

A Fresh Start

This chapter begins with a fresh account **Elohim's** (the triune God) creation of man in His likeness, male and female, the couple being named Adam. Using "Mr. and Mrs. (husband's name)" to address mail to a married couple is consistent with God's naming the original couple by the husband's name. If married, use his name. Women's rights advocates attempt to blur the headship order and gender distinctions established by God, thinking to promote the independent rights and "equality" of women. We can respect and observe God's order in our dress and behavior and even in such simple things as mail addresses.

Moses' account in chapter five leads directly to the list of generations descending from Adam and Eve through Seth. There is no mention here of their initial sin, the garden, of Abel or of Cain and his descendants. These are given in Moses' first account ending with Chapter 5:1. That account closes with the report of the birth of Seth. It notes that Eve regarded him as replacing godly Abel whom Cain had slain. Unlike some parents she did not blindly defend her guilty son.

Chapter 4 notes, after the birth of Seth's son Enosh, people began to call upon the name of "Jehovah." This was some two hundred years after Adam was created. (This is the first case in scripture of God's name "**Jehovah**" being used alone. "Jehovah" means "He that always was, always is, always will be." God is first referred to as Elohim, the Triune God. Later He is called "Jehovah Elohim" or "the Lord God," emphasizing His eternal being.)

The genealogy of the human race from Adam to Noah begins with some additional detail of the birth of Seth. He is specifically said to be "in Adam's likeness and after his image." But along with that, Adam transmitted his acquired sinful nature. The term "likeness" seems to refer to a moral resemblance to another and the term image seems to refer to one representing another. So Adam first both represented God and resembled Him. When he sinned he remained an image of God though marred, but the resemblance ended. Seth resembled sinful Adam, but not God. Seth represented Adam, and so represented God, even though the image was marred by the fall. Genesis 9:6 and 1Corinthians 11:7 still refer to men as the image (representative) of God. Christ is the image of God, 2Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15.

This genealogy contains more information than Cain's in chapter 4. In Cain's we know names and succession and some limited but significant information and details of incidents regarding the progress of the civilization Cain founded without God. We learn about its end story in chapter 6.

The meanings of names of people and places in scripture are instructive. Sometimes given names are prophetic or descriptive of the person's character or they may reflect some event or experience surrounding that

person's birth. Some commentaries devote considerable space to names. F. W. Grant does so in the "Numerical Bible." A good reference for personal use is "Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names" by J. B. Jackson, 1909.

The genealogy in chapter 6 gives ages and time spans clearly meant to allow calculation of the passage of time between Adam and the Noah without resort to guess work. The extreme ages and life spans are mind boggling and many attempts have been made to explain away these plain facts and figures. On the other hand the scriptures explicitly deny the theories of men that mankind are simply a sophisticated animal which gradually evolved over millions of years from lower life forms. Is all scripture inspired by God? Then treat it as such. All of it, no picking and choosing or warping, please. One interesting study for the believer is to determine overlapping life spans in Noah's ancestors. Charting them might be a good Sunday School or "home school" project.

Who were contemporaries? Who was the first to die? Abel. The next to die was Adam. They both were buried as were others named and unnamed in chapters 5 and 6. But one didn't die: Enoch. He was translated bodily into heaven. The first to reach there bodily. Nobody who dies takes their body with them when their invisible soul and spirit together fly either to Paradise—or to Hades. Only three people that we know of have gone bodily into heaven, Enoch and Elijah went to heaven without dying. Jesus died on the cross and went to Paradise as did the believing thief beside him. Jesus' body was laid in a tomb but He rose again and ascended bodily to heaven where Enoch and Elijah were already. We're next! Dead or alive we will go.

Note the chronological order of souls departing the earth as recorded early in scripture.

1. The first was Abel, the godly victim of murder for his faith, before Adam was even 130 years old.
2. Enoch, the man who walked with God, was 360 years old when he was taken, well before Adam died.
3. Adam, the natural, sinful, first man reached 930 years before he died of old age. He was contemporary with all of his descendants before the Flood except Noah and his sons.
4. Then Seth died and the rest of humankind, many in the Flood.

All of those named lived part of their life while Enoch lived except Noah.

All of those named lived part of their lives while Adam lived except Noah.

Noah's birth was much later in his father's life than "normal" for those days. Therefore Noah was not a contemporary of many of his early ancestors though he was of some of his descendants. Yet the chain of witness was complete and with many overlaps. The life spans remained remarkably consistent, averaging over 900 years and

showing little or no trend downward until just before the Flood. And Shem lived 600 years (and into Isaac's time). Lamech conveniently died aged 777 just before the Flood as did his father Methuselah who lived to the longest recorded age, 969.

Enoch was a faithful prophet. He is quoted in the second to last book of the New Testament. Some think he was being pursued by ungodly men when God took him

Jude 1:14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

But read the surrounding passage too.

Enoch took a strong stand against the mounting ungodliness spreading over the earth. He prophetically named his son Methuselah, "when he is dead it shall be sent." Methuselah's son Lamech named his son Noah "comfort" for he prophesied regarding Noah's day,

5:29 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.

Apparently none of those later sons and daughters entered the ark! (Unless as a wife?).

Chapter 6 is an account of the grace of God though both depressing and disturbing in the need for that grace. It is the sordid story of the full development and exercise of unchecked sin in a world of mankind without reverence for their Creator God. Apparently there was no law and no authority to govern, except that implicit in the aged family heads from Adam on down. Compared to the present day, people then apparently possessed superior intelligence, marvelous creative talents in the arts, shrewd ingenuity in developing commercial and financial systems and imaginative, inventive talents and skills in producing devices. There are apparently no structures or records or relics that survived the flood so we don't really know how "developed" their civilization was. But we do know they were without God.

Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Acts 14:15 We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: 16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with

food and gladness.

So they ("progressed") degenerated from bad to worse, until Jehovah reached the end of His patience. He tried, through His faithful prophets, to awake and arrest their downward course, but to no avail. He had created Adam in His image and likeness, innocent and free-willed, but the race became sinful, willful and wicked.

Genesis 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. {both...: Heb. from man unto beast}

And why did He allow it to happen? Couldn't He have prevented it? Could it be this was anticipated and that He has had a Plan from before the Creation to use this rebellion by His created beings to display His being and character to all His intelligent creatures, one and all. Oh, and what was that? It was that GOD IS LOVE.

Some having been told this have become indignant, saying in effect "How could a loving God 'use' us as 'pawns' that way? How could an all powerful, all wise God of love allow all that sin and all that suffering, and death and hades and hell? How could He design the world that would let ME suffer? It's not fair!" But who am I to question Him?! Is He unrighteous to create some intelligent beings that could, and might, voluntarily respond to Him and love Him for who He is? And if they chose of their own free will to disobey Him and ignore Him, is He not righteous in judging their sin? Should He not have justifiably, instantly destroyed them all? Yet He chose to give them ample opportunity to repent and voluntarily turn back to obey and worship Him! Is He not merciful to endure a wretched sinful world? To warn them? To send Enoch and a preacher of righteousness as Noah was? And 24 centuries later to send Another, His own Son? And to send the gospel to millions today? And is not the creation around us enough witness of the power and goodness of its Creator to humble us before Him?

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

1Peter 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

2Peter 2:5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

And did not the horror and injustice of the Cross infinitely outweigh the total of all the sufferings of His creatures? And does not this alone far outweigh the suffering of this life?

2Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal

weight of glory;

God **is** God after all! He does not need to be vindicated or defended in what He does, or doesn't do.

Romans 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Nevertheless He has condescended to vindicate Himself.

He sent Jesus!

John 3:16

On a different tack others, who like to reason, see a difficulty in scripture stating the Jehovah repented . . .

Genesis 6:6 And it repented [05162] the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved [06087] him at his heart.

Note it doesn't say "regretted." Here are the Hebrew words as defined in Strong's Concordance:

Repented 05162 נָחַם acham, naw-kham'

a primitive root; properly, to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself);--comfort (self), ease (one's self), repent(-er,-ing, self).

Grieved 06087 נָצַב 'atsab, aw-tsab'

a primitive root; properly, to carve, i.e. fabricate or fashion; hence (in a bad sense) to worry, pain or anger-- displease, grieve, hurt, make, be sorry, vex, worship, wrest.

They reason that if He had to "repent" He wasn't the omniscient God. Surprise! Jehovah has FEELINGS! He felt (still feels) badly for what had occurred. It was not His original intent, nor His fault. But God was not taken by surprise. Nor had He blundered when He had made Man nor when He had placed him in the garden with a prohibition. He knew what would happen. He is the Omniscient God after all. Then why was He disappointed in what happened? Even we sinful, mortal humans who are parents know our children as born sinners. Yet don't we feel disappointed and sad when we see them sin?

God had **not** made a mistake or miscalculation. He had intentionally equipped these, His created beings, with free wills. They were **not** inanimate stones, not plants, not robots, not slaves, but men with free hearts to voluntarily walk with Him as companions, and unselfishly worship Him. But they declined to obey Him. Soon they (e.g. Cain and his descendant Lamech) boasted in their free will. The

rest is sorrowful history. God let things proceed to their inevitable conclusion before judging them all. Why? So man would know the exceeding sinfulness of sin and take heed. The Bible didn't end there! The story of God's patient grace goes on and on beyond today, even as we see men getting worse and worse again, ripening for judgement, setting the stage for another remnant. Notice throughout scripture how God deals with remnants after an established original is in ruin. The Church is in ruin today. How many are even aware of this? Are you part of a remnant today?

Noah. In the middle of verse 5 Moses began a new account of man's history and God's ways with them. (This transition is not obvious due to the unfortunate chapter and verse divisions here in our Bibles.) This account describes stupendous, world changing events that occurred in Noah's lifetime and his role in them. Noah (technically along with his wife and his in-laws) is a common ancestor of every human being alive today. As the sole surviving Patriarch he is father of all who repopulated the fresh new earth. He is worthy of distinguished honor for his faith and action. He not only preached against the rampant evil of his day, he warned of God's impending judgement. And, by the mercy of God he built and stocked the ark, the means of preservation of the race through the judgment. God had set a dead line. His Spirit would strive with man for 120 years. He gave him the plan for a huge ark, a rectangular barge, capable of holding a pair of every kind of animal and bird on the earth and hundreds of people as well. It was about the size and proportions of one of the earlier ore boats that sailed Lake Superior though the middle 1900's. (If you tour the one on display in Duluth, think of Noah's wooden ark.) Noah had undoubtedly been preaching repentance from sinful ways to ward off God's judgement. And he had undoubtedly changed the message to one of repentance and coming to the ark he was building and readying for all who believed and came to escape. That is our message now. Today, due to the Cross of Jesus, the Ark to heaven is finished and furnished and ready to go. The door is still open for lost sinners to enter before it is too late. Please come if you haven't yet.

**Jesus said I am the door:
by me if any man enter in,
he shall be saved,
John 10:9**

By Ronald Canner, March 31, 2010