, because *eloahim* transported him; for before his being transported he had borne witness that he well-pleased *eloahim*. (Hebrews 11:5)

The key to these two passages lies in the ancient book of Jubilees, which states that *eloahim* took Enoch from the children of men after he had testified against both the sinning angels and men regarding their evil.<sup>55</sup>

For example, Hebrews 11:5 states that part of Enoch's testimony to men was that, unlike other men, "he (Enoch) well-pleased *eloahim*." As a result, wicked men and the sinning angels sought to kill him, just as wicked men later sought to kill Yahushua the messiah for making the same witness.

Yahweh, seeing that men were about to lay their hands on Enoch, had him lifted up from their midst and taken to the land of Eden "so as not to see death" by the hands of these men. When these men and angels looked for Enoch,

he "was not found, because *eloahim* translated (transported) him."

After leaving a book of prophecy dealing with world events destined to happen to all generations of men up "until the day of condemnation,"<sup>56</sup> Enoch died!<sup>57</sup>

There remained no record of his death because Enoch was hidden from the rest of mankind in Eden. Therefore knowledge of the exact date of his death was not known among men.<sup>58</sup> Further, like Melchizedek, he was a parabolic type of the messiah, and for that reason, his age at death was not given.

The late 1st century C.E. Christian writer Clement likewise states, "Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was transported, AND DEATH WAS NEVER KNOWN TO HAPPEN TO HIM,"<sup>59</sup> i.e., no man knew of his death. It is most probable that Enoch was secretly buried by Yahweh, as Yahweh later secretly buried Moses.<sup>60</sup>

Yahweh, seeing that men were about to lay hands on Enoch, had him lifted up from their midst and taken to the land of Eden "so as not to see death" by the hands of these men.

<sup>53</sup> Heb. 5:5-10, 6:19-7:6.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Jubilees 4:22-26.

<sup>56</sup> Jubilees 4:24.

<sup>57</sup> Heb. 9:27, 11:1-13.

<sup>58</sup> Jos. Antiq., 1:3:3, 9:2:2.

<sup>59</sup> Clement of Alexandria, 1 Ep. to Cor 1:5.

<sup>60</sup> Deut. 34:5-6; Jos. Antiq., 4:8:48.

Interestingly, if not for the record of the death of Moses in Scriptures, Josephus suspected that men would also claim that he too had been “taken up by the deity” to heaven.<sup>61</sup>

### Elijah

The story of Elijah’s journey into the heavens is also explained by understanding that he only passed through the first heavens, i.e., the earth’s atmosphere. To begin with, in 2 Kings, we read:

And it happened, as they (Elijah and Elisha) were going on and speaking, that, behold, a chariot and horses of fire; and they separated between the both of them (i.e., between Elijah and Elisha), and Elijah went up in a whirlwind into the *shamayim* (heavens). (2 Kings 2:11)

Reminiscent of Enoch’s disappearance, men afterward were sent to look for Elijah but were unable to find him.<sup>62</sup> This story is understood by many Jewish and neo-Christian factions to mean that Elijah, like Enoch, did not die but ascended up to the third heavens to be with the deity. In this piece of scriptural history, those believing in a trip to heaven feel they have found their primary article of proof.

It is certainly true that in this scripture, we are told that Elijah “went up in a whirlwind into the heavens.” However, it is most likely that this whirlwind of fire was also the mode of transportation used by *eloahim* to carry away Enoch. Furthermore, Elijah had not yet died but went up bodily.

### Still Upon the Earth

As a result, we again have an apparent contradiction in Scriptures, for Yahushua, long after Elijah’s experience, just as strongly asserted that “no one has gone up into the heavens

except he (the messiah) who came down out of the heavens.”<sup>63</sup>

What *shamayim* (heavens), then, did Elijah go up into? This detail is explained not only by the facts surrounding Elijah’s departure but in the story of the subsequent events. The following five points must be brought forth:

**It is certainly  
true that in this  
scripture, we are  
told that Elijah  
“went up in a  
whirlwind into  
the heavens.”**

1. Elijah’s departure took place shortly after the death of Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, who ruled but two years, beginning in the 17th year of the sole reign of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, Elijah ascended into the heavens at the beginning of the reign of Jehoram, the son of Ahab and brother

of Ahaziah, the king of Israel who succeeded Ahaziah in 847/846 B.C.E., spring-to-spring reckoning.

2. Jehoram, the king of Israel, began to reign in the 18th year of the sole reign of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah (847/846 B.C.E.). He ruled for 12 years.<sup>65</sup> The date of Elijah’s ascension, therefore, is in the year 847/846 B.C.E., spring reckoning, at the time that King Jehoram became king.

3. Elisha, who succeeded Elijah as prophet after Elijah’s ascension, went to Jehoram, the king of Israel, just after he took his throne. At this time, Jehoram was allied with Jehoshaphat in a war against the nation of Edom.<sup>66</sup> This detail shows that Jehoshaphat was still alive after Elijah’s ascension.

4. In the 5th year of Jehoram, the king of Israel (843/842 B.C.E.), Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, became the king of Judah while Jehoshaphat was still alive.<sup>67</sup>

5. AFTER the death of Jehoshaphat, the prophet Elijah WRITES A LETTER to Jehoram,

<sup>61</sup> Jos. *Antiq.*, 4:8:48.

<sup>62</sup> 2 Kings 2:12-17.

<sup>63</sup> John 3:13.

<sup>64</sup> 1 Kings 22:51-52; 2 Kings 1:1-3:1.

<sup>65</sup> 2 Kings 3:1.

<sup>66</sup> 2 Kings 3:1-27.

<sup>67</sup> 2 Kings 8:16-17; 2 Chron. 21:5, 20.



the king of Judah, foretelling him of his impending death. Two years later, Jehoram, the king of Judah, did in fact die, having had a sole reign of eight years.<sup>68</sup> Jehoram died in 836/835 B.C.E. Accordingly, Elijah's letter must have been written in about 838 B.C.E., shortly before Jehoram's death and some 10 or so years after Elijah's ascension in 847/846 B.C.E.

The question is now prompted, How could Elijah send King Jehoram a letter some 10 years or so after his ascension if Elijah had already gone to the third realm of the heavens? Our answer lies in the book of Jewish Antiquities written by the Jewish priest Josephus during the 1st century C.E. Josephus gives the same sequence of events as reported in Scriptures.<sup>69</sup>

In one of the variant texts of this book, we read:

A letter was brought to him (Jehoram, king of Judah) from the prophet Elijah, FOR HE (ELIJAH) WAS STILL UPON THE EARTH!<sup>70</sup>

### The First Heavens

Elijah never went beyond the first heavens. He merely "went up in a whirlwind into the *shamayim*,"<sup>71</sup> meaning our immediate atmosphere. The heavenly realm he traveled through was the same in which birds fly. The angels (*eloahim*) that took him up simply placed him back upon the earth, where he remained, like Enoch before him, concealed from the people.

That Elijah remained hidden, as Enoch had been, is also revealed in another passage from Josephus. He writes:

**Therefore, Elijah  
and Enoch became  
"viewless," or  
"unseen," that is,  
they were hidden  
from view.**

Now about that time, Elijah disappeared from among men, and to this day, no one knows his end. He left behind him a disciple Elisha, as we have already related. However, concerning Enoch, who lived before the Flood, and Elijah, it is written in the sacred books that they became ἀφανείς (*aphaneis*; viewless, unseen),<sup>72</sup> and no one knows of their death.<sup>73</sup>

Therefore, Elijah and Enoch became "viewless," or "unseen," that is, they were hidden from view. Yet both were still on the earth. The fact that "no one knows of their (Elijah and Enoch's) death" or Elijah's "end" does not mean that they did not die, only that no man was present to witness or record it.

In fact, if no one knows what became of them, why do many Jews and neo-Christians assert without any scriptural authority that these men went into the third heavens to live with father Yahweh, obtaining eternal life?

Due to the fact that Elijah was still on the earth at a date much later than his ascension, he was able to send a letter to the king of Judah notifying him of the king's impending death. Elijah was a loyal prophet of Yahweh and, therefore, one of "the prophets" described in the book of Hebrews who continued "by trust" to follow Yahweh.<sup>74</sup>

The book of Hebrews summarizes the afflictions that befell these Yahwehists by stating:

And these all, having obtained a good report through trust, did not receive the promise, *eloahim* having provided something better for us,

<sup>68</sup> 2 Chron. 21:1-20.

<sup>69</sup> Jos. *Antiq.*, 9:2, 3, 4, 5:3.

<sup>70</sup> Marcus, Jos. *Antiq.*, vi, p. 53, n. c.

<sup>71</sup> 2 Kings 2:11.

<sup>72</sup> The Gk. term ἀφανείς (*aphaneis*) means, "unseen, invisible, viewless," "unknown, uncertain, obscure" (GEL, pp. 136-137).

<sup>73</sup> Jos. *Antiq.*, 9:2:2.

<sup>74</sup> Heb. 11:32.

that without us they should not be made perfect. (Heb. 11:39-40)

Since none of the prophets have yet received the promise of eternal life, it is clear that Elijah died at some point after writing his letter to the king of Judah. There is simply no evidence whatsoever that Elijah went to the third heavens.

### Conclusion

The evidence is conclusive. In accordance with the words of Yahushua the messiah and Scriptures, no one has ascended into the third heavens where father Yahweh resides, including men like Enoch and Elijah. The only exception to this rule was Yahushua the messiah.

Yet Yahushua's experience in the third heavens was either (1) in his preexisting *eloahim* form as a *ruach* being or (2) after his resurrection and quickening into eternal life. Yet when he did return to be at the right-hand side of father Yahweh, he had also returned to his former glory as a *ruach* being.<sup>75</sup>

On the other hand, Yahushua, while a mortal man, was incapable of personally seeing father Yahweh except through visions and communications in the *ruach*. Indeed, there is no record of any sort that Yahushua ever visited father Yahweh during his earthly ministry.

Elijah and Enoch, meanwhile, never went beyond the first level of heavens, the atmosphere surrounding the earth. Being born of flesh, they were incapable of entering into the third realm or highest of heavens. Instead, after being taken up from the earth by *eloahim*, both Enoch and Elijah were only carried through the first heavens and then were placed back upon the earth.

Like all men with corruptible bodies, Enoch and Elijah died. To live again, they must

be resurrected from the dead on the earth. They will only personally see father Yahweh's face at the end of or present world-age occurring at the end of the Millennial Judgment Day, and then only after they, like the messiah, have been transformed into a perfected eternal form.

**Like all men with corruptible bodies, Enoch and Elijah died. To live again, they must be resurrected from the dead on the earth.**

<sup>75</sup> John 17:4-5.

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