

Beginnings: Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Six: The Beginning of Two Lines of Humanity – Genesis 4:1-5:32

Overview of Chapters 4 and 5

- 1) Read Genesis 4:1-5:32 carefully. Can you think of reasons why retaining and recording genealogies would have been important, particularly in that time?

- 2) Discuss the general impressions Scripture gives about Cain’s descendants and about Seth’s descendants (see especially Genesis 4:17, 19, 24, 4:26b, and 5:22-24). Then summarize the two spiritual lines (types) of humanity that began with these early fathers and continue to this very day.

- 3) Using what you know about your *spiritual* heritage, list the names of those who led you to faith in Christ, and the names of those who led them to faith. If you don’t know and it’s possible to find out, you might want to make inquiries this week in order to chart your spiritual genealogy. Although spiritual birth is a work of God alone, believers in Jesus Christ are called to be His witnesses and make disciples in His name. With this in mind, add a few names that you are actively seeking (by prayer, witnessing, and example) to lead into the family of the redeemed.

From Genesis 4:1-7 (read also 1 John 3:12 and Jude 11):

- 4) According to Genesis 4:4, “The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering.” How does one receive the Lord’s favor? See Genesis 6:8-9, Exodus 33:12-13, Leviticus 26:3-9, Psalm 5:12, Luke 4:14-21, John 3:16 and 3:36, and Hebrews 11:4, 6.

- 5) How would you summarize Cain’s response to God’s rejection of his offering?

- 6) Contrast God’s warning to Cain (4:7) with Christ’s offer in Revelation 3:20. What choice (implied by this contrast) did Cain have and do you have when faced with temptation (see also 1 Corinthians 10:13)?

- 7) How can we “master” or “rule over” (4:7) temptation? See Matthew 4:1-11, Ephesians 6:13-18, 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, and James 4:7.

From Genesis 4:8-12:

- 8) Compare God’s questions in Genesis 4:9 and 3:9. On both occasions, what kind of a response was God looking for and what does this tell us about Him?
- 9) Read verse 10, together with Hebrews 12:24.
- a) For what was Abel’s blood crying out (Genesis 4:10)?
 - b) How does Jesus’ blood, shed on the cross for us, “speak a better word”? See Romans 5:9, Ephesians 1:7, and Colossians 1:20.
 - c) Read Hebrews 12:28-29. In light of your answers to Questions 9a and 9b, for what can you “be thankful” and “worship God acceptably”?

From Genesis 4:13-26:

- 10) The only living people that have been mentioned, until the middle of Genesis 4, are Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel. However, 4:14-15 hints at a growing human population and 4:17 unexpectedly reveals that Cain had a wife. From where might Cain’s wife and these others have come?
- 11) The first mention of a city in the Bible is in Genesis 4:17 (Cain built a city). Re-examine God’s curse upon Cain in Genesis 4:10-12. How was Cain’s city evidence of his ongoing defiance?
- 12) Compare Lamech’s evil boast to his wives in 4:23-24 with Jesus’ words to Peter in Matthew 18:21-22. According to those who live and work closely with you, which of these two spirits characterizes you?

From Genesis 5:1-31:

- 13) Genesis 1:26 says that God made Adam in His likeness. In 5:3, we are told that Adam's son Seth was born in Adam's likeness. Based on what we have learned in Genesis thus far, in what ways would Adam's son Seth have been like him?
- 14) List the repeated words and phrases in 5:6-27.
- a) Whose life interrupts the pattern (see also Hebrews 11:5 and Jude 14-15)?
 - b) According to Psalm 116:15, how does God feel about the departure from this world of those who walk with Him?
- 15) Genesis 5 gives a sad commentary: God's originally "good" creation was now in a cycle of death. Nevertheless, Lamech expressed hope at the birth of his son Noah (see 5:29). Read Romans 15:13. Do you have a seemingly hopeless situation for which you need to trust the "God of hope" today? If so, what is it?