**Lesson 8**

**26, 27 July 2021**

**Genesis 4:17-6:8**

**Comments from Chapter 7: *Study with Prayer***

* Jen Wilkin uses the acronym P.A.R.T. to structure prayer, which she explains as follows:

PRAISE: glorify God for who He is and what He has done

ADMIT: confess to God where you have fallen short

REQUEST: ask God to forgive your sin and to meet your needs

THANK: give thanks to God for who He is and what He has done

* Note that this particular structure begins and ends with a focus on God. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between “praising God” and “thanking God”. I think the main difference is that praise focuses on God Himself; we tell God what we admire about Him or find worthy of praise. Revelation 4:8 provides an example of praising God for *who He is*: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” Revelation 4:11 is an example of praising God for *what He has done*: “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” When we thank God, on the other hand, we tell God how grateful we are for what He has done *for us* or how His deeds have *impacted our lives*. Psalm 30:2, 3 is an example of David thanking God *for healing him*: “O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.”
* If you find it difficult to get started, turn to any of the Psalms from 146 to 150 and read it aloud. They are fairly short, and each one begins and ends with “Praise the Lord!” The verses in between are filled with reasons to do so. Once you have read through one of these, you will probably think of many other things to praise God for on your own.
* I appreciated that Jen showed us how to incorporate prayer into every stage of our study: before we begin, in the midst of it, and after we finish our assignment. She had some very practical suggestions, so I think it would be beneficial to read those pages together in class again today.

**Jen Wilkin, *God of Creation* video #7, “Named and Known”**

**Genealogies** – Why should we even care about genealogies? What purpose do they serve? We tend to just zip through them as quickly as possible so we can get to something more interesting. But remember that biblical authors pick and choose about what they will include and what they will leave out, so if a genealogy is included, we can be sure it is relevant. For example, when Moses wrote a genealogy for Cain that was *six* names long, he had a reason for doing so. The number “6” is associated with “man” (i.e. not God). For example, you have probably heard that the number “666” is the mark of the Beast in Revelation. That indicates that the Beast is just a man, not God as he will claim. The genealogy for Seth, however, is *ten* names long: 10 is a number of *completeness*. It is important to remember that not every name may be included in a given genealogy (i.e. some generations may be left out); the author has a purpose in mind, and he selects the names that are necessary to communicate what he wants to tell us.

**Why Genealogies?** – These lists would be really important for the Israelites wandering in the desert and getting ready to enter the Promised Land. Remember that they had no written copy of Scripture, and they needed to have a way to remember their roots. The way these lists were written, with a certain rhythm and repetition, would be a help to memorization for them. But what about us today? An important “take away” for us to remember as we read genealogies is that they remind us that **God cares about individuals**. When God looks down on Earth from on high, He doesn’t just see a teeming mass of humanity. He sees individual people, people who have names and faces and individual circumstances. And just as the names in the genealogies were recorded in Scripture, so each one of our names is recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life. God cares about names, and we should care about them, too.

**Purpose of These Two Genealogies** – The genealogies given in chapters 4 and 5 of Genesis serve several purposes. 1) They show us the development of the unrighteous line of Cain, and the righteous line of Seth. 2) They show us the continued progression of sin and death. 3) They show us the continued faithfulness of God to accomplish the promise He made of bringing a Deliverer, the seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent. The names in these lists may seem meaningless and unfamiliar, but they do have meaning, and the lists mention certain individuals who will show up in other parts of Scripture. Note that both lists contain an Enoch and a Lamech.

**“Cain built a city named after his son Enoch.”** – Cain had been sentenced to being a wanderer, but he built a city and stayed there in defiance of what God had told him. But if God condemns you to wandering, you will never truly be at home anywhere, even if you do try to put down roots.

**Lamech** – Cain’s descendant Lamech was seventh in line from Adam. His name means “brought low”. We are told that he took two wives, which indicates that he had no concern for God’s law for marriage, given in Genesis 2:24, that marriage is to be between one man and one woman. We will encounter multiple marriages many times in the Bible, many times by men of faith such as Jacob and David. God worked through these men to accomplish His purposes, but it is never okay to violate God’s principles, and when we examine the home lives of these men and others, we see that multiple marriage *always* creates bad situations in the home.

Lamech had three sons, Jabal, Jubal and Tubal-Cain. One was into music, one did iron working, and one was a herdsman. So we see that art is being created, beauty is being created, functional things are being created—by people who don’t call on the name of the Lord. So the cultural mandate is going forward. This is what we see in our world today. We may enjoy music composed by an unbeliever or marvel at a lovely building designed by an unbeliever. God is able to bring about beauty, even through the hands of the wicked. Art belongs to God. He will employ skilled artisans to build the tabernacle in the wilderness under Moses and then the temple in Jerusalem during Solomon’s reign. God is not against the arts; He loves them, and He will derive glory even from something that is not done in His name.

**Women in Cain’s Line** – We can learn something about the culture that Cain is breeding from the names given to the women in his line. Lamech’s two wives were Ada and Zillah. Ada’s name means “pleasure, ornament, or beauty”, and Zillah’s name means “shade” (as in a covering of long, luxurious hair). His daughter Naamah’s name means “loveliness”. So what were women valued for in this culture? They were objectified and valued for the way they looked.

**Lamech’s Poem** – We have seen poetry before in Genesis. God spoke a poem as He created humankind, and Adam was poetic in his reaction to Eve. Now we see the first post-Fall poem—and it is about *murder!* Mankind has moved from committing murder to being bold about it, and now actually writing poetry to celebrate the fact that they have done it. So Lamech writes this poem and directs it to his two wives. After the Fall, God said that men and women would try to dominate each other. Women would use their appearance and sexuality, while men would use physical strength. So when Lamech writes his poem and specifically directs it to his two wives, he is saying in essence, “Don’t mess with me. I can kill you.” Ada and Zillah were probably terrified to be around him.

Lamech is singing about killing a young man for striking him. He is celebrating the fact that he dealt out a punishment that far exceeds the crime. And when he sings, “If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold,” he means, “Hey, God’s protection of Cain is nothing compared to Lamech’s protection of himself!” The numbers are significant here. Both seven and ten are numbers of completeness, so combining them to get seventy indicates something that is “utterly complete”. Jesus would later play on this idea when He told Peter that he should forgive someone who offends him “seventy-times-seven times,” indicating that he should *forgive to the uttermost*. This is set in direct contrast to Lamech, who sought to *punish* to the uttermost and then bragged about it.

So Lamech is the seventh in the line, and he sings this song of boasting. It is hard-hearted, cruel, self reliant, and it objectifies and terrorizes women. Truly the line of Cain is “brought low” in Lamech.

**The Line of Seth** – The name Seth means “appointed” or “set in place of”. Eve sees Seth as a replacement for Abel whom she has lost, and she is probably hoping that Seth will be the one who will crush the head of the serpent. Although we know that Seth is not the promised redeemer, it is true that the redeemer will be born through one of his descendants. Seth had a son named Enosh, which means “frail one” or “mortal”.

**“People began to call upon the name of the Lord.”** – This is a sign of hope. Up to this point, God has been doing the calling, seeking out Adam, Cain and others when they sinned and giving them an opportunity to repent. Now men are seeking the Lord and calling out to Him as times grow dark, and they have an increasing awareness of their sin.

**“Adam…fathered a son in his own image”** – This wording is very similar to “God created man in His own image” from chapter 1. We are all born in the image of God, but that image has been obscured by sin. We all have Adam’s sinful image stamped on us, and it needs to be removed so that the image of God will show more and more clearly.

**Seth’s Genealogy** – Seth’s grandson was Kenan, which means “sorrow”. Kenan named his son Mahalalel, “God be praised”. Mahalalel’s son was Jared, which means “shall come down”. Jared’s son was Enoch, which means “dedicated” or “disciplined”.

There is a mournful refrain that keeps recurring in this genealogy, like the tolling of a death bell: “and he died.” Why is this thought continually repeated? It shows that God was telling the absolute truth when he warned Adam, “in the day that you eat it, you will *surely* die.” Each generation and each person saw that death was an inescapable certainty.

**Enoch** – Enoch is #7 in Seth’s genealogy, so we are intended to see him in comparison with Lamech from Cain’s genealogy. It says that he lived only 365 years (which is not a long time when compared with how long everyone else in the list lived). Once again the number 365 signifies completeness, i.e. a complete year of time. He is probably the most righteous man in the list. The Bible says Enoch began to “walk with God” after the birth of his son Methuselah, so evidently something about his son’s birth had a spiritual impact on Enoch’s life. Remember that God would walk in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve until they sinned. It was a time of fellowship and communion together. It is amazing that even though Enoch lived in an increasingly evil, corrupted world (not long before the Flood of judgment fell), he lived such a righteous life that he could walk with God. His “walking buddy” was the one, true God.

But Enoch didn’t just walk with God. We see from the book of Jude, verses 14 and 15, that he also proclaimed the impending judgment of God upon a wicked and depraved generation. Enoch obviously believed that a judgment was coming, and he apparently reached that conclusion around the time of the birth of Methuselah.

**Methuselah** – Methuselah’s name means, “on his death it shall come”. His name is a prophecy. If we do the math, we discover that the Flood came right when he died, or very shortly thereafter. Enoch was right to give his son this prophetic name. And his age—he is the longest living human in history—reveals just how long suffering and slow to judgment the Lord is. People were so wicked in Enoch’s time that he knew judgment was coming, but God waited almost 1000 more years to send it. He was giving men yet another opportunity to repent. Our God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**“The sons of God married the daughters of men.”** – There are many ideas about what this means. The Bible doesn’t say, and so people speculate about who the “sons of God” are. Some people think that they are fallen angels who mated with human beings, and that their offspring are the giants mentioned at the beginning of chapter 6. However, if we consider the context that we have just covered, we see that there are two genealogies immediately preceding this verse. One is for the unrighteous line of Cain and the other is for the righteous line of Seth. It makes sense from a continuity standpoint to interpret verse 6:2 as meaning that sons from the righteous line looked at the daughters of the unrighteous line and said, “Let’s marry those women.” Was this a wise idea? No! God repeatedly warns His people throughout the rest of Scripture not to intermarry with ungodly people. He warns them that ungodly idolators will lead them astray. This unholy alliance with unbelievers leads to a dangerous offspring, the Nephilim or giants. We will see these giants mentioned again many years later when Joshua and Caleb go on a survey trip into the Promised Land, along with ten other scouts.

**“His (man’s) days shall be 120 years.”** – Jen interprets this to mean that God is saying He will send the Flood in 120 years. So man has just 120 years left to repent. But man did not repent. *Every* intention of his heart was *only* evil *all the time*, and that grieved God to His heart. He is sorry that He has made man. When God looked around after the six days of creation, He saw that everything was *good*. But now when He looks down on earth, He sees that everything is *not good.* It has been wrecked by sin. And so He decides to “de-create” the earth and everything in it; He mentions the destruction of every living thing in reverse order to the way He created them, i.e. He begins by mentioning man, then the land animals, and then the birds (verse 7).

**Our Reaction** – We tend to be horrified by the severity of the Flood and its utter destruction. Why? We are horrified by the judgment because we *fail* to be horrified by the severity of sin. We think that God is harsh. But God always contends for His holiness, and when we see the Flood, we need to ask ourselves, “If the *solution* was that terrible, how terrible was the *problem*?” God utterly destroyed the unrighteous line of Cain, and it was never heard of again. We are afraid to look at sin and call it what it is, but God is willing to do whatever is necessary to put sin to death. May we learn to look at sin the way God does. As John Owen said, “Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you!”

**One More Genealogy** – Luke 3:23-38 records one more genealogy that relates to what we have looked at today. Adam and Eve hoped that one of their children would be the promised deliverer, but that was not to be. Cain turned out to be a murderer instead of a deliverer, and Seth, though a godly man, was not the deliverer either. But it was indeed through his line of descendants that Jesus Christ was born. The genealogy in Luke 3 traces Jesus’ ancestry all the way back to king David and Judah and Abraham, and then to Shem (son of Noah), ending with, “…son of *Seth*, son of Adam, son of God.” God is always faithful to keep His promises.

**TAKE AWAYS:**

* Jen Wilkin’s closing comment: The genealogies we have looked at today remind us that God cares about individuals. He records their individual names. Who is an individual that God wants *you* to care about? How can we learn to care about people individually the way God does?
* Remember that Genesis is an archetypal book. One pattern seen in the two genealogies (Cain’s and Seth’s) is that throughout Scripture God presents the evil, temporary, natural, fallen concept *first*, and then the redeemed version of whatever is being illustrated. As the Bible Study Fellowship said in their material on this passage of Scripture, “Genesis typically records the families that carried God’s promised offspring forward *after* listing families that rejected Him. Therefore, Adam’s family line through Seth in Genesis 5 *follows* Cain’s descendants listed in Genesis 4. Cain’s descendants focused on worldly success and power. Their legacy mentions neither God nor individual life spans. **Seth’s descendants included people who related to God through grace, obedience and worship.”** (BSF Lesson 5, page 1)
* “The phrase ‘call on the name of the Lord’ appears for the first time in Genesis 4:26. At that time, a community began to publicly acknowledge and honor God by seeking His presence. The concept of the ‘name of the Lord’ in Scripture encompasses much more than a word that identifies God. The name of the Lord encompasses the full measure of His inexhaustible character. **To ‘call on the name of the Lord’ implies seeking God through faith, with a desire to know Him.”** (BSF Lesson 5, page 2)
* One last note: We saw in the wording of Seth’s genealogy that almost everyone in it had a firstborn son and then *lived* a certain number of years and had other sons and daughters. But it says of Enoch that after he had his firstborn son, he *walked with God* and had other sons and daughters. So it made me think that a good question to ask ourselves is: what about us? Are we just “living”…or are we walking with God?