

February 12, 2006 AM

**FAITHFULNESS IN THE FAMILY
GENESIS 5:1-32**

Structure of Genesis: built around ten of these “generations” sections (Heb. = *toledot*). 1:1–2:3 - intro/creation; 2:4–4:26 - what happens with the first family—Adam and Eve, then Cain and Abel; 5:1–6:8 - historical situation for the flood.

Structure of 5:1-32 - “ten name” genealogy-type is followed again in the latter part of chapter 11:10ff. and runs from Shem (the son of Noah) through Abraham (who then becomes the highlighted figure in the divine drama). Point of genealogy: who is the true image-bearer/promise-bearer, the rightful heir to the throne of the world.

One other preliminary remark: What about these life spans? Take them at face value. Real years.

1. FROM THE IMAGE-BEARING SON ... (1-5)

Original Creation (1-2): note the “image-ry” from 1:26-27 in 5:1b-2.

Why this reiteration? God is re-creating the world through the re-creation of a new “man.” Note 5:2 the naming of them as “Man.”

Seth as the image and likeness of Adam (3): *Seth as the new “seed”* - Why does God trace Adam’s line through Seth and not Cain? Is this arbitrary or purposeful? Does it mean anything? What are we being told about Cain and about Seth (if anything)?

Cain is the firstborn, but he is disinherited because of his murder of Abel. Cain has been excommunicated from the family. He lost all rights to the promises of God. God makes this plain when he drives Cain away from the land into “the wilderness” or the place of wandering (cf. 4:11ff.).

Then God raises up another “seed” in the place of Abel whom Cain slew (4:25-26). Being “in the place of Abel” means that he is a true worshiper like Abel. He is a faithful son. And he is the one through whom God’s promise will come. Seth is “the seed of the woman.”

Seth and the “image” - purpose of genealogy: lets us know who is the rightful heir of God’s promises.

Man created in God’s image is to bear that image, in part, by being fruitful and multiplying, filling the earth with other image-bearers. The image of God is “given” to man to “reproduce” through the blessing of procreation. So: (1) the image of God still exists in man in the world. It is mediated through Adam (and through parents in general), but it is still the image of God.

(2) God’s blessing is still a part of man’s image-bearing existence. He is still procreating in the world.

“Image” language specifically connects Seth to being “a son of God.” You may note that even though procreation and cultural development are part of the family of Cain, “image” language is not connected to them like it is Seth. (Note Adam understood as “the son of God” in Lk 3:38.

“Image” and sonship (of God) walk hand-in-hand throughout Scripture being revealed fully in Jesus the Son who is the image of the invisible God. He is also, as Luke makes clear in his genealogical record in chap. 3 of his Gospel, in the line of Seth.

Other sons and daughters: (1) The mention of the birth of other children is an indication of the “image of God” once again. (2) These children are not “named” because the purpose of the author is to trace the line through whom the promise will come.

“and he died”: Man was originally created to live. He was to find his life in God who would communicate it to him through the Tree of Life. But once Adam sinned, the promise given to him by God concerning dying the day he ate of the Tree of Judgment (= Knowledge of Good and Evil) came to pass. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, cut off from the Tree of Life (a point that is emphasized in the text; cf. 3:22-24).

Man was created to proceed to maturity from glory to glory. Sin brought death to this process.

Death is bad because it is brought on by sin. But death is now necessary for redemption because the only “cure” for sin is death followed by resurrection (cf. e.g., Rom 6:7; 7:1-3).

2. TO THE FAITHFUL PROPHET... (6-24)

Although creation language is used in the first part of this chapter, Seth and the rest of the children of Adam mentioned here are not said to be “created” or “formed” but rather “fathered” or “begotten.” New creation will come *through* present creation.

Enoch: Other people in this line up to this point probably also “walked with God.” Why God chose to translate Enoch like this and not the others is really unknown to us. But we do know this: he was a faithful man.

Two NT commentaries on Enoch: Hebrews 11:5-6 and Jude 14-15. First, Jude makes mention of the fact that Enoch is the “seventh from Adam.” Why make mention of that?

He is being compared and contrasted with the 7th from Adam through Cain: Lamech, the apex of wickedness. In juxtaposition to Lamech, Enoch is the epitome of what it means to be the seed of the woman, the true image-bearer.

Jude, referring to a non-canonical book, says that Enoch was a prophet that prophesied judgment on an ungodly generation. He stood faithfully against the wicked line of Cain and pronounced God’s coming judgment on them. Noah, who was also a preacher of righteousness (2Pt 2:5), was just following in the footsteps of great-grandpa when he did what he did.

Hebrews: says that Enoch, before he was “translated,” was accounted as one who “pleased God” (the writer of Hebrews takes the LXX reading of this text). He then goes on to say that without faith it is impossible to please God. The logic is, then, that Enoch was a man of faith, or a faithful man.

“Walking with God”: seems to have some allusion to the Garden life and God walking in the Garden in the Spirit of the day (3:8). Enoch was a worshiper of God who clung to God’s promises. “Walking with God” is what will characterize Noah’s life (6:9).

“Walking with God” is what is to characterize every one of God’s children. Cf. Micah 6:8; a call to be faithful.

Author of Hebrews says it means that he “pleased God.” What does that mean? Cf. Rom 12:1-2; 14:18; 2Cor 5:9; Eph 5:10; Col 3:20; Heb 13:21. To please God is to walk in the way of faith. It is to have your life shaped and molded by God’s word. It is to be loyal to God. It is to be a true worshiper of God. Enoch was that man. And that is the person that God expect each one of us to be.

Enoch does not die. The text says “he was not for God took him.” Hebrews says that God “translated” him. The words used here are the same words used to speak about Elijah and his “translation” being taken up by the chariot (cf. 2 Kgs 2:1, 5, 9, 10).

What actually happened here we do not really know. All we know is that Enoch did not die but was translated into the immediate presence of God. This is, no doubt, an anticipation of the resurrection of Jesus and his believers.

But this may have been also the original intention that God had for Adam. As Adam progressed from glory to glory, he may have been transformed and brought into God’s immediate presence until the time heaven and earth were joined.

God vindicated the man and his message by transforming him so that he should not see death.

3. THE “REST” OF GOD (25-32)

Methuselah died in the year of the flood, when Noah, his grandson, was 600 years old.

Noah and new creation: Lamech gives commentary on the meaning of his son’s name, indicating his continuing faith in the promise of God. He names his son in accordance with that promise.

The name Noah means “rest.” Cf. Gen 2:15 where God “puts” or “rests” man in the Garden that he has made. The connections here would be obvious to those reading this in Hebrew. “Noah” is associated with the Garden and its rest.

Cf. also Gen 3:17-19 - the ground will fight against man (includes “earth” and “man” who comes from the earth). Noah will bring “Garden rest” back to man through (1) retributive justice (cf. 9:1ff.) and (2) “new creation” (cf. the vineyard and the wine).

Application: (1) Death without resurrection indicates that the curse has not yet been overcome.

Application: (2) God is faithful to his promises no matter what the situation looks like around us.