

16. The Early Descendants of Adam

'This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died. And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died. And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. 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. And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died. And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Genesis 5:1-32).'

Having seen the beginning of the godly line in the previous chapter, Genesis 5 now further develops the godly line through to the time of Noah and his family. Yet it also shows how the consequences of sin continued to be felt through the death and passing of each generation.

It is not known with certainty whether Genesis 5 records an unbroken line of descendants or only mentions significant members of that line (Jude 14 and 15 suggests a literal lineage). The method of recording only significant persons in a genealogical lineage was fairly common in this region and the passage may therefore indicate an even more significant period of time between Adam and Noah. It should be noted therefore that this passage is a genealogy and not a chronology.

Verse 1: This verse marks the beginning of a new section within the Genesis account. The use of the 'toledoth' formula once again is to be noted here marking the beginning of a new section as previously discussed (See Study 1 of this series). This point is further highlighted by the summary of the creation of man at the beginning of this section, having already dealt with the creation of man in the earlier chapters of Genesis.

This verse does point out the special creation of man in the likeness of God, which is then

contrasted with the birth of Seth after the likeness of Adam and not God (See 5:3).

Verse 2: This verse succinctly summarises the creation of Adam and Eve, and therefore the beginning of the human race. It also points to the ‘oneness’ of a husband and wife in marriage (2:23,24).

A point of interest here is that the verse mentions ‘in the day when they were created,’ clearly pointing to the literal understanding of the creation account.

Verse 3: It is interesting that in this verse only Seth is mentioned by name as a direct descendant of Adam. This would seem to be because Seth fits into the overall objective of the passage, while the other descendants do not. In this chapter we are tracing the godly line through Seth to Noah, therefore Cain, Abel and others of Adam’s descendants are not the focus of God’s purpose at this point.

As mentioned in verse 1, Seth has been born after the likeness and image of Adam, indicating a significant change since the introduction of sin and its consequences into the world.

QUESTIONS: How has sin changed the progeny of Adam since the fall? How has the image of God in man been affected by the fall?

Does verse 3 hint at the corruption of sin being passed from Adam to Seth? Explain your answer.

Explain how are your children born in your image or likeness?

Verses 4-8: This passage records the incredibly lengthy lifespans of our early ancestors. All throughout this period our early forefathers probably knew each other and had many sons and daughters, greatly increasing the population of the world.

Though there was such incredible longevity in these early days upon the earth, there is the introduction of ‘and he died.’ This constant refrain reminds us of the curse as a consequence of sin and how it now began to be felt and seen upon the earth and in the lives of men. Sin and its consequences were making their mark, as indeed they still do today.

Verses 9-21: These verse record further evidence of the consequences of sin and the extension of the human race through the lineage of Seth. These verses not only continue to relate the advance of death and the growth in population upon the earth, but they also introduce to us the name of Enoch. Enoch as we shall see was a very important member of the godly line.

NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY QUESTION HERE: What is the significance of Enoch having ‘walked with God’ in Genesis 5:22?

Verse 22: This verse stands out from those that have gone before with the introduction of the phrase, ‘walked with God.’ Enoch ‘walked with God,’ indicating an especially intimate relationship with God. This is not to say that others in this lineage didn’t have a right relationship with their Creator, only that Enoch’s was an especially close relationship with God.

QUESTION: Is it possible for men and women to ‘walk with God’ today? Explain how this is so.

Verses 23 and 24: Having ‘walked with God’ for so many years suddenly Enoch ‘was not; for God took him (5:24).’ His disappearance from the world of men seems incredibly similar to that of Elijah. What had happened to Enoch in the prime of his life?

Simply put, God had taken him from the place of men and received him in His presence immediately (Hebrews 11:5). He was not because he was no longer present on the earth, but present with His God. God had decided to withdraw His testimony to men (Jude 14 and 15).

Verses 25-27: Two things mark the life of Methuselah, the first of course being his father Enoch. When Methuselah was 300 years old his father could not be found because ‘God took him (5:24).’ How this impacted on the life of Methuselah and the rest of his extant family is unknown, but we can speculate that it caused quite a stir at the time and probably for many years afterwards.

The second thing about Methuselah to note is that he is recorded as the longest lived individual in the world. This doesn’t appear to mean anything particularly significant, having outlived his ancestor Jared by only 7 years (5:18-20), whom he possibly knew for a considerable period of time. However, his name may be interpreted to mean ‘when he is dead it shall come,’ which may very well be a prophetic reference to the coming judgement of the flood. Shortly after the death of Enoch the flood came. Therefore even the name of Methuselah might well have been a continuing testimony to the message and warnings issued by his father Enoch as a preacher of righteousness.

Verses 28 and 29: Lamech is to be noted here as having a similar faith to that of Eve (4:1, 25), as he looked to his son Noah as a potential vessel of blessing from the Lord. Here is evidence of pre-flood faith in the person of Lamech. Lamech saw in Noah a possible deliverance from all that the curse represented and by such represents an example of faith in the promise of God to deliver man from sin and its consequences.

Verses 30 and 31: The rest of the days of Lamech pass without comment in the

Scriptures. It is probable that Lamech lived to see the beginning of the end for man at that time, with Noah's call to construct the ark. However, there is nothing recorded of Lamech's response to the call of Noah to this work.

Verse 32: This verse indicates to us that Noah was 500 years old before his wife gave birth to Shem, Ham and Japheth. This was about 100 years before the flood (7:11; 9:28,29). It would appear from the record of the flood in the coming chapters of Genesis that Noah had no other children before the flood. If there were other children, these all perished in the flood.

QUESTION: How were the days of Lamech similar to our own day? Are you able to relate to Lamech in any way? Explain.

INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY

What is to be understood by the 120 years mentioned in Genesis 6:3?

All Bible Studies by the author may be freely copied, printed and distributed. We ask only that they remain unedited (unless approved by Kevin Matthews) and contain the Aussie Outpost name and website URL: <http://particularbaptist.com>. This Bible Study is by Kevin Matthews. It is asked that this notice be included as is. Thankyou.