JESUS’ FAMILY TREE
Seeing God’s Faithfulness in the Genealogy of Christ

From Adam and Abraham to King David and King Solomon, this incredible book gives a fantastic overview of key people in Jesus’ ancestry.

Looking at the dozens of names listed in Jesus’ genealogy can be quite overwhelming. You may wonder: Where do I begin? What do I really need to know? Dive into the fascinating lives of key people from Jesus’ family tree, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ruth, David and more. Packed with simple summaries, charts, and time lines, this book makes it easy to trace Jesus’ genealogy, starting in the book of Genesis.

- Deepen your understanding of how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah’s ancestry—he was from the family line of David, from the seed of Abraham, from the root of Jesse, and more.
- See how God fulfilled his promises through the generations despite the strengths and weaknesses of each individual.
- Find fascinating insights into the women in Jesus’ genealogy and why they are important.
- Get dozens of charts, maps, time lines, and a 3-page foldout showing Jesus’ entire genealogy at a glance.

Full color, reproducible for classroom use up to 300 copies per page.

BONUS: Genealogy of Jesus Diagram (3-page, foldout family tree)
Jesus’ Family Tree
Seeing God’s Faithfulness in the Genealogy of Christ
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Digging for Our Roots

In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage—to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness.

—Alex Haley, Roots

Have you ever been curious about your family’s past? How did Grandma meet Grandpa? Were any of my ancestors famous? How did we arrive in this country or this state?

Where Did We Come From?

This is an important question. The need for knowing and understanding our origins is part of being human. Knowing our origins gives us identity for the present, guidance for the future, and a powerful connection to the past. This knowledge gives us a sense of being rooted, of belonging. We can find this sense of identity in many different ways. A family farm can be handed down from one generation to the next to provide a sense of place. Family traditions during holidays and anniversaries, and cultural and ethnic heritages can connect us with our ancestors. A country’s symbols, like flags, can impart national identity. Songs and stories from the past can be told and retold to help us remember historical events. In a world where building strong, long-lasting connections is ever more difficult, finding a connection to the past gives us a sense of purpose and meaning.

We find out about our past by tracing our family history; by talking to our relatives; by using the many research tools available to us today; by visiting old neighborhoods, villages, or even cemeteries. Sometimes families leave written records of their stories, but in other cases that history is lost to later generations.

Our origins also have a spiritual dimension. And, fortunately, the record of our spiritual ancestors is an open book!
ADOPTED CHILDREN OF GOD

When we accept Jesus, we become members of another family, the family of God. The apostle Paul teaches us that we are “fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household” (Eph. 2:19) and that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20), and that we are adopted children of God (Rom. 8:15, 23; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5). Understanding the people and events that shaped this family in faith connects us with the past, gives meaning to our present, and grants us guidance for the future.

The Bible contains a number of genealogies. Many people simply skip these sections, or skim the many names, because the lists make little sense to them. However, these strange lists of names are firmly rooted in God’s promises to God’s people. Ultimately, these lists are all part of Jesus’ family tree. Every person identified on these lists, no matter how insignificant or unknown, is a link to God’s promised Messiah, and helps us with our own grafting into God’s family.

WHAT CAN I LEARN ABOUT MY PRESENT FROM MY PAST?

This book invites you to take a journey into the past. It will help you understand how God weaved together the lives of people throughout history to bring about the most important story of all: the birth of the Lord Jesus. These accounts are the stories of our spiritual ancestors. Our identity today—who we are and why we are here—has been shaped by their stories. This book will show you what family and lineage meant to people of Jesus’ day, and will reveal important truths that you, as a modern Christian, should know about Jesus and yourself.

Where Did Jesus Come From?

Nearly everyone has heard the story of Jesus’ birth. Most may know about Mary and the angel and the birth of Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem. And some may know the prophecies in the Bible that described where Jesus would be born and what he would do. But few of us know about Jesus’ great-great grandparents, his uncles, aunts, and others in his family tree. Yet to the early followers of Jesus this list of ancestors was so important that it makes up long sections in the biblical books of Matthew and Luke.
Genealogies in the Bible

Someone once said, “I trace my family history so I will know who to blame. Every family tree has some sap in it.” Even a tongue-in-cheek remark like this has some truth to it. Anyone who digs into their family’s past is bound to find some unusual characters, some “sap,” in their family tree.

Jesus’ family tree is no exception. Jesus’ genealogy, recorded in the New Testament gospels of Matthew and Luke, reveals a whole host of characters. There are spies and foreigners, kings and paupers, prostitutes and military heroes. Their stories are Jesus’ family stories. As believers in Jesus and adopted children of God, those stories become our family stories as well.

But to really understand Jesus’ family tree in the New Testament, we first must go back—way, way back—to the ancient world of the Old Testament.

Genealogies in the Old Testament

In the ancient world, genealogies were used mostly for political reasons. Lists of names in Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt were used primarily for preserving royal lineages. Kings who came to power in unknown or dubious ways used genealogies to legitimize their right to the throne.

In contrast, the genealogies in the Old Testament were used to:

- Define time frames for the stories.
- Introduce important characters in the narrative.
- Define the identity of the Israelites and their relations to other peoples around them.
Two Main Types of Genealogies in the Old Testament

**Lineal:** Lists of members of each generation, either in ascending or descending order. They take the form: A begot B, B begot C.

**Segmented:** Family trees branching out into clans and lineages. They take the form: The sons of A are B, C, and D.

Examples:

*Lineal genealogy* (Gen. 5:1-32)

Adam  
|  Seth  
|   | Enosh  
|   | Kenan  
|   | Mahalalel  
|   | Jared  
|   | Enoch  
|   | Methuselah  
|   | Lamech  
|   | Noah  
Shem  Ham  Japheth

*Segmented genealogy* (Gen. 36:1-5)

Zibon the Hivite  
|  Elothe Hittite  
|   | Adah = Esau/Edom = Oholibamah = Basemath = Nebaioth  
|   | Eliphaz  
|   | Jeush  Jalam  Korah  Reuel  
|   | Nahath  Zerah  Shamma  Mizzah  
Teman  Omar  Zepho  Gatam  Kenaz

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**Major Genealogies in the Old Testament**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genealogy</th>
<th>Bible Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam to Noah</td>
<td>Genesis 5:1–31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sons of Noah and their descendants</td>
<td>Genesis 10:1–32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah’s son Shem to Abram</td>
<td>Genesis 11:10–26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Terah</td>
<td>Genesis 11:27–32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Nahor</td>
<td>Genesis 22:20–24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Abraham by Keturah</td>
<td>Genesis 25:1–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Ishmael</td>
<td>Genesis 25:12–18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Jacob</td>
<td>Genesis 25:23–29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Esau</td>
<td>Genesis 36:1–43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The descendants of Jacob who went into Egypt</td>
<td>Genesis 46:8–27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lineage of Moses</td>
<td>Exodus 6:14–26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A list of the Levites</td>
<td>Numbers 3:14–39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The heads of the tribes</td>
<td>Numbers 26:1–51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The genealogy of David</td>
<td>Ruth 4:18–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ancestors of Ezra back to Aaron</td>
<td>Ezra 7:1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogical information for the residents of Jerusalem</td>
<td>Nehemiah 11–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various genealogies that reflect earlier information</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 1–9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Genesis: The Book of Beginnings**

You will notice that ten of the major genealogies in the Old Testament listed in the table above are in the book of Genesis. The word *genesis* means beginning, origin, or even, generation. Origins, births, and descents are at the heart of the first book of the Bible.
In fact, the entire book of Genesis can be divided into a series of genealogies. Each genealogy begins with the following, or similar, phrase: “This is the account [or “generation”] of . . .”

Genesis 2:4 “This is the account of the heavens and the earth . . .”
Genesis 5:1 “This is the written account of Adam’s family . . .”
Genesis 6:9 “This is the account of Noah . . .”
Genesis 10:1 “This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth . . .”
Genesis 11:10 “This is the account of Shem’s family . . .”
Genesis 11:27 “This is the account of Terah’s family . . .”
Genesis 25:12 “This is the account . . . of Abraham’s son Ishmael . . .”
Genesis 25:19 “This is the account of . . . Isaac”
Genesis 36:1 “This is the account of . . . Esau . . .”
Genesis 37:2 “This is the account of Jacob’s family . . .”

The focus of the book of Genesis narrows down progressively, from interest in the whole universe—creation—to interest in one family in particular—Abraham, and God’s call of, promise to, and covenant with him. Through Abraham’s family, God would deal with the problem of human sin. Through this family, God’s wonderful plan of salvation would come about in time. If we are to understand how God’s plan unfolded, we must pay attention to this particular human family.

Genesis is not only a book of genealogies. It’s a book of stories. The genealogies tell us the characters’ names and family relations. They tell us where each person fits on the family tree. But the stories tell us who these people were—their triumphs and downfalls, their faith and their sins. Each genealogy in Genesis sets off a series of stories about people in the genealogy. The stories in Genesis are not random tales. They are purposeful histories about the individuals who shaped and revealed God’s plans for humanity.

FAMILY PROBLEMS

Genesis reveals that God made us in his image, which means that God made us to be his representatives on earth so that we might proclaim his lordship over creation. He made us to relate in love and openness to him, to each other, and to the good creation he made. But humans became dissatisfied with being made in God’s image and wanted to be like God, and so they rebelled against God. Because of this rebellion, humanity’s relationship with God was broken. We became separated from God.
The effects of sin are powerful and deep. Sin has shattered our relationships with God, with each other, and with creation. We long for true and intimate connections, but sin, evil, and death constantly get in the way. Relationships that should be nurturing, loving, joyful, and intimate can turn destructive, hateful, sorrowful, and divisive. The way we relate to God, to other humans, and to our world is not the way it is supposed to be.

You might find it difficult to accept that we are incapable of fixing this problem, this separation from God and the sin that results. We can fix many things around us to make them and our lives better, but the core of the problem is beyond our abilities. Only God can repair our brokenness—and God has a plan to do exactly that. We find out about this plan in the Scriptures.

FAMILY BLESSINGS

God’s solution to human sin is Jesus Christ. Although Jesus enters the picture later in the Bible, in Genesis we already understand what makes this solution possible: the character of God.

In Genesis, we learn that:

- Our God is a God of grace.
- God wants humanity to be saved and creation restored.
- God has taken the first steps to accomplish that purpose.
- God has decided to use people to achieve that purpose.

God could have accomplished his plans in the same way he created the universe: through his word. For reasons that belong to God alone, he chose to allow humans to be part of his plans. What a wonderful piece of news! Sure, we can make things quite bad for ourselves and for others around us, but God has given us the opportunity to be part of the solution.

God desires to bring salvation and restoration to his world using humans, despite our limitations and sinfulness. God’s ultimate plan involves a man, Jesus, who is both fully human and fully divine. For this reason, Jesus’ family, their stories and their times, play an important role in who Jesus is and what he did.

As believers, we have not only received blessings from God, but we are also a crucial part of God’s plan to bless others. It is likely that one role genealogies play in Scripture is to remind us that God is working through a human family. We are adopted children of God in Christ, and the biblical genealogies connect us to our ancient, adopted family. They remind us that we are also God’s instruments of blessing.
## The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

### The Gospel of Luke

Luke lists the genealogy from Jesus to Adam

Luke 3:23–38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abraham</th>
<th>Isaac</th>
<th>Jacob</th>
<th>Judah and Tamar♀</th>
<th>Perez</th>
<th>Hezron</th>
<th>Ram</th>
<th>Amminadab</th>
<th>Nahshon</th>
<th>Salmon and Rahab♀</th>
<th>Boaz and Ruth♀</th>
<th>Obed</th>
<th>Jesse</th>
<th>King David and Uriah’s wife (Bathsheba)♀</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>Judah and Tamar♀</td>
<td>Perez</td>
<td>Hezron</td>
<td>Ram</td>
<td>Amminadab</td>
<td>Nahshon</td>
<td>Salmon and Rahab♀</td>
<td>Boaz and Ruth♀</td>
<td>Obed</td>
<td>Jesse</td>
<td>King David and Uriah’s wife (Bathsheba)♀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Seth</td>
<td>Enosh</td>
<td>Kenan</td>
<td>Mahalalel</td>
<td>Jared</td>
<td>Enoch</td>
<td>Methuselah</td>
<td>Lamech</td>
<td>Noah</td>
<td>Shem</td>
<td>Arphaxad</td>
<td>Cainan</td>
<td>Shelah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan</td>
<td>Mattatha</td>
<td>Menna</td>
<td>Melea</td>
<td>Eliakim</td>
<td>Jonam</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>Judah</td>
<td>Simeon</td>
<td>Levi</td>
<td>Matthath</td>
<td>Jorim</td>
<td>Eliezer</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew lists the genealogy from Abraham to Jesus

Matt. 1:1–16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abraham</th>
<th>Isaac</th>
<th>Jacob</th>
<th>Judah and Tamar♀</th>
<th>Perez</th>
<th>Hezron</th>
<th>Ram</th>
<th>Amminadab</th>
<th>Nahshon</th>
<th>Salmon and Rahab♀</th>
<th>Boaz and Ruth♀</th>
<th>Obed</th>
<th>Jesse</th>
<th>King David and Uriah’s wife (Bathsheba)♀</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>Judah and Tamar♀</td>
<td>Perez</td>
<td>Hezron</td>
<td>Ram</td>
<td>Amminadab</td>
<td>Nahshon</td>
<td>Salmon and Rahab♀</td>
<td>Boaz and Ruth♀</td>
<td>Obed</td>
<td>Jesse</td>
<td>King David and Uriah’s wife (Bathsheba)♀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph, the husband of Mary♀</td>
<td>JESUS</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>JESUS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Legend

♀ = Female

= Names common in both genealogies
GENEALOGIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are two genealogies in the New Testament. Both belong to Jesus. The gospel writers, Matthew and Luke, each record Jesus’ genealogy in their gospels. However, their genealogies are not identical. Matthew traces Jesus’ family history back to Abraham; Luke goes all the way back to Adam. Neither writer lists all the individuals in the family. These writers include only key names, but they don’t always select the same names.

Why are there two different genealogies for Jesus? The answer to that question can be found by first asking another question: Why are there four different gospels?

FOUR GOSPELS

Despite the many similarities among the Gospels, especially in the first three, each provides a different account of the life and ministry of Jesus. The Gospels tell Jesus’ story in four different ways.

Why are there four gospels instead of just one? One answer is that it takes four points of view to get the whole story about Jesus. Some might argue that one authoritative story should be enough. However, God chose to reveal himself using four gospels. The gospel of John begins with these words: “In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word became flesh” (1:1, 14). That is, God’s preferred method of communication to humans

What Does Gospel Mean?

The term gospel was commonly used in the Roman world for the announcement of Caesar’s deeds. The gospel, which means “good news,” announced to Roman citizens that the Caesar returned victorious from a military campaign. A messenger would go ahead of the Caesar and his entourage to the city, such as Rome, and announce the imminent arrival of the victorious Caesar. Hence, the good news was that the king had achieved victory and was returning to his kingdom.

The New Testament uses the word in a similar way, to announce that:

- The King of the universe has come to this earth to bring the kingdom of God in our midst.
- The King has been victorious over the power of sin and death; and that evil, with Satan as its main representative, has been defeated.
- The King offers salvation from sin and death and the possibility of a new life.
- The King is returning in full celebration of his victory.

“The Gospels” is used today to refer to the four books of the New Testament—named according to their writers—that record the good news of Jesus’ life and ministry: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
is by using human language and culture. This preference is revealed in the Bible and it is supremely true for Christ himself who, we are told, is God in the flesh (John 1:14–18). So then, the Gospels are, like Jesus, both a divine work as well as a human work. They have real human authors and one divine Author. The gospel writers express the message of their “good news” using their own intelligence and abilities to reach a particular audience. For this reason, it is often best to read and understand each gospel account on its own merit.

The Gospels give particular details that might be difficult to understand, but when taken as a whole, the accounts are never truly contradictory. Although they have four different points of view on the history of Jesus, they have only one Divine conclusion as to his identity as the Son of God. Instead of finding problems with the four accounts, we should rejoice for having a great richness of views about Jesus. To understand that God became human and died for us is a wonderful, complex, and difficult concept that takes many different viewpoints to convey fully.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOSPEL</th>
<th>VIEWPOINT</th>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
<th>JESUS THE SON OF GOD IS . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>Jewish in the Holy Land</td>
<td>Jewish world</td>
<td>The Messiah King of Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Hellenistic Jewish</td>
<td>Greek-speaking world</td>
<td>The power of God in the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Heavenly</td>
<td>Whole world</td>
<td>The Word of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TWO GENEALOGIES**

The two gospel writers Matthew and Luke, who include Jesus’ genealogy, were writing to different audiences. The differences between their genealogies may reflect the differences between the audiences they were trying to reach to give the good news of Jesus.

Matthew was writing to a Jewish audience. It was an audience that wondered whether Jesus was really the promised Messiah (see Jer. 23:4; 33:15). Matthew wanted to assure new Jewish believers, or Jews interested in the message of Jesus, that Jesus was a true Israelite, had descended from David, was the rightful King of Israel, and was the promised Messiah. Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus traces Jesus’ legal descent from King David.
More than the other gospel writers, Matthew focuses on the many ways that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament promises about the Messiah and God’s plans to bring salvation to the world. Matthew presents Jesus as the true Israel in whom God’s promises are being fulfilled.

Luke, on the other hand, was writing primarily for a Gentile audience. Luke wanted to show that the good news of Jesus is meant for the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles. Because the message of the gospel is for all peoples, Luke traces Jesus’ genealogy back to Adam. Although in Luke’s account Jesus is the King of Israel, Luke also presents Jesus as the Savior of the whole world. Jesus’ coming is both a consequence of Israel’s history and the entire history of the world. In addition, Luke shows how Jesus’ mission is handed over to the church, Jesus’ followers.

Both genealogies arrive at the same conclusion: Jesus is Lord and Savior. However, by emphasizing two different sides of who Jesus is, they present us with a fuller picture of the life and ministry of Christ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MATTHEW</th>
<th>LUKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>List</strong></td>
<td>An ascending list (from Abraham to Jesus)</td>
<td>A descending list (from Jesus to Adam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>• The list is divided among 42 generations</td>
<td>• The list has 77 names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It makes three blocks of 14 generations</td>
<td>• It has 21 names before Adam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It is a multiple of seven</td>
<td>• 14 names before David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 21 names after David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 21 names after Zerubbabel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starting Point</strong></td>
<td>The list starts with Abraham</td>
<td>The list starts with Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
<td>• From Abraham to David the names in the lists agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• After David, the names in the lists diverge (only two names in common: Zerubbabel and Shealtiel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• They have two different names for Joseph’s father</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td>Begins the story of Jesus’ birth</td>
<td>Precedes the beginning of Jesus’ ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
<td>It traces the legal descent of the house of David</td>
<td>It traces the biological descent from Adam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jesus’ Two Natures: Divine and Human

Jesus’ family tree in the Gospels gives us clues about his identity and his mission. From studying the New Testament, we discover that Jesus is the only person with two natures: a fully divine nature and a fully human nature. Jesus is not sometimes human and other times divine. Jesus is always both human and divine at the same time.

We confess Jesus, as a divine nature, to be one with the Father, yet also a distinct person from the Father and the Spirit. We confess Jesus’ existence before the creation of the entire universe. Jesus is God.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAITS UNIQUE TO GOD</th>
<th>TRAITS OF JESUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation is the work of his hands—alone (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 102:25; Isa. 44:24)</td>
<td>Creation is the work of his hands—all things created in and through him (John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2, 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first and the last (Isa. 44:6)</td>
<td>“The First and the Last” (Rev. 1:17; 22:13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Lord of lords” (Ps. 136:3; see also Deut. 10:17)</td>
<td>“Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unchanging and eternal (Ps. 90:2; 102:26–27; Mal. 3:6)</td>
<td>Unchanging and eternal (John 8:58; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:11–12; 13:8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge of all people (Gen. 18:25; Ps. 94:2; 96:13; 98:9)</td>
<td>Judge of all people (John 5:22; Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only Savior; no other God can save (Isa. 43:11; 45:21–22; Hos. 13:4)</td>
<td>Savior of the world; no salvation apart from him (John 4:42; Acts 4:12; Titus 2:13; 1 John 4:14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redeems from their sins a people for his own possession (Ex. 19:5; Ps. 130:7–8; Ezek. 37:23)</td>
<td>Redeems from their sins a people for his own possession (Titus 2:14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hears and answers prayers of those who call on him (Ps. 86:5–8; Isa. 55:6–7; Jer. 33:3; Joel 2:32)</td>
<td>Hears and answers prayers of those who call on him (John 14:4; Rom. 10:12–13; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 12:8–9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only God has divine glory (Isa. 42:8; 48:11)</td>
<td>Jesus has divine glory (John 17:5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worshiped by angels (Ps. 97:7)</td>
<td>Worshiped by angels (Heb. 1:6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jesus is also fully human. In his humanity, Jesus was obedient throughout his life and in his death. Although fully human, Jesus was without sin; he was not rebellious against God. Yet, as a Jew, he was profoundly shaped by the history of his ancestors, by the way God revealed and dealt with them, and by how they lived in the presence of God.

**JESUS’ IDENTITY AND THE GOSPELS**

As humans, our identities as individuals are shaped in a large part by our families. In traditional societies, families extend beyond the immediate relatives of the clan; the larger community plays a defining role in developing the identity of each individual. Similarly, the society and history of those around Jesus shaped the way Jesus revealed himself as a human. This human identity of Christ is deeply rooted in the history of Israel in particular and in human history in general.

The two genealogies in the Gospels reflect Jesus’ identity in Israelite history and in human history. By looking back to the stories of those ancestors, we can better understand the reasons Jesus revealed his humanity the way he did. Such a study will illuminate his identity and enrich our understanding of his ministry. Just as the Gospels affirm a single conclusion, no matter which direction we take in this study, we will also conclude that Jesus is the Lord of history, the Redeemer of humanity, and the Restorer of all things (Acts 3:21).
In the story of Adam and Eve we see how things should have and could have been for God’s creation. But things went wrong, and God’s original plans for this good creation were distorted by human sin. However, we also see God’s grace shining through the midst of this dark moment. He already had a plan to make all things new through grace. The rest of the Scriptures tell us about this story, this plan.

The Bible, then, is not just a study of God or a history of humanity. It is the story of how God is fulfilling his mission, his plan to restore his creation. It is the story of how God has invited humans to carry on this purpose alongside him. As Christians, we know how this story will end—and it is a glorious ending! But to fully appreciate the wonder of God’s grace, we must read this story carefully.

**The Account of the Heavens and the Earth**

The gospel writer Luke traces Jesus’ genealogy all the way back to the first human being—Adam, whom he calls “the son of God” (Luke 3:38). This title does not mean Adam had a divine nature; instead, Luke wants to show us that Jesus came to all people. Luke’s main audience, let us remember, were Gentiles. Adam’s story is found in Genesis 2, right after the account of creation. Creation is completed, and God blessed it and called it “very good” (Gen. 1:31). This first section of Genesis ends with God blessing the seventh day and resting.

> “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.”—Genesis 2:4

In what sense are these biblical chapters the account of the heavens and the earth? To understand this question, let’s look at the other “accounts.” The Hebrew word for “account” is *toledot*. This word can also be translated into English as “genealogies.” In Genesis, the accounts of the patriarchs refer to the deeds of their descendants. For example, the account of Terah is really about his son Abraham.
(Gen. 11:27), and the account of Isaac is really about the actions and lives of his sons Esau and Jacob (Gen. 25:19). In other words, these accounts are about how those who come next continue the story.

The line, “This is the account of the heavens and the earth,” introduces the events that take place in this new creation. The creation account is not the end of the story—it’s just the beginning. Genesis 2 is not retelling the creation of the universe, which already happened in the previous chapter of Genesis. Rather, it takes a slice of that creation—the part about humankind—that begins the larger story of God and his role as redeemer of his creation.

The story of the heavens and the earth, then, is the story that leads from creation, rebellion (sin), grace and blessings, to salvation and redemption that will end in new heavens and a new earth when Christ makes all things new (Rev. 21:1–2). This is a story that begins with God as Creator (Gen. 1) and ends with God as re-Creator (Rev. 21). This story begins in a garden (the Garden of Eden) and ends in a city (the New Jerusalem).

**THE GARDEN**

It all happened in the garden. It wasn’t an ordinary garden. God made this place especially for his new creatures: humans. This garden was a place filled with goodness, where the land produced with abundance, and the creatures God made could be fruitful. It was a place God himself could go to enjoy the cool of the afternoon in the company of his creatures.

“Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden.”—Genesis 2:8

Let’s look at the words used here. God *plants* the garden in Eden. The descriptions of the planting and the garden are very different from how Genesis 1 describes the process of creation. Here, God’s involvement is more personal: he is a gardener. Although he never stops being the great King of Genesis 1 who organizes his created kingdom, the metaphor here is easier for us to understand. Gardeners care for and nurture their plants; they are deeply involved with their gardens. Gardening requires time, attention, work, and love.

Why did God put such care into preparing this garden?

- The garden is the model of what God’s original intentions were for creation. It is the standard that allows us to see how things should be and how the world should function.
- The garden is a place where God’s creatures, the man and the woman, would be able to flourish. It provided the place and space for humans to develop their talents and their full potential to be the creatures that God wanted them to be: loving, relational creatures who would contemplate God and his creation and be filled with praise and gratitude. They could be God’s friends, caretakers of this special creation, and fulfill the potential of creation.
- Most importantly, the garden is a temple for the Lord. What makes the temple, or the tabernacle, or the garden important is God’s presence. A temple is a meeting place where humans encounter God’s presence. God walked in the garden! This is a beautiful image that expresses God’s direct presence in his temple. God is not an absent gardener.
The Human in the Garden

The Scriptures use the metaphor of the gardener for God when talking about the garden. But the metaphor changes when the Scriptures talk about humanity: God becomes a potter—he forms man from the dust of the ground. Once again, God’s care and hands-on involvement show the importance that the creature would have to him.

Unlike the material of the potter, however, God did not use clay to make Adam. God used dust.

Dust? Pottery is made with clay. Why did God use dust? The term dust is probably not a reference to the raw materials that God used when forming Adam. Rather, dust is an important term used in ancient Hebrew writing. Remember, this story was originally written in ancient Hebrew. Ancient Hebrew did not have periods or other punctuation marks to help readers understand the text. Rather, it used repetition of words or sounds, for example, to highlight important words or to help readers make connections that might otherwise be lost. For example, in Genesis 2:7, we find that God formed the man (‘adam) out of the ground (‘adamah). Those words are not necessarily connected, though they might have been, but the similarity of sounds connects them. In this case, Adam is connected to the ground. In Genesis 1, humans are connected to God, they are made in God’s image and likeness, but they are not gods. Genesis 2 makes it clear that humans are creatures of the earth, the ground.

In Genesis 2:7, there is a repetition of sound that is not apparent in English but is easy to identify in ancient Hebrew: “from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” The word for nostril (‘aphim) is similar to the word for dust (‘aphar). The connection is that just as dust rises to life from the ground to become “living dust,” so it will go back down to the ground when life is extinguished (Gen. 3:19).
God breathes into this creature, and the man becomes a “living being” or a “living creature” (*nephesh haya*). Notice that animals are also each described as a “living creature” (*nephesh haya*, Gen. 2:19). What distinguishes humans from animals is being created in the image and the likeness of God. “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness” (Gen. 1:26).

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”—Genesis 2:15

The word for “work” in Hebrew used here, ‘*eved*, is the same word used for both “worship” and the “work” of the priests in the tabernacle and the temple. If the garden was a natural temple for the Lord, then Adam’s original work was that of a priest. The priests’ main role in Israel was to preserve the order of the temple and the worship. God gave humanity an extraordinary task: to preserve the order and harmony of creation, as described in Genesis 1. We see this task in action when Adam names the animals and takes care of the garden. In other words, God made humans his representatives on earth. Among other important things, being created in God’s image means that we represent God in his creation. We have been given the task of keeping the order and harmony of his creation.

**The Two Trees in the Garden**

As with the man whom God made from the ground, God made “all kinds of trees grow out of the ground” (Gen. 2:9). Genesis calls our attention to two of these trees: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God allows the man to eat from every tree in the garden (including the tree of life) except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The text does not yet explain the purpose of the tree of life. However, we learn later in Genesis 3:22 that eating from this tree prolongs life; the verse affirms that the fruit of the tree would give perpetual life, a life so long as to seem endless.

In other places in the Bible, a tree of life is associated with wisdom (Prov. 3:18; 11:30; 13:13; 15:4). From the book of Proverbs we know that one of the functions of wisdom is that it allows for a long and abundant life: “Long life is in [wisdom’s] right hand; in her left hand
are riches and honor” (Prov. 3:16). Regarding the other tree in the garden, we read of this one prohibition to the man: “you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:17). What is so wrong with knowledge of good and evil? Why does God forbid the man to eat the fruit of this tree?

The expression “good and evil” is a well-known literary device called merism. For example, the expression “morning and night” does not refer only to the morning and the night; it also refers to all the time in between. In other words, the whole day. Also, the expression “heavens and earth” refers to both the heavens and earth, and everything in between the heavens and the earth—the entire creation. The expression “good and evil” refers to more than just absolute goodness and absolute evil, the two extremes; it also means everything in between.

In our culture, knowledge is often seen as a mental activity, like scientific or rational knowledge. In the culture of the Old Testament, knowledge meant experiential learning: what we come to understand or appreciate based on our experiences. The term “knowledge of good and evil” seems to refer to the ability to discern between good and evil that allows one to make proper decisions. In other words, wisdom.

But the sort of wisdom available from this prohibited tree is a characteristic of God, a kind of knowledge that only he can possess (Job 15:7–9, 40; Prov. 30:1–4). For humans to take the fruit from this tree would be essentially a short cut—an attempt to gain God-like wisdom without learning or experience, and without God.

Companions for Adam

“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’” —Genesis 2:18

God did not intend the man to be alone. God created humans to be in relationships. For that reason, God formed creatures to be company to the man. God brought these animals to the man, and the man named them. But they were not “suitable help” for the man.

“So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman . . .” —Genesis 2:21–22
So God makes another special creation. Just as the man (\textit{adam}) was taken from the ground (\textit{adama}), the woman is taken from the man. The man is taken from dust, but the woman is taken from a rib of the man. God took the woman from the side (ribs), instead of the head or the feet, showing that this companion stands side by side with the man, rather than above or below him. God considers her to be the right companion for the man.

It is not that God was experimenting with creation, trial and error. Rather, God created male and female, and together made them in his image and likeness (Gen. 1:27).

\textbf{Rebellion, Death, and Grace}

Things in the garden went wrong, and the world today is not the way it is supposed to be. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil offered humanity two ways: one that led to life and another that led to death. (See also Psalm 1.) Choosing the latter was the path of rebellion.

The serpent, which came to Eve, pointed out that humans could become like gods. Said the serpent: “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). According to God’s own words in 3:22 (“The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil”); the serpent was not lying about this.

Eve’s words in response to the serpent are curious: “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die’” (3:2–3; compare these words with those of God in 2:16–17: “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”) “You must not touch it” is an added instruction in Eve’s report. Is this, perhaps, connected to the human tendency to add to God’s instructions “just in case” (“don’t eat from the fruit; and, just in case, don’t even touch it”)?
Or is this an indication that in the woman’s mind, God’s instruction was an unreasonable, tyrannical imposition?

In the Genesis story, the serpent is not initially identified with Satan. Because of progressive revelation (God revealed more about himself and his plans increasingly throughout the Scriptures; see Hebrews 1:1–3), we come to discover in the New Testament that the serpent was Satan (Rev. 12:9; 20:2). The text describes the serpent as “more crafty” (Gen. 3:1). In the Bible, craftiness—shrewdness or prudence—is often a desirable attribute (Prov. 12:16, 23; 13:16). However, when misused, craftiness becomes a negative attribute (Job 5:12; 15:5; Josh. 9:4). Jesus advised his disciples to be “wise as serpents” (Matt. 10:16). The word for “wise” here is the same word in Genesis 3:1 for “crafty.” In the case of the serpent in the garden of Eden, the serpent used its craftiness to entice Eve and Adam to the fruit.

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”

—Genesis 3:6

The serpent did not cause humans to sin. Rather, the serpent reminded them of the opportunity not to be content with their created condition and to covet a condition that belonged to God alone. Being created in the image of God was not enough for humans; they wanted to be like gods themselves. Disobedience to God’s instruction was the symptom of a deeper problem: rebellion. Adam and Eve rebelled against God’s order, God’s desires for humanity and creation. Another name for this rebellion is **idolatry**.

The first consequence was that “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked” (3:7). The Hebrew word for “nakedness” (әרәм) is a play on the sound of the word for “crafty” in 3:1. The “crafty one” (әрәм) embroiled the “naked ones” (әрәммүн). In other places in the Old Testament, “nakedness” is an idiom for “vulnerability.” When Joseph tested his brothers in Egypt, after having been sold into slavery and experiencing God’s blessings, he accused them of being spies. The accusation was that they had come
to “see where our land is unprotected (or, the Hebrew reads, see the nakedness of the land)” (Gen. 42:9). It might be the case in Genesis 3 that having their eyes opened, Adam and Eve became aware of their vulnerability in the world apart from God. Being in God’s presence was the source of their security and identity. By becoming rebellious against God and acting as if they were gods, they had rejected the comfort, security, and guidance of God’s presence.

When confronted by God, their responses were consistent with their rebellion. Rather than recognizing their rebellion, asking for forgiveness, and restoring the relationship with God, their denial and defensiveness further damaged their relationship with God. Although the consequences of their rebellion were terrible, it is important to notice that God did not curse humanity. God cursed the serpent (3:14) and the ground (3:17). God cursed the very creation he had declared very good and had blessed before.

The consequences of this rebellion appear in three broken relationships:

1. **Among Humans.** God made the woman as the right companion for the man, but now the man will rule over the woman (3:16). Their relationship is broken, as is their relationships with their descendants and the relationships among those descendants.

2. **Humans and Nature.** In the garden, things worked the way they were supposed to work. If Adam planted a tree, that tree would produce as expected. Tending the garden was work, and likely hard work, but it was fruitful, productive, and, surely, satisfying work. Now, however, the ground is cursed! Work becomes painful and burdensome. The land produces thorns and thistles instead of the proper fruit or grain. The ground, rather than being the source of life that it was supposed to be, is now the fatal destiny of all humans: “for dust you are and to dust you will return” (3:19).
3. **GOD AND HUMANS.** God expelled Adam and Eve from the garden. The relevance of this expulsion is not that they lost paradise, an ideal life. Rather, they lost God’s presence, which was what made the garden special. After driving them out, God placed a cherubim and a flaming sword at the entrance of the garden. We know from Ezekiel’s visions (Ezek. 1:1–28) and the temple and tabernacle curtains, which had embroidered cherubim, that cherubim guard God’s holiness. Humanity was exiled from God’s presence, and there is nothing humanity can do in this world to return there.

**ADAM AND JESUS**

However bad things were at that moment, this story is not merely about humanity’s rebellion and destruction of those important relationships. This story, as with the entire Bible, is about God. God is not an object of study. Rather, God is the subject of the most important, dramatic, meaningful, and vital story there is: the story of God’s mission to save his creation. The story in the garden of Eden is a story of grace’s victory over sin and death.

God had warned Adam that eating from the tree would bring death. The serpent suggested to Eve that eating from the fruit of the tree would not cause them to die. The serpent seems to have known something about God. True, humanity experienced a kind of death—a spiritual death. However, God did not say, “You will die, spiritually.” He said, “You will surely die.” But humanity is still here, even though Adam and Eve deserved death. If God had carried out the anticipated punishment, we would not be here now to think about it. No, God did not lie, as the serpent wily suggested. Instead, he gave us his grace. God’s grace is an unmerited gift, something we get without deserving or even looking for it, and through his grace he opened a new possibility for humanity and creation.

God began a rescue and restoration mission, one that only he could do. For reasons that belong to God, he decided to use humanity to carry on this rescue mission. Humans on their own are not able to make things right; nonetheless, through humanity, through a human, a second Adam, God accomplished his mission. This understanding is stated by the apostle Paul in Romans 5:12–21: “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much...
more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!” (Rom. 5:17).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADAM</th>
<th>JESUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam was the first person in this creation.</td>
<td>In his resurrection, Jesus is the first person in this New Creation (1 Cor. 15:23).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam was God’s administrator or ruler (Gen. 1:28).</td>
<td>Christ is God’s Anointed to be King (Matt. 1:16).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam was the head of the race (Gen. 3:20).</td>
<td>Christ Jesus is the Head of the New Creation (Rom. 5:12–24).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His actions brought consequences to his children causing them to inherit sin and death (Gen. 3:16–19).</td>
<td>His actions brought consequences to God’s children causing them to inherit righteousness and life (Rom. 5:12–19; 1 Cor. 15:20–22, 45–49).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam joined Eve and rebelled against God (Gen. 3:6).</td>
<td>Christ redeemed his bride (the church) by obeying God (Rev. 19:7–9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam’s shame required the death of an animal to cover it (Gen. 3:21).</td>
<td>Christ was shamed, stripped, and slain to cover our shame (Matt. 27:27–35).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instead of closeness with God, we experience isolation and loneliness. Instead of love and care for each other, we experience violence and hatred.</td>
<td>Through Christ’s redemptive action, we can experience true life, a close relationship with God and his love, and care for others.</td>
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**ADAM AND EVE’S DESCENDANTS**

On this side of the garden, we live a different reality, one colored by sin, death, and cursedness. Things are no longer the way they are supposed to be: Relationships are broken, the ground is cursed, we have a sworn enemy (Satan) who seeks our destruction, and we are moving away from God. The stories of Adam and Eve’s descendants that we find in Genesis 4–10 show us the extent and depth of the effects of sin. We know about the consequences of Adam and Eve’s rebellion; we now get to see those consequences in action. It is a sad history. However, as Paul taught us, “Where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (Rom. 5:20). These are also stories of God’s grace and compassion. Whereas sin and rebellion bring death and
destruction, God’s grace and compassion bring life, forgiveness, and restoration.

The next person in Jesus’ genealogy is “Seth, the son of Adam” (Luke 3:38). To understand the significance of Seth, we must also look at the story of his brothers, Cain and Abel. We find their story in Genesis 4.

Cain and Abel

“Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, ‘With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man.’” —Genesis 4:1

The Hebrew word for “made love” is yada’. This is the same word for “to know” used in Genesis 2 and 3 for the tree located in the middle of the garden. In the Old Testament, “knowing” someone is not an intellectual exercise. Knowledge is a relational word, and so “knowing” someone means experiencing that person at a deep, intimate level. For humans, the sexual act is an activity of the deepest and most intimate kind. The apostle Paul teaches that in the sexual act, two beings become one (1 Cor. 6:16). It is a special kind of knowing, an intimate knowledge.

However, this knowledge is no longer the way God had intended it. Rather, this knowledge is affected by sin; it is broken. Our relationships with others, including our spouses, are broken. Instead of being characterized by vulnerability and intimate knowledge, our relationships are now tainted by our desire to be gods, to be at the center of life, to have power and control over others, even those we love.

Cain is born. The meaning of the name “Cain” (Hebrew, qayin) is not known, although some scholars connect it with metalworking. Whatever its meaning, the name is another sound play with the word for “bring forth” (Hebrew, qaniti). This word can mean to buy, to acquire, or to create. The sentence is quite difficult to translate, but it means that Eve acquired or gained a man with the Lord’s help. Note that Eve affirmed that she had acquired a “man” ('ish) and not a “son” or a “child.” In Eve’s mind, apparently, Cain would do what Adam, the original “man” ('ish, Gen. 2:15), did not do: fulfill the promise of crushing the serpent’s head (3:15). The repetition of words or sounds
is a way to call attention to those words. Here, the emphasis is on the importance of Cain. Cain was seen as a gift from God, but when Abel is born, Eve makes no such comment. In Eve’s mind, Cain, being the firstborn, is a special child.

In addition, we are later told that “Cain worked the soil.” The text literally says that Cain was a “servant of the ground” (‘obed’ adamah), which is just the reason God had for creating Adam (Gen. 2:5). As readers, the expectation is that Cain will be favored: he is a special gift from God, he is the firstborn, and he is fulfilling God’s designs for Adam. The name of his brother, however, is not reassuring. Abel (habel) means “vapor, breath, or vanity.” As Psalm 144:4 says, “They are like a breath; their days are like a fleeting shadow.” Abel’s life was like a breath!

“The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.”
—Genesis 4:4–5

Surprisingly, God preferred Abel’s sacrifice to Cain’s. The text does not give a clear reason for this preference. Some scholars surmise that God preferred Abel’s sacrifice because it revealed Abel’s heart to God. Offering a valuable animal for God was a greater sacrifice than offering vegetables and fruits from the ground. Although that is possible, the text remains silent about it. However, this preference starts a pattern that we will find throughout the Scriptures: God preferring the younger brother to the firstborn, and God having a soft heart for shepherds (Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David).

The offering of sacrifices also illustrates one of the effects of sin: the relationship with God is broken. In the garden, God walked alongside humanity. However, humanity was expelled from God’s presence. Sacrifices, then, were a way that humanity could indirectly relate to God.

The story also illustrates the other two ways that sin has broken our ability to relate to each other. First, we see how sin affects the relationship among humans. Cain killed Abel. Jealousy,
anger, and violence permeate our lives because of our inability to relate in healthy ways to others. The possibility to do what is right is present, but it is no longer the only option. Now, sin stands ready to strike, meaning that even our best intentions can produce hurtful, unintended consequences.

God punished Cain. The dialogue between God and Cain parallels that of God with Adam. In fact, the parallels of this section with Genesis 3 seem to confirm that this story illustrates the effects of sin in creation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARALLEL</th>
<th>ADAM AND EVE</th>
<th>CAIN AND ABEL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A concise description of the sin</td>
<td>“She took some and ate it . . .” (3:6–8)</td>
<td>“Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him” (4:8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The struggle</td>
<td>“Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (3:16)</td>
<td>“It [evil] desires to have you, but you must rule over it” (4:7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God’s questions</td>
<td>“Where are you?” (3:9) “What is this you have done?” (3:13)</td>
<td>“Where is your brother Abel?” (4:9) “What have you done?” (4:10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The voice</td>
<td>“I heard [your voice] in the garden” (3:10)</td>
<td>“[The voice of] your brother’s blood cries out to me” (4:10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God’s punishments</td>
<td>“Cursed are you [the serpent] above all livestock” (3:14) “Cursed is the ground because of you [Adam]” (3:17)</td>
<td>“Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground” (4:11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God’s grace</td>
<td>“The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them” (3:21)</td>
<td>“Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him” (4:15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of God’s presence</td>
<td>“So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden” (3:23)</td>
<td>“Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence” (4:14)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The three forms of brokenness appear in the story of Cain:

1. **THE BROKENNESS** in the relationship among humans is powerfully illustrated in Cain’s murder of Abel.

2. **THE BROKENNESS** in the relationship between humanity and creation is illustrated by the reaffirmation of God’s curse on the ground.

3. **THE BROKENNESS** in the relationship between humanity and God is illustrated by the need of sacrifices, the rejection of God’s grace and wisdom, and by the exile of Cain from God’s presence.

**SETH: GOD’S GRACE AND FAITHFULNESS**

When Seth is born, Eve names him, saying, “God has granted me another child in place of Abel” (4:25). However, instead of the common word for “child” (son, *ben*, or child, *yeled*), the word used here is *zera‘*, a word that is not commonly used in this way. God promised an “offspring” (or a descendant, a seed, *zera‘*) that would defeat the serpent. This word makes an important connection with God’s promise in Genesis 3:15. By using this word, the text reminds the reader of God’s promise, and suggests that Seth is the fulfillment of this promise. Because we already know the rest of the story, we know that the birth of Seth is only a partial fulfillment of this promise—Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of this promise.

Immediately after his birth, the text notes that Seth had a son. We know little more about Seth, except for his immediate genealogy and his relation to Jesus’ genealogy. Seth named his son Enosh. The name Enosh is a Hebrew word synonymous with the word for Adam. Either word means “human being, man.” This similar meaning with the name of Adam might point to the importance of Seth: his descendants represent the fulfillment of God’s promise to defeat the serpent. For this reason, Seth is part of Jesus’ genealogy.
Two Stories, Two Destinies

Just as the story of the garden of Eden presents two trees, and Psalm 1 presents two paths, the story of Adam’s descendants presents two families: Cain and Seth. Their genealogies show important similarities and differences, as well as the comments we find in the scriptural text around the genealogies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cain’s Genealogy</th>
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|                                  | Shem                      |
|                                  | Ham                       |
|                                  | Japheth                   |

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In the summary, at the beginning of chapter 5 in Genesis, we are reminded that God created humanity “in the likeness of God” (Gen. 5:1). Then, we are told that Adam “had a son in his own likeness in his own image” (5:3). The Scriptures give us a reminder that despite the terrible effects of sin, as illustrated in Cain’s life, God’s likeness in humanity remains, tainted as it might be. We read these short reminders that say to us, despite sin, humans look for God: “At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord” (4:26). And some, like Enoch, a descendant of Seth, walk “faithfully with God” (5:22).