

GENESIS—Seed of the Bible
Session Four: A New Beginning

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Adam made love to his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

—Genesis 4. 25-26

THIS IS THE STORY OF A FAMILY. And a very dysfunctional family at that! Think about it for a moment. The mother, Eve, is deceived by the Devil and commits the first sin. Adam, father of the family, allows her to seduce him into rebellion. The elder son murders his brother, and so all semblance of righteousness is erased. So what will God do?

We have no supernatural intervention; hope must lie within the context of what God has already done by his creation. And he had already given the clue, the hint of hope:

... I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

—Genesis 3.15

Hope must lie in the son of this couple. But the righteous child is dead, murdered by his brother! But when a new son arrives, the woman sees in him the God-given substitute:

"God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him."

Here is a new beginning. Here is the restoration of hope. Her faith is revealed in the name she gave to her new-born, for Seth means "compensation" and in her explanation of her choice of name, "another child in place of Abel".

WE HAVE OBSERVED that God grants no supernatural occurrence. This son of Eve is also the son of Adam.

When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

—Genesis 5.3

Notice the particularity of expression: Adam fathered a son—not in the image of God, in which he himself was made—but in his own likeness, that is, a fallen, sinful likeness. Since Adam had lost the perfect image of God in the Fall, it was no longer possible for him to transmit the image of God to his offspring. Seth was born in the image of Adam, and therefore subject to sin and death. Since the Fall all men are subject to death:

Sin entered the world because one man sinned. And death came because of sin. Everyone sinned, so death came to all people.

—Romans 5.12

So here we have a new beginning, a hope. Yet things are not like they were even so.

BY NOW CAIN HAS LEFT HOME, gone to the wilderness as a result of God's sentence upon him. He built a city, emphasising the fact that man away from God sets his sights on building something great in the world. Cain wanted his city quickly, just the successors of Noah wanted to build a city and a tower long before God's time. One day, in the day of glory, God will establish His city for which the believer must wait patiently.

In Cain's family there was a Lamech as well as an Enoch:

Cain made love to his wife. She became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. At that time Cain was building a city. He named it after his son Enoch. Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael. And Methushael was the father of Lamech. Lamech married two women. One was named Adah, and the other was named Zillah. Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of everyone who plays the harp and flute. Zillah also had a son. His name was Tubal-Cain. He made all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah.

—Genesis 4. 17-22

The Lamech who was a descendent of Cain had two sons by Adah—Jabal and Jubal. The first of these was occupied with trade and commerce, dwelling in tents and keeping livestock; the second was a musician. His other wife, Zillah, bore a son named Tubal-cain, an instructor of those skilled in brass and iron work. The line of Cain is therefore seen in a foremost place in reference to trade and commerce, the arts and the sciences. Of course the unbeliever concentrates on these things rather than on the knowledge of God.

We also observe that often the ungodly prosper in the world, a fact that David lamented in Psalm 37. 35: *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.*

IN THE FAMILY OF SETH was a descendent named Lamech too (Genesis 5. 25). The fact that Lamech, the sixth name in Cain's list corresponds to Enoch, the sixth name in Seth's list seems suggestive, indicating that God wanted to point out the contrast between the generations of these two sons of Adam.

But we are anticipating! Back in Genesis 4 we discover that the hope Eve had in her son seemed to be coming to fulfilment:

Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

—Genesis 4. 26

The name Enosh is generally interpreted as a weak, feeble, frail, mortal, miserable man. On the other hand, Lamech contrasts as meaning a strong man. The implication in these names is that the godless boast in their strength, and they live in the belief that they have no need of God's help; the righteous man recognises his weakness and acknowledges his dependence on God.

In the first instance men think they can prosper without God. God allows them to go on forgetting Himself; he does not interfere; and this not only because He is longsuffering, but also because one of His great purposes is that man shall have full scope to develop himself mentally, morally, and physically.

Man has torn himself off from God; and God will let it be seen how he fares severed from Himself. God will let the world roll on its own way, that it may be seen what a world it is. What is earth without the God that made it, or the Christ by whom it is yet to be made new? What are the arts and sciences; genius of the race, developed to the full? What are all these in a world from which its Creator has been banished; a world whose wisdom is not the knowledge of Christ, and whose sunshine is not the love of God?

THE BIRTH OF ADAM AND EVE’S GRANDSON, Enosh, brings about a change. *Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD*—Genesis 4. 26. However, we should perhaps not take these words at face value, for the marginal translation seems to give us the most proper sense: then *began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord*.

In consideration of this, we should turn to Genesis 6:

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose.

—Genesis 6. 1, 2

It is generally understood that the distinction took place at this time between the children of God and the children of men—true believers were known as the sons of that Lord whom they served, while the rest of mankind were called the sons of men.

THIS FAMILY OF SETH seems to vindicate the hope and faith of Eve. We read that “*Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD*”—Genesis 4. 26.

Cain’s descendants now disappear from the story. From this point on the story will be concerned with the descendants of Seth, for these were the ones who carried the hope of the future.

The posterity of Cain will ultimately be swept away in the Flood.

Through Seth the seed of the woman will be preserved toward the ultimate victory.

