

Genesis: Beginning “Good” with God
New Pilgrim Baptist Church Bible Study
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Lesson: Genesis 5:1-6:8: The Generations of Seth and The Cause of the Flood

Genesis 4:17-24 offers a genealogy of corrupted people. Cain’s lineage list concludes with his son, Lamech who tried to reduplicate the sins of Cain. He continued the violence in the world.

Genesis 4:25-26 offers a turn of events. Adam and Eve have another son, Seth. Seth means “appointed.” He was another more well-favored son like Abel. And in his line, people began to call on the name of the Lord (4:26). Genesis 5 explores Seth’s genealogy and sets up the story for the restart of humanity under Noah, who comes from Seth’s lineage.

Genesis 6 follows the narrative of Seth’s line, but human beings still got it wrong by engaging in intercourse with the “sons of God,” the angels. It was this and other wickedness which caused for God to flood the world to rid it human iniquity.

Biblical Takeaways (5:1-6:4)

1. Children of Adam are Children of God (5:1-4)
 - a. This “book” or list helps us understand the theology of Genesis; all human beings are Adam. When he made them, he called them all Adam. This is why when the Bible speaks of men most often women are included.
 - b. Seth was made in the “likeness” and “image” of his father, Adam. To say, “likeness” and “image” is to speak of parental language. When God spoke of us made in his image and likeness, this was another way of saying we are God’s children.
2. The human lifespan in Genesis (5:5, 5:25-27): Scholars note there the Assyrians and others believed ancients could live for hundreds of years. Some have suggested that the years are metaphorical or that they counted years differently. I would argue that prior to the flood sin was slowly draining the life out of human living potential. It took a long time to die. The more sin took its toll, the less we knew of God, the easier it was to die.
3. Enoch defies Death (5:21-24)
 - a. Where the narrative describes the deaths of so many, there is a note of hope with Enoch. He walked with God. This language suggests a steadfast and faithful relationship. This is what God wanted of all humanity but did not receive.
 - b. Due to his faithfulness, his walk caused him to be translated. The promise of translation is what every believer receives who walks with God (see Heb 11).
4. The Sons of God and Human Failure (6:1-8)
 - a. Who are these sons of God? The children of Seth? Regular faithful people? Likely, they are understood as divine beings, angels.
 - b. They had intercourse with women and produced abominable hybrids. How? This is unknown but a reality to which the Bible gives witness. The book of Enoch, a non-canonical book, argues they produced giants, though the Bible does not say this. This expansion of the story is called “The Book of the Watchers.”
 - c. In 6:5ff, the Lord declares judgment after he witnesses the “wickedness” and evil inclination of humans. His Spirit would not be with them forever (6:3, 120 years), but now he will judge them because they made him sad for making them. We never want to make God sorry for being good to us. But even still, Noah found favor with God. There will always be a remnant.