

## Walking With God Like Enoch

**Genesis 5:17-24**<sup>17</sup> So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died. <sup>18</sup> Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. <sup>19</sup> After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup> So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died. <sup>21</sup> Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup> And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

You may know the saying “The Road Less Travelled” It comes from a beautiful poem by Robert Frost.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

He goes on to say that they seemed about equal to him, but he knew he could not travel on both.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

To walk on the road less travelled by has become a saying for being willing to go against the crowd. Instead of going with majority opinion, you swim against the tide, you are willing to be the outsider, the exception, the minority objector. Even if the whole world seem to be going a certain way, you are not swayed by that.

In fact, the Bible teaches that such an attitude will save your life and save your soul. Jesus told us that “wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matthew 7:13–14). He told us “Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.” (Luke 6:26).

Jesus made sure His disciples understood that there was a radical distinction between them and the world. <sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (John 15:18–19)

So the Bible has always taught that those who choose truth, who choose God, who choose eternal life, will not be in the majority, and will likely be a remnant, voices in the wilderness. That was true of Israel as a nation among all the nations. It was true of the godly remnant within Israel who believed God. It is true today of the true church, genuine believers in Christ amidst a sea of ungodly culture and false teaching.

But standing against the current can seem lonely sometimes. It can make you question if you're crazy and everyone else is sane. It can seem unfair, and it can seem taxing. It's hard to walk uphill every day, to swim against the current.

So God, in His wisdom, has given us accounts in Scripture of those who did just that, and triumphed. One of the earliest is a three-verse description of man named Enoch. Enoch's whole life

is given to us in a little detour in the middle of a genealogy. Genealogies list fathers and son, tracing ancestry and descent. They are in the Bible to prove the historical nature of the characters it described, they give us the chronology and time period being described. They were also vital for establishing lineage, especially for a king, to be descended from the royal line, or for priests, to be descended from Levi.

But now and then, a little gem appears in a genealogy, when the writer breaks the sequence, because the story of the person he is listing is too irresistible to avoid telling. We saw it in chapter 4, where special mention is made of Lamech. It happens in chapter 10, where special mention is made of Nimrod. It happens in 1 Chronicles 4, when the writer is listing out names, but then comes to Jabez, and gives you more information in him.

Here, in the middle of this genealogy, we meet a man who stood against the tide of his culture. Not only did he have a remarkable life, but a remarkable finish, because Enoch, along with Elijah is one of two men who never faced death, but was translated straight to Heaven. His unusual life, combined with this statement summarising his life, is supposed to get our attention. To consider Enoch is to consider a short but powerful example of what the Christian can be.

So, what was Enoch's secret? Did he have it easier than we do? Did he have more resources? As we gather up the evidence, we'll see Enoch's world, Enoch's walk, and Enoch's welcome.

## **I. Enoch's World**

Genealogies are not usually the most interesting reading. A list of names, this one begetting this one, living to this age, and dying. Someone said that Genesis 5 sounds like the tolling of funeral bells, a monotonous refrain of so-and-so lived, begat, and he died. And he died, and he died, and he died. Genesis 5 is proof of God's words – in the day you eat of this, you shall surely die. Here is the truth of God's words played out in repetitive cycle.

Enoch was the seventh from Adam, which is interesting because in many genealogies, the seventh person is often a remarkable person. He was born 622 years after the Fall, and 1034 years before the Flood. He lived at a time when human lifespans were enormous by today's standards; most of those mentioned in this genealogy averaged around 800 years. And if you work it out, Adam was still alive for the first 300 years of Enoch's life.

When verse 22 suddenly breaks the cycle, we sit up and notice. Here we find something new added. Here was a man who did not merely live, beget children and die, but the account says

After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.

Enoch walked with God for three hundred years. And then, verse 24 makes this man even more outstanding: <sup>24</sup> And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

What was his world like?

From what we can tell, human civilisation during this time became very advanced. It's possible that some of the enormous ziggurats, stonehenges, man-made mounds and other monoliths were being built during this time, or shortly after this time using methods and technologies we still don't understand. Some of the blocks that were lifted into place were so heavy that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we don't possess a crane strong enough to lift them. Much of masonry was cut so precisely that modern engineers have said one would need a high-speed diamond drill. There seems to have been great

advances in astronomy, mathematics, cartography and map-making, travel. When people are living for 800 years, they can learn a lot. Imagine if Isaac Newton had lived for 600 years and co-existed with Albert Einstein. Imagine if Einstein had lived for 700 years.

But they were not only becoming advanced in technology, they were becoming advanced in evil. We saw in chapter 4, it had become a world of polygamy, murder, and lawlessness.

<sup>23</sup> Then Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me. <sup>24</sup> If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold." (Genesis 4:23–24)

False worship, idolatry, and possibly even demonic intervention in the world was part of life.

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. <sup>3</sup> And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."<sup>4</sup> There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

<sup>11</sup> The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup> So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

According to the book of Jude and 2 Peter, this is a reference to fallen angels who chose to leave their proper dwelling as spirit beings, and took on some kind of embodiment. Some kind of mingling of their physical form and humans produced hybrids, that the NKJV translates as giants, the Hebrew word is Nephilim, which means fallen ones. The very created order was now being polluted, the very DNA of mankind was being corrupted, possibly in an attempt to prevent the promised Deliverer of Genesis 3:15 from ever being born.

This was no clean and welcoming world. This was no conservative culture. This was a society which God was prepared to wipe off the face of the Earth with a Flood. It was in this world that Enoch lived. It was in this society that Enoch stood out like a diamond in the rough. Like us, he lived in a world given over to evil, in rejection of God.

But the second-last book of the Bible gives us a fascinating gem of truth as to how Enoch responded to this world around him. In the book of Jude, we read, "**Jude 1:14-15** <sup>14</sup> Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, <sup>15</sup> "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

In this world, Enoch stood as a lonely voice, preaching truth. Enoch preached a message of judgement on a sinful culture. He called sin by its name. He promised that God would come to convict, judge and punish the ungodly. In the culture of violence and immorality, Enoch was a minority voice, a voice in the wilderness.

Jesus told us that the world just before His return would be much like the world in the days of Noah. Enoch's world and ours have a lot of similarities: very advanced, very immoral, very violent, with little attention given to the message of the Bible.

So what was the secret of this man who lived such an exceptional life in such a world?

## II. Enoch's Walk

<sup>24</sup> And Enoch walked with God;

What does it mean to walk with God? The Bible loves to use this term. Twice the writer of Genesis, Moses, tells us that Enoch walked with God.

<sup>9</sup> This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:9)

<sup>1</sup> When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I *am* Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. (Genesis 17:1)

<sup>15</sup> And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, (Genesis 48:15)

It's used throughout the Old Testament.

Paul used the term in all sorts of ways: He tells us in Ephesians to walk in love, to walk in wisdom, to walk worthy. In Galatians, he tells us to walk in the Spirit. In 2 Corinthians we are told to walk by faith. In Romans we are told to walk in newness of life, and to walk properly. John tells us to walk in the light, and to walk in truth.

Sometimes the simplest analogies contain the deepest truths. A walk means at least three things. First, if you walk with someone, then you have some kind of relationship with them. Amos 3:3 says, can two walk together except they be agreed? If you have ever walked where there are crowds of people walking, perhaps in a mall, or in a busy street, if you find yourself walking right next to a complete stranger, what do you do? Do you keep pace with that person? No, you typically slow down or speed up, because the only person that you will keep walking with, side-by-side is with someone you know. Enoch was one of the few in his world that had believed on God, and God had counted it to him for righteousness. He was one of God's children, one of God's people. Nobody walks with the triune God who does not know God through His Son by the Spirit.

Second, if you walk with someone, the chances are, you're also talking with them. In a walk with another person, there is plenty of two-way conversation. There will be communion. When you walk with someone, there is free, easy, natural, and ongoing conversation. To walk with God is to let Him speak to you in the Word by His Spirit for all of life, and you speak back to Him in prayer. God talks to you, and you talk to Him. Enoch prayed, and Enoch listened. Enoch had learned the art of talking to God in all of life.

Third, if you walk with someone, you have to match their speed, and keep doing that. You walk at the same pace, and you keep doing it, until the walk is over. If you suddenly sit down, you're not walking together. If you race ahead, you're not walking together. Walking is a deliberate conformity to each other. This corresponds to a life of obedience. You conform your actions to what God wants, and you keep doing that. You endure in your obedience. Enoch lived a life that was pleasing to God and obeyed God.

The New Testament actually confirms that this is what the writer of Genesis means.

**Hebrews 11:5-6** By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. <sup>6</sup> But without faith

*it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Here Hebrews gives us another name for walking with God: a life of faith.

Enoch, like all Old Testament saints, was made pleasing to God by his faith in God. They believed God's Word, trusted in what He had revealed to Him, and God justified them. God declared them to be righteous through the future death of His Son on the cross. That was the first kind of faith – **saving** faith.

But the second kind is seen when the writer of Hebrews says that faith believes that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him. Your faith must believe not just in the *reality* of God, but also in the *reward* of God. That's what Enoch did. He believed God is, and He believed that to speak with God, and commune with God and live in God's presence would be rewarded with more experience of God. This is **sanctifying** faith. This is walking with God: choosing to by faith share all of life with God. To live it before Him and with Him and in front of Him, because you believe He is, and He rewards the diligent effort to seek Him. This is communing with God. Jesus used the word 'abide' to describe this. What does it mean to abide? It simply means to dwell, to live together.

But then consider that Enoch's saving and sanctifying faith was also a persevering faith.

**Genesis 5:22** <sup>22</sup> After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.

But maybe someone says, “only a hermit could walk with God for three hundred years. My life is far too busy with family concerns to ever walk with God.” Well, notice what the text says about Enoch in Genesis 5. Enoch was a family man. Enoch conducted this walk surrounded by the noise of sons and daughters. He raised a son, Methuselah, who would go on to be the longest living human being in history. And if his long life was partly a reward for honouring father and mother, then we can infer that Enoch was not simply a begetter, but a good father.

It meant raising a godly family, and a son whose own name was perhaps a warning to all. Methuselah possibly means, “When he is dead it shall be sent’ or “When he dies, judgement”. Quite possibly, Enoch was told of the coming judgement of the Flood and testified to the world in the very name of his son- a son who lived for 969 years.

Oswald Chambers said, “The test of a man's religious life and character is not what he does in the exceptional moments of life, but what he does in the ordinary times, when there is nothing tremendous or exciting going on.”

Enoch walked with God. That means that by faith he knew God, he talked with God, and he obeyed God. By faith he was saved, sanctified, and by faith he endured.

This kind of life led to Enoch's welcome.

### **III. Enoch's Welcome**

And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

What does that mean? Instead of Enoch following the path of all the others who lived, begat children and then died, Enoch was one of two men who was taken directly to glory. Elijah was the

other one. Enoch did not only walk with God, but God chose to extend a special welcome to Him. He took Enoch to glory personally.

And it seems that Enoch lived such a life of communion with God, such a life of abiding in God, that there came a point when God chose to favour him with a gift that Christians living when the Lord returns will experience – direct catching up into God's presence, without seeing death.

Spurgeon said of Enoch, “But this man did his work so well, and kept so close to God that his day’s work was done at noon, and the Lord said, “Come home, Enoch, there is no need for you to be out of heaven any longer; you have borne your testimony, you have lived your life; through all the ages men will look upon you as a model man, and therefore you may come home.” God never keeps his wheat out in the fields longer than is necessary, when it is ripe he reaps it at once: when his people are ready to go home he will take them home.”

**Hebrews 11:5-6** By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him

Notice something in verse 5 of Hebrews 11. It says that Enoch was not found. Now if Enoch was not found, what does that imply? People were looking for Him. There came a day when Mrs Enoch waited and waited, and he did not come home. There came a day when Methuselah heard the news that father was nowhere to be found. There came a day when all the other sons and daughters wept for their father who had now gone from them. There came a day when the people Enoch had taught, and those who had heard his preaching, searched for him, but he could not be found. Enoch had lived a life that had profoundly affected others, and when he was gone, people knew it. John Wesley said, live so as to be missed. He was missed. But Earth's loss was heaven's gain. The one who had gotten so used to walking with God, walked into Heaven.

Again, Spurgeon: “To walk with God for three centuries was so sweet that the patriarch kept on with his walk until he walked beyond time and space, and walked into paradise, Where he is still marching on in the same divine society. He had heaven on earth, and it was therefore not so wonderful that he glided away from earth to heaven so easily.”

What a simple phrase to summarise an entire life. What a truth to have written on your tombstone. Alexander the Great's tombstone was said to read, “A tomb now suffices him for whom the world was not enough”. C.S. Lewis' epitaph simply reads, “Man must endure his going hence.” A.W. Tozer's tombstone simply reads, “A Man of God”. Enoch didn't have a tombstone because he was taken, but his eternal epitaph written in God's Word is “he walked with God”.

Enoch was a man of like passion as we are, and he walked with God. He walked with God in a wicked age. He walked with God in a busy life.

Enoch took the road less travelled: walking with God in a world that doesn't. And that made all the difference.