

Introduction

After chronicling the depraved line of Cain (Gen 4:17–24), Moses went back in time to describe how the Lord kept his promise of a godly line which would eventually destroy the seed of the serpent (Gen 3:15).¹⁰⁰¹ He began this section by writing, “And Adam again knew his wife, and she gave birth to a son. And she called his name Seth, because ‘God has appointed to me another seed instead of Abel, for Cain killed him’” (Gen 4:25).

Eve spoke with a focus upon God, unequivocally attributing this son’s birth to the Lord. Her description of Seth as “another seed” indicates that she recognized redemption would come through him or one of his descendants.¹⁰⁰² Unlike Cain or Abel (Gen 4:8), he would father a godly line of people.¹⁰⁰³ Seth’s name derives from a verb (*sith*) which means “put,” “place,” or “appoint.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Despite Abel’s death, Eve trusted that God would fulfill his covenant.¹⁰⁰⁵ The Lord placed Seth on earth as a substitute for her second son.¹⁰⁰⁶

At the end of Genesis 4 another birth announcement appeared: “To Seth also a son was born. And he called his name Enosh” (Gen 4:26). In Akkadian, a language related to Hebrew, the verb form of Enosh (*anash*) means “to be weak, feeble.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Enosh’s recognition of his human weakness may have evoked his dependence upon God,¹⁰⁰⁸ for “Then it was that humanity began to call on the name of Yahweh.” However, the text notes that worship of the Lord began during Enosh’s lifetime, rather than specifying that he initiated it.¹⁰⁰⁹

The emphasis switched from glorifying humanity, as we saw in the lineage of Cain, to exalting God.¹⁰¹⁰ Although Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord (Gen 4:3–4), here divine worship began on a regular basis.¹⁰¹¹ Thus, ritual adoration of Yahweh did not begin in Moses’s era but restored much earlier devotion.¹⁰¹² These worshipers enjoyed a relationship with God as servants who depended upon him to fulfill his promise of a redeemer.¹⁰¹³

Ancient Near Eastern Genealogies

1) Gen 5:1: In contrast to most lay readers of Scripture, biblical scholars experience great fascination with the historical aspects of genealogies.¹⁰¹⁴ Names in the Ancient Near East (ANE) often made statements about a god. These include Ashurbanipal, Ramesses, and Nebuchadnezzar. Hebrew divine designations include “iah,” “el,” and “Jeho.” Consequently, something as mundane as people’s names informs us of their language and religious beliefs.¹⁰¹⁵ Biblical Hebrew emerged during 1400–1200 BC.¹⁰¹⁶ Therefore, names which indicate a belief in Israel’s God were likely translated from earlier sources.¹⁰¹⁷

¹⁰⁰¹Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 100–1.

¹⁰⁰²Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 193.

¹⁰⁰³Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 242.

¹⁰⁰⁴G. Vanoni, “*sith*,” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)*, (Rev. Ed., G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H.-J. Fabry (Eds.), D. W. Stott (Trans.) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 14:646–59, 652.

¹⁰⁰⁵Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 101.

¹⁰⁰⁶Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 115.

¹⁰⁰⁷F. Maass, “*enosh*,” *TDOT* 1:345–8, 345–6.

¹⁰⁰⁸Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 101.

¹⁰⁰⁹Walton, *Genesis*, 279.

¹⁰¹⁰Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 101.

¹⁰¹¹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 116.

¹⁰¹²Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, 116.

¹⁰¹³Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 193.

¹⁰¹⁴Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 248.

¹⁰¹⁵Walton, *Genesis*, 280.

¹⁰¹⁶Gene M. Schramm, “Languages: Hebrew,” *ABD* 4:205–14, 205.

¹⁰¹⁷Walton, *Genesis*, 280.

Genesis 5 begins by saying, “This is the book of the generations of Adam.” This introductory formula denotes our entry into a new major segment of this book of the Pentateuch.¹⁰¹⁸ By citing a document (*sepher*), Moses implied that he incorporated preexisting material into this chapter.¹⁰¹⁹ The phrase, “The book of the generations of...” occurs thirteen times in Genesis alone (eg. Gen 6:9; Gen 10:1; Gen 11:10, 27).¹⁰²⁰ Since the word “generations of” (*toledot*) derives from the verb which connotes “fathering offspring,” the word conveys a family or clan history.¹⁰²¹ Long sections of narrative intersperse with these genealogies.¹⁰²²

In this chapter, Moses reached back in time to the age of Adam, once again surveying the era of Gen 4 but from the vantage point of the line of Seth.¹⁰²³ Both this genealogy and that of Cain trace one line of descent until the final named generation, which lists three sons (Gen 4:17–22; Gen 5:32).

This repeated format draws our attention to the contrasts between the two records. Cain’s cursed line prominently features two murderers (Gen 4:8, 23–24). The line of Seth links the two founders of humanity: Adam and Noah (Gen 4:1–2; Gen 10:1).¹⁰²⁴ Some scholars cite the similarities between names in the genealogies of Gen 4 and Gen 5 to assert that these passages denote the same people. However, enough differences exist between them to reject that theory.¹⁰²⁵

For example, Moses listed Enoch as the seventh in the line of Adam through Seth and as second through Cain (Gen 5:19; Gen 4:17). Others cite Mahalalel via Seth vs. Mehujael from Cain (Gen 5:13; Gen 4:18). This type of repetition and of similar sounding names commonly occurred throughout the ANE.¹⁰²⁶

Genesis contains two distinct genealogy formats. A segmented genealogy traces an individual’s descendants through several of his children (Gen 10:1),¹⁰²⁷ while a linear genealogy follows one straight line of descent. The latter type often bridged the gaps between major events, such as the creation of humanity and the flood.¹⁰²⁸ As commonly occurs with linear genealogies, those falling outside the main line of descent receive little mention, if any at all.¹⁰²⁹

Genealogies in the ANE suggested continuity and relationship to increase a person’s power and prestige.¹⁰³⁰ By recounting the generations from Adam to Noah, Moses identified Noah as the legitimate seed who built a godly culture (Gen 3:15).¹⁰³¹ Indeed, the concept of a seed resembling the parent closely aligns with a royal line of descent throughout Genesis.¹⁰³² Eventually, Seth’s line would produce Abraham (Gen 11:1, 27).¹⁰³³

Unlike the number seven, which signifies divine completeness, the number ten

¹⁰¹⁸Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 121.

¹⁰¹⁹Josef Schreiner, “תולדות” (*toledot*), *TDOT*, 15:582–8, 584.

¹⁰²⁰Logos 7 word study of תולדות (*toledot*). In Hebrew, the English phrase consists of a single word in construct form.

¹⁰²¹Schreiner, “תולדות” (*toledot*), *TDOT*, 15:582–8, 582–3.

¹⁰²²Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land, 2nd Ed*, 101.

¹⁰²³Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 189.

¹⁰²⁴Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 112.

¹⁰²⁵Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 442.

¹⁰²⁶Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 442.

¹⁰²⁷Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 248–9.

¹⁰²⁸Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 5:1–32.

¹⁰²⁹Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 190.

¹⁰³⁰Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 5:1–32.

¹⁰³¹Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 109.

¹⁰³²Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land, 2nd Ed*, 105.

¹⁰³³Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 248.

symbolizes fullness on a lesser level.¹⁰³⁴ Throughout the ANE, genealogies tend to limit the number of generations to ten, just as we see in Gen 5 and in Gen 11. This also occurs in other biblical texts (Cf. 1 Chron 6:3–14 to Ezra 7:1–5).¹⁰³⁵ Ezra 7:3 skips six of the generations listed in 1 Chron 6:7–10.¹⁰³⁶

While “son” (*ben*) typically refers to a direct descendant, the Hebrew language also allows for it to mean a grandson (Gen 31:17–18, 26–28) or the distant offspring of a founding father.¹⁰³⁷ For example, the “sons of Levi” answered Moses’s summons. However, many generations had been born and died since Levi’s lifetime (Exod 32:26). After all, his descendants had been in Egypt for 430 years (Exod 12:40–41).

By limiting the Gen 5 and Gen 11 accounts to ten generations of important people or to those who lived at critical times, Moses presented the flood as the important dividing line in what scholars call primeval history (Gen 1–11).¹⁰³⁸ Knowing that these genealogies contain broken lines of descent which include only the most significant ancestors enables us to recognize that the periods of time from Adam to Noah and from Noah to Abraham almost certainly differ in length.¹⁰³⁹

Even the Epic of Gilgamesh—which existed hundreds of years before Abraham’s lifetime—recognized the flood as having occurred in the distant past.¹⁰⁴⁰ Gilgamesh hinted at this by nicknaming the man who had survived the flood “the Faraway” and expressing shock that he looked like a normal man.¹⁰⁴¹ By ca. 2000 BC, people understood that the world was already ancient. Therefore, they used existing records to develop early histories of their people.¹⁰⁴² Gen 5:1 confirms this by using the term “the document of the genealogy,” suggesting the incorporation of preexisting material.¹⁰⁴³

In keeping with the ten generations mentioned in this chapter, Gen 5 contains ten paragraphs. Although some variation may occur for important historical figures,¹⁰⁴⁴ the typical format appears as follows: Person A lived x years and fathered Person B; Person A lived y years after that and had other sons and daughters; Person A lived x plus y years and then he died.¹⁰⁴⁵ The text does not indicate whether these people experienced the life spans typical for all people in that era or whether the descendants of Seth lived for unnaturally long periods of time.¹⁰⁴⁶

An intriguing parallel to Gen 5 exists in the form of the Sumerian King List.¹⁰⁴⁷ The prism begins by stating, “When kingship was lowered from heaven, kingship was [first] in Eridu.”¹⁰⁴⁸ Most likely, a scribe composed this record after the Sumerian Empire put an end

¹⁰³⁴Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 111.

¹⁰³⁵Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land, 2nd Ed*, 105 n3.

¹⁰³⁶We see the same skipping of generations in Matthew’s gospel. In order to achieve 14 generations from Abraham to David, from David to the exile, and from the exile to Christ, Matthew omitted three of Judah’s kings (Matt 1:8, 17).

¹⁰³⁷H. Haag, “בֶּן” (*ben*) *TDOT*, 2:145–59, 150, 152.

¹⁰³⁸Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 111.

¹⁰³⁹Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 10–1.

¹⁰⁴⁰Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 11.

¹⁰⁴¹E. A. Speiser, trans., “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, tablet 11:1–4, 93.

https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up.

¹⁰⁴²Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 444.

¹⁰⁴³Schreiner, “תּוֹלְדוֹת” (*toledot*), *TDOT*, 15:582–8, 584.

¹⁰⁴⁴Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 110.

¹⁰⁴⁵Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 121.

¹⁰⁴⁶Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 256.

¹⁰⁴⁷“The Sumerian King List (SKL),” http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/doku.php?id=the_sumerian_king_list_skl. This site has an excellent photo of the best example and descriptions of several versions of this list.

¹⁰⁴⁸Thorkild Jacobsen, trans., “The Sumerian King List,” in *ANET*, 265.

https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n289/mode/2up.

to Akkadian rule over Sumer (ca. 2100–2000 BC). King Utuhegal wished to prove that Sumer had always been united into one empire, even though the rulers lived in different cities.¹⁰⁴⁹ Thus, the Sumerian King List consisted of propaganda.

This list of rulers notes that nine kings ruled before the great flood.¹⁰⁵⁰ Their reigns ranged from 18,600 to 43,200 years. Eight of these kings ruled from five cities over a period of 241,000 years. “[Then] the flood swept over [the earth].”¹⁰⁵¹ Some versions of this document cite ten generations before the flood.¹⁰⁵² The list continued after the deluge, citing thirty-nine kings with considerably shorter reigns. In fact, the longest post-flood rule endured for a relatively short 1560 years.¹⁰⁵³ This same pattern of progressively shorter lives occurs after the flood in Genesis,¹⁰⁵⁴ ranging from 600 to 110 years (Gen 11:10–11; Gen 50:26).¹⁰⁵⁵

Some significant differences exist between these two genealogies. While the Sumerian King List cites the first royalty, Genesis names the first man.¹⁰⁵⁶ In addition, the former calls several of the kings who lived after the flood priests and/or gods. It says: “Mes-kiag-gasher, the son of the (sun) god Utu, became high priest as well as king, and ruled 324 years...; the god Lugal-banda, a shepherd, ruled 1,200 years; the god Dumu-zi, a... fisherman ...ruled 100 years; the divine Gilgamesh, his father was a...high priest of Kullab, ruled 126 years.”¹⁰⁵⁷

While some of the men named in Genesis, such as Adam, could be considered priests (Gen 2:15), none of them were gods. Furthermore, the king list notes the length of rule; the book of the generations of Adam cites the length of life.¹⁰⁵⁸ In addition, some kings reigned approximately fifty times longer than the early descendants of Adam lived.¹⁰⁵⁹

The genealogy in Genesis 5 presents us with several difficult issues. We must address these patriarchs not becoming fathers until at least sixty-five years of age and their extremely long lives.¹⁰⁶⁰ While Adam’s lifespan of 930 years has more credibility than one of nearly 43,000 years, we cannot logically explain it with ease.¹⁰⁶¹

Complicating the matter, the most reliable Hebrew text (Masoretic), the Samaritan version, and the Greek translation of the Old Testament (LXX) frequently disagree concerning the ages of these patriarchs. In the case of the LXX, it appears that translators modified it to counter Egyptian dates for the origin of humanity.¹⁰⁶²

Not only does the amount of time which passed seem less important than the notion of completing the charge to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Gen 1:28),¹⁰⁶³ these dates of descent do not correspond to the archaeological record.¹⁰⁶⁴ As a result, the intended meaning may be that “Person A fathered the line culminating in Person B,” rather than “A

¹⁰⁴⁹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 251.

¹⁰⁵⁰Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 124.

¹⁰⁵¹Jacobsen, “The Sumerian King List,” in *ANET*, 265, https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n289/mode/2up.

¹⁰⁵²Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 124.

¹⁰⁵³Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 252–3.

¹⁰⁵⁴Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 124.

¹⁰⁵⁵This does not include Noah, who died at 950 years of age (Gen 9:29).

¹⁰⁵⁶Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 125.

¹⁰⁵⁷Jacobsen, “The Sumerian King List,” in *ANET*, 265, https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n289/mode/2up.

¹⁰⁵⁸Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 253–4.

¹⁰⁵⁹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 125.

¹⁰⁶⁰Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 130.

¹⁰⁶¹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 256.

¹⁰⁶²Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 130.

¹⁰⁶³Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 5:1–32.

¹⁰⁶⁴Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 133.

fathered B.”¹⁰⁶⁵ The key may lie in understanding the purpose of a linear genealogy: to establish generational legitimacy. Since some names may have been omitted,¹⁰⁶⁶ totaling the ages of these men to establish a date for the creation of Adam at 4004 BC produces enormous problems.¹⁰⁶⁷

Sumerians utilized a number system which combines base ten and base six.¹⁰⁶⁸ The Sumerian King List contains indications that the first king of Uruk reigned for “7 x 60 plus 7 days.”¹⁰⁶⁹ Consequently, Kenneth A. Kitchen surmises that the length of the reigns before the flood in that document had been multiplied by 60 to represent heroically long rule.¹⁰⁷⁰ However, this does not apply to Genesis, for the Hebrew civilization seems to have always used base ten. Furthermore, people would have fathered children when they were six or seven years old.¹⁰⁷¹

The scholar M. Barnouin views the ages of these patriarchs in terms of the length of time it takes for a planet to reappear in the same place in the sky, called synodic periods. Babylonians discovered this concept. Based upon Barnouin’s theory, Enoch’s lifespan of 365 years would represent perfection, since there are 365 days in a year (Gen 5:23).¹⁰⁷² Lamech lived for 777 years, equivalent to the synodic periods of Jupiter plus Saturn (Gen 5:31). The 962 years of Jared’s lifetime equal the synodic periods of Venus plus Saturn (Gen 5:20).¹⁰⁷³

By adding the number of years when each of these descendants of Seth fathered their first child and dividing by the number sixty, the sum of the remainders is a perfect 365. The same result occurs for their lengths of life. Since the cycles of these men’s years match the cycles of the heavenly orbs, Moses may have intended to symbolize that their lives were meaningful and complete.¹⁰⁷⁴

In sum, it remains unclear whether the ages of these historical figures in Adam’s genealogy are symbolic or literal. Moses’s purpose may have been to suggest that human history extends to an extremely distant past.¹⁰⁷⁵ When discussing the Sumerian King List in relation to Gen 5, Kitchen wrote, “BE WARNED! We are entering a zone of speculation....”¹⁰⁷⁶

As a result, most Old Testament scholars present only some general observations on the transmission of the image of God from generation to generation and on the fulfillment of the mandate to fill the earth (Gen 1:26–28).¹⁰⁷⁷ The long lives of the descendants of Seth may depict that they were unusually godly people (Deut 5:16, 33–6:2). On the other hand, this genealogy may indicate that the penalty of death gradually took its hold upon humanity (Gen 3:19).¹⁰⁷⁸

By recording precise numbers, this genealogical record conveys that Moses discussed real people. At the same time, the vast spans of their longevity indicate that they lived in an environment very different and remote from ours.¹⁰⁷⁹ While God’s blessing remained upon

¹⁰⁶⁵Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 254.

¹⁰⁶⁶Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 106.

¹⁰⁶⁷Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 133.

¹⁰⁶⁸Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 5:1–32.

¹⁰⁶⁹Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 121, <https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/as11.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷⁰Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 445.

¹⁰⁷¹Walton, *Genesis*, 281–2.

¹⁰⁷²Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 133–4.

¹⁰⁷³Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 111–2.

¹⁰⁷⁴Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 111–2.

¹⁰⁷⁵Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 134.

¹⁰⁷⁶Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 445.

¹⁰⁷⁷Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 134.

¹⁰⁷⁸Walton, *Genesis*, 282.

¹⁰⁷⁹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 134.

them in terms of their fruitfulness, Moses reminds us that the scourge remained by repeating the refrain, “and then he died.”¹⁰⁸⁰

a) Read Gen 5:1. What characteristics of ANE genealogies make it unlikely that God created Adam in 4004 BC? Why were these types of ancestral records important? What do you think Moses was implying by referring to the creation and blessing of humanity at the beginning of Seth’s genealogy rather than before recounting the descendants of Cain?

In the Likeness of God

b) Gen 5:1–2: Moses began this chapter by returning to the sixth day of creation. He wrote, “This is the book of the generations of Adam. On the day when God created humanity (*adam*), in the likeness of God he created him. Male and female, he created them. And he blessed them and he called their name ‘human’ (*adam*) on the day they were created.” While this paragraph sounds much like Gen 2:4, its content bears greater resemblance to Gen 1:26–28.¹⁰⁸¹ Repeating this information establishes that God also made the line of Adam—which originated after the fall—in his image (Cf. Gen 5:3).¹⁰⁸²

The Lord blessed those succeeding generations with the ability to multiply. However, while God created, Adam and his descendants procreated.¹⁰⁸³ Sexual differentiation characterizes humanity. The Lord described people in terms of gender, unlike the plants and animals, which he made in various species and kinds (*min*) (Gen 1:11–12, 21, 24–25). Not until the flood narrative does Genesis portray non-human creatures as male and female (Gen 6:19). Therefore, this verse affirms that the Lord created both men and women in his image as stewards over creation. Our sexuality comes as a gift from God, rather than an accident of nature or a mere biological phenomenon.¹⁰⁸⁴

As a result, those who are male need interactions with those who are female and vice versa, for neither gender comprises all that it means to be human.¹⁰⁸⁵ Just as the members of the Trinity exist in relationship, God designed us to experience community as men and women in order to express all that it means to be fully human (Gen 2:18, 22–24).¹⁰⁸⁶ This holds true whether we marry or remain single.

Throughout Genesis, fathers blessed their children (Gen 9:26–27; Gen 27:27–29; Gen 48:14–16; Gen 49:28). Here the father of us all does the same (cf. Gen 9:1; Gen 12:1–3). Ultimately, the Lord’s plan to bless humanity would be fully realized by the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15), the lion of the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:8–10).¹⁰⁸⁷ This royal savior would mediate God’s favor to all the people groups of the earth (Rev 5:4–10).¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁸⁰Walton, *Genesis*, 284.

¹⁰⁸¹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 126.

¹⁰⁸²Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 112.

¹⁰⁸³Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 255.

¹⁰⁸⁴Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–1*, 138–9.

¹⁰⁸⁵Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 97.

¹⁰⁸⁶Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3*, 83

¹⁰⁸⁷Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, 117–8.

¹⁰⁸⁸Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land, 2nd Ed*, 88.

Read Gen 5:1–2. What makes people different from animals in the Lord’s sight? Why is it significant that God created all of humanity to rule over his creation, even after the fall? How does this affect your view of yourself? Why do people need relationships with each other?

In Adam’s Likeness and Image

b) Gen 5:3–5: Moses began Noah’s ancestral record by referring to Adam’s creation in the image of God (Gen 5:1–2). In accordance with the purpose of Ancient Near Eastern genealogies, this indicates that Noah also received that divine image and mandate to rule over the earth (Gen 1:26–28; Gen 9:1–3).¹⁰⁸⁹ The text states, “And it happened that Adam [lived] one hundred and thirty years. And he fathered [a son] in his likeness (*demuth*), according to his image (*tselem*), and he called his name Seth.”

Since Moses intertwined “likeness” and “image” both here and in Gen 1:26, where they occur in the opposite order, the two words are virtually identical in meaning.¹⁰⁹⁰ Some scholars use this verse to contend that the image of God consists of a bodily resemblance. Indeed, the most common meaning of “image” involves physical appearance. Since the Old Testament stresses that God does not possess a body and remains invisible, this interpretation contains difficulties (Deut 4:15–16).¹⁰⁹¹ On the other hand, the Lord describes himself as having eyes and ears to communicate his awareness of the plight of the afflicted (Deut 11:11–12; Num 11:18).¹⁰⁹²

Seth was born in the image of the one created in the image of God. Understanding this phrase in its Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) context enables us to grasp how the Lord views humanity. In the ANE, the “image of God” applied to the king, primarily in terms of his function and his presence.¹⁰⁹³ Consequently, in recent years most scholars understand the “image of God” in Gen 1 and 5 in terms of exercising dominion over the world, ruling as God’s representatives on earth.¹⁰⁹⁴

An Akkadian proverb says, “Man is the shadow of a god, a slave is the shadow of a man; but the king is like the (very) image of a god.”¹⁰⁹⁵ While in Egypt, the oppressors of Moses’s original readers taught them that they existed solely to work for the pharaoh. In contrast, Genesis uses royal language to describe all of humanity, from the greatest king to the lowliest slave.¹⁰⁹⁶

People living in the ANE believed that an image carried the essential nature of what it personified. For example, an Egyptian stela in the British Museum states, “[Ptah, the Creator-god,] fashioned the gods...He installed the gods in their holy places, he made their offerings to flourish, he equipped their holy places. He made likenesses of their bodies to the

¹⁰⁸⁹Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 106–7.

¹⁰⁹⁰H. D. Preuss, “הַמִּצַּד” (*demuth*), *TDOT*, 3:257–60, 259.

¹⁰⁹¹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 30.

¹⁰⁹²Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 65.

¹⁰⁹³Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 30.

¹⁰⁹⁴Ian Hart, “Genesis 1:1–2:3 as a Prologue to the Book of Genesis.” *TynBul* 46, no. 2 (November 1995): 315–36, 317–19, http://tyndalehouse.com/tyndbul/library/TynBull_1995_46_2_06_Hart_Gen1Prologue.pdf.

¹⁰⁹⁵Robert F. Pfeiffer, trans., “Akkadian Proverbs and Counsels,” in *ANET*, 5.3, 426,

https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n451/mode/2up.

¹⁰⁹⁶Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 135.

satisfaction of their hearts. Then the gods entered into their bodies of every wood and every stone and every metal.”¹⁰⁹⁷

Consequently, people viewed worshiping an idol as equivalent to adoration of the god whom the idol portrayed. While it might not have looked identical to the god, it could accomplish the deity’s work.¹⁰⁹⁸ Similarly, the Hebrew concept of “image” does not necessarily specify an exact physical likeness.¹⁰⁹⁹ Just as people believed an idol accomplished the work of a god, so God gave humanity the task of doing God’s will in his temple, the cosmos (Gen 1:28; Gen 2:1–3; Isa 66:1).¹¹⁰⁰

In Mesopotamian thought, a son could bear the image of his father, but only a god could be created in the image of the gods.¹¹⁰¹ As a result, ancient rulers set up statues of themselves in distant parts of their realms to represent their authority.¹¹⁰² The Assyrian emperor Shalmaneser III recorded his victories on a black obelisk, noting that after defeating the people of Hattina and installing a new ruler, “I fashioned a heroic image of my royal personage; I had it set up in...his royal city, in the house of his gods.”¹¹⁰³ This is why Nebuchadnezzar II expressed such outrage when three Hebrew men refused to fall down in worship before the statue he erected (Dan 3:1, 8–15). They refused to recognize him as the incarnation of a god.¹¹⁰⁴

A phenomenal example of this concept remains in Abu Simbel, Egypt. Ramesses II ordered this temple complex carved from a cliff side along his border with Nubia to assert his power. It depicts his claim of victory over the Hittites at Kadesh. He set four images of gods, including Ramesses the Great himself, at the back of the largest temple. On his birthday and coronation day, which are conveniently six months apart, a ray of light shines to the back of the temple, illuminating three of the four idols. Only Ptah, the god of darkness, remains unlit.

As a former member of the royal family (Exod 2:10), Moses knew the Egyptians believed that the sun god Ra once ruled on earth as the first king of their nation.¹¹⁰⁵ Beginning with the Fifth Dynasty (2494–2345 BC), every pharaoh claimed linear descent from Ra. They adopted the title “Son of Ra” to indicate that a mortal woman and the god himself produced them.¹¹⁰⁶

“According to our likeness” more precisely defines what it means to be created “in the image of God” (Gen 1:26).¹¹⁰⁷ Most scholars assert that this phrase affirms that some distinctions exist between the creator and humanity,¹¹⁰⁸ just as Seth could not have been completely identical to his father.¹¹⁰⁹ The word “likeness” (*demuth*) occurs three times in Ezek 1:26 alone.¹¹¹⁰ Notably, the prophet did not say that he saw a throne or a man,¹¹¹¹ but

¹⁰⁹⁷James H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 46, <https://archive.org/stream/developmentofrel00brea#page/46/mode/2up>.

¹⁰⁹⁸Walton, *Genesis*, 130.

¹⁰⁹⁹Swanson, “תְּצַלֵּם” (*tselem*), *DBLSDH*, 7512.

¹¹⁰⁰Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 1:31.

¹¹⁰¹Walton, *Genesis*, 130.

¹¹⁰²Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, 67.

¹¹⁰³K. C. Hanson, “The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III,” trans. Daniel David Luckenbill, <http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDPCS/meso/obelisk.html>, 155.

¹¹⁰⁴Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, 67.

¹¹⁰⁵Niehaus, *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology*, 37.

¹¹⁰⁶James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt (5 Vols.)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906), section 187, 2:75–6, <https://archive.org/stream/ancientrecordse13breagoog#page/n110/mode/2up>.

¹¹⁰⁷Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 29.

¹¹⁰⁸Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 135–6.

¹¹⁰⁹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 29–30.

¹¹¹⁰Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “הַמִּצְוֶה” (*demuth*), *BDB*, 198, <https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/198/mode/2up>.

¹¹¹¹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 136.

“something like” them.¹¹¹² Thus, humanity bears great resemblance to God but is not divine,¹¹¹³ even as Seth resembled his father but was not Adam.

The Babylonian Creation epic *Enuma Elish* says, “Anu begot in his image Nudimmud (Enki). This Nudimmud was of his fathers the master; of broad wisdom, understanding, mighty in strength, mightier by far than his grandfather.¹¹¹⁴ Although this god was born in the likeness of his father, they were not identical.

Moses concluded Adam’s biography by writing, “And it was that the days of Adam after his fathering of Seth [were] 800 years, and he fathered sons and daughters. And so it was that all the days of Adam which he lived [were] 930 years. And he died.” Here we finally see Adam’s physical death which resulted from the fall (Gen 2:16; Gen 3:1–6). The refrain “and he died” at the end of the description of even the oldest patriarch points to the universality of the penalty upon Adam (Gen 3:19; Rom 5:14).¹¹¹⁵

Read Gen 5:3–5. How did people in the ANE view the image of a god? What are the implications of Seth having been born in the image of his father—who was made in the image of God even after the fall? How do we see both the blessing and curse of God in this text?

The Son of Adam, the Son of God

2) Luke 3:23, 38: Luke wrote for a Gentile audience (Luke 1:1–4), so his inclusion of a genealogy of Jesus in his account may seem rather odd. However, even Greco-Romans from his era delighted in tracing their ancestry.¹¹¹⁶ For example, Diogenes Laertius (third century AD) began his *Life of Plato* (427–347 BC) with an account of the philosopher’s maternal and paternal ancestry.¹¹¹⁷ Even Gentile readers appreciated Christ’s ancestral record.¹¹¹⁸

In contrast to Matthew’s genealogy for Jewish readers, which stops with Abraham (Matt 1:1–2), Luke reached back all the way to Adam. He compared Adam the son of God with Jesus the Son of God,¹¹¹⁹ asserting Christ’s qualifications to serve as the mediator between God and humanity (1 Tim 2:5).¹¹²⁰ Rather than beginning his gospel with Jesus’s ancestry, Luke placed this genealogy immediately after the Father affirmed Christ as the son of God and empowered him by the Spirit (Luke 3:21–22). This genealogy further legitimates Jesus as the son of God.¹¹²¹

¹¹¹² Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 29.

¹¹¹³ Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 66.

¹¹¹⁴ E. A. Speiser, trans., “Enuma Elish (The Creation Epic),” in *ANET*, lines, 16–9, 61, https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n85/mode/2up.

¹¹¹⁵ Meredith G. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006), 135.

¹¹¹⁶ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 123.

¹¹¹⁷ Diogenes Laertius, “Plato (427–347 B.C.),” in *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (trans. R. D. Hicks; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 3.1–2,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0258%3Abook%3D3%3Achapter%3D1>.

¹¹¹⁸ Bock, *Luke*, 123.

¹¹¹⁹ John Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 2002), 167.

¹¹²⁰ Bock, *Luke*, 124.

¹¹²¹ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 188.

Luke continued his account with Jesus leaving the Jordan River. The Spirit led Christ into the wilderness to experience the devil’s temptations regarding his status as God’s Son (Luke 4:1–11).¹¹²² The author did not ignore Christ’s Jewish royal identity, despite the nature of his audience.¹¹²³ Yet, this genealogy includes David’s son Nathan, rather than the messianic line of Solomon in Jesus’s lineage through Mary (Luke 3:31; 2 Sam 7:12–16; 1 Ki 1:39; Matt 1:6).¹¹²⁴ Most of the men Luke named are otherwise unknown (Luke 3:23–38).¹¹²⁵

Luke began this genealogy by writing, “And he, namely Jesus, beginning [his ministry] at about thirty years old, being son, as was thought, of Joseph.” Jewish people of that era considered thirty the appropriate age for a man to enter public service (Num 4:1–3).¹¹²⁶ Joseph had reached the age of thirty when he entered the pharaoh’s service (Gen 41:46), as did David when he began to reign over Judah (2 Sam 5:4).¹¹²⁷

The phrase “as was thought” is very important. God had just acclaimed Jesus as his son after his baptism. Therefore, his legal ancestry pales in significance.¹¹²⁸ This expression also hints at Christ’s miraculous conception within Mary’s womb (Luke 1:26–38).¹¹²⁹ Luke asserted that Jesus merely appeared to be the son of Joseph (Luke 4:16–22).¹¹³⁰ Although Jesus was not Joseph’s biological son, as the firstborn, he was Joseph’s legal heir (Luke 2:39–52).¹¹³¹ Even Christ needed legal legitimacy to operate within his Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) milieu.¹¹³² Luke concluded this genealogy with “the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”

The Lord kept his promise of a redeemer, working his will across thousands of years (Gen 3:15).¹¹³³ While this list asserts that Jesus’s life affects all of humanity,¹¹³⁴ Luke did not stop with Adam. This genealogy terminates with God himself, a feature unparalleled in the ancient world, including the Old Testament.

No ANE sources refer to Adam as a “son of God.” However, the Jewish philosopher Philo (20 BC–40 AD), touched upon this concept.¹¹³⁵ He wrote:

“But why should I speak of these men, and pass over the first man who was created out of the earth? Who, in respect of the nobleness of his birth can be compared to no mortal whatever, inasmuch as he was fashioned by the hand of God, and invested with a form in the likeness of a human body...And he was also thought worthy of a soul, which was derived from no being who had as yet come into existence by being created, but God breathed into him as much of his own power as mortal nature was capable of receiving. Was it not, then a perfect excess of all nobleness, which could not possibly come into comparison with any other which is ever spoken of as favors? For all persons who lay claim to that kind of eminence rest their claims on the nobility of their ancestors...”

“But the father of his man was not mortal at all, and the sole author of his being was God. And he, being in a manner his image and likeness according to the dominant mind in the soul, though it was his duty to preserve that image free from all spot of blemish, following and

¹¹²²Note that the word “if” (*ei*) (<https://archive.org/stream/greekenglishlex00liddrich#page/412/mode/2up>) in Luke 4:3, 9 can also be translated as “since.” Satan was well-aware of Jesus’s identity.

¹¹²³David E. Garland, *Luke* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 171.

¹¹²⁴Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20*, 170.

¹¹²⁵Garland, *Luke*, 173.

¹¹²⁶Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 188.

¹¹²⁷Garland, *Luke*, 170.

¹¹²⁸Garland, *Luke*, 171.

¹¹²⁹Bock, *Luke*, 124.

¹¹³⁰Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 189–90.

¹¹³¹Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20*, 174.

¹¹³²Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 190.

¹¹³³Garland, *Luke*, 173.

¹¹³⁴Bock, *Luke*, 123.

¹¹³⁵Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20*, 173.

imitating as far as was in his power the virtues of him who had created him, since the two opposite qualities of good and evil (what is honorable and what is disgraceful, what is true and what is false) were set before him for his choice and avoidance, deliberately chose what was false, and disgraceful, and evil, and despised what was good, and honorable, and true; for which conduct he was very fairly condemned to change an immortal for a mortal existence, being deprived of blessedness and happiness.”¹¹³⁶

While Adam failed the test (Gen 2:16–17; Gen 3:1–7), Jesus endured Satan’s temptation and remained faithful. By virtue of his status as God’s son and his obedience,¹¹³⁷ Christ proved that he met the qualifications to serve as the promised messiah (Matt 28:18–20; Heb 5:4–8).¹¹³⁸ In effect, Luke stated that the one who is really the Son of God is Jesus.¹¹³⁹ As the last Adam Christ can represent all humanity (1 Cor 15:20–22, 45–49). Therefore, the possibility of salvation remains open to people from every tongue, tribe, and nation (Acts 17:22–31; Rev 7:9–10).¹¹⁴⁰

Adam began a plague of sin which infected the entire human race. Starting a contagion is simple; ending one proves far more difficult.¹¹⁴¹ On the cross, Jesus took my place and paid the penalty for my sin (Eph 1:7–8; Col 2:13–14). Similarly, God charged his righteousness to me (2 Cor 5:21).¹¹⁴² Now when the Father looks at me, he sees Jesus. The blood of Christ covers all my sin (Ps 103:10–13). Consider the great magnitude of this promise: we can travel to the top of the North and visit the bottom of the South of Earth but can never reach the end of the East or West.

By his one act of sacrifice after a blameless life, Christ reversed the effects of the fall (Rom 5:12–21; Heb 4:14–16).¹¹⁴³

Read Luke 3:23, 38. Why did Luke mention Christ’s age? What was his purpose in going back to Adam instead of stopping with Abraham? How does Jesus, the Son of God, differ from Adam, the son of God? What hope does that give to you?

Walking with God

3) Gen 5:21–24: Scholars know virtually nothing about the men listed in Gen 5:6–20 aside from the meaning of a few of their names.¹¹⁴⁴ These men function simply as links in the chain between Seth and Noah.¹¹⁴⁵ Therefore, we will skip to Gen 5:21–24. Enoch’s biography begins by saying, “And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and he fathered Methuselah. And Enoch walked with God after fathering Methuselah for three hundred years. And he fathered [other] sons and daughters.”

¹¹³⁶Philo, “On the Virtues,” 204–5, <https://archive.org/stream/worksofphilojuda03phil#page/500/mode/2up>.

¹¹³⁷Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20*, 173–4.

¹¹³⁸Bock, *Luke*, 123.

¹¹³⁹Nolland, *Luke 1:1–9:20*, 173.

¹¹⁴⁰Garland, *Luke*, 172.

¹¹⁴¹Garland, *Luke*, 174.

¹¹⁴²R. C. Sproul, *The Gospel of God: An Exposition of Romans* (Great Britain: Christian Focus, 1994), 107.

¹¹⁴³Douglas Moo J., “Nature and the New Creation: New Testament Eschatology and the Environment,” *JETS* 49, no. 3 (9 January 2006): 458, http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/49/49-3/JETS_49-3_449-488_Moo.pdf.

¹¹⁴⁴Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 127.

¹¹⁴⁵Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 256.

Biblical genealogies tend to emphasize the people who occupy the seventh generations.¹¹⁴⁶ As the seventh in line from Adam, Enoch’s life of reverent devotion contrasts with that of Lamech, the seventh in line from Cain (Gen 4:23–24).¹¹⁴⁷ Although Enoch shares a name with the first son of Cain (Gen 4:17), the text portrays the son of Jared very differently (Gen 5:18).¹¹⁴⁸

Moses informed us that “Enoch walked (*hithhalak*) with (*eth*) God.” This same phrase appears in the account of Noah (Gen 6:9).¹¹⁴⁹ God expected Israel’s priests and the lay people of Israel to “walk (*halak*) with” him (Mal 2:1–7; Mic 6:8).¹¹⁵⁰ Shortly before his death, David charged Solomon and his descendants to “walk (*halak*) before” the Lord as he had (1 Ki 2:1–4). These texts imply that to “walk before God” means living a life of obedience.¹¹⁵¹ The sense of the phrase connotes worship and loyal service.¹¹⁵²

However, the Hebrew verb slightly differs in meaning from what we see in Enoch’s situation.¹¹⁵³ Regarding Enoch, Moses used a rare verb form (*hithpael*) which adds the prefix “hith” to the verb stem. This alters the meaning of the verb to depict an intense action performed in relationship with someone else.¹¹⁵⁴ In other words, Enoch walked in fellowship with God and God walked in close communion with Enoch.¹¹⁵⁵ More than living in a way which pleased the Lord, both parties experienced mutually-satisfying intimate communion (Lev 26:11–13).¹¹⁵⁶ This indicates that Enoch experienced a deeper relationship with the Lord than most other members of Seth’s chosen line.¹¹⁵⁷

Several patriarchs in Genesis “walked (*hithhalak*) before” (*panah*) God in an intimate covenant relationship (Gen 17:1–5; Gen 24:40; Gen 48:15–16).¹¹⁵⁸ In the historical books, King Hezekiah entreated the Lord to remember how he had “walked (*hithhalak*) before” him when it appeared that he was about to die (2 Ki 20:1–7).

Moses continued, “And all of the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.” Enoch’s years correspond to the number of days it takes for the earth to orbit the sun.¹¹⁵⁹ To the original audience, this conveyed that Enoch enjoyed great privilege,¹¹⁶⁰ even though his life was the shortest of those recorded in this genealogy. His relatively brief life occurred because “Enoch walked with God, and he [was] not, because God took him.”

By repeating the description of Enoch, Moses emphasized the outstanding nature of his piety. Here we see the only deviation from the formula of this record. “And he died” appears nowhere. However, “and was not” does occasionally serve as a euphemism for death (Ps 39:13; Ps 103:15–16; Job 7:21).¹¹⁶¹ Enoch did not suffer the fate of Adam and his other descendants.¹¹⁶² Enoch found true life in the midst of the penalty of death.¹¹⁶³ Thus, the

¹¹⁴⁶Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 257.

¹¹⁴⁷Richard S. Hess, “Enoch (Person),” *ABD* 2:508.

¹¹⁴⁸Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 112.

¹¹⁴⁹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 258.

¹¹⁵⁰Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 127.

¹¹⁵¹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 258.

¹¹⁵²Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 258.

¹¹⁵³Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 127.

¹¹⁵⁴Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar, 2nd Ed.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 385.

¹¹⁵⁵Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 114–5.

¹¹⁵⁶F. J. Helfmeyer, “הִלַּךְ and הִלִּיכָה” (*halakh* and *halikhah*) *TDOT* 3:388–403, 394.

¹¹⁵⁷Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 127.

¹¹⁵⁸Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 205.

¹¹⁵⁹Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 257.

¹¹⁶⁰Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 115.

¹¹⁶¹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 127–8.

¹¹⁶²Walton, *Genesis*, 279.

¹¹⁶³Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, 118.

greatest honor consists not of a long life but of God lifting a person into his presence without dying.¹¹⁶⁴ Only Elijah experienced something similar among Old Testament figures (2 Kings 2:1–12).¹¹⁶⁵

Surprisingly, the text does not say where God took Enoch. People in the Ancient Near East (ANE) would never have regarded an early trip to the underworld of Sheol as a reward.¹¹⁶⁶ This leaves us to assume that Enoch now resides with the Lord in heaven. Other ANE texts report similar depictions of devout men going directly to heaven without dying.¹¹⁶⁷

For example, the Sumerian King List records that, “Etana, a shepherd, the one who to heaven ascended, the one who consolidated all lands, became king and reigned 1,560 years.”¹¹⁶⁸ Just like Enoch, Etana came seventh in his line.¹¹⁶⁹ Another important parallel occurs in an ANE text published by R. Borger. It describes the seventh sage of antiquity who advised the seventh king as one “who ascended to heaven.”¹¹⁷⁰

Intertestamental authors elaborated upon Enoch’s significance by portraying him as a man who revealed prophecies concerning the end of this age (1, 2 and 3 Enoch).¹¹⁷¹ In the first two of these books, Enoch traveled through time and the universe to witness creation, judgment, and the cosmos.¹¹⁷² Although the New Testament author Jude regarded the prophecies in 1 Enoch as inspired by God (Jude 14–15), this does not imply that he held that text as equivalent to Scripture. Similarly, the Essene community valued 1 Enoch but did not list it among their Scriptures.¹¹⁷³ Jewish leaders from other sects also did not accept any of the books of Enoch into the Old Testament canon.¹¹⁷⁴

Read Gen 5:21–24. How does the hithpael form of the Hebrew verb “walked” affect our understanding of Enoch’s relationship with God? Why do you think the Lord took Enoch? Where do you think God took him? How can you walk with God?

Pleasing to God

4) Heb 11:5–6: The author of Hebrews sought to lessen the influence of those who persecuted the recipients of this letter (Heb 10:32–34). The writer called them to shift their focus to seeking the Lord’s approval, rather than directing their attention to the people surrounding them.¹¹⁷⁵ Therefore, this chapter concerning Old Testament (OT) heroes emphasizes their faith and their spiritual demeanor (Heb 11).¹¹⁷⁶

¹¹⁶⁴Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 257.

¹¹⁶⁵Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 115.

¹¹⁶⁶Walton, *Genesis*, 279.

¹¹⁶⁷Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 128.

¹¹⁶⁸Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), obv.ii 16–19, 81, <https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/as11.pdf>.

¹¹⁶⁹Walton, *Genesis*, 283.

¹¹⁷⁰J. Paul Maarten, “Enoch,” *NIDOTTE* 4:579–80, 579.

¹¹⁷¹Walton, *Genesis*, 280.

¹¹⁷²Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 257–8.

¹¹⁷³Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1983), 97.

¹¹⁷⁴Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 574.

¹¹⁷⁵David A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews”* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 390.

¹¹⁷⁶Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 375.

This passage pays tribute to the obscure figure Enoch,¹¹⁷⁷ noting that he received divine approval.¹¹⁷⁸ Genesis 5:21–24 does not explicitly mention Enoch’s trust in the Lord.¹¹⁷⁹ However, in this text he shines forth as an example of a “righteous one who by faith shall live” (Heb 10:35–39).¹¹⁸⁰ The author began by writing, “By faith Enoch was transposed. He did not see death, and he was not found because God translated him.” Note the difference from “and he [was] not, because God took him” (Gen 5:24). This occurs because the quotation comes from the Greek translation of Gen 5:24, rather than from the Hebrew text.

In secular Greek, “to transpose” (*metatithēmi*) means “to bring to another place.”¹¹⁸¹ Here the author interpreted the word to signify that Enoch bypassed death.¹¹⁸² Seeing (*eidon*) death meant experiencing it (Ps 89:48; Luke 2:26).¹¹⁸³ Since the author cited neither a point of departure nor a place of arrival, the text implies Enoch’s removal to heaven.¹¹⁸⁴

Clement of Alexandria (150–220 AD) attributed Enoch’s transfer to heaven to his behavior. He wrote, “Let us take (for instance) Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was translated, and death was never known to happen to him.”¹¹⁸⁵ Similarly, Jewish literature never cites Enoch as a model of faith.¹¹⁸⁶ According to the second century BC book of Sirach, “Enoch pleased the Lord, and was taken up; he was an example of *repentance* to all generations” (Sir 44:16, RSV).¹¹⁸⁷

Hebrews takes an entirely different approach.¹¹⁸⁸ Concerning Enoch, the author wrote, “before his removal he had been attested to be found pleasing to God.” Again, the switch from “walked with God” to “was found pleasing to God” adheres to the Greek translation of Gen 5:22–24.¹¹⁸⁹ The people who translated the OT from Hebrew into Greek typically avoided any terms which gave human characteristics, such as walking, to the Lord.¹¹⁹⁰ That appears to be what happened here, as well as in the quotation from the book of Sirach.¹¹⁹¹

Nevertheless, those who walk in intimate fellowship with the Lord do delight him (Col 1:9–10).¹¹⁹² Therefore, believers must emulate Enoch’s relationship with the Lord by pleasing God.¹¹⁹³ Developing a lifestyle of prayer enables us to draw near to the Lord (Heb 4:16; Heb 10:19–22).¹¹⁹⁴ Ultimately, we shall transcend death (Col 1:13–14).¹¹⁹⁵

However, we can accomplish this only by the work of God in our lives (Heb 13:20–21). All believers can experience the close fellowship with God which Enoch did, for the Holy Spirit resides within us (John 14:16–27; Gal 5:16–26). This gives us an advantage which even Christ’s disciples did not have while with him (Luke 24:49; John 16:5–15).

Indeed, “without faith it is impossible to please [him].” This statement summarizes

¹¹⁷⁷deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 389.

¹¹⁷⁸Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 336.

¹¹⁷⁹Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 574.

¹¹⁸⁰Gareth L. Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 529–30.

¹¹⁸¹Christian Maurer, “μετατίθημι” (*metatithēmi*), *TDNT* 8:161–2, 161.

¹¹⁸²deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 389.

¹¹⁸³Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 336.

¹¹⁸⁴Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 575.

¹¹⁸⁵Clement, *First Clement* (NPNF01; trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1897), 9:3, 7, <https://archive.org/stream/antenicenefather01robe#page/6/mode/2up>.

¹¹⁸⁶Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 336.

¹¹⁸⁷Italics mine.

¹¹⁸⁸Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 574.

¹¹⁸⁹Elpenor, <http://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/physics/septuagint-genesis/5.asp?pg=3>.

¹¹⁹⁰Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Rev. ed., 284.

¹¹⁹¹Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 336.

¹¹⁹²Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 376.

¹¹⁹³Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 337.

¹¹⁹⁴Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 376.

¹¹⁹⁵deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 390.

the argument of Heb 3:7–4:2. True worship necessitates two components of faith.¹¹⁹⁶ First, “the one who comes to God must believe that he exists.” No one can sincerely approach the Lord in prayer without a firm conviction of his reality.¹¹⁹⁷ The Lord is one of the things “not seen” (Heb 11:1–2).¹¹⁹⁸

Surprisingly, the statement that God exists has no biblical parallels. However, Scripture does condemn those who live as if there were no God (Ps 10:4; Ps 53:1).¹¹⁹⁹ The author did not mean any deity but referred to the God who first spoke through the OT prophets and then through his Son (Heb 1:1–3).¹²⁰⁰

People living in the Ancient Near Eastern milieu did not question God’s existence. The idea developed in the Greco-Roman era. “That God exists” appears in the form of a creed like those developed in the Greek-speaking synagogues of that era.¹²⁰¹ For example, during the war between Antiochus IV and the Maccabees, a Jewish legal expert said this to the king, “We worship with due respect the only God who really exists” (4 Macc 5:24, CEB).

The Jewish philosopher Philo (20 BC–40 AD) also alluded to this when he wrote: “In his before mentioned account of the creation of the world, Moses teaches us also many other things, and especially five most beautiful lessons which are superior to all others. In the first place, for the sake of convicting the atheists, he teaches us that the Deity has a real being and existence [Exod 3:14]. Now, of the atheists, some have only doubted of the existence of God, stating it to be an uncertain thing; but others, who are more audacious, have taken courage, and asserted positively that there is no such thing; but this is affirmed only by men who have darkened the truth with fabulous inventions.”¹²⁰²

Our belief requires far more than intellectual assent. It involves drawing near to the Lord in worship and service as we diligently pursue a relationship with him.¹²⁰³ Consequently, the author of Hebrews added this second aspect of faith, “And to the ones who continually seek (*ekzēteō*) him, he becomes a rewarder.”¹²⁰⁴ Seeking God involves religious devotion and prayer. Deuteronomy 4:29; Ps 34:4; and Ps 69:32–33 all employ the same word in the Greek translation of the OT.¹²⁰⁵

The word “rewarder” (*misthapodotēs*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and rarely in secular Greek. It literally means “a paymaster,” one who delivers a just wage.¹²⁰⁶ Thus, a life of faith necessitates confidence that the Lord shall deliver what he promises to his people.¹²⁰⁷ Throughout the book of Hebrews, the author declared that God is worthy of our trust (Heb 1:8–12; Heb 2:14–18; Heb 5:7–9; Heb 9:11–14; Heb 10:11–18).¹²⁰⁸ Enoch not only relied upon the Lord but experienced him as the source of his greatest delight.¹²⁰⁹ God promises that those who seek him with all their hearts shall receive the exceedingly great joy of finding him (Ps 17:15; Ps 43:4).¹²¹⁰

¹¹⁹⁶Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 576.

¹¹⁹⁷Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 376.

¹¹⁹⁸Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 531.

¹¹⁹⁹Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 577.

¹²⁰⁰Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 286–7.

¹²⁰¹Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 338.

¹²⁰²Philo, “On the Creation of the World,” in *The Works of Philo Judaeus*, vol. 1 (trans. Charles Duke Yonge; London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), section 170, 51, <https://archive.org/stream/worksofphilojuda01yonguoft#page/50/mode/2up>.

¹²⁰³Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 531.

¹²⁰⁴Present active participles in Greek depict a repeated or continuous action.

¹²⁰⁵Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 577.

¹²⁰⁶Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, “μισταποδοτής” (*misthapodotēs*), *BDAG*, 653.

¹²⁰⁷Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 376–7.

¹²⁰⁸Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 287.

¹²⁰⁹Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 338.

¹²¹⁰Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 287.

Consider Ps 37:4. What is the greatest desire of those who delight themselves in the Lord? Is it not God himself? For believers, to live in the presence of the Lord comprises our greatest aspiration (Rev 21:1–5).

Read Heb 11:5–6. Why does the quotation here differ from Gen 5:24? How does walking with God bring him pleasure? What does it mean to have faith in God? How did Enoch exemplify this? In what ways are we like Enoch?

Methuselah

5) Gen 5:25–27: Methuselah experienced the longest recorded life in the Bible. Based upon the genealogy in Gen 5, the patriarch who lived on earth for the shortest time produced the biblical person who dwelt upon the planet the longest.

In the Old Testament, longevity typically signifies divine favor (Ps 91:14–16; Deut 6:1–2; Prov 10:27).¹²¹¹ However, even the oldest patriarch lived less than a “day” (*yom*) by the Lord’s accounting (Ps 90:1–6). This prevented these men from achieving a God-like status (Gen 3:17–19; Gen 5:5).¹²¹² Those who reside in the Lord’s presence—as Enoch did—receive far greater benefits than a long life on earth (Gen 5:21–24).¹²¹³

Read Gen 5:25–27. In contrast to the account of Enoch, how does the record of Methuselah remind us of the effects of sin upon humanity?

¹²¹¹Note an exception in 1 Ki 14:12–14, where the Lord ended a child’s life to spare him from greater calamity.

¹²¹²Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 257–8.

¹²¹³Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 115.