

# TAKE A WALK

GENESIS 5:1-32 AUGUST 18, 2021

One of the longest walks ever taken was by Jean Béliveau, who spent 11 years walking 46,600 miles across 64 countries.<sup>1</sup> The Canada native did so in an effort to “raise awareness for children who suffer from violence.” He called it a walk for peace.

I can’t imagine walking for a decade. But imagine walking for *several hundred years!* That’s the image we’re given of two of Adam’s Godly descendants, who (we’re told) “walked with God.” Of course, as we’ll see, their lives were full of a lot more than just walking around.

We’re in a section of Genesis where God is contrasting two lineages. Last time we saw the line of Cain, full of rebellion and murder. But also full of great worldly feats. Tonight the Lord puts Seth’s line on display - the line from which the Deliverer would finally come. In this list there are two standouts: Enoch and Noah. Enoch walked with God for 365 years. Noah would for 950. They didn’t do so perfectly, but we find that their walks were potent and consequential, producing a great testimony that has lasted for thousands of years. They remind us that we are called to walk with God.

This analogy of walking with the Lord seems to be a favorite of His. He uses it here in the beginning. In one of His most significant post-resurrection appearances He goes on a walk with two believers on the road to Emmaus. During the time of the kings of Israel and Judah, they were always appraised by whether they “walked in the ways of David” or in the wicked ways of Jeroboam.

What does it mean to “walk with God?” Bruce Waltke writes, “[to walk with God] denotes to enjoy supernatural, intimate fellowship with God, not merely to live a pious life.”<sup>2</sup> It makes sense if we think about the analogy. Walking with someone isn’t the same as busting out your cardio on a treadmill.

To walk with someone requires that you have a common goal. As the prophet Amos said, “Can two walk together without agreeing on the direction?” Of course, in this life, we can’t see beyond the here and now, so we have to trust God who *does* know the way. And therefore, to walk with Him means that we agree with His route.

To walk with someone requires closeness. If you go on a walk with a friend or your spouse, you walk in close proximity. If you’re 100 yards apart, you’re not walking together.

To walk with someone means that you’ll keep a similar pace. Though, on the spiritual level we often follow slowly and hike with a limp, the Lord does not leave us in the dust. He knows our weaknesses<sup>3</sup> and is a High Priest who sympathizes with us.<sup>4</sup>

When you walk with someone, you’re going to find yourself in personal conversation with them. As one source pointed out, it wouldn’t do for you to bring a kazoo along and blow it the whole time.<sup>5</sup>

The Bible explains walking with God as being an ongoing, personal progression of faith and growth in our understanding of the Lord and our obedience to His will. Colossians chapter 3 is a very

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_longest\\_walks#Longest\\_Solo\\_or\\_Duo\\_Walks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_longest_walks#Longest_Solo_or_Duo_Walks)

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Waltke *Genesis: A Commentary*

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 103:14

<sup>4</sup> Hebrews 4:15

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/walk-with-God.html>

practical passage for *how* we are to walk with God, giving both positive instructions of what to do, like setting our minds on heavenly things and putting on compassion and putting to death what belongs to our earthly nature. And it also gives us negative instructions - things *not* to do. Like, don't lie to one another, put away anger, filthy language and these other things that you *used* to walk in.

All told, walking with God is about an active and personal relationship with God Who desires to lead us, guide us, be known by us and shape our lives according to His glorious standard. It's not just about *conduct*, but also *communion* with Him. That was the failure of the Pharisees. All conduct, no communion. They honored God with their lips but their hearts were far from Him.

So, with these ideas in our minds, let's take a look at a couple of these faithful long walkers.

**Genesis 5:1-2 - This is the document containing the family records of Adam. On the day that God created man, he made him in the likeness of God; <sup>2</sup> he created them male and female. When they were created, he blessed them and called them mankind.**

Your version may something like, "This is the book of the genealogy of Adam." The book of Genesis is actually broken up into 11 sections, each marked out by this term. We've already seen it once, back in chapter 2 where we saw the "history of the heavens and the earth." Like this book of Adam, the rest will surround individuals. And they alternate between genealogy and narrative each time.<sup>6</sup>

Notice here in verse 1 where it says, "On the day that God created man." The book makes itself clear that we are to accept it as literal and historical. In fact, the genealogy we're reading this evening is *repeated* in both 1 Chronicles and the Gospel of Luke. And so, if *Adam* isn't literal, we have no reason to think *David* is literal or *Jesus* for that matter.

We're reminded not only that these were real people, but *as* people, they were specially blessed by God. Mankind is a unique creation in God's universe. We have a capacity to know and love Him that no other creature has. Even after the fall, when so much has been ruined, God allowed human beings to *still* have a capacity to love Him. And that is a great blessing.

**Genesis 5:3-5 - <sup>3</sup> Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. <sup>4</sup> Adam lived 800 years after he fathered Seth, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> So Adam's life lasted 930 years; then he died.**

Using this verse as a basis, I've heard it said that human beings aren't really created in the image of God anymore. "Look, it says right there that Seth was in the image of *Adam*!" I'm not sure what the point is, but Seth was in the image of Adam, who was made in the image of God, so I see no reason to downgrade humanity's worth.

This *does* remind us that, after Adam, there was a serious alteration stamped into humanity: And that's sin. Sin was now spreading throughout creation. It was passed down from father to child. And it had a very significant, very real consequence: Death.

Adam's death was not the first on the earth, but it would've been a profound moment when he breathed his last and returned to the ground from which he was made.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://thepolisinstitute.com/toledoth-and-the-structure-of-genesis/>

I imagine Adam and Eve must've struggled with incredible guilt as they walked the earth, watching humans die, animals die, and sorrow multiply. And yet, we see Eve's enduring hope in the coming deliverer. We see Adam training up his descendants in the ways of God. Yes, they were responsible for what had happened, but they were not crushed. God's mercy overflowed and they were able to continue walking in faith and in the hope that God Himself would make all things right again.

If you are feeling guilt this evening, if you feel the weight of your sin, on one hand that's a *good* thing. Sin is serious. But don't carry that weight any longer. Lay it down at the cross where all the wrongs we have done and the wrongs done to us were nailed there with the Deliverer.

Adam lived 930 years. That means he lived long enough to see Noah's dad turn 56. He didn't get to meet Noah, but it's remarkable to think about what sort of access and influence Adam and Eve would've had with these generations of people.

Through those long centuries, he must've wondered at some point, "What's God waiting for?" We may wonder that today. In answer to Adam's wondering, we could say God was waiting for you and me! And His long-suffering *still* waits today, because God's desire is to populate eternity with people.

Long section now:

**Genesis 5:6-20 - <sup>6</sup> Seth was 105 years old when he fathered Enosh. <sup>7</sup> Seth lived 807 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup> So Seth's life lasted 912 years; then he died. <sup>9</sup> Enosh was 90 years old when he fathered Kenan. <sup>10</sup> Enosh lived 815 years after he fathered Kenan, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup> So Enosh's life lasted 905 years; then he died. <sup>12</sup> Kenan was 70 years old when he fathered Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup> Kenan lived 840 years after he fathered Mahalalel, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup> So Kenan's life lasted 910 years; then he died. <sup>15</sup> Mahalalel was 65 years old when he fathered Jared. <sup>16</sup> Mahalalel lived 830 years after he fathered Jared, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup> So Mahalalel's life lasted 895 years; then he died. <sup>18</sup> Jared was 162 years old when he fathered Enoch. <sup>19</sup> Jared lived 800 years after he fathered Enoch, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup> So Jared's life lasted 962 years; then he died.**

I do find it interesting that we still have Seths and Jareds today but no Mahalelels or Enoshes.

This section is feels repetitive, like a record of routine things, but we can see that what is routine - living a life, having a family - is actually a significant part of the miraculous, providential work of God. Remember: This is the road that leads to *Jesus*. In your life and mine, God is *still* accomplishing His providence, even in our routine experiences. Your family life is not insignificant to Him or to history. In two of his letters, Paul celebrates what he calls a "quiet" life. A regular life, full of grace and the Holy Spirit, pleases God and is used by God to bring others to deliverance in Jesus.

**Genesis 5:21-22 - <sup>21</sup> Enoch was 65 years old when he fathered Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> And after he fathered Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and fathered other sons and daughters.**

There is a sudden change in the format. We're told that this man walked with God. That doesn't mean the others didn't. We know almost nothing about them, but remember that the context is a comparison between the God-rejecting line of Cain and the God-believing line of Seth. We'll also be told in Genesis 6 that Noah, too, "walked with God." Along the way they had regular lives. But they

were also preachers to the world around them. In fact, the book of Jude tells us that Enoch prophesied about the second coming of Christ and the final judgment. How did he know about these things? We don't know. But they were, on some level, in some way, revealed to him.

His message could be summarized this way: "If you live according to your own desires, you will be judged." That message is as true today as it was four thousand years ago. Solomon said that if we "walk in the ways of your heart and in the desire of your eyes...know that for all of these things God will bring you to judgment."<sup>7</sup> Because all of us have gone astray from the Lord. To be saved we must turn to Him, believe on Him, walk with Him who leads to life instead of death.

By the way, there are three apocryphal books said to have been written by Enoch. One of them is quoted by Jude. That doesn't mean that the rest of what we have was actually written by Enoch or that they should be treated as Scripture, but that *particular* quote found in Jude 14 and 15 is genuine and was included by God the Holy Spirit in the Canon.

**Genesis 5:23-24 - <sup>23</sup> So Enoch's life lasted 365 years. <sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him.**

We would say that Enoch was "raptured" - taken up bodily to be with the Lord without experiencing physical death. The same happened to Elijah and the same will happen to believers who are alive at the end of the Church age. The word there means that God *snatched* him.<sup>8</sup> And it is the same term used in Psalm 73 where we read:

**Psalm 73:24 - <sup>24</sup> You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me up in glory.**

The question is: If you have this Godly man, this prophet-preacher, why cut his life on the earth short? God knew judgment was coming. But He took Enoch home 669 years before the flood. Wouldn't it have been better to *leave* him to preach?

First, there were other preachers - Noah would become one. But second, God really likes to set up what we call *types* in history and in the Scripture. Meaning, He accomplishes things that can be looked back upon to teach us truth about what is yet to come. For example, Abraham offering Isaac on Mount Moriah. That was a *type* of God the Father sacrificing His own Son on our behalf. Or the bronze snake that Moses made and set up in the wilderness. That anyone who was bitten by a serpent could look to that pole in faith and be healed. That was, of course, a type of Jesus lifted up on the cross, who anyone can simply look to, in faith, and be saved.

Enoch is part of a type. Judgment was coming. Enoch was warning people. There would only be *one* way of escape - God's way. Then what happened? One of God's people (Enoch) was suddenly snatched away. Another of God's people (Noah) would be saved *through* the judgment on the ark.

We have now a powerful type of God's plan for the end times. The Church, represented by Enoch, will be caught away suddenly. Then there will be an interval of time and God's people, the Jews, will be saved *through* the Tribulation and coming judgment.

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<sup>7</sup> Ecclesiastes 11:9

<sup>8</sup> *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

One other note about Enoch: One source points out that the phrasing of the Hebrew suggests that, “Enoch and God ‘got along.’”<sup>9</sup> I think that’s a wonderful sentiment to consider. Do we *get along* with God? If not, it’s probably because we’re harboring some resentment toward Him or assuming that we know better than He does. We don’t. He is altogether right, altogether loving, altogether caring. If we’re having trouble ‘getting along’ with His leading, the defect is in *us* and we should invite Him to search us and see if there be any wicked way in us so that He might lead us in the way everlasting.

**Genesis 5:25-27 - <sup>25</sup> Methuselah was 187 years old when he fathered Lamech. <sup>26</sup> Methuselah lived 782 years after he fathered Lamech, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup> So Methuselah’s life lasted 969 years; then he died.**

God had pronounced judgment through His servant Enoch. But before judgment came God waited and waited and waited, through the lifespan of the *oldest* man to ever live. God’s long-suffering is great. He really does want to save. He’s not willing that *any* should perish. This gives us context to why God waits today, why He allows so much wrong to continue, it’s so that a few more people might be brought into His family and be bought back from their sin, rescued from death.

**Genesis 5:28-29 - <sup>28</sup> Lamech was 182 years old when he fathered a son. <sup>29</sup> And he named him Noah, saying, “This one will bring us relief from the agonizing labor of our hands, caused by the ground the Lord has cursed.”**

Clearly, Lamech had hope in God and communion with Him. He knew that God was going to do something significant through Noah’s life. He was focused on that promised deliverance. We should be too. Now, the deliverance that God would work through Noah was almost assuredly *not* what Lamech had in mind. He was hoping things would be restored and rolled back. But, as we know, that’s not the plan for Noah’s life. Instead, God *would* bring deliverance through Noah, but it was in the form of a *choice*. Noah preached to the wicked world and gave them a choice. Peter compared it to baptism, which is - of course - a *choice* whether a person will surrender and believe God and walk with Him or whether they will go their own way.

The deliverance worked through Noah would also be a choice. Would they *join* him on the ark? I’m sure the wicked of the world were sick and tired of the agonizing labor of their hands, too, but would they *turn* from their wickedness? That was the question. That was the requirement for deliverance.

**Genesis 5:30-32 - <sup>30</sup> Lamech lived 595 years after he fathered Noah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup> So Lamech’s life lasted 777 years; then he died. <sup>32</sup> Noah was 500 years old, and he fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.**

Lamech died 5 years before the flood, Methuselah died the year it happened. This has led some to speculate that he was one of the wicked, but it’s only that - speculation. What we do know is that Methuselah’s father was a faithful follower of God and so was his son. Why trash his memory?

The genealogy leading to Jesus will take a pause here so we can focus on Noah and his family in the coming chapters. Here’s something to think about: The story we know of Noah’s walk with the Lord started halfway into his life. He’d live a total of 950 years. Of course, we can assume he was walking with God long before his fifth century. But it’s a good reminder that God’s work is not only for the

young or only for the old. He works and moves in each of our lives, accomplishing His purposes as we walk with Him.

Jean Béliveau is celebrated by some people for his “walk for peace.” Dig a little deeper and you find some sad realities surrounding it: First of all, he admits he made the plan to take his walk because he was in a mid-life crisis. He hid his plan from his wife and children until a month before he left. When asked if he would periodically return home to be with them, he said “I’ll be back in 10 years.” He took his trip and relished meeting Nobel laureates like Nelson Mandela along the way, but meanwhile he missed the birth of his grandchildren, the passing of his father.<sup>10</sup> What did he accomplish? Has he won peace for the world? Has he ended violence against children? He made a name for *himself*, but abandoned his *own* children in the process.

In a photo op on his walk, President Mandela said, “The world needs people like you.” No, the world needs people like Enoch and Noah. People who love the Lord and walk with *Him*. People who honor their families and seek the Lord in them. People who are faithful to the word of God and the callings of God. Let’s be those people. Let’s take a walk with our Lord. “So follow the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/jean-b%C3%A9liveau-s-11-years-on-the-road-1.1070673>

<sup>11</sup> Proverbs 2:20