

# *St. Augustine's* Sermons

Calgary, Alberta

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November 25, 2007

*Adam's Line or Jesus' Line?*

*10:30 am, Holy Communion*

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The Text: Genesis 5:

## ***From Adam to Noah***

**1** This is the written account of Adam's line.

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. **2** He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man.

**3** When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. **4** After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. **5** Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

**6** When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh. **7** And after he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. **8** Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

**9** When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. **10** And after he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters. **11** Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

**12** When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. **13** And after he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. **14** Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to an excellent sermon on Genesis 5 by Ray Stedman. Off everything I read in preparation for this sermon, nothing surpassed his sermon. Much of points 2 and 3 are taken from him. To read or hear his sermon go to: <http://www.raystedman.org/genesis/0324.html>.

**15** When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. **16** And after he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. **17** Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

**18** When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. **19** And after he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. **20** Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

**21** When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. **22** And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. **23** Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. **24** Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

**25** When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. **26** And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. **27** Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

**28** When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. **29** He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." **30** After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. **31** Altogether, Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.

**32** After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

### **Introduction:**

In Genesis 5 we come to the first of the familiar genealogies of Scripture. These have proved to be a stumbling block to many who seek to read through the Bible. They start well, but they soon get to the desert of genealogies and give up their reading. These genealogies are somewhat difficult. I am inclined to approach it in the fashion of the old Scottish minister who was reading from the opening chapter of Matthew. He started reading,

"Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judah, and they kept on begetting one another all the way down this page and halfway into the next."

But it is a mistake to ignore these genealogies because they are very fruitful, very suggestive, and very interesting.

This one begins with a brief introduction and continues, in a standard formula of presentation, throughout the chapter. Look at the first five verses:

*1 This is the written account of Adam's line.*

*When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "Man."*

*3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 5 Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.*

Now it is important that we take careful note of the title of this chapter. The phrase, "This is the written account of Adam's line" can also be translated: "This is the book of the generations of". This phraseology occurs only one other place in Scripture. It is in Matthew chapter 1. There we read: "This is the book of the generations of Jesus Christ." Here in Genesis it is, "This is the book of the generations of Adam."

We are told here that God created man in the likeness of God. Notice, he did not name them "The Adamses;" it was "Adam." So for the NIV to translate this Man is quite right. In this genealogy we have here the story of a race, not merely an individual.

There is only one man in the Old Testament, and that is Adam. There is only one man in the New Testament, and that is Jesus. There are only two men who have ever lived in history, Adam and Jesus -- the first Adam and the last Adam; the First Man and the Second Man. We are either of Adam's line or Jesus' line.

St. Paul understands this clearly when in Romans five he compares Adam and Jesus in this way. Of Adam he says:

"Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned".<sup>2</sup>

Of Jesus he says:

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<sup>2</sup> Romans 5:12

"For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!"<sup>3</sup>

The way of Sin leads to death, the way of grace overflows in the gift of life to the many. Adam is the Man of Sin. Jesus is the Man of Grace. We need to see this clearly. In the Bible we are of one line or the other. We are either of the line of Adam, or through faith we have been grafted into the line of Jesus.

Right at the beginning of the Bible these two lines are clearly demarcated for us in Genesis four and five. While Enoch is born into the line of Adam, we will see that even here people can be grafted into Christ.

Let me show you what I mean by comparing Lamech with Enoch.

Last week we looked at the line of Cain as it is found in Genesis 4: As we read through that genealogy it was traced from Adam forward like this:

Adam was the father of Cain,  
Cain the father of Enoch,  
Enoch the father of Irad,  
Irada the father of Mehujael,  
Mehujael was the father of Methushael,  
Methushael was the father of Lamech.

The genealogy then focuses on Lamech, whose life represents someone who is living in rebellion to God and so lives under the power of Sin and the counsel of the wicked.

As we come to the genealogy in chapter five, as it goes from Adam to Seth there is a similar pattern.

Adam was the father of Seth  
Seth the father of Enosh  
Enosh the father of Kenan  
Kenan the father of Mahalalel

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<sup>3</sup> Romans 5:15

Mahalalel the father of Jared

Jared the father of Enoch

You will notice that this genealogy also stops at the seventh generation and concentrates on Enoch. What a different man Enoch was from Lamech. Lamech's life was live centred on himself. As we will see in a minute Enoch was one who walked with God and so here in the early chapters of the Old Testament Enoch represents a type of the New Adam, someone who is grafted into Jesus Christ.

As we think about Enoch this morning I am not going to concentrate at all on the ages of the people listed here, other than to say that I follow those scholars who understand that before the flood people lived longer than they do today.

What I do want to concentrate on is what we learn in chapter five about what it means to be grafted into the Jesus' line as we study Enoch.

There are three points I will make:

1. Death is different for those who are in Christ.
2. Our faith can be characterized as a walk with God.
3. Although we live within the limitations of our own generation, we are able to grasp something of God's larger plans that go beyond our generation.

### **1. Death is different for those who are in Christ.**

As we look carefully at this text you will notice in the generations leading up to Enoch the phrase: "and he died." Every individual's life ends with the phrase, "and he died," "and he died," "and he died." Like the tolling of a great bell, this phrase resounds throughout the passage. Six times before Enoch is introduced and twice after Enoch it is recorded "and he died," contradicting the lie of Satan in the garden when he said to Eve, "If you eat of this fruit you will not die," (Genesis 3:4). But here is the factual record. Everyone who came along lived so many years and then he died.

But now in this account there is found one exception to the tolling of the bell of death; one man of whom it is not said, "and he died." This is evidently the highlight of this chapter, the reason why all this is given to us:

**21** When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. **22** And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. **23** Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. **24** Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Evidently this is designed to focus our interest. Instead of saying, "and he died," it says, "and he was not, for God took him." Now the book of Hebrews in the eleventh chapter, recounts the story of Enoch and tells us that this phrase, "and he was not, for God took him," means that he was "taken up [or translated] so that he should not see death," (Hebrews 11:5). In other words, here is one of only two men in all history who never died. Enoch is one; Elijah is the other. Enoch did not see death but he was taken up. Twice it says in this account that, before he was taken up, "he walked with God."

As we think of what Enoch's translation means I think we need to turn to those famous words of Jesus in John 11.

*"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."*

I think it is wonderful that back here in Genesis chapter 5 we are given a picture of what eternal life is like for the person who walks with God. Here is the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For those who are in Christ, we will never die.

On Wednesday last, our dear sister in Christ, Edna Buchan, spent her last night in this world. She entered into His Glory at 9:00 AM on Thursday morning. When I was sitting with her at around 5:00 PM on Wednesday she knew that death was near. And so I read these words from 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:

*For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. **2** We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. **3** For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. **4** While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by*

*life. 5 God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup>*

What assurance there was for Edna and for me as I shared with her the confidence that we have in the Gospel because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! When we are adopted into Jesus' line it makes all the difference.

How different this is from those who are in Adam and lost to the grace of Jesus Christ. Listen to the despair of Bertrand Russell, one of the foremost atheistic thinkers of the twentieth century.

*That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental arrangement of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave.<sup>5</sup>*

This is so different from the teaching of the Bible. Yes, like Enoch we can say that for the person who is adopted into the family of Grace, death is very different from the person who is lost in the Sin of Adam. Edna Buchan and Bertrand Russell show us clearly this contrast.

## **2. Our faith can be characterized as a walk with God.**

Death is different for those who are in Christ because we live by faith. Our faith can be characterized as a walk with God, which is my second point.

What does it mean to walk with God? Enoch was a man who, in the midst of a godless generation, walked with God. What does it mean? Well, it is exactly the same today as it was then. To walk with God is accomplished now in exactly the same way. Enoch did not literally walk with God, this is unquestionably a figurative expression, but a figurative walk involves the same thing today as it did then:

First, it means he went in the same direction God went. He was moving the way God was going. God is forever moving in human history. He is moving right now to accomplish certain things in human life, and he has been doing so for centuries. The man or woman who walks with God is the person who knows which way God is going and goes the same way. It is the way of faith as Hebrews 11 makes clear.

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<sup>4</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

<sup>5</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*. (W.W. Norton and Company, Inc.: New York, NY, 1929), pp. 47-49.

For in this passage we have the Hall of Fame of Faith in the Old Testament. There in verses 5 is Enoch. We read:

*By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.<sup>6</sup>*

To have faith pleases God and so the person of faith wanting to delight the Father says, I want to walk with you. I want to go in the direction you are moving.

What direction is God moving? God moves always in unswerving hostility toward sin. He is opposed to that which destroys and wrecks human life. No matter how good it looks, no matter how attractive it seems, how luridly it is painted, God is against it.

And the person who walks with God is someone who walks in unswerving hostility toward sin in his or her own life and refuses to make up with it or permit it to rule or to reign, either personally or within the Church, the body of Christ. That is the first thing in a walk with God.

Second, it means to keep in step. You cannot walk with somebody if you do not keep in step with him. Sooner or later there comes unbalance and you bump into him, or he bumps into you. Therefore there must a keeping in step.

In Ephesians 5: 15 Paul says: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise".

To walk wisely means that we are people who understand God's purpose for us and for his world. Because of what we have read here in Genesis we are all too aware of how easy it is for us to walk as unwise people. These are people who have rejected God and his will. But the wise are those who know that we live constantly in the presence of God and we are to seek him and his will for our lives always.

Have you ever analyzed your walk? Every time you take a step you almost fall. You allow your body to go off balance and then you catch yourself with your other leg. Then you shift to that and you almost fall again, only to catch yourself. That is what a walk is; living on the verge of a fall all the time. And the man or women who walks with God is the man or woman who lives on the verge of a fall. That is an adventurous life. That means if God is not there to support and

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<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 11:5

strengthen you, down you go. You are counting on him to come through and to keep you steady. That is what a walk with God involves. It is always a walk of venturing out. It is never satisfied with the status quo, never content to remain in a quiet state, doing nothing, waiting, enjoying one's self; it is forever venturing out. It is forever moving at the same pace God moves. It means taking a step when God insists.

For three hundred years Enoch walked with God, and this is the same activity to which we are called. We are to walk "as children of light," (Ephesians 5:8). We are to walk "in the Spirit," (Galatians 5:16, 5:25 KJV). We are to walk "worthy of God" (1 Thessalonians 2:12 KJV), through the midst of a godless generation, exactly as Enoch did.

**3. Although we live within the limitations of our own generation, we are able to grasp something of God's larger plans that go beyond our generation.**

When we learn to walk with God, not only do we see death differently, but we are able to grasp something of God's larger plans that go beyond our generation. This is my third point and is made clear in our text when we study the name Methuselah.

*Methuselah* is a very interesting name. It means, literally, "His death shall bring it," or loosely translated, "When he dies, it will come." What will come? The Flood!

Enoch, we are told in another passage of Scripture, was given a revelation from God. He saw the direction of the divine movement, looked on to the end of the culture, the comforts, and the mechanical marvels of his own day, to the fact there must come an inevitable judgment on the principle of evil in human life. He saw the certainty of destruction of a world living only to please itself. When he saw it his baby was born, so, in obedience, evidently to God's word, he named the baby, "When he dies, it will come."

This revelation to Enoch is given in the next-to-the-last book of the Bible. If you want to see what a unit the Bible is, notice how ties in with Genesis. In the 14th verse of Jude we read, concerning certain godless men who would be present in any age but especially in the last age:

**14** *Enoch, who lived in the seventh generation after Adam, prophesied about these people. He said, "Listen! The Lord is coming with countless thousands of his holy ones* **15** *to execute judgment on the people of the world. He will convict every person of all the ungodly*

*things they have done and for all the insults that ungodly sinners have spoken against him. **16** These people are grumblers and complainers, living only to satisfy their desires. They brag loudly about themselves, and they flatter others to get what they want.<sup>7</sup>*

That was the world of Enoch's day, and Enoch saw the end of it. He saw that the Lord was coming to execute judgment on it. Now I know there are those who take that passage in Jude to refer to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in a secondary way it does refer to that. But its primary reference is to the judgment of the Flood. Enoch saw the coming of the Flood and he named his child, "When he dies, it will come." If you figure out the chronology of this from the life of Noah, who was six hundred years old when the Flood came, you will find that the very year Methuselah died, the Flood came. It happened exactly as God had predicted.

But the grace of God is revealed here in the fact that this boy lived longer than any man ever lived, nine hundred and sixty-nine years! That is how long God waited before he fulfilled the threat implied in the boy's name. Can you imagine what a fascination this boy must have been to his family? How they watched him every time he went out! But God let him live longer than anybody else to reveal the heart and compassion of a God who dislikes to bring judgment but does so because of the moral demands made upon his nature of truth. Now we see the reason for this table of genealogy.

First, it is given to highlight the supreme purpose of revelation, to teach us the possibility and importance of a walk with God. That is what men and women are called to do, to walk with God. The greatest glory that can come to any human being is to learn to walk with and be a friend to God. Enoch was the friend of God.

Second, this genealogical table is given to warn us of the day when evil shall ultimately be stopped. God cannot allow human evil to increase endlessly. He restrains it, but when it reaches a certain limit, he judges it. That is the repeated story of history. This is the whole message of the book of Jude.

### **Conclusion**

God has given you and me a life to watch just as Methuselah's generation watched his: It is your own life.

God has written *Methuselah* on each one of us. "His death shall bring it," or "When he dies, when she dies, it will come." How far is it till the

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<sup>7</sup> Jude 1:14-16

end of the world for you? When you die, that is the end of the world. Is it fifty years from now? Ten? Tomorrow? Who knows? But at any moment, when you die, it will come.

Is it not foolish how we try to escape the inevitability of the end? Yet everything hangs on that. It will be for us the end of Adam's Book, when all that Adam is in us is at an end, there is nothing more to be recorded in it. Then only what Christ has written in us will survive. There is a motto that goes like this:

Only one life, 'twill soon be past.  
Only what's done for Christ will last.

That is a pithy expression of what we find in this chapter. In Revelation when John saw the dead standing before God, the books also were opened ... What books? Adam's book, and Jesus' book. The book of the generations of Adam and the book of the generations of Jesus Christ.

Now one question lingers: What are you doing today in this godless generation? Are you walking with God? Have you learned to keep step with the Almighty? Have you learned to trust what he says and walk in his direction and to keep step with him, in agreement with him?

If you can answer yes, thanks be to God. If you have not said yes, what is keeping you from responding?

If you have not responded to God's call, there is a prayer that I am going to pray now. I would invite you in the quiet of your heart to repeat it after me, if you are so moved.

### A Prayer

*Gracious heavenly Father, I know see that there are two ways to live: Either according to the Generation of Adam or according to the Generation of which Jesus is the head. I have lived too long in under Adam's influence. Please forgive me for my own godless ways. Today I turn from the way of Sin and choose to walk in the way of grace, the way of Jesus. Please grant to me the empowering of your Holy Spirit so that like Enoch I may be your friend and so bring you pleasure as I walk with you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.*