

The Book of Beginnings

Section 2

The Generations of Adam (5:1–6:8)

The line of Cain is never mentioned again. Evidently, it's destroyed at the time of the flood. At this point, the focus in the narrative shifts entirely to the line of Seth.

1. Its connection to the original creation (5:1–2)

These verses hearken back to 1:27–28, reminding us that God created man (male and female) in His image.

2. Its preservation (5:3–32)

There are ten paragraphs – one for each generation.

Adam (vv. 3–5)
Seth (vv. 6–8)
Enosh (vv. 9–11)
Kenan (vv. 12–14)
Mahalalel (vv. 15–17)
Jared (vv. 18–20)
Enoch (vv. 21–24)
Methuselah (vv. 25–27)
Lamech (vv. 28–31)
Noah (v. 32)

The key phrase is: “he died.” The main purpose of the genealogy is to demonstrate that God’s curse is fulfilled from generation to generation (2:17). Adam has a son in his own likeness – sinful and mortal.

This harsh reality is tempered by God’s grace as seen in Enoch’s *walk* (v. 24) and Lamech’s *hope* (v. 29). It’s worth noting the contrast between these two men and those of the same name in Cain’s line.

3. Its corruption (6:1–8)

(1) *God’s assessment* (vv. 1–5)

Sin affects man inherently (Jer. 17:9), totally (Ti. 1:15), and continually (Ps. 51:5). What particular “wickedness” is in view? There are three popular views:

- *Improbable.* The “daughters of man” are human women, and the “sons of God” are fallen angels. (1) Are there male and female angels in the same way there are male and female humans? (2) Are they capable of reproducing like humans reproduce? See Luke 20:35–36.
- *Possible.* The “daughters of man” are female descendants of Cain, and the “sons of God” are male descendants of Seth. (1) Why is this problematic? (2) How can this happen again (after the flood), when all the descendants of Cain are dead?
- *Probable.* The “daughters of man” are women in general (descendants of Cain and Seth), and the “sons of God” are “mighty men” (descendants of Cain and Seth). See Lk. 3:28. They’re guilty of polygamy (v. 2).

For Nephilim, see Num. 13:33.

(2) *God’s regret (v. 6)*

God’s repentance isn’t a change in His purpose, but a change in His attitude (from man’s perspective).

(3) *God’s judgment (v. 7)*

God gives humanity 120 years to repent (v. 3), before “blotting out” every living thing.

(4) *God’s grace (v. 8)*

This doesn’t mean that Noah is virtuous. The word “but” contrasts God’s judgment and God’s grace. This speaks of undeserved goodness.