

**GROUNDS OF FAITH CAFÉ: “Genesis” (Subtitled: Is there a snake in your Garden too?)**  
**Further subtitled: Lessons from the Garden! Genesis Lesson 7 (4:17-5:32): Some Summary Thoughts:**

Overview: In the first four chapters of Genesis, the Scripture began our introduction to the Godhead; described God’s creation as “good;” detailed man’s rebellion in the fall of man; and elaborated on the depth of man’s rebellious nature as it described Cain’s murder of Able. It concluded on the twin notes of the growing arrogance of Cain’s descendants contrasted to the hopeful note that with the birth of Seth, “*At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.*” In chapters 5-11, the primary line of thought will be that of man continuing to live lives apart from God; one line’s apparent continued faithfulness; and God’s activity of renewal.

Contrast of Lineages helps define man’s degeneration: The two genealogies in Chapters 4 and 5 delineate the process of degeneration by contrast.

- It could be argued that “civilization” begins with Cain’s descendants. They appear to make several technological advances: they build cities (although Cain names it for his son, not in any way giving glory to God), invent instruments of bronze and iron, and develop musical talents (4:17-22).
- However, their character is greatly lacking. In 4:23-29, Lamech, a descendant of Cain appears to boast of his murders as avenging Cain’s downfall, showing the rebellious line’s continued decline. The initial absence of any remorse from Cain festers into full bombastic defiance in Lamech. Not only does Lamech ignore any vision of monogamy (2:24; 4:19), he boasts that if Cain receives a sevenfold protection from God after having committed cold-blooded murder, surely he will receive a seventy-sevenfold protection for a homicide that only he could potentially justify (4:24). This total misreading of God’s character will be strongly contrasted in the birth of Seth (*sheth*) and his subsequent descendants as Eve credits God for her replacement son, saying “*God has appointed (shath) for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.*” (4:25).
- Seth’s lineage in 5:1-31, by contrast, introduces us to another Lamech who eventually births Noah – described as one who “*found favor in the eyes of the LORD*” (6:8) and one called a “*righteous man*” (6:9).

Several key observations seem to emerge from the rendering of Seth’s lineage:

- (A) Genesis 5:1-2: Seth is no longer described as being “*in the likeness of God;*” rather, the Scripture depicts him as being in the image and likeness of Adam. Despite this,
- (B) 4:26: When Seth’s son is born, it appears that Seth and his descendants determine to worship the LORD for “*at that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.*” To “call upon God’s Name,” is simply another way of saying that one is submitting himself or herself to the Lordship of God. The “name” is synonymous with “authority.” Thus, one is voluntarily placing oneself under the authority and dominion/rule of God.
- (C) 5:21-24: One man in Seth’s lineage, Enoch, continues to maintain and experience God’s presence, apparently not experiencing death, but having God take him away.
- (D) 5:29: Finally, the offspring through Seth/ Enoch/ Methuselah/ Lamech – Noah – is described as one who will bring comfort from God’s curse, i.e., Noah “*will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.*”
- So, even in the midst of man’s gross rebellion toward God, and that point becomes abundantly clear as Chapter 6 opens, faithful service to God not only is defined as possible, it is demonstrated by men who chose to live in accord with God’s will.
- Earlier, Scripture taught us that Abel lost his life to Cain out of Cain’s anger at God’s acceptance of Abel’s faith offering to God (Genesis 4:4-8; Hebrews 11:4), an offering of the best of his best. But this does not completely blur man’s ability to be faithful to God – a point completely reinforced in the description of Noah, paralleling words used of Enoch – “*Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.*” (Genesis 6:9).