

Passage: Genesis 4:16- 5:32

Usually, the reason genealogies are recorded in the Bible is that God, the Lord of history, wants to summarize the history that has flowed up to this point before unfolding a new chapter.

Moses, who wrote Genesis, compares the descendants of Cain, who symbolize the offspring of darkness, with the descendants of Seth, given in place of the first martyr Abel, in another genealogy in chapter 5.

Let's reflect on some features that appear in these genealogies.

First, the inclusion or exclusion of age calculation.

The people in Cain's genealogy do not have their years lived and died recorded, while those in Seth's genealogy do. Why did Moses, who wrote Genesis, make this distinction?

I believe it shows that a life lived without God, no matter how long, is meaningless and akin to an animalistic existence that cannot be acknowledged by God.

On the other hand, the people in Seth's lineage are often recorded to have lived over 900 years. This indicates that even though their journey was difficult in a sinful world, their days lived with faith in God and a God-centered life are all counted and acknowledged by God. Perhaps that's why we see the refrain, "...lived so many years and died." Here, "lived" implies that they experienced meaningful years.

Second, the difference in human life expectancy.

The descendants of Seth are recorded to have lived an average of over 900 years, which is significantly longer than the average lifespan of 120 years after Noah's flood.

According to Christian scientists, before the flood, the water above the firmament created by God blocked harmful rays such as ultraviolet light from the sun, which could age humans. But after the flood, this protective layer was gone. Since 80% of skin aging is said to be due to ultraviolet light, this explanation seems plausible.

Third, the significance of Adam's 930 years.

No one besides the first humans, Adam and Eve, have seen God, the creator of the universe and mankind. Adam, who spent time with God in the Garden of Eden, was a unique witness to the Creator for his descendants. Thus, the 930 years Adam spent in the world after being banished from the garden provided both Cain's and Seth's descendants opportunities to hear his testimony of God.

However, the knowledge of and faith in God that Adam testified was rejected by Cain's descendants and passed down through Seth's lineage. The first official worship in Seth's lineage is recorded in Genesis 4:26, and acknowledging and worshiping God continued through to Noah's time.

Bible scholars estimate roughly 2,000 years from Adam to Noah. During almost half of this period, Adam was alive to testify about God, giving ample evidence for the people of his time to believe in God.

Later, Jesus, the Son of God, came into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, and demonstrated God through countless miracles and teachings. Yet, even His own people, the Jews, rejected Him. Despite God directly testifying, people didn't believe, much like Adam's testimony during his lifetime.

Fourth, comparing Cain and Seth's genealogies.

In Cain's lineage, the seventh descendant is Lamech, while in Seth's, it's Enoch. Lamech, who marked the peak of sin in Cain's lineage, contrasts sharply with Enoch, who lived a holy life and was taken up by God.

Lamech, not only the initiator of polygamy but also a murderer, surpassed his ancestor Cain's brutality. Even after committing murder, he sang a song of the sword, mocking and despising God's words to Cain, displaying the height of human sin (Genesis 4:19, 23-24).

Meanwhile, Enoch, a descendant of Seth, is recorded as having walked faithfully with God, even while having children, demonstrating a holy life (verse 24).

Comparing the descendants of Cain with those in chapter 5, we see that Seth's lineage includes faithful individuals like Enoch, who walked with God, Methuselah, who lived the longest (969 years), his son Lamech, and Noah, who sought God's comfort in a painful life. From Adam to Noah spans about 2,000 years, and by Noah's time, the distinction between Cain's and Seth's lineages had disappeared, with the whole world being filled with sin, leading to the flood judgment.

What lesson should we take from today's passages on Genesis 4 through chapter 5?

I hope you remember that you, in your family, are a spiritual descendant of Seth who acknowledges and worships God.

Romans mention the concept of the "remnant." This world is increasingly filled with sin, heading towards destruction. Therefore, each of us must live with a sense of divine calling.

Do you know what thought opposes a sense of calling? It's thoughts like "What difference can I make?" or "What can one person do?" These feelings of defeat and helplessness do not come from God but from Satan, the ancient serpent.

The Christian faith, as shown in the Bible, is not just about a personal relationship with God; it is both individual and communal. While personal healing and restoration are important, we must not neglect our mission. We

shouldn't think, "I'm already struggling to keep my own faith; how can I care about others?"

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus said, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." The key word here is "first." What you seek first determines whether your faith is biblical and healthy. Seeking His kingdom and righteousness first means always caring about the salvation of others, praying for them, and being willing to use your time and resources for their salvation.

If we seek our own happiness and success first, our faith can easily become worldly. However, if we seek God's kingdom and righteousness first, it may seem like we and our families might suffer or fail, but that's not the case. The Lord promised that "all these things will be given to you as well!" This includes happiness, success, health, prosperity, and all the blessings we seek.

Therefore, we must always check ourselves: Am I striving for my mission in my current situation, or am I just trying to keep my own faith? Be honest with the Holy Spirit and ask yourself.

How about our church as a whole? If churches forget their sense of calling, the world has no hope. The hope of this world lies in the church. But not all churches are the same. Many churches are just barely surviving. What matters is not how many people gather, what programs they have, or how much offering they collect.

The core of a church is whether it has a sense of divine calling. Is the church a community of mission?

This is what God seeks.

I hope and pray that our church becomes such a church. I ask you to join in this holy desire and prayer.

Hallelujah!

