Day 1 – Introduction to the Text

Genesis 5:21-27

If you were to ask people what their number one fear is, some may say things like spiders, or heights, or cramped spaces. However, I think a majority of people would say "dying" is their number one fear. In fact, The David Crowder Band wrote a song in 2003 called *Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven*. The lyrics are quite simple: "Everybody wants to go to Heaven; but nobody wants to die." This is so true, isn't it?

Adam and Eve had the opportunity to live forever in the Garden of Eden, but they disobeyed God. In His mercy, God drove them from the garden so that they could no longer take from the tree of life, eat its fruit, and live forever in a sinful state. Without access to the tree of life, Adam's body began to decay. Moses records in Genesis 5:5, "So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, *and he died.*" What a sad statement. It leaves us wondering if that is all life will consist of in a fallen world—live life, have children, and die. Now that death has been given power does it have the final say? Moses writes "and he died" for all of Adam's descendants—except one.

When we come to the seventh descendant in Adam's line, something changes in the story. Instead of just living a certain period of time after having his son Methuselah and then succumbing to death, "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." And he didn't just walk with God for a year or two. Enoch walked with God for 300 years! As noted by John Sailhamer, "Enoch found *life* and escaped the curse, death. In this brief episode the author uncovers a fundamental truth: Death is not the last word. In the face of death one can, like Enoch, find life by 'walking with God.' In his focus on Enoch's fate (and faith), the author has found a door leading back to the tree of life (3:24)" (Sailhamer, 108-109).

Many people today believe that there is nothing more to life than to live and then die—this is as good as life gets. What a bleak perspective? Indeed, Adam and his descendants may have held this same perspective—until God graciously took Enoch! Do you think it changed Methuselah and Lamech's perspective? How should it change ours?

Scripture Memory: Genesis 5:24

Day 2 – What Does the Text Say?

Read Genesis 5:1-20 for the context

1. What does the text say happened in the day when God created man?

2. How is Adam's son Seth described in verse 3?

3. Beginning with the account of Seth, what pattern emerges in the way that each of Adam's descendants are described?

Read Genesis 5:21-27

1. In verse 22, what did Enoch do and how long did he do it?

2. How many years were the days of Enoch?

3. According to verse 24, what happened to Enoch?

4. How long did Methuselah live?

Day 3 – What Does the Text Mean?

Read Genesis 5:21-27 again

Verse 21: ***Enoch…*** "The description of Enoch deviates from the genealogy pattern, highlighting his righteousness. In this line, he is listed seventh, a position often favored in biblical genealogies. Enoch is a symbol of the covenant strength within this line" (Waltke, 114).

Verse 22: ***Enoch walked with God...*** "'Walked with God' is metaphorical and indicates that Enoch had a lifestyle characterized by his devotion to God. The sense of 'walk' (*hālak*) in its verbal stem indicates a communion or intimacy with God. It is reminiscent of Adam's initial experience (3:8) and is the same wording that typifies Noah, who is remembered for his godly reputation (6:9). Moreover, the Abraham narrative has similar language where God exhorts Abraham to godly faithfulness (17:1; 24:40; cf. 48:15). In later Israel this nuance of divine Presence describes God's covenantal intimacy with Israel where he 'walks' in the camp (e.g., Lev 26:12; Deut 23:14 [15]). For the psalmist to 'walk before God' means life and prosperity (Pss 56:13 [14]; 116:9)" (Mathews, 313).

Verse 23: ***three hundred and sixty-five years.*** "Perhaps a symbolic number corresponding to the days of the solar year and signifying a life of special privilege. Although longevity is often a sign of divine favor (Ps. 91:16), the blessed Enoch's relatively short life span, especially compared to his son Methuselah, shows that being in God's presence is an even greater privilege" (Waltke, 115).

Verse 24: ***Enoch walked with God...*** "The author's purpose in singling Enoch out in this way is disclosed by the use of repetition. The fact of each patriarch's death is stated once. But the author repeats twice the fact that Enoch 'walked with God' (vv. 22, 24). Repetition is an important means for driving home a point in a narrative. Enoch's escape from death is tied directly to the fact that he 'walked with God.' This phrase 'walked with God' describes a life of faithfulness and obedience to God. Noah too 'walked with God' and was 'a righteous man, blameless among the

people of his time' (6:9). Abraham and Isaac, as faithful servants of God, also walked with God (24:40; 48:15). The repetition of the phrase in vv. 22 and 24 suggests it is the author's way of explaining why Enoch did not die" (Sailhamer, 108).

and he was not, for God took him. "This describes a sudden and mysterious disappearance. Of all recorded Old Testament saints, only Enoch and Elijah are represented as not experiencing physical death (2 Kings 2:1–12; Heb. 11:5). The expression 'took him' (*lāqaḥ*) differs radically from 'to take the life of someone,' referring to an untimely death (cf. Jonah 4:3) or 'to take from' (*lqh min*), referring to depriving someone of life (cf. Ezek. 24:16). Schmidt rightly renders 'took him' in Gen. 5:24 and 2 Kings 2:3, 5 as 'to rapture'" (Waltke, 115).

"Enoch's translation stands about half way between Adam and the flood, in the 987th year after the creation of Adam. Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, and Jared were still alive. His son Methuselah and his grandson Lamech were also living, the latter being 113 years old. Noah was not yet born, and Adam was dead. His translation, in consequence of his walking with God, was 'an example of repentance to all generations,' as the son of Sirach says (Ecclus. 44:16); and the apocryphal legend in the book of Enoch 1:9 represents him as prophesying of the coming of the Lord, to execute judgment upon the ungodly (Jude 14, 15). In comparison with the longevity of the other fathers, Enoch was taken away young, before he had reached half the ordinary age, as a sign that whilst long life, viewed as a time for repentance and grace, is indeed a blessing from God, when the ills which have entered the world through sin are considered, it is also a burden and trouble which God shortens for His chosen"
(Keil and Delitzsch, 80).

Verses 25-27: "Methuselah's 969 years distinguish him as the longest-living person in the Bible. Not only does chap. 5 indicate the longevity of ancient man but it also may reflect a time when human life developed at a slower pace. Methuselah was 187 years old before he fathered Lamech, and Lamech was 182 years when his son Noah was born" (Mathews, 315).

Day 4 – What Difference Does the Text Make?

Read Genesis 5:21-27 again

1. As a Christian, why is it important to be walking with God?

2. How would you describe your walk with God?

3. What things cause you to get off track in your walk with God?

4. What changes would you make in your life to go deeper in your walk with God?

Day 5 – What Must I Change?

Review and reflect on your study of the passage

1. How do you plan to address the things that interfere in your walk with God?

2. What steps do you plan to take to deepen your walk with God?

3. How will you help your fellow believers in their walk with God?

Bibliography

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update.

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Sermon Notes