



Scripture Passage for This Week

Genesis 5:1-32

This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. 2 Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. 4 The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. 5 Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he fathered Enosh. 7 Seth lived after he fathered Enosh 807 years and had other sons and daughters. 8 Thus all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died.

9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he fathered Kenan. 10 Enosh lived after he fathered Kenan 815 years and had other sons and daughters. 11 Thus all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died.

12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel. 13 Kenan lived after he fathered Mahalalel 840 years and had other sons and daughters. 14 Thus all the days of Kenan were 910 years, and he died.

15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he fathered Jared. 16 Mahalalel lived after he fathered Jared 830 years and had other sons and daughters. 17 Thus all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years, and he died.

18 When Jared had lived 162 years he fathered Enoch. 19 Jared lived after he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 20 Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died. 21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. 22 Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. 24 Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he fathered Lamech. 26 Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech 782 years and had other sons and daughters. 27 Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.

28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son 29 and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." 30 Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters. 31 Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.

32 After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Commentary on This Week's Text

Genesis 4 provides a record of human degeneration - first with Cain's personal, cold-blooded, hands-on murder of his younger brother, Abel. Cain showed no remorse, but only fear and self-

pity. He left bloodied but unbowed, to wander the earth. The record of degeneration that began with Cain is rounded out in the second half of the chapter with the account of its spread among Cain's descendants - especially Lamech and his children Jabal, Jubal, and Tubalcain - the fathers of agriculture, the arts, and technology. Lamech's song recorded in Genesis 4 was a chest-thumping rejoicing in exponential violence - "If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold" (4:24).

And so it has been in the succeeding generations. People and nations have answered slights with swords and spears and machine guns and missiles. Civilization, with its abundance and art and technology, does not save. In fact, these seemingly good things can be used for exponential evil. But this dark picture was not devoid of hope because in contrast to the Cainite line, a new line was raised up, the Sethite line: "And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, 'God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.' To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD" (v. 25-26). This godly line called on and proclaimed the name of the Lord. They declared the wonders of his name. They sang of his excellencies.

With this bright event, chapter 5 introduces a new section in Genesis, the second of the ten *toledots* - the ten "These are the generations of" divisions of Genesis. This account runs from 5:1 - 6: 8, and its first part, which makes up chapter 5, is the Sethite genealogy that extends from Adam through Seth on to Moses. And how different it is from the Cainite genealogy! The genealogy of Cain gives no ages, since his line, being cursed by God, would have no eternal history. But Seth's genealogy not only gives the age of each patriarch at the time of the firstborn (by whom the line would be continued), but the number of years that he lived after the birth, and then the total years of his life. Each individual is important to God's eternal economy.

Created and Blessed by God

The Sethite genealogy is introduced in verses 1 and 2 with a retrospect that recalls that the descendants of Adam and Seth have been created in the image of God and blessed by him. His image. The opening line ("This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God,") references the Bible's first poem in Genesis 1:27: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. This retrospect reminded the descendants of Seth that the fall had not obliterated the image of God in them. And because they were image-bearers, they had unparalleled privilege and potential. First, as image-bearers they had the capacity to hear God's word, which is something no other creature, except angels, could do. Second, as image-bearers they were charged to rule the earth in God's stead (Gen. 1:26-28). And third, the image of God in them suggested the possibility of an intimate spiritual relationship as children of God.

Similarly, as the image of God had not been obliterated by the fall, neither had the blessing been abrogated. Thus the Sethite line was reminded in verse 2, "Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created." The blessing had been defined in 1:28 as physical procreation and multiplication: "And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply.'" The Sethites were to fill the earth. The genealogy in Genesis 5 demonstrates that they did so, because it suggests extraordinary multiplication. The ten-generation structure of the genealogy indicates that it is a selective genealogy with gaps between the ancestors, which leaves room for substantial increase in population. The other Genesis genealogy, from Shem to Abram, also includes ten generations. King David's

genealogy in Ruth 4:18-22 also is given in the form of ten names. These ten-name structures telescope the number of descendants in order to create a compressed history. Therefore we understand that the flexibility of this genealogy, plus the repeated emphasis that the patriarchs “had other sons and daughters,” plus their amazing longevity (their average age at death was about nine hundred years, and this included their offspring) all together argues for rapid multiplication. Thus Seth’s genealogy shows the patriarchs living out God’s blessing —and multiplying and spreading the image of God in humanity — especially as many had begun “to call upon the name of the LORD” (4:26).

The Existence of Universal Death

So the descendants of Adam and Seth had substantial reasons for optimism. They fathered thousands of offspring to whom they passed on the Imago Dei, people who despite the fall and their sinfulness could hear God’s word, could rule and subdue the earth, and could live in relationship to God. Some did, and some did not. Yet, as they multiplied, the possibilities were immense. Nevertheless, the Sethites’ optimism was always clouded because the genealogy continually repeats the depressing phrase, “and he died.” Adam lived some 930 years, “and he died.” His dear son Seth lived 912 years, “and he died.” It was 905 years for Enosh, “and he died.” Methuselah came to within 31 years of a millennium, “and he died.” The Hebrew for these three words is a resounding single word. Thus the Sethites lived under the double-edged sword of human experience. As the commentator Kenneth Mathews notes, “Life produces hope only to see it dashed by the all too real finality of death.”

And so it has been since the fall. A great plow furrows the earth, plowing men and women and their children under. As Derek Kidner poignantly observes, this awareness is “like the unfolding of a murder mystery in which we ourselves turn out to be the victim.” The day is coming when the earth will not know us. We will be gone. The day came fast for the long-lived patriarchs. At death, life is short for all. “Where did it all go?” we wonder; life seems but a vapor and a fleeting dream. Vast multitudes of people since the beginning of time have been born bearing the image of God but they too have been plowed under. The rains have washed their names from the tombstones. Their bones are no more. Death spread its dark cloud over the patriarchs’ bright hopes, and the cycle went on and on and on - “and he died” - “and he died” - “and he died.”

He Was No More

But then we come to the seventh generation from Adam and the man Enoch. Which the writer W.R. Bowie points out that “This astonishing paragraph shines like a single brilliant star above the earthly record of this chapter.” Its light illuminates the dark rhythm of Seth’s genealogy. The placement of Enoch’s name could not be more intentionally dramatic. Evil Lamech, the man who worshiped his sword, was number seven in the Cainite genealogy, while here, Enoch, the man who “walked with God,” is number seven in the Sethite genealogy. These two are placed in eternal antithesis. They are Hell and Heaven - exponential death and unbounded life. There is wisdom for all in the life of Enoch

Walked with God

This phrase “walked with God” is only ever applied to Enoch and Noah and describes the closest personal communion with God - as if walking at the side of God. It must be distinguished from other Old Testament phrases such as walking *before* God, and walking *after* God, which describe blameless moral and ethical conduct. Walking *with* God is far more intimate. For example, the minor prophets use this phrase to describe the walk of priests who entered the Holy of Holies to speak directly with God. The phrase also indicates the deepest obedience, for

the metaphor of walking suggests walking along God's path, in the same direction. As Allen Ross says, "The expression became a common description of the life of fellowship and obedience with the Lord, as if to say that walking with the Lord was a step above mere living."

As to the question of how Enoch's walk with God worked out and what characterized it in life, we have an answer in Hebrews 11:5, which tells us that Enoch's walk was one of faith: "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God." So his faith pleased God. The next verse tells us what this God-pleasing faith was like: "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Heb. 11:6). First, such God-pleasing faith literally believes that God is - that the awesome, sovereign God of creation is God. Because Enoch was made in God's image, he could hear and respond to God's word. And so he did, believing with all his heart that God is who he says he is. This pleases God. It is the same today. God is pleased with those who wholly believe what his Word says about him. Second, Enoch believed that God "rewards those who seek him" - that God is positively equitable. Enoch also believed the negative side of this, that God judges those who reject him and continue to go their own way. Jude 14 and 15 reveals that Enoch (just like Noah after him) preached this: "It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.'"

What we see in sum is that Enoch's walk with God subsumed all of life. His walk was rooted in deepest intimacy with God; he knew God. His walk rested on great faith; he believed in God with all his heart. And he believed that God would judge and reward all who live. So he preached the righteousness of God. This describes not the high point of his life but his entire life for three hundred years - three centuries! It describes three hundred years of a progressively closer walk with God.

God Took Him

And so at the age of 365 (while still just a young man), "he was not, for God took him." How did God do this? Perhaps it was as God later did with Elijah as Elijah walked along with his successor Elisha: "And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it and he cried, 'My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!' And he saw him no more" (2 Kings 2:11-12). Or perhaps he just disappeared, was "beamed up," so to speak. One thing is sure - his walk with God extended into eternity, and in that respect, we do know what ultimately happened. He was taken up from this earthly life and transposed to life eternal, exempted by God from the law of death and decay - just as it will be for the faithful who will be alive at the coming of Christ for judgment. Those in like manner shall not taste death and corruption but will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. As to why God took Enoch, we have only to look at our passage. Enoch was translated up to eternal life with God and was spared disease, death, and corruption for the consolation and encouragement of believers, and to awaken them to hope of life after death. God took Enoch about halfway between Adam and the flood. Some of the patriarchs in this genealogy, and the hosts they represent, were alive at that time. They had whole centuries to reflect upon and discuss Enoch's translation. How they must have been heartened to what awaited them as they faithfully followed God. Did many of Enoch's peers and descendants begin to listen to God's word and

walk with him and call upon his name? Certainly such hopes were rooted in the hearts of the great ones in the Old Testament. Listen to Job: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!” (Job 19:25-27). And listen to Daniel: “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever” (Daniel 12:2-3). This all foreshadows the New Testament promises of Christ’s return - promises with which we are to comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The question for us is, how do we walk with God today? And the answer is this: The image of God has been passed on to us, so that it is possible for us to hear and obey God’s Word and to live as his children. We may have further marred the image by our sin, but the likeness persists. The wondrous fact is that by God’s grace we can know God intimately. Jesus said, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Jesus also said, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). So we see God in his Son, and we see him best in his Son’s death. The cross is God’s supreme revelation of himself: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). When you see God in Christ pouring forth his love for the world, you begin to understand. And when you believe it, you know him! When by faith you receive Christ, you receive God. By growing in Christ, you become more like Him. And when this happens you can begin to walk with God. As you draw nearer through the gift of divine intimacy, you will walk closer and closer to the heart of God. And one day you will be no more, for God will indeed take you to himself. You may experience death, but it is a death without sting, for the bright, eternal, and incomparable hope that Enoch represents awaits - just on the other side of the thin curtain of our last breath.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Study

- Genealogies can seem like the most meaningless and “easiest to skip” parts of Scripture. But the genealogies of Cain and Seth are very different in their presentation, read of the genealogies and note the differences. Why are these differences significant?
- Even though the line of Seth was more righteous than the line of Cain, they still had to deal with the reality of the fall and the curse of death. How does the genealogy of Seth’s line illustrate this reality? And how is the 7th person of each line contrasted with the other?
- Why did God choose to take Enoch specifically and what did God demonstrate to his faithful people by taking Enoch to himself?

- It is said that Enoch “walked with God.” What does this mean? How do we “walk with God” today, and how does Enoch’s life and his eternal life illustrate what all of our hope is? Is that your ultimate hope?

Family Catechism and Scripture Memory

New City Catechism Question: *“What does God require in the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments?”*

Answer: *“**Sixth, that we do not hurt, or hate, or be hostile to our neighbor, but be patient and peaceful, pursuing even our enemies with love. Seventh, that we abstain from sexual immorality and live purely and faithfully, whether in marriage or in single life, avoiding all impure actions, looks, words, thoughts, or desires, and whatever might lead to them. Eighth, that we do not take without permission that which belongs to someone else, nor withhold any good from someone we might benefit.**”*

Scripture Memory Verse: *“The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”*

Song of the Week: *“But God”* - The Village Church

Weekly Unreached People Group

Every week, in this space, we highlight an unreached people group somewhere in the world. Please consider spending some portion of your prayer and reading time during the course of the week praying for the highlighted group. Pray that their hearts would be softened, that the Lord would provide laborers to take them the good news of the Gospel, and that they would come to know the glory of that Gospel and of Christ himself and be saved. Pray also that your own heart would be softened for the reality of the nearly 6,000 people groups that have not heard the Gospel and consider what part the Lord is calling you to play in fulfilling our common command to be about making disciples of all nations. (Source: The Joshua Project - joshuaproject.net)

This week’s unreached people group are the **Khalkha of Mongolia**

Population 1,952,000	% Christian 1.70%	% Evangelical 1.40%
Largest Religion Ethnic Religions	Main Language Mongolian	Progress Few Known Believers

Introduction / History

The Khalkha are the largest group of Mongols in Mongolia. In fact, they are the core of all the Mongol peoples across North Asia. The Khalkha Mongol consider themselves the direct descendants of Genghis Khan and therefore, the true preservers of Mongol culture.

In the thirteenth century, Genghis Khan formed one of the greatest empires in world history by uniting all of the nomadic Mongol tribes. During the centuries that followed, the once mighty Mongol empire was squeezed between the growing Russian and Chinese empires. In the early 1920's, Mongolia became a Marxist state until its quiet democratic revolution in 1990.

The Khalkha Mongol consider their language, Halh, to be the "real" Mongolian language, since all other Mongols speak variations or dialects of Halh. Halh is understood throughout Mongolia and by Mongols living in Central Asia.

Mongolia was once one of the most closed countries in the world, but is now relatively open to outside influence, including Christianity.

What Are Their Lives Like?

There is a large population of Khalkha Mongol nomads. They live in herding camps and migrate seasonally with their animals. Their housing takes the form of portable gers, which are round felt tents that have brightly painted wooden doors. The nomads raise horses, cattle, and sheep and migrate four or five times a year in search of fresh pastures.

Some of the Khalkha Mongol are now settled farmers who live and work on the "collective" (community) farms. Those who live in the cities, occupy Soviet-built apartment complexes. Many of them have found jobs in industry, mining, or transport.

Due to the harshness of the climate in Mongolia, the Khalkha Mongol diet consists primarily of fat, meat (mainly mutton), milk, and dairy products. Large amounts of fat and mutton are eaten during the winter, and dairy products such as yogurt, cheese, and sour cream are eaten during the summer. Their favorite drink is airag or kumiss, which is fermented mare's milk.

The Khalkha Mongol traditionally married while they were very young. The girls were usually 13 or 14, and the boys were only a few years older. Today, couples usually marry while they are in their early to mid-twenties; then they immediately begin having children. Urban Khalkha Mongol, especially those with a college education, tend to delay marriage until they reach their late twenties. Birth control is discouraged in Mongolia. Families with six or more children are given financial benefits.

The Khalkha Mongol love music, folk dances, chess, and sporting events. Every July, the ancient Naadam festival is celebrated throughout Mongolia. Sporting events are held in horse racing, archery, and wrestling.

What Are Their Beliefs?

The Khalkha Mongol were traditionally Shamanists (belief in an unseen world of gods, demons, and spirits). The people depended on shamans (medicine men) to cure the sick by magic, communicate with the gods, and control events.

In the late 1500's, the Mongols were introduced to Tibetan Buddhism, and most Mongols converted to Buddhism at that time. By 1900, more than half of Mongolia's males were serving as priests in Buddhist monasteries. However, as a result of an anti-religious movement launched by the Marxist government in the 1930's, about three-quarters of the Khalkha Mongol became either non-religious or atheists.

Today, a number of Khalkha Mongol have returned to the beliefs of their forefathers. Shamans are once again called upon to cure the sick or alleviate evil spirits through divination, oracles, and astrology. A combination of Buddhism and Shamanism has survived, especially among the elderly. Obos, heaps of stones thought to be inhabited by local spirits, can still be seen on almost every hilltop.

What Are Their Needs?

Mongolia's distance from the sea and poor roads have contributed to a poor economy. One-third of the country lives in extreme poverty. Rape, murder, alcoholism, and violence are major problems in Mongolia's urban areas today. Many young people are also involved in criminal gangs.

Prayer Points

- * Pray that Christian workers would have unity as they reach this large unreached people group for Jesus.
- * Pray that the Mongol men would rise up to become strong in the Lord.
- * Pray that God will open the hearts of the Khalkha Mongol government leaders to the Gospel.
- * Ask God to set the Khalkha Mongol free from their bondage to occultism and Shamanistic beliefs.
- * Pray that the doors of Mongolia will soon open to Christian missionaries.
- * Pray that alcoholism, violence, and divorce will be wiped out.
- * Ask God to raise up teams of intercessors who will faithfully stand in the gap for the Khalkha Mongol.
- * Pray that Christians will have opportunities to introduce the Khalkha Mongol to the Prince of Peace.