

## LESSONS FROM NOAH'S ANCESTORS

Genesis 5:1-32

August 10, 2014

After God created the universe and all plant and animal life, He created the first human beings: Adam and Eve. God gave one commandment to them, but Adam violated that command, bringing the entire race under the curse of sin and of death (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12-14).

Adam and Eve produced two sons: Cain and Abel. Abel believed God and by means of his faith was accepted by God (Heb. 11:4). Cain did not believe, but revolted against God and was rejected. Enraged against his brother Abel, Cain murdered him, thereby bringing upon himself and his descendents additional hardship by which he was condemned to be "a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth" (Gen. 4:14).

Cain's children followed him in unbelief, so that within seven generations his descendents had become a civilization of wickedness. They boasted in wicked exploits, introduced polygamy and flaunted their violence; even vaunting themselves against God. By these descendents of Cain "the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Gen. 6:11). All of them perished in the flood, so that the lineage and seed of Cain was destroyed from the earth.

Adam and Eve bore a third son whom Eve named "Seth" (Gen. 4:25-26). She named him this because she perceived him to be God's replacement of Abel, whom Cain had murdered. "Seth" means "set," and was given because he was set in the place of Abel. Eve knew God's promise that the "seed of the woman" would crush the serpent's head, a promise given when the curse of sin came upon the human race (Gen. 3:14-15). She perceived this promise would be fulfilled through the new son given as a substitute for Abel.

Indeed, this perception was correct, for the descendents of Seth include Noah, the one by whom humanity is preserved from the flood's destruction. More significantly, Noah is the one through whom Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior of all who believe, was delivered to mankind. Christ is the "seed of the woman" Who crushed the serpent's head through His crucifixion and resurrection from death.

Genesis 5 records Seth's descendents and is a genealogical record of all humanity born since the flood. Such vital and relevant information is therefore recorded in a very structured, methodical form. A man is named, followed by his age at the time of his firstborn son's birth, then the number of years he lived after that son's birth, the fact that he begot sons and daughters, his age at death, and the solemn declaration: "and he died" (5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31).

Nine men are named, from Adam through Lamech, Noah's father. Three are notable inasmuch as additional information is given. Seth's birth is announced with comment regarding the worship He offered by this godly line. Enoch's unusual departure from earth, with the reason for that departure, is provided. And Lamech's prophecy when Noah was named gives a significant glimpse into life at that time, the perception of God's grace, and a faith that anticipated His salvation. Yet for each, the last statement is, "and he died," by which solemn warning is given.