

men were so few upon the earth, long life was necessary if the world was to be rapidly populated, if an advance in knowledge and art was to be made, and, above all, if the knowledge and worship of God was to be handed down from generation to generation.

The period of time between Adam and Noah, Edersheim says, is almost spanned by two lives, those of Adam and Lamech, for Lamech died only five years before the Flood.

We wonder sometimes what the general effect of those long lives must have been upon the characters of men. The apparent security of life must have tempted them to think little of the hereafter and much of the present; and it is strange to notice that Enoch's life was only half the length of that of most of his race. It seems as though God knew how hard a battle he was fighting, and in mercy took him to Himself; just as in our own day God often calls one of His servants away from the forefront of the battle, where he has been marked out in His service.

The question as to why men's lives should have been so long before the Flood, and so short after cannot be answered. It may have been due to physical circumstances, such as changes in the constitution either of man or of the earth, or by the direct will of God. Whatever the answer may be, the record stands thus, and stands, not only in the Bible record of the Jews, but also in the traditions of other nations. It is said that all ancient nations of which we have record have left traditions as to the extraordinary length of the lives of the early races upon earth.