

God's grace bestowed upon Enoch in life and death¹

Rev. J.M. Kleppe – *Genesis 5:21-24*

Sing: Psalter 422:8

Read: Genesis 5:1-24

Sing: Psalter 67

Sing: Psalter 426:1-3

Sing: Psalter 179:1-3

The portion of Scripture which we will consider with you, with the help of the Lord, you can find in Genesis 5, verses 21 through 24. There we read the word of God as follows:

And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters

And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years

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

The words of our text speak about God's grace bestowed upon Enoch in life and death.

1. He walked without God, through his first birth
2. He walked with God, through second birth
3. Walking with God he did not see death

Beloved hearers,

The chapter from which our text has been chosen may not have been so attractive at first sight. It gives a monotonous enumeration of facts and names without meaning to us. In Genesis 5, the chapter which has been read to you, we read all the time of being born, living, getting married, having children and then the irrevocable death.

¹ This sermon probably needs to be adjusted in length. As Sermonweb-team we decided to leave this to the discretion of the elder who is planning to read this sermon in a worship service.

And yes, how are we, children of men? Of the first four things we are prepared to hear and to know. But the last thing! Again and again we hear: “and he died.”

That is something we hate. Man wants to live. Man wants to enjoy life, every time. Every day man reaches for the treasures of the lost paradise consciously or unconsciously. Man knowingly puts the day of his death away, as far as possible.

That is because we do not read well what God’s Word says. Let us read what it says at the beginning of the chapter of Genesis 5. This is the book of the generation of Adam. That means, this is the history of your generation and my generation. It is the history of the generations of Adam’s children. That is what we are, all of us. Therefore, Genesis 5 clearly shows us the program of our lives: being born, getting married, receiving children and death. Or, as it is also expressed in a simple way: rising, shining for a moment (if it comes to shining, boys and girls, there are also such that die in early childhood or in the prime of life) and then death. To die is to meet God. One day it will be said of us, also: “and he died” or “and she died.”

We have no right to what has been said here of living, getting married and receiving children. All this we receive only if God gives it to us graciously, as a gift from heaven.

Congregation, have you learned to realize, yet, that we only have a right to die? That is the right a man has. “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” For that was the threat of the covenant of works.

Oh, when the Lord starts convincing a man’s heart, through the all-persuading power of His eternal Spirit, then we know the times when death pursues us like a creditor. Then the Spirit starts reproof of sin and of righteousness and judgment to come. Man begins to understand experimentally that he has deserved death and forfeited life. What an incomprehensible wonder it is then, that Heaven spares still and the earth bears still. What a wonder that God grants a man time to be converted. No, then we won’t put the day of our death farther from us every day. Then, death is at our heels. Then, death sometimes pursues us day and night, as the king of terrors. Then the all-

dominating question in our lives is: My soul, do you realize your lot? How shalt thou appear righteous before God?

Then, we seek God’s throne of grace with supplications in a secret prayer room. Do we have this? Do you have this, boys and girls? We are travelling to eternity. Do we have a prayer-closet where we say, “Lord, I must die and I cannot die. I lack a God for my heart and a Surety for my immortal soul?” Then it becomes so true what we have sung:

*Let not mercy be forgot,
For Thy goodness; sake O Lord.*

Perhaps you say, “The chapter that has been read is somewhat monotonous, because it is a genealogical register.” Such chapters are often skipped when a father or mother reads from the Bible at meals. All those difficult names and all these families which mean nothing to us and sometimes don’t appeal to us at all.

Fortunately, the Lord has a different opinion. The Lord does not skip these names and families at all. No, on the contrary He has promised to work through the generations and to glorify His grace in a man’s heart through the covenant of grace. In those families He will have His residence.

For in the days referred to by our chapter there were only two families on earth: the family of Cain and the family of Seth. What a difference there was between these two families! In Cain’s family we do not find the least fear of God, let alone the revelation of tender piety. In Seth’s family the fear of the Lord is shown immediately. Do you see what contrasting families manifest themselves already here? For we read that in Seth’s family men began to call upon the name of the Lord. There they assembled and sought each other, in the depths, to cry unto the everlasting God.

What a privilege it is to descend from a God-fearing family. We often think too mean of this. Then, there are prayers for us at the throne of grace, sometimes uttered before we had been born. Then, we are born under a prayerful mother’s heart, already before the time of our birth.

But on the other hand it is also true that grace does not run in the blood and that is also very comforting. Otherwise, it would never be possible for someone from the family of Cain. All Cain’s descendants would have to perish.

Then, it would never have become a great wonder for someone from the family of God-fearing Seth. Then nobody would ever be able to sing:

*With endless thanks O Lord to Thee
Thy wondrous works will I proclaim.*

Do you see how wisely the Lord deals with man? God sees to His honor. In the salvation of the sinner, all God’s virtues will beam forth. It will be forever and ever:

*Thou art, O God, our boast, the glory of our power;
Thy sovereign grace is ever our fortress and our tower.*

For Enoch, about whom we want to speak, was also a son of Adam. He was fallen away from God, though he had the privilege of descending from the god-fearing family of Seth. For Enoch, it was true also: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Enoch also knew a time that he lived without God. That’s why Enoch also knew an “in time past.” He knew a time that he walked without God and was a stranger from the covenants of promise, like everyone by nature. Onetime man walked with God. That was in the state of rectitude. Man was attached to his Creator so closely that he knew and noticed and loved God, when He made Himself heard in the cool of day. There man knew God by the His Fatherly heartbeat. Then, he heard the voice of the Lord in everything. He knew the Lord. He was an image-bearer of God.

But, when man voluntarily chose Satan’s side, through his misbehavior, the tie with God was broken. Now, we are all guilty before God. When man sinned he did not return to God, but fled farther and farther away from God, terrified. Our state before God is so miserable, that we cannot walk with our Creator any more. Nobody will ask of his own accord: “Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?” No, we can’t even walk with the Lord. So miserable our natural state before God is. Through sin, our communion with God was severed and a fathomless gulf has come between the Creator and His creature. Beloved, add to this, it is not only true that we cannot walk with the Lord any more, but we don’t even dare to walk with Him. Our hearts condemn us again and again, and our sins debts make us tremble and fear before His holy Majesty. Be honest, who dares walk with God, who has become for us a devouring fire and everlasting burnings? Who dares walk with that Holy Majesty, who by virtue of His incorruptible justice,

must punish us with temporal and eternal punishments? Our state of nature before God is so miserable that we don’t even want to walk with God. For walking with God means no less than a cordial forsaking of the world. A cordial farewell to the enjoyments of sin and the pleasures of the idols of this age and walking in a new and holy life. Following Him prayerfully and asking Him: “What wilt Thou have me to do?” “I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength!”

We do not want to walk with God. For the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Who likes walking with his creditor? Say yourself, who likes to walk with somebody that keeps reminding him of the debts he has contracted and asking for payment? We prefer to avoid that person, don’t we?

That’s the way Enoch had lived, even as long as sixty-five years. Enoch was also a son of Adam, conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity.

Boys and girls, that means that Enoch spent his childhood without God and without a Surety for his soul. We too, children? How serious that is! How awful it is when in our youth, already, we walk after the imagination of our own hearts. And yet, there are children of whom we read in God’s Word, who had the privilege of fearing the Lord, the supreme and everlasting God, from early youth. How happy they are, when they may ask at an early age: “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” When like young Samuel, we may lift our ear towards heaven and say: “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.”

Before the birth of his first son, Methuselah, Enoch lived without God, according to the Word of the Lord. That means, for sixty-five years he lived, perhaps, honorably in the sight of the world. This must doubtlessly have been so, for nowhere in God’s Word do we read that Enoch misbehaved in his time past. So it must have been a life without dissipations. For a world-ling it was, in all respects, an impeccable walk of life. But, yet, it was a life without God and a life outside God.

In comparison with his contemporaries, Enoch sought and found a wife at an early age. But this was also without God. How moving it is to have to discover our own life story in Enoch’s “in time past!” Enoch lived sixty-five years of his life without God.

And we, congregation? It is a word that concerns us. It is a word that comes to you personally, today. We cannot hear that Word without engagement. One day, we shall stand before Christ’s judgment-seat. God’s Word will never return unto Him void. In the great day, it will appear everlasting profit or everlasting loss for us.

How long, congregation, how long, young people, do we already walk without the Lord? Perhaps also sixty-five years already?

We read in Genesis 5 that people became very old in Enoch’s days. In comparison with the span of life in our days, he must have lived without God for twenty years. So, he must have been a relatively young father.

Boys and girls, do we still live without the Lord? Remember, you must die! We have sung of it. That also holds true for our young lives:

*Remember Lord, how frail I am, how few my years;
My life is like a cloud that comes and disappears.*

Each day, in which we can live on without the Lord is one day too many. It is the tale of death: “O man, remember you must die.” For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

What shall we do, presently, when death finds us. When the awful king of terrors comes up into the windows of our life? How shall we meet God then? For a life without God will eventually give a miserable death without God. John had to write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord!” But miserable the man is who will eventually get lost forever outside God.

2. He walked with God, through second birth

Now our second thought: He walked with God through second birth. For we read: And Enoch lived sixty and five years and begat Methuselah three hundred years. The great turning-point in Enochs’ life took place, at the age of sixty-five years. We can conclude from God’s Word, that he began to walk d in that year. You may say: When was that radical change in the life of this sixty-five year old man? Well, of his conversion we know hardly anything. The Bible is not a book full of conversion stories to satisfy our curiosity. The Bible is the Word of God; it is the revelation of God for us, children of men. It is the book that teaches us of life and death, of blessings and curses. It is the Word in which God makes Himself known

and also the salvation in His Son Jesus Christ. So, the Bible tells us little or nothing of Enoch’s conversion. O, the Lord has so many ways and means at His disposal to bring a sinner to His feet as a poor sinner. How often, the Lord used the death-bed of a precious father or mother as a means in His hand, to give one of their children a deep and lasting impression and convince him or her of the necessity of regeneration and conversion to God. The opposite also happens; the Lord is free and sovereign. There have been many parents who had to lose a dear child through death so that they realized themselves that they lacked God and with Him everything for their poor soul. With Enoch it was different again. Only a few words have been written about it, but still impressive because it was so true and divine. That’s what counts in our lives.

With Enoch, the Lord seems to have used the birth of his first child, for his conversion is connected with that birth! It says, literally, and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah! These words don’t stand there without reason. Each word has its particular meaning in the Bible. God’s Word has been inspired by God the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit had these words also written down with emphasis; “...after he begat Methuselah.”

Who knows, it may have become an incomprehensible wonder of God for Enoch that he had become a father or he may have been present at Methuselah’s birth and it may have become an incomprehensible wonder that the Lord had spared the life of his wife and given new life. Or, perhaps, who knows, he had been granted to realize through God the Holy Spirit at the birth of his first son: “Enoch, remember you must die, for having been born only once, means sure perdition! You must be born again!”

At any rate, the Lord has begun to work in Enoch’s heart through His eternal Spirit. The Holy Spirit reproves a man of sin, of righteousness and of future judgment. Then, sin becomes guilt before God. Then we begin to realize that we have provoked, angered and insulted a merciful God, worthy of being loved and served. We begin to realize and confess this. O, that confession becomes a cordial confession that we are to blame for having lost the righteousness with which we have been created.

The Lord, also, clearly convinced Enoch’s heart of the judgment to come. We’ll come back to this in our last thought. Of this, Enoch gave a powerful

testimony to his contemporaries as a preacher of righteousness. O, what a great change took place in Enoch’s life! He had lost God! He lived sixty-five years without God!

Besides, boys and girls, he had not devoted his young life, the best part of his life, to God! How he will have regretted all this with bitter tears. During all these years, he had not cried out against the sins of Cain’s family. And, as he had probably not lived in the world as a gross sinner (at least we don’t read of any gross sins in Enoch’s life), his conversion was probably not so stormy either. I have said already: the Lord has as many as a thousand ways and means at His disposal to bind a man’s heart to Him. But yet, whoever and in whatever way; all of them get to know God. All of them are placed before the mirror of His holy law. Each heart is convinced of the judgment to come and filled with unspeakable Godly sorrow that works a repentance to salvation not to be repented of. Then it becomes true in our hearts and lives: how do I get reconciled with God? How do I ever get converted to God?

Congregation, Enoch was born again. For his walking with the Lord was no less than a fruit and consequence of the great work of regeneration from God. May I ask you, beloved, do we also know a year in our lives of which we say: I shall never forget this! No, however old I may become, nothing will ever be able to wipe this year out of my memory.

Do you also know of such a year in your lives, boys and girls, that God came into your lives? Older people, do you know the time in your lives that you were privileged to experience to your surprise:

For my affliction Thou hast seen, and known my many woes.

You will understand, Enoch never forgot that sixty-fifth year. Do you know such a year? O, how necessary this is in our lives. For man goes to his long home. Do we know of such a year that the Lord sought us; that the Lord showed to be stronger than we? Was it perhaps the sixth year of your life, boys and girls? Or, can we still live without the Lord every day? How serious that is! Do seek the Lord and His strength.

Was it perhaps in your twelfth or twentieth year? Or was it your sixty-fifth year just like with Enoch? Or if you do not know that year exactly, then your way of life should give a testimony of the good work the Lord has begun in your heart.

There is more, for we should read the words literally: Enoch walked with God. What a wonder that this should be possible. He did not walk with his equal, no, he walked with God. In himself, Enoch was born from Adam, just like you and I. He was also an unholy person before God. He was wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Enoch also had a heart that testified; Lord, depart from me; for I desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. Enoch was also entirely corrupt, incapable of doing any good and inclined to all wickedness. The Lord is so holy, that even the holy angels, the holy spiritual beings round the Throne always cover their faces and cry out: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.” The Lord is righteous, perfectly holy, glorious and blessed.

Now it says here, that such an unholy child of man walks with the holy God! Here the Creator walks with His creature.

The prophet Amos says: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” For we all walk; that is true, but we walk the wrong way. We all walk without God, away from God, on self-chosen ways. If we want to admit this, with our hearts or not, it is so true what Isaiah says: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way.” That means, we all are walking with our backs turned to God and our faces turned to the world. Therefore, an almighty wonder of divine grace is necessary for the Lord to meet a miserable son of man, for God to come into our life and for the Lord to stop us in our course of life. Whether it is in a conversion like Saul had (in this also the Lord is free) or in which He draws us in our early youth with bands of love. But, however it may be, the Lord is always the first in His seeking love. He is always the first in His preserving faithfulness. It is so true what Zion may sing:

*He saved me in the trying hour
Hence shall my mouth His praise prolong*

So it was with Enoch. Enoch was privileged to know what the Lord says: I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. What a wonder, congregation; then we must become speechless. What a wonder that God, so glorious, so high, so holy, so full of majesty, so exalted, a God surrounded by thousands and tens of thousands of holy spiritual

beings, is willing to walk with a miserable son of man, with an earthworm like we are. O, what an infinite distance God must cover to walk with a man.

It is so true what Jeremiah says: Thou hast persuaded me and I was persuaded. Thou art stronger than I and hast prevailed. Also, what Isaiah says: I am sought of them that asked not for Me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by My name. “Enoch walked with God.” Walking with somebody indicates something like friendship. Walking with somebody indicates intimate companionship. Usually, we walk with somebody who is very near to us. We walk with a friend or an intimate friend. When we walk together, we generally look at each other. We look each other in the eyes. Especially, we listen to each other’s voices. This gives a particular meaning to the intimate companionship during our walk.

Enoch walked with God. Walking with God means: Walking together like friends! No, then they are not ashamed of each other, for they are friends. They are not ashamed of revealing a piece of their hearts to each other or sometimes their whole hearts and those things that we don’t so easily tell to anybody else. Things we are ashamed of, which we neither can nor dare confide to anybody else we reveal to a friend during an intimate walk. Then, we sometimes tell each other everything. We may pour out our hearts to each other. That is real friendship! Real friendship does not fear that we will be put to shame by a friend, for love casts out fear. He that fears is not made perfect in love.

How wonderful it is if we may not only say to each other how surprised and happy we are, but also if we may speak with somebody about the struggles and the cares we must experience. If we may tell each other of the difficulties and the temptations and whatever can be in a man’s heart.

Look, so it is also in walking with God. Then, it also holds true: “Love casteth out fear.” “For he that cometh to God,” says the apostle, “must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

When we may walk with the Lord, then we may tell Him everything. What a privilege that is! What we neither can nor dare tell somebody else we may tell the Lord. Then the Lord says:

*Before Me pour ye out your heart
For I am your defense.*

Not only for natural things, but also for spiritual and eternal things. That gives a tender walk with the Lord.

Do you know of this, congregation? For that is walking with God. Then we cannot take one step without the Lord any more. Then, it is in our hearts, “Lord, having to do without Thee, is missing everything for time and eternity, but being privileged to have Thee is having everything.”

Enoch walked with God. Walking with God is also a prayerful life. A prayerful life is a dependent life. A dependent life gives a devoted life. That is a tender life. Then we say:

*But when I owned my trespass
My sin hid not from Thee
When I confessed transgression,
Then Thou forgavest me*

Then, we lay our whole heart bare in a walk with the Lord. We confess sincerely: Lord, in Thy judgment Thou art just and in Thy sentence right.

No, then a man will not keep anything back, for grace makes a man honest and upright before God. Grace makes a man walk like Benhadad’s servants, the ropes of self-condemnation on their heads and causes to cry out, “I am worthy of Thy wrath, for I have sinned against Thee.”

He that walks with the Lord always speaks with Him and always sighs to Him. Though it is not always with spoken words, it is still with a prayerful, childlike heart. It is that heart that says: Thou knowest my ways and my conversation, I won’t hide anything from Thee, O my God. Such a man goes to God with all his problems and cares, with all his pains and sorrows and asks Him for light and for wisdom. He tells Him the deepest heart secrets and most inward soul’s conflicts. Walking with God implies that we don’t keep anything back. We tell the Lord the filthiest sins and the most gruesome iniquities, yea, the greatest wickedness of our hearts; everything that oppresses and afflicts or soul. Do you know what is such a wonder? The Lord is no land of darkness, for when we walk with the Lord He will answer: “But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at My word.” Sometimes the Word says: “Before they call I will answer.”

How wisely the Lord deals with a soul that comes after Him. O, then the Lord will often draw out the secrets of the heart in such an intimate and loving way, by asking the soul a question. That’s what He did on the Emmaus road with the harassed disciples travelling to Emmaus. In order to draw out their hearts He asked: “Why are you so sad?” He also asked sorrowful Mary Magdalene at the open grave: “Why weepest thou?” He restores the soul that flees to Him weeping by means of His precious promises.

He looks at them with an eye of everlasting love. It becomes so true what we have sung together:

Grace and truth shall mark the way

Where the Lord His own will lead.

You know that we read of Enoch in Hebrews 11, in the gallery of heroes of faith. We cannot explain these words of Genesis clearly unless we also consider those from the Epistle to the Hebrews. There it says this (you should read it again at home today) that Enoch pleased God. He pleased God with a godly conversation. What a testimony, congregation! What a testimony that puts us to shame! To be jealous of! He has pleased God!

Can that also be said of you, boys and girls? Especially when we are young we are bent on pleasing each other. This is not wrong, for that also the Lord has put in our hearts in a man’s heart. If only we would understand that this is a gift from heaven. But the apostle says of Enoch not that he pleased a man or woman but that he pleased God and that he even had this testimony. The apostle says: “As ye have received Christ the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” That means in the same dependence, in the same humility, in the same tenderness, in the same holy conversation, hungering and thirsting after His righteousness.

Oh, what a great care this requires! The smallest sin disturbs the blessed and sweet communion with the Lord. There may be some among us that must confess with tears in their eyes: “O God, in the time of my first love it was so different!” People of God, do search your hearts to find the cause why the Lord must accuse you and say: “I remember thee, o My children, the love of thine espousals, when thou went after Me in the wilderness, in the land that was not sown. I remember the time of thy first love.”

Enoch walked with the Lord not only for a couple of years, but as many as three hundred years! With him it was not just a morning cloud and an early dew. No, all the remainder of his life in this world, till the last moment of his death he lived close to God in a tender way. He walked with the Lord till he was at home with Him forever.

Now you may say: How did Enoch hold out for three hundred years? How is that possible for a man? The answer may be simple. Enoch held out because God held Enoch for three hundred years. Enoch was put outside with all his piety and he was put inside through divine grace. Only because God held Enoch, did Enoch walk with God for three hundred years. He could not do anything in his own strength. He has also had to experience: Thy servant like a sheep has gone astray. Do you understand that it was God’s strength? Only because God held him did he remain on the right way.

And whenever he knew the times in his life that he feared to have lost God again and he had to miss the felt grace which made him cling to God, then Enoch prayed and sought till he had found the Lord again. What a wonder!

Is not that a life to become deeply jealous of, boys and girls? Enoch could not do anything without the Lord. Through grace he remained in the saving faith, walking with the Lord for three hundred years. For three hundred years Enoch walked in the first love; he was privileged to walk, held by God’s hand. When looking up to God Enoch could sing, as we now will sing together:

*I love the Lord, the found of life and grace
He hears my voice, my cry and supplication.*

We sing Psalter 426: 1, 2 and 3.

Whenever Enoch was granted to look up to God humbly and childlike, he experienced for three hundred years: “I will guide thee with Mine eye”

O congregation, what a glorious thing it is, walking with the Lord. Then we are not the boss anymore! When you meet a child walking outside with his father, then the child mostly walks at father’s hand. The child loves to walk like that! And a child is never worried that Father has lost his way. For the heart of the child is full of trust and the eyes look up to father who knows everything and is never mistaken. How ashamed we should be! The poet even says this: “Yea, though I

walk through the valley of shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.”

It is our third thought: **Walking with God he did not see death.**

Enoch walked with God. Somebody may say: “Yes, but Enoch’s circumstances were quite different from the ones we are living in. The circumstances in which Enoch lived were extraordinary favorable?”

He must have been a man who had drawn into himself; somebody that had nothing to do with our life every day. You may say: I am married, I have a family, I have a wife, I have children, or I have a busy job or business. You should know the people among whom I have to live every day.”

Beloved, let’s have a look at Enoch’s life once more. It was such a meaningful life. We also read of Enoch that he had a family. Enoch also had married a wife. He was in the midst of life. Do not overlook this; we won’t have any excuse before the eternal God. For we read this: “And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years.” And pay attention to what follows: and begat sons and daughters.

That means this: Enoch walked with the Lord during the years that he got children. He walked with God in those years that his family grew more and more and as a result his daily cares increased more and more. In our opinion we may add this: He walked with God in the years that he had to enlarge his business (if he had one) because his growing family needed more and more!

Besides, he was a prophet in his family, just like we should be, fathers! Are you? We have promised to be so before God and His congregation. Enoch was also priest in his family. He also had to rule his family like a king. In one sentence: Enoch walked with God in the busiest time of his life. But it stands there so impressive: He walked with God, in everything, every day with a deep feeling of dependence.

There are people that say: “If I were not married, if I did not know married life then I would perhaps walk with God, also.” This does not take away anything from the sincere love and affection for a wife, a husband and children, but they consider all the circumstances of life (the busy married life, the busy family life, the busy business life) as the great impediment, as a stumbling block in fearing

the Lord and walking with Him. They say, “If I had not all these worries, then...” O, Congregation! Don’t talk like that! Solomon says something else. He says, “They have sought out many inventions.”

There is so little time for this and for that. Young people, is there still any time to die? And what if it became eternity today? That is possible, isn’t it? Our life is like a cloud that comes and disappears. Is there any time to die, to draw up an inventory of our life? For dying is meeting God.

Enoch begat sons and daughters in the fear of the Lord! It was not just a matter of passion; it was a matter of experiencing marriage in all its aspects. For the words: “and he begat sons and daughters” follows in close connection with...’and he walked with God.” Therefore, keep holy matrimony and family life in high and holy esteem! Never think that need be an impediment in walking with God. Moreover, Enoch lived in just such a godless and superficial time as our days are. Then also Satan walked about as a ravaging wolf. For he lived (we can read that in the Bible) in the days that Cain’s generation spread out enormously; not only in numbers, but also in wickedness. In those days giants were born. Giants in size and in length, but also giants in science, culture and knowledge. And, above all, they were giants in sin. Enoch lived in the days of Lamech, the boaster, the murderer, the mocker. Lamech said: “I have slain a man to my wounding and a young man to my hurt.” God’s word says that in those days the hatred and violence were so great that there was no natural love any more, but that people killed each other for a trifle.

Congregation, now you can read this in the newspapers every day. In much the same days we are living with our children. It is exactly the same godless age as the days in which Enoch lived and walked with God. It was an age in which the descendants of Seth and the unbelieving descendants of Cain intermarried. But the Lord has separated His people in this world. Boys and girls, bearing the sign of Holy Baptism on our foreheads means always bearing the name of a triune God with us! The Lord sees us anywhere, also when we have bad friends, when we are in ungodly, sinful company, or when we join the world. For it is also true for us, what God required from Israel. It was a people that should dwell alone! The more worldliness increases, the more we sink down in brutish unbelief and the faster we live towards the total final judgment.

Enoch did not serve the gods of his age, like we do in many respects. He lived so close to God that he prophesied. You can read that in the epistle of Jude, verses 14 and 15. There also Enoch’s name is mentioned. He made himself clear of the blood of Cain’s family. He delivered himself from the blood of his wife and children. He spoke the Word of God outside his family. Jude, the apostle, tells us the contents of Enoch’s prophecy. Time and again he prophesied: “Remember you must die! The Lord is coming! The Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints! You must die! You must meet God! The Lord cometh!” That’s what Enoch prophesied.

Finally, we also read this: “...and he was not.” Just a few words; “for God took him.” Hebrews 11 says more about it: “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him.” He died young, boys and girls. What do you say? Did Enoch die young? I read here that Enoch became three hundred and sixty-five years old! Do you call that young?

Yes, he died young all the same. For in proportion to the ages which were then attained, he did not grow old. You know, in those days people became about nine hundred years old, but not Enoch. In comparison with our life-span Enoch died at the age of thirty to thirty-five. That is young, is not it?

And yet Enoch was happy, for the Lord spoke of Enoch: My soul desireth the first ripe fruit. Enoch was ripe for the heavenly barn at an early age. His corn was ripe early. Then God’s sickle came. His being taken away was his being taken up into everlasting glory.

Young people, when we may die in this way, after having walked with the Lord, then we are with God early. He did not see death. Walking with God, he crossed the boundaries of eternal bliss.

God took him. We don’t read that of all the others in Genesis 5. Of all the others it says: “And he died.” Only of Enoch we read: “For God took him.” The Lord changed him in the twinkling of an eye, just like Moses later, of whom we also read something like that. Of Moses we read that he died according to the word of the Lord. The Hebrew text says, “He died at the mouth of the Lord.” There have been ancient rabbis who have said: He died through a kiss from the mouth of the Lord in His precious favor.

God took him.

Congregation, don’t expect such a death as Enoch had. But we do have to expect death. Death is the wages of sin, also for us, the king of terrors, appearing before Christ’s judgment seat.

O, the anguish and wrestling of death can be so terrible. Just like Enoch, we need both grace to live and grace to die, to appear before God’s judgment seat without terror. What man is he that liveth and shall not see death?

When the Lord takes His children home, dying becomes receiving and everlasting inheritance. And it is often a tender life. A walk with the Lord often gives a free departure out of this life full of consolation. Then it is so true: “Mark the perfect man and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.” In one of the old Scottish divines I read that he calls death for God’s children a bridal page. A bridal page who appears with his bridal carriage; a bridal page who comes to fetch the bride of Christ, to lead her into the arms of her heavenly bridegroom Christ, where she may hear from His mouth: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Then these words will sound in all eternity:

*How blessed, Lord, are they who know the joyful sound,
Who when they hear Thy voice, in happiness abound!
With steadfast step they walk, their countenances beaming
With brightness of the light that from Thy face is streaming*

Death has lost its venomous sting in the blessed body of the Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. He killed death on Calvary. He has brought life and immortality to light, so that the walk of faith of all those that have loved His appearance may end in the boasting of faith: “Death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Christ is the resurrection and the life.

Finally, Hebrews 11 says of Enoch: “and he was not found.” They must have looked for him but they could not find him for God had taken him.

Oh congregation, how his wife and children must have looked for him very seriously. For, what do you think? If you had to lose such a husband in such a manner, would not you look for him? He was not found.

But what do you think, young people, if you lost such a mother or such a praying father, one that has delivered himself faithfully from the blood of his family?

Faithfully, by means of prayer and exhortation, what a loss that would be! Wouldn’t that be a great loss? But they did not find him, for God had taken him away.

So it was with the prophet Elijah. When God took up Elijah into His eternal glory, with a chariot of fire and horses of fire, there were also fifty sons of the prophets who went out to look for Elijah but did not find him.

We can understand how people missed Enoch; his friends who were attached to him, whom he exhorted, encouraged and warned. How all his acquaintances must have missed him; they that had listened to his prophetic words: Remember you must die, for the Lord is coming.

How he must have been looked for by his enemies, who attempted at his life. They looked for him in order to kill him. Oh, how serious it is, when we lose such prophets. Christ says: “Pray ye therefore the Lord of harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest, for the harvest truly is great but the laborers are few.” How we have to pray that instead of the fathers may be the children. We are going to close. The way Enoch lived in the same way he was taken away by God. He left a precious testimony, namely: he walked with God. Now, I want to ask you this, also you, young people, you also small children: With whom do you walk? Who is your companion?

No, don’t say now, that is not important for me personally, or not yet important. No, that is important for you indeed. With whom do you walk? Who is your companion on your journey to eternity? Do you still walk according to the fashion of these days? Do you still walk with the pleasures of sin? Do you walk with the friends of the world? Do you delight in everything that is of the world? Or, do you live on quite at ease? Perhaps, you have an impeccable life outwardly but yet you are without God and outside His communion. Oh, how moving this is! For walking without God means dying without God presently. And if we die without God we shall be lost without God forever.

But still, it is the God of Enoch, who stands at the borders of eternity where staggering sinners stand on the brink of an unfathomable abyss where He calls

out to them: “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.”

Presently, an Enoch-like people who have walked with God, will inherit eternal salvation and understand what Asaph once sang:

And afterward make me in glory abide.

Amen.

Concluding Psalter: Psalter 179:1-3