

## Adam Clarke:

## Introduction

A recapitulation of the account of the creation of man, Genesis 5:1, Genesis 5:2; and of the birth of Seth, Genesis 5:3. Genealogy of the ten antediluvian patriarchs, vv. 3-31. Enoch's extraordinary piety, Genesis 5:22; his translation to heaven without seeing death, Genesis 5:24. The birth of Noah, and the reason of his name, Genesis 5:29; his age at the birth of Japheth, Genesis 5:32.

## Verse 1

The book of the generations - ספר (sepher), in Hebrew, which we generally translate book, signifies a register, an account, any kind of writing, even a letter, such as the bill of divorce. Here it means the account or register of the generations of Adam or his descendants to the five hundredth year of the life of Noah.

In the likeness of God made he him - This account is again introduced to keep man in remembrance of the heights of glory whence he had fallen; and to prove to him that the miseries and death consequent on his present state were produced by his transgression, and did not flow from his original state. For, as he was created in the image of God, he was created free from natural and moral evil. As the deaths of the patriarchs are now to be mentioned, it was necessary to introduce them by this observation, in order to justify the ways of God to man.

## Verse 3

And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, etc. - The Scripture chronology especially in the ages of some of the antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchs, has exceedingly puzzled chronologists, critics, and divines. The printed Hebrew text, the Samaritan, the Septuagint, and Josephus, are all different, and have their respective vouchers and defenders. The following tables of the genealogies of the patriarchs before and after the flood, according to the Hebrew, Samaritan, and Septuagint, will at once exhibit the discordances. For much satisfactory information on this subject I must refer to A New Analysis of Chronology, by the Rev. William Hales, D.D., 3 vols. 4th., London, 1809.

And begat a son in his own likeness, after his image - Words nearly the same with those Genesis 1:26: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. What this image and likeness of God were, we have already seen, and we may rest assured that the same image and likeness are not meant here. The body of Adam was created provisionally immortal, i.e. while he continued obedient he could not die; but his obedience was voluntary, and his state a probationary one. The soul of Adam was created in the moral image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. He had now sinned, and consequently had lost his moral resemblance to his Maker; he had also become mortal through his breach of the law. His image and likeness were therefore widely different at this time from what they were before; and his begetting children in this image and likeness plainly implies that they were imperfect like himself, mortal like himself, sinful and corrupt like himself. For it is impossible that he, being impure, fallen from the Divine image, could beget a pure and holy offspring, unless we could suppose it possible that a bitter fountain could send forth sweet waters, or that a cause could produce effects totally dissimilar from itself. What is said here of Seth might have been said of all the other children of Adam, as they were all begotten after his fall; but the sacred writer has thought proper to mark it only in this instance.

## Verse 22

And Enoch walked with God - three hundred years - There are several things worthy of our most particular notice in this account:

1. The name of this patriarch; Enoch, from עָנָה (chanack), which signifies to instruct, to initiate, to dedicate. From his subsequent conduct we are authorized to believe he was early instructed in the things of God, initiated into the worship of his Maker, and dedicated to his service. By these means, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, which will ever attend pious parental instructions, his mind got that sacred bias which led him to act a part so distinguished through the course of a long life.
2. His religious conduct. He walked with God; הִתְהַלֵּךְ (yithhallech), he set himself to walk, he was fixedly purposed and determined to live to God. Those who are acquainted with the original will at once see that it has this force. A verb in the conjugation called hithpaal signifies a reciprocal act, that which a man does upon himself: here we may consider Enoch receiving a pious education, and the Divine influence through it; in consequence of which he determines to be a worker with God, and therefore takes up the resolution to walk with his Maker, that he might not receive the grace of God in vain.
3. The circumstances in which he was placed. He was a patriarch; the king, the priest, and the prophet of a numerous family, to whom he was to administer justice, among whom he was to perform all the rites and

ceremonies of religion, and teach, both by precept and example, the way of truth and righteousness. Add to this, he was a married man, he had a numerous family of his own, independently of the collateral branches over which he was obliged, as patriarch, to preside; he walked three hundred years with God, and begat sons and daughters; therefore marriage is no hindrance even to the perfection of piety; much less inconsistent with it, as some have injudiciously taught.

4. The astonishing height of piety to which he had arrived; being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and having perfected holiness in the fear of God, we find not only his soul but his body purified, so that, without being obliged to visit the empire of death, he was capable of immediate translation to the paradise of God. There are few cases of this kind on record; but probably there might be more, many more, were the followers of God more faithful to the grace they receive.

5. Enoch attained this state of religious and spiritual excellence in a time when, comparatively speaking, there were few helps, and no written revelation. Here then we cannot but see and admire how mighty the grace of God is, and what wonders it works in the behalf of those who are faithful, who set themselves to walk with God. It is not the want of grace nor of the means of grace that is the cause of the decay of this primitive piety, but the want of faithfulness in those who have the light, and yet will not walk as children of the light.

6. If the grace of God could work such a mighty change in those primitive times, when life and immortality were not brought to light by the Gospel, what may we not expect in these times, in which the Son of God tabernacles among men, in which God gives the Holy Spirit to them who ask him, in which all things are possible to him who believes? No man can prove that Enoch had greater spiritual advantages than any of the other patriarchs, though it seems pretty evident that he made a better use of those that were common to all than any of the rest did; and it would be absurd to say that he had greater spiritual helps and advantages than Christians can now expect, for he lived under a dispensation much less perfect than that of the Law, and yet the law itself was only the shadow of the glorious substance of Gospel blessings and Gospel privileges.

7. It is said that Enoch not only walked with God, setting him always before his eyes, beginning, continuing, and ending every work to his glory, but also that he pleased God, and had the testimony that he did please God, Hebrews 11:5. Hence we learn that it was then possible to live so as not to offend God, consequently so as not to commit sin against him; and to have the continual evidence or testimony that all that a man did and purposed was pleasing in the sight of Him who searches the heart, and by whom devices are weighed: and if it was possible then, it is surely, through the same grace, possible now; for God, and Christ, and faith, are still the same.

#### Verse 27

The days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years - This is the longest life mentioned in Scripture, and probably the longest ever lived; but we have not authority to say positively that it was the longest. Before the flood, and before artificial refinements were much known and cultivated, the life of man was greatly protracted, and yet of him who lived within thirty-one years of a thousand it is said he died; and the longest life is but as a moment when it is past. Though life is uncertain, precarious, and full of natural evils, yet it is a blessing in all its periods if devoted to the glory of God and the interest of the soul; for while it lasts we may more and more acquaint ourselves with God and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto us; Job 22:21.

#### Verse 29

This same shall comfort us - This is an allusion, as some think, to the name a Noah, which they derive from נח—נח (nacham), to comfort; but it is much more likely that it comes from נח (nach) or נחם (nuach), to rest, to settle, etc. And what is more comfortable than rest after toil and labor? These words seem to have been spoken prophetically concerning Noah, who built the ark for the preservation of the human race, and who seems to have been a typical person; for when he offered his sacrifice after the drying up of the waters, it is said that God smelled a savor of Rest, and said he would not curse the ground any more for man's sake, Genesis 8:21; and from that time the earth seems to have had upon an average the same degree of fertility; and the life of man, in a few generations after, was settled in the mean at threescore years and ten. See Genesis 9:3.

#### Verse 32

Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth - From Genesis 10:21; 1 Chronicles 1:5, etc., we learn that Japheth was the eldest son of Noah, but Shem is mentioned first, because it was from him, in a direct line, that the Messiah came. Ham was certainly the youngest of Noah's sons, and from what we read, Genesis 9:22, the worst of them; and how he comes to be mentioned out of his natural order is not easy to be accounted for. When the Scriptures design to mark precedency, though the subject be a younger son or brother, he is always mentioned first; so Jacob is named before Esau, his elder brother, and Ephraim before Manasses. See Genesis 28:5; Genesis 48:20.

Among many important things presented to our view in this chapter, several of which have been already noticed, we may observe that, of all the antediluvian patriarchs, Enoch, who was probably the best man, was the shortest time upon earth; his years were exactly as the days in a solar revolution, viz., three hundred and

sixty-five; and like the sun he fulfilled a glorious course, shining more and more unto the perfect day, and was taken, when in his meridian splendor, to shine like the sun in the kingdom of his Father for ever. From computation it appears, 1. That Adam lived to see Lamech, the ninth generation, in the fifty-sixth year of whose life he died; and as he was the first who lived, and the first that sinned, so he was the first who tasted death in a natural way. Abel's was not a natural but a violent death. 2. That Enoch was taken away next after Adam, seven patriarchs remaining witness of his translation. 3. That all the nine first patriarchs were taken away before the flood came, which happened in the six hundredth year of Noah's life. 4. That Methuselah lived till the very year in which the flood came, of which his name is supposed to have been prophetic methu, he dieth, and shalach, he sendeth out; as if God had designed to teach men that as soon as Methuselah died the flood should be sent forth to drown an ungodly world. If this were then so understood, even the name of this patriarch contained in it a gracious warning.