

Genesis 5 (2011)

- Today is Mother's Day...

An Amish boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and back together again. The boy asked his father, "What is this, Father?" The father responded, "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my life, I don't know what it is."

While the boy and his father were watching wide-eyed an old lady in a wheel chair rolled up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady rolled between them into a small room. The walls closed and the boy and his father watched small circles of lights w/numbers above the walls light up. They continued to watch the circles light up in the reverse direction. The walls opened up again and a beautiful 24 year old woman stepped out.

The father said to his son, "Go get your Mother."

- Things aren't always as they appear, especially in Scripture
 - And especially in the genealogy chapters of Genesis
 - Many Bible students are tempted to skip the genealogy chapters like the one before us today
 - In reality, they have much to teach us, though it may take a little more work to uncover the lesson
 - As Chapter 4 ended last week, we came to the end of the line of Cain
 - And in that line we noted that the culmination of Cain's sinful family could be seen in the seventh from Adam; Lamech
 - Lamech embodied the completed, perfected sin nature, in keeping with his position as seventh in Cain's line from Adam
 - His sin displayed how he didn't need God
 - Not for protection, not for honor or anything
 - Yet all the while, Lamech and his fathers gave lip service to God including in the way they named their children godly-sounding names

- Now in contrast to the seventh man in the line of Cain, Chapter 4 ended with a return to Adam and a look at the other side of the family tree
 - Seth, appointed one, is born to replace Abel
 - And through his son Enosh, men began to engage in public worship of God
 - Already, there is a clear distinction between the line of Cain and the one of Seth
 - Chapter 5 continues to reveal that distinction

[Gen. 5:1](#) This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

[Gen. 5:2](#) He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

[Gen. 5:3](#) When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

[Gen. 5:4](#) Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:5](#) So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:6](#) Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh.

[Gen. 5:7](#) Then Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after he became the father of Enosh, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:8](#) So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:9](#) Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan.

[Gen. 5:10](#) Then Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:11](#) So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:12](#) Kenan lived seventy years, and became the father of Mahalalel.

[Gen. 5:13](#) Then Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after he became the father of Mahalalel, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:14](#) So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:15](#) Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Jared.

[Gen. 5:16](#) Then Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Jared, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:17](#) So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:18](#) Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch.

[Gen. 5:19](#) Then Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:20](#) So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:21](#) Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah.

[Gen. 5:22](#) Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:23](#) So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.

[Gen. 5:24](#) Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

- Chapter 5 finishes the *toledat* or family record of Adam
 - In Chapter 6 we begin the *toledat* of Noah
 - And this will be the pattern of the book of Genesis
 - Moses will select one person in the line of the Messiah and focus on his family for a time before moving to the next focus
 - And the juncture between each person of focus will be a genealogy chapter to stitch the two together
 - So, Chapter 5 is the stitching between Adam and Noah
 - Also remember how Moses will zoom in and out in his narrative
 - Here we see him zoom out again – nearly 1,500 years pass in this chapter
 - Even before we study the chapter, we might ask the question why does Moses capture these long genealogies in Scripture?
 - Besides the reason I just gave, genealogies serve at least one other major purpose
 - God has promised to bring a salvation to the world through a seed, a seed He has chosen
 - And when that seed arrives, God will have provided a complete genealogy from Adam to the Messiah to ensure we can trace the Messiah's claim
 - Those genealogies are then demonstrated in Luke and Matthew
- Let's look at Chapter 5
 - Moses begins the chapter with a brief reminder of how Adam himself began
 - And then how children began to be born
 - We notice that Seth was born when Adam was 130 years old

- And then Moses emphasizes that this child was born in the likeness and image of Adam
- The words likeness and image are important here
 - First the word for likeness in Hebrew is *demuth*, which means in the pattern of
 - And the word for image is *tselem* and means in the appearance of
 - So Adam's children shared Adam's nature and appearance
 - But glance back to v.1 and notice how Adam himself began
 - He was created in the likeness or pattern of God, though not in God's image
 - This is confirmed in Genesis 1, when it only says in the likeness or pattern
- So God made Adam in the likeness or nature of God, but here we see Adam making his offspring in the likeness or pattern of himself
 - This is a difference created by sin
 - Today, people are not being born in the likeness or God
 - That similarity was lost once Adam sinned and changed his nature
 - Adam was no longer like God, since Adam knew evil and God does not
 - So Moses reminds us here that the generations that came from Adam shared Adam's nature not God's nature
 - It requires the grace of God to grant us a new spirit and a new nature so that we might be restored to the likeness of God
 - This is why Paul says

[1Cor. 2:14](#) But a **natural** man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

- What about the long ages we see mentioned in this account and other places in Genesis?
 - Some Bible students have come to assume the numbers are wrong, or at least only symbolic
 - The reason they conclude they are wrong is simply because our present-day experience tells us that people can't live hundreds of years
 - This is a classic example of interpreting scripture through a lens of the world and our experience
 - Rather than interpreting the world and our experience through the lens of Scripture
 - If I were to interpret my experience through the lens of Scripture, how would I understand these long ages?
 - First, I apply the Golden Rule of interpretation
 - When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense
 - In this case, there is no indication in the text to suggest that the ages aren't intended to be literal
 - So to seek another sense than the literal sense is reaching past the meaning of the text itself
 - Then I am forced to conclude that men lived very long lives in the beginning
 - And I also notice that later in Genesis the length of life begins to decline rapidly, especially after the flood
 - We'll discuss why when we get to Chapter 9
 - Secondly, I formulate reasonable theories out of Scripture for how life could be so long and then decline later
 - First, we know God created Adam and Eve in perfection
 - They had bodies that had limits
 - The body has amazing regeneration and self-sustaining abilities even today

- Secondly, we know that death was not a part of God's original design for the human body
 - Death was not a necessity for our bodies
- Third, we know that the process of physical death was instituted by God's decree that everything would wear out and return to dust
 - He didn't design the death of the body to be an instantaneous process but a gradual process
 - Yes, some die early and unexpectedly, but the usual process is gradual, steady deterioration until the body gives out
- Taking these three facts together, I can allow Scripture to inform my understanding of the world we see today
 - First, we conclude that physical death is a process that takes hold over time
 - It is a process of weakening and deterioration in the physical strength of the body
 - Secondly, we note that the process took hold slowly over generations to wear down the body
 - Initially, men had very long life spans
 - But over time the deterioration process accelerates leading to shorter and shorter lives
 - The best scientific explanation for how this happens biologically is found in DNA
 - The errors and defects in our genetic code are passed on to the next generation
 - And as the defects grow in number and seriousness, the body's systems weaken and death comes quicker to the next generation
 - We will get more in-depth into this discussion in Chapter 9

- The next observation we can make is that this is not a complete list of Adam's direct descendants (all the names are Hebrew though...)
 - In v.4 we're told that Adam has other sons and daughters over his 930 years of life
 - Adam could have easily had hundreds of children, depending on Eve's patience and tolerance
 - And by the time Adam died, he had seen his great, great, great, great, great, great grandchildren born
 - In fact, Adam died only about 125 years before Noah was born
 - Noah was born only 14 years after Seth died
 - But notice something else that Moses takes time to emphasize in this account
 - After each man in the line of Seth is described, the record always ends in the same way
 - And he died
 - Though these men live long lives, they always succumb in the end to the curse made necessary by Adam's sin
 - Today men live 75-80 years on average, and even now many people live that entire lifetime with little thought given to the inevitable
 - To the fact that death comes to all and then comes judgment
 - Like an ostrich, many put their heads in the sand and hope that they can ignore this unpleasant fact forever
 - So imagine how easily men of this day could have ignored the obvious
 - After 700-800 years of life, do men perhaps forget that judgment is coming?
 - And add to that, that until Adam died, perhaps only a handful of men had probably died

- But Moses doesn't want his readers to miss the fact that death is common to every man and it catches up to us eventually
- But then we find a curious exception at the seventh in the line of Seth from Adam
 - First, we notice that Enoch lives 365 years and in v.24 God "took" him
 - The age is interesting by itself
 - It's a year for every day in a year
 - It suggests a completing of a whole, the adding up of a number until the complete whole has been reached
 - Secondly, we have Enoch's place in the line of Seth, the seventh
 - Remember, Cain's line ended in a seventh as well
 - The record of Cain ended with Lamech, the man who completed and perfectly embodied the sin nature
 - Here we have a genealogy that doesn't end in the seventh, but the seventh becomes a stopping point for comparison purposes
 - While Cain's line was a line of unbelievers living opposed to God
 - Seth's line is the seed line with men of faith who trace to the Messiah
 - And in the seventh position, we see Enoch completing a year's worth of days
 - And he walks with God
 - The Hebrew word for walk is the same for God walking in the Garden with Adam
 - It means fellowship and close companionship
- Finally, we have an intriguing end to Enoch's life
 - The English phrase "for he was not, for God took him" is actually only two words in Hebrew
 - *Elohim* (God) and *laqach*, which means received or caught or took away

- The meaning is clear: Enoch didn't experience physical death
- The writer of Hebrews affirms this interpretation when he teaches:

Heb. 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

- This taking away is strange and unique, so it brings us to the important question
 - Why did God choose to end Enoch's life so differently from the normal experience?
 - To get the proper answer we must add in the other clues of Enoch's age and his position as seventh in the line
 - And we must also consider what we know comes soon after Enoch's departure, namely the judgment of the flood on the earth
 - More specifically, we need to take note of how the New Testament uses the flood story itself as a picture of the coming judgment of the world
 - This is a comparison we will build more fully in the coming chapters
 - And finally, we can't help but make comparisons of Enoch's experience to the promised taking of believers revealed in the New Testament – namely the Rapture
 - So let's put these details together
 - As the seventh in Seth's line, Enoch must stand as the opposite example to Lamech, the seventh in Cain's line
 - These two men would have been contemporaries
 - Just as Lamech lived as a testimony to sin
 - Likewise, Enoch's life is immediately recognizable as a picture of man living in faith and walking with God
 - Just as Hebrews 11 confirms

- Enoch is taken as he reaches 365 years, or a completed year of years
 - Then he is taken by God from the Earth
 - And then a period of time passes for those who remain behind
 - But then God's judgment waters come upon the earth
 - Leaving only a few to be rescued
- Do you see God creating a picture for us through Enoch's experience?
 - Enoch is the symbol of the believer
 - And after an appointed period of time and once a completed number is reached, then Enoch is removed from the Earth
 - Likewise, the NT tells us that once a completed number is reached, the Church will be removed from the Earth
 - We call that moment when the church is removed the Rapture
 - Enoch therefore becomes a picture of God's mercy in removing the believer from the earth in preparation for the pouring out of judgment
 - In Enoch's day, the judgment was water
 - But as 2 Peter 3 says, the future judgment will be fire
 - But as Enoch was rescued from that coming flood, so will the church be rescued before the final time of judgment comes to the earth
 - But not before Enoch warned the world of that coming judgment, as Jude explains

Jude 14 It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, **Jude 15** to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

- God used Enoch's life to illustrate His love and mercy for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose

- But finally today, notice that Enoch's line doesn't end

[Gen. 5:25](#) Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and became the father of Lamech.

[Gen. 5:26](#) Then Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after he became the father of Lamech, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:27](#) So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

- His own son Methuselah outlives not only dad but every other human being at 969 years
 - His name means "when he dies, it shall be sent"
 - According to the genealogies in Genesis, the year Methuselah died was the same year that the flood came upon the earth
- Enoch declared even in his son's name, a prophetic message warning of the coming judgment
 - In fact, notice that not one of the men in the line of Messiah dies in the Flood
 - All of them either die naturally prior to the flood, are raptured (Enoch) or are rescued (Noah)
 - This is consistent with Peter's teaching that God will rescue the righteous from the coming judgment
- When we return to Genesis, we'll finish Chapter 5 as part of an introduction into Noah and the flood story, which begins in Chapter 6